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A Broadford Retrospective
Reviews • Mailbag • AMRM News**

Issue 378 Vol. 32 No.9

ISSN 0045-009X





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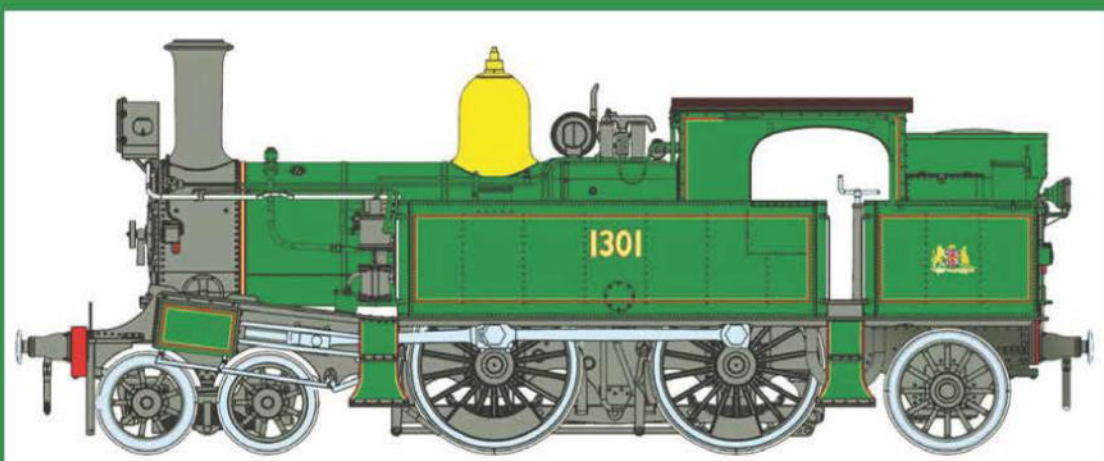
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AT ISSN 0045-009X

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The Victorian modelling Juggernaut

There has been a slow but steady increase in the production of Victorian prototype models and many of the New South Wales-based manufacturers have embraced the Victorian modelling Juggernaut to the extent that now there is a saying: if it has Victorian Railways (VR) on it, it will sell.

What could be the cause for this success? What are Victorian modellers doing right, and why is it happening now? Some thoughts on how we may have gotten here:

- A powerful modelling base that puts their money where their mouth is.
- Modelling advocates that lobby manufacturers, they make their presence felt at exhibitions and push their wish lists directly to manufacturers.
- An active and widespread exhibition scene, with multiple big, capital city, and healthy regional exhibitions, which attract both retail shops and manufacturers. The simple fact of having more than one or two big exhibitions puts more modellers and families through the doors, which means a larger financial base, spread evenly geographically and temporally, supporting multiple organisations (therefore it is not just one club or entity that succeeds).
- Readily-available prototype information, well-documented, and a steady stream of self-supported publishers who produce publications on general and niche subjects, such as the histories of certain railway lines etc. This helps the curious modeller, with everything laid out for them, making modelling easier. Pick it up, take it home, devour the information.
- A willingness to help manufacturers in the design phase of production of a model.
- Staging regular modelling forums, where modellers can display their work to a like-minded audience. This inspires others to get in and give it a go, also providing even more information to their modelling base in the process, with well-produced handout material.
- Mixing modelling with prototype events. Given the right encouragement, this could tap into the railfan-only audience, which will only help the modelling base.
- From an exhibition layout point of view, there is also a healthy layout production base, with a steady stream of Victorian-prototype layouts being produced by individuals as well as clubs. This means that going to an exhibition you might be surprised by the variety of different layouts being displayed. This also includes non-Victorian prototype layouts being produced in Victoria.
- Obsession with prototype one-off locomotives or rolling stock. I am not sure where this comes from, but my guess would be it follows on from the obsession to be informed and devour every obscure morsel of prototype information produced. Based on this obsession would Victorian Modellers be happy to put their money down for a r-t-r H220 4-8-4 steam locomotive?
- Dedication to the cause. While operating my layout at the Kyneton exhibition, a V/Line modeller struck up a conversation with me. It turns out that this modeller and his mate were building a layout for the forthcoming Lilydale exhibition, and his 'collectable' car was stored at his missus' house so that they could finish the layout in his garage. I said to him, "well, she is a keeper!" At the Lilydale exhibition, there they were with the completed layout, grinning from ear to ear, proud of what they had all achieved. During the Sunday arvo pack-up, his missus asked me, "You don't do this every weekend do you?" I responded oh no, only when asked. "Oh thank you, oh my god!" There are lots of Victorian modellers out there dedicated to the cause.

What do you think is the secret of Victorian modellers' success?

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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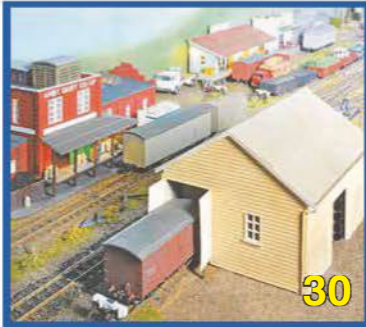
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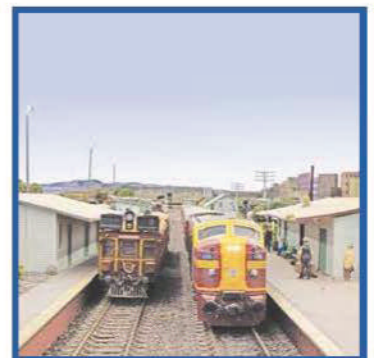
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ON THE COVER

Locomotive No. 4306 brings the Up North Coast Daylight Express into Northmeadow station, while a CPH Railmotor and trailer wait to follow with a local service, on Phil Nadin's layout the Northmeadow Lines, photo by Scott Fitzgerald.



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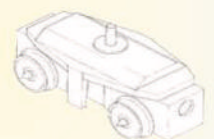
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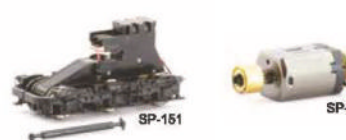
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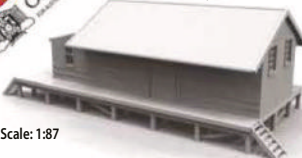
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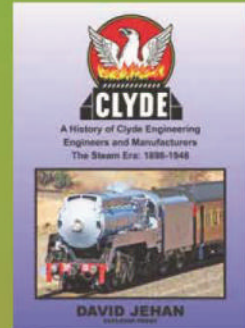
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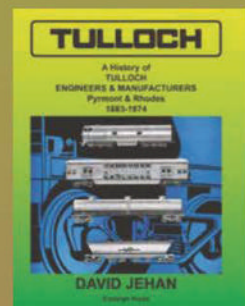
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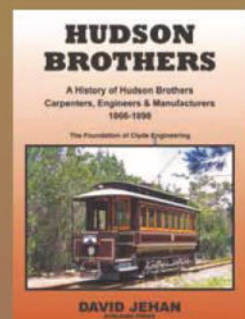
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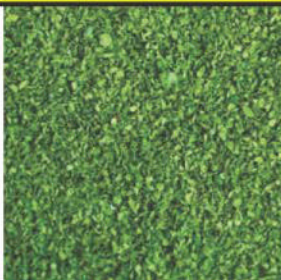
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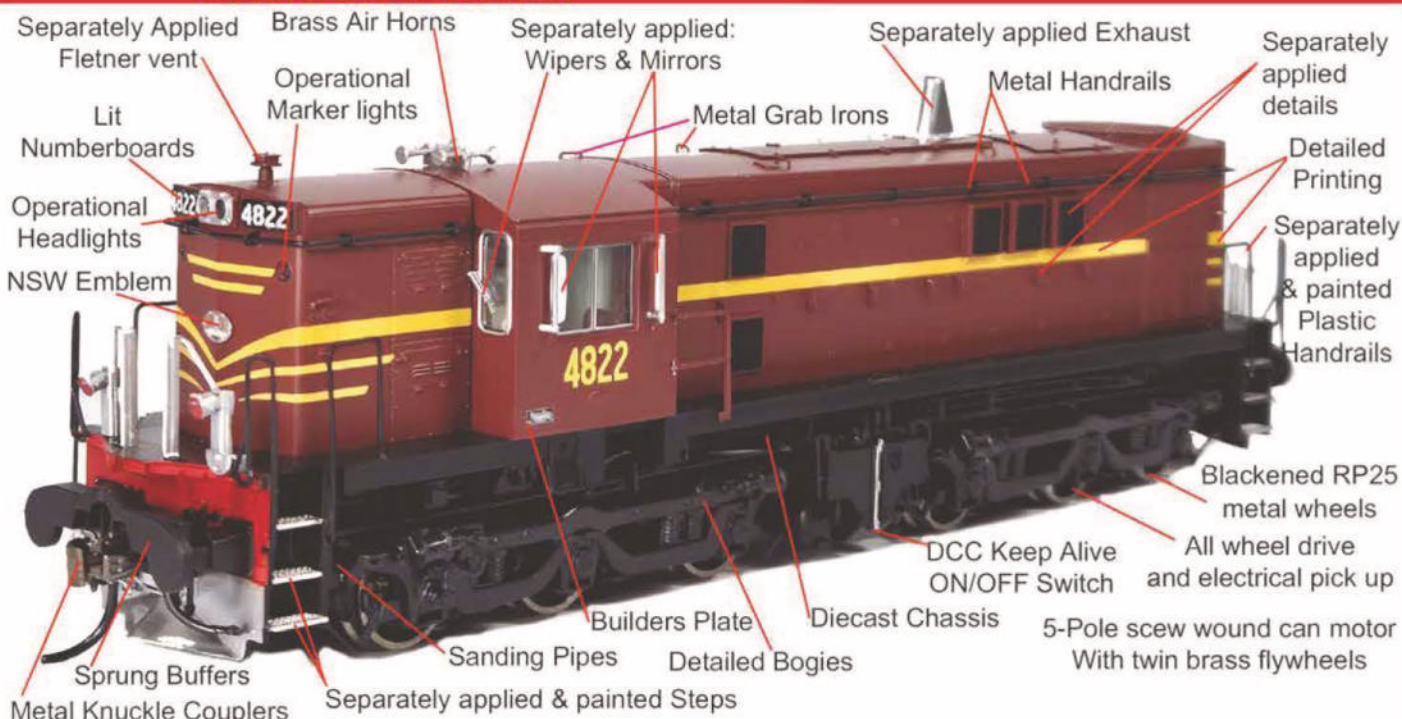
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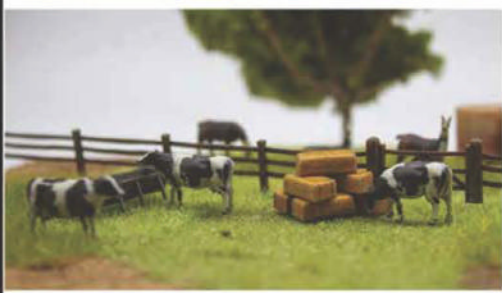
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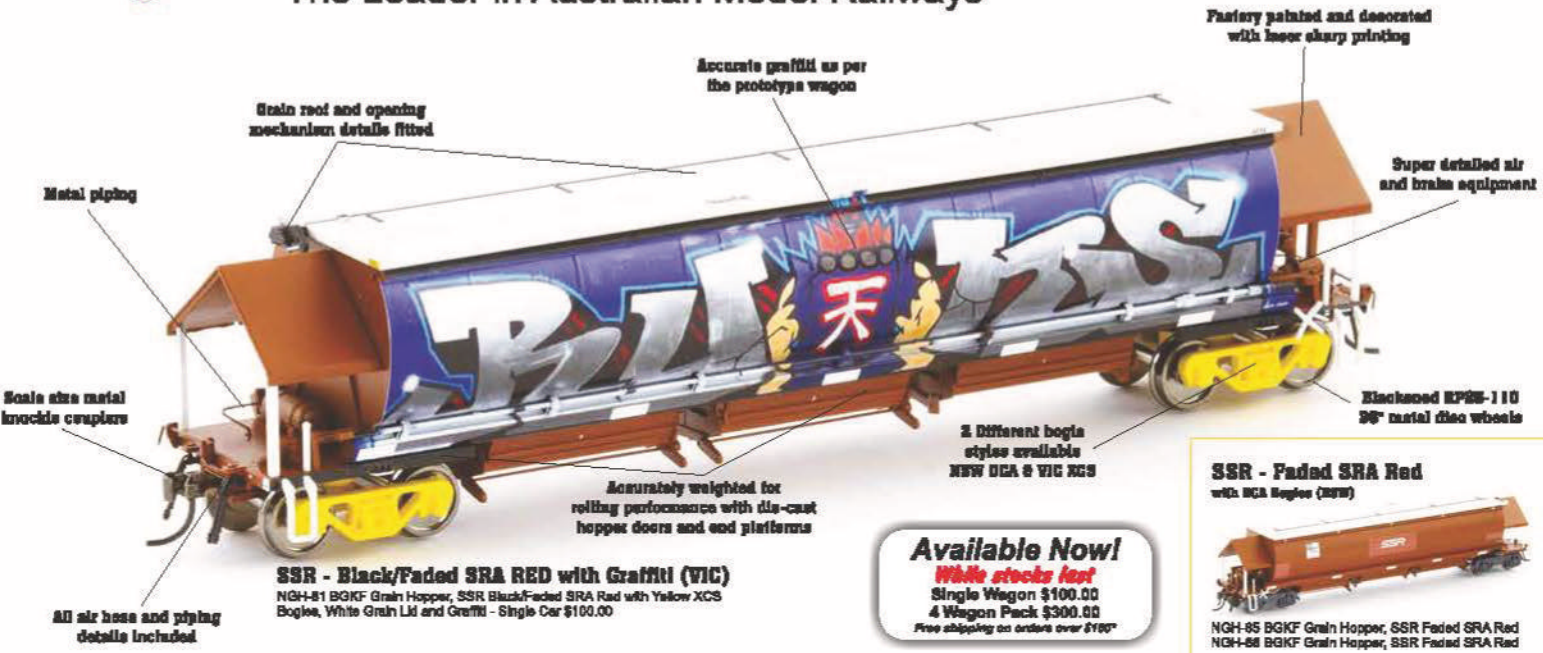
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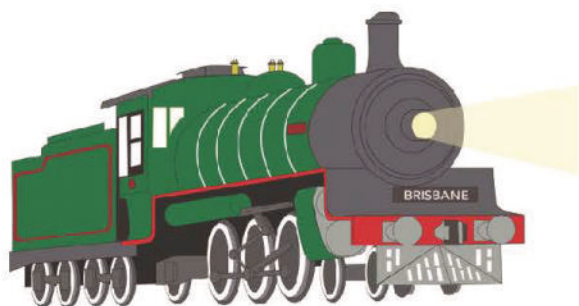
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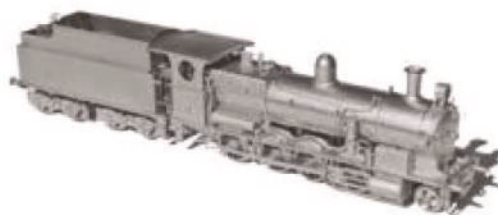
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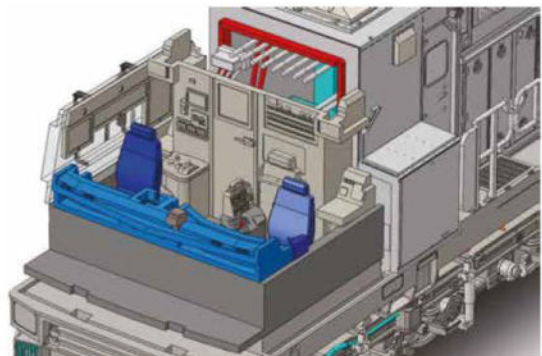
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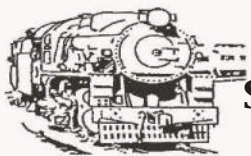
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- from some hobby shops.

Forms should be available at the June Exhibition and will be emailed or posted to recent attendees in late June.

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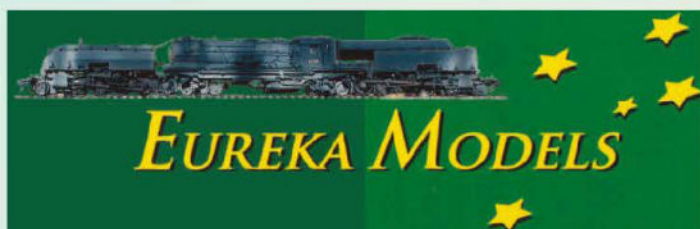
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THE NSWGR 38 CLASS RE-RUN



3830 in dark green at Werris Creek



3801 in light green at Werris Creek

3801 and 3830 above are decoration samples received from the factory which illustrate "light" and "dark" green. The factory has confirmed that the production run will be "on the wharf" in China before the end of April. When it will be "on a ship" will be determined by factors beyond the factory's control.

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

Factory weathering (light dusting)
Factory fitted sound
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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



THE NSWGR AD60 CLASS BEYER-GARRATT LOCOMOTIVE RE-RUN

The following variations are in stock:

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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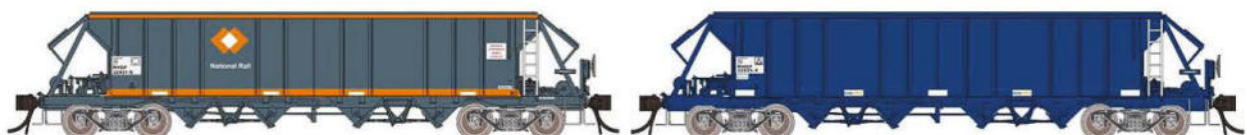


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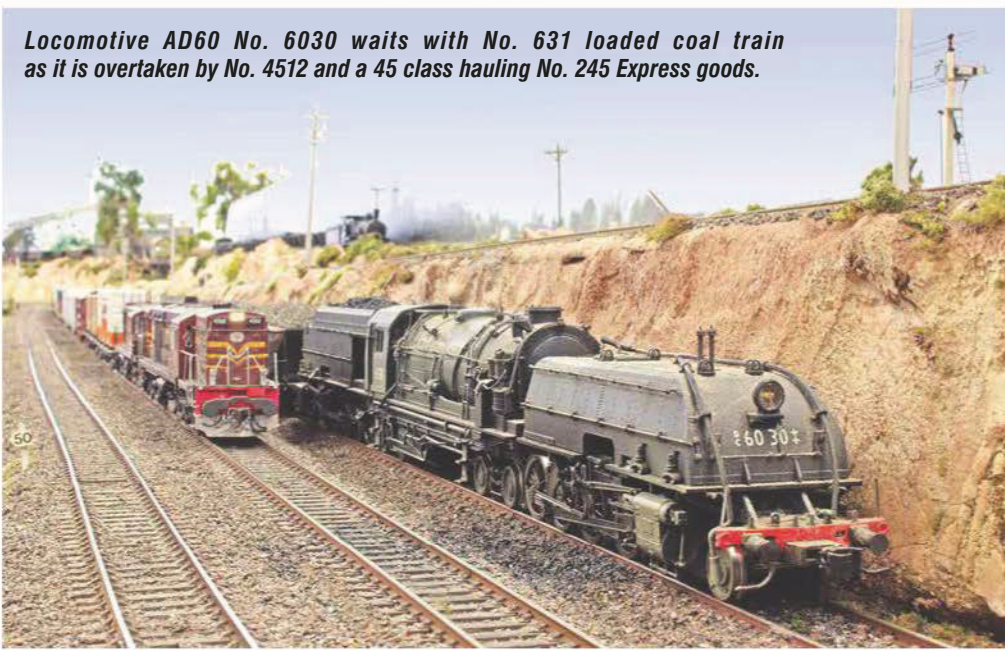
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The Northmeadow Lines

Phil Nadin describes his substantial NSWGR layout set in the late 1960s. Photos by Scott Fitzgerald.

Locomotive AD60 No. 6030 waits with No. 631 loaded coal train as it is overtaken by No. 4512 and a 45 class hauling No. 245 Express goods.



Northmeadow is a model railway set in the Newcastle, Short North and Lower Hunter area of New South Wales (NSW) in the late sixties steam-to-diesel transition period. The main purpose of this layout is to provide for operations, and lots of them – just on 100 train movements in a day's timetable sequence.

Setting the scene

Work on the layout started in 2008. The first stage involved major rebuilding of a train room to accommodate a new layout. Like many modellers, our family cars had not seen the inside of a garage for decades, but the old layout had developed in

stages, largely unplanned. The effects of the layout's age, magnified by some inherent design issues, a lack of carpentry and electrical skills, as well as the under-house garage the layout occupied, which was prone to flooding and regular visitations from all manner of critters, provided a pretty strong motivation to plan a major redevelopment. Moreover, the collection of locomotives and rolling stock had outgrown the old layout, and something was needed that would allow for the running of more trains.

When the new room was finished, it came with a host of very welcome features including more space, adequate

drainage, upgraded power supply with plenty of lighting, and vermin-proofing (no more cats, rats, possums, geckos or snakes!!).

An afternoon at Honeysuckle terminal finds locomotive No. 3662 about to leave with an Up Gosford passenger service, to be followed by a Maitland-bound Diesel train, and No. 3067 on a Toronto local passenger service.



The track plan

As Northmeadow isn't my first layout, I could build on previous experience. That's management speak for 'I've made enough mistakes in the past to have a pretty clear idea of what disasters I want to avoid this time around'. Disasters like duck-under. At 190 cm tall and ageing, crawling into the train room on my hands and knees is no longer a pleasant way to commence an operating session. In fact, all I have ever really wanted to do is walk into the train room, switch on the lights, and start running the trains.

So, a list of features to incorporate or avoid for the new layout was developed:

- No duck-under
- Double track main line in a continuous figure of eight pattern
- Capable of one person operation from a central control with visual surveillance of the whole layout
- On-track storage for at least twelve trains, with reversing loops, minimising the need for manual handling of model locomotives and rolling stock
- Multi-level to accommodate storage tracks, with a generous maximum train length
- Based on Short North/ Newcastle/ Hunter prototype – mid to late 60s steam to diesel transition era
- Stub end terminus for 'Newcastle', also a branch line and a colliery
- 'Olde world' electronics, DC operation and hand control of points, power operated only when out of reach
- Local cab control to allow for simultaneous shunting and main line running
- Mainline track – PECO code 100; secondary lines and sidings – code 75 (recycled as much as possible from earlier layouts)
- Sequential New South Wales Government Railways (NSWGR) Working Timetable based operation
- Scenic vistas from front of layout; no visual barriers, thereby allowing visual control throughout nearly all the room
- Realistic weathering of buildings and rolling stock based on photographs
- High standard of finish throughout the room: plenty of lighting; colour harmonisation of scenery, fascias, below fascias and walls; workbenches tidy and storage out of sight; neat shelving and photos/memorabilia properly displayed.

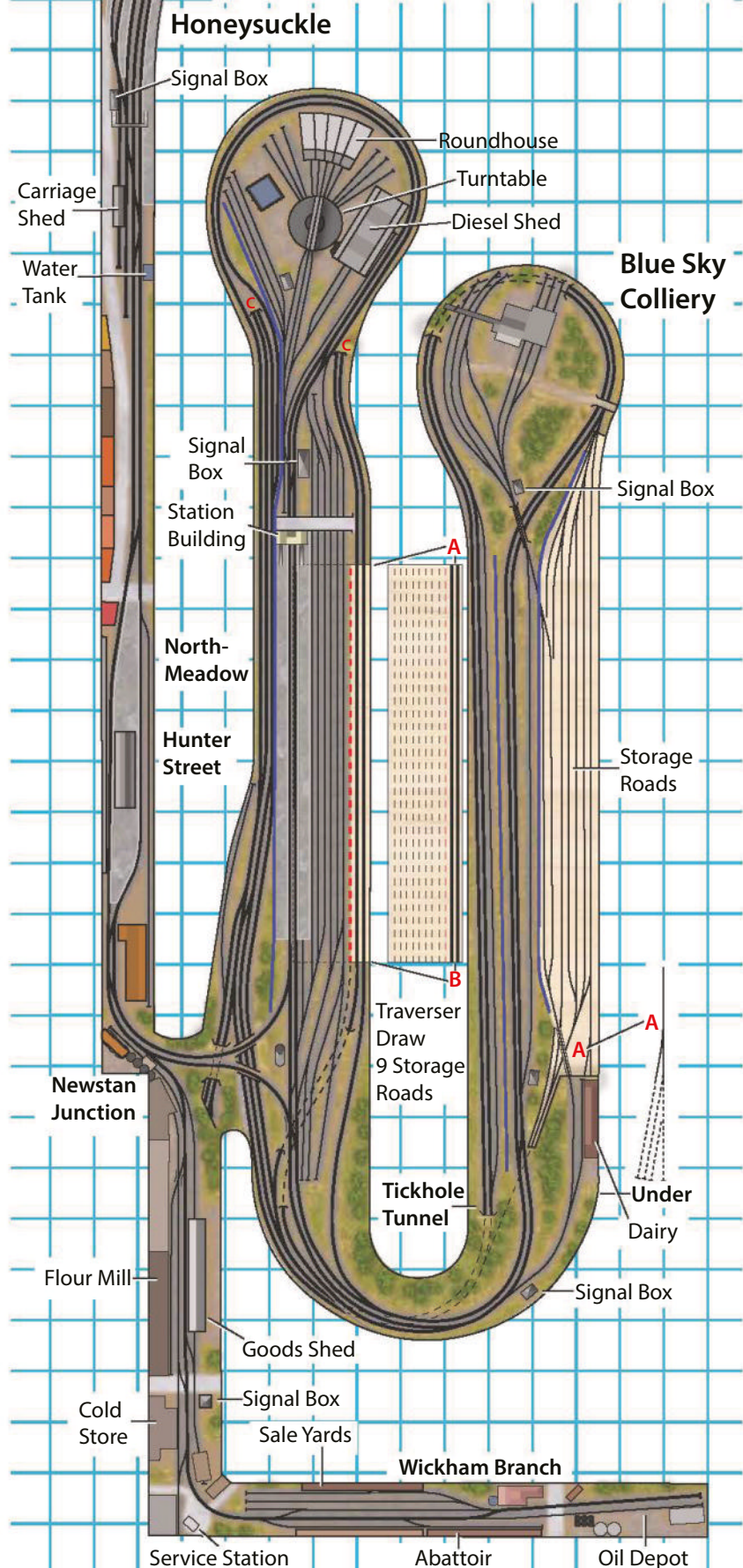
The track plan includes two features which have proved crucial in achieving the aims for the layout. The first of these is a traverser for storage of down North Coast and Main North trains. This is located under Northmeadow station and yard. Armchair Modeller Downunder provided a reminder of the possibilities that traversers offer (refer <https://armchairmodellerdownunder.blogspot.com/search/label/Traverser>). In my case, being able to roll out the storage tracks from under the Northmeadow station and yard to check or vary goods train consists, or to change locomotives after a run, means the clearance spacing between lev-

The Northmeadow Lines NSW

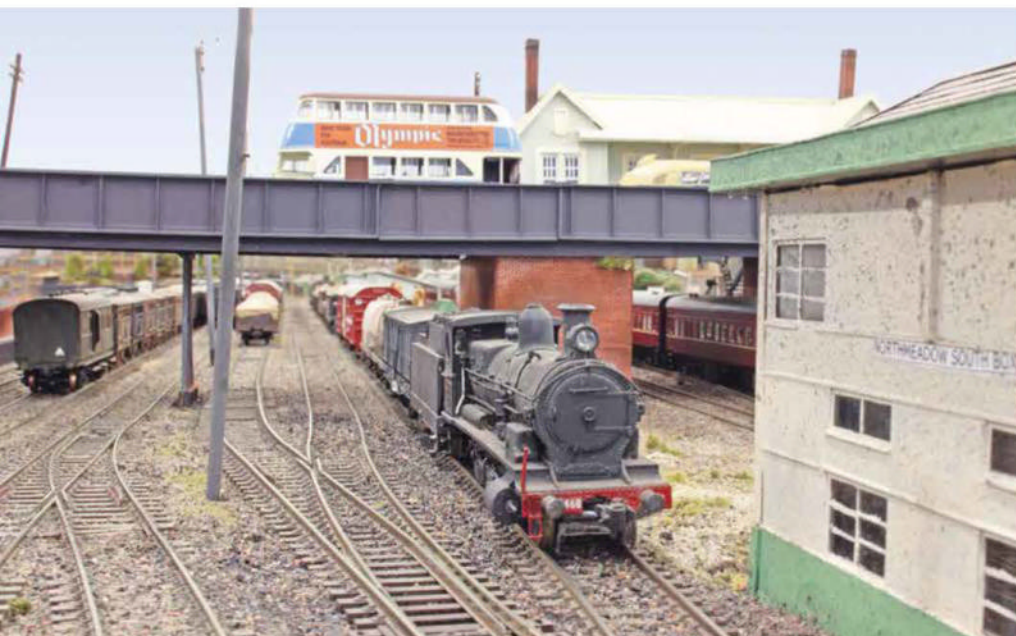
HO scale (1: 87)

Layout Size: 9.7 x 4 metres

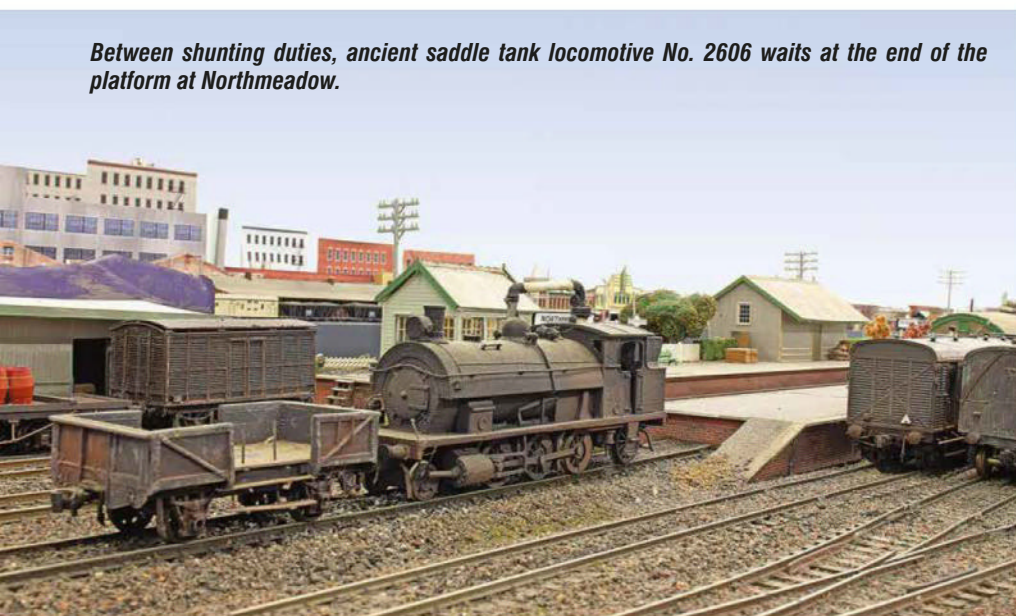
Grid Size: 300mm x 300mm



©2026 Australian Model Railway Magazine, Illustration by Keith Pennington. Original Diagram by Bob Stack.



Locomotive No. 5468 waits with one of the day's processions of Up goods trains while a passenger service precedes it out of Northmeadow.



Between shunting duties, ancient saddle tank locomotive No. 2606 waits at the end of the platform at Northmeadow.



There is always a number of both Up and Down goods trains waiting in Northmeadow yard. Today's collection includes a long stock special.

els is much less than if the storage tracks could only be accessed by reaching under the upper level. This traverser provides nine storage tracks each 2400mm long. Another advantage is doing away with the need for the point ladders which would have been required at both ends of the storage yard. This represents a huge saving in space. The whole contraption was made in a day by a mate who is a cabinet maker, and it works very well. The saving in not having to purchase sixteen sets of points paid for the traverser, and all the other benefits came for free.

The other important feature is the incorporation of a reverser facility in the way the storage sidings for goods trains are marshalled. Trains entering the 'Down' storage tracks on the traverser re-emerge on the 'Up' main after running under Northmeadow. Similarly, trains stored in the 'Up' storage facility re-emerge onto the 'Down' main by passing under another set of running lines situated on the second peninsula. They are effectively reversed without any manipulation by the operator, unless of course to alter their consist or change locomotives. The idea of using grade separation occurred from observing how the Coffs Harbour Model Railway Club exhibition layout uses grade separation to access their impressive storage areas. By using a similar concept on this layout, it is possible to maintain a lot of action on the mainline.

As this layout is mostly a one-person operation, it is important that trains can be kept under visual control all the time, and that most parts of the track can be reached quickly if anything goes wrong (assuming the operator is awake!). The dimensions of the room and the layout design dictated the baseboards be no more than 800mm in width (except on reverse curve sections at the ends of both peninsulas). This means that an operator standing in the centre aisle where the main control panel is located can reach each track when needed. This is essential in an emergency, but it also means less walking around generally.

The main baseboards are 1300mm above floor level, with storage and lower level track at 1200mm, thus obtaining a minimum grade separation. This isn't so much a double deck layout as a single level layout with storage sidings underneath. The tight clearance between the running tracks and the storage tracks below reduces the gradients involved (ruling gradient is 1 in 60) and allows for longer trains. Most trains are run at a moderate speed, so locomotives are run just fast enough to get them up the incline they need to climb, without running too fast on level track. A DC sound equipped Garratt in particular will crawl along on level track and then put in an impressive performance on the grade without touching the controller – it looks and sounds quite convincing.

The standard length for passing loops and storage tracks is 2400mm, which

Northmeadow locomotive Depot has found space to accommodate both diesel and steam engines. Locomotive No. 4904, not a regular visitor, will be returning to the west via Werris Creek and Binnaway after overhaul at nearby Cardiff workshops.



allows for trains up to 56 axles long – meeting my original brief of quite a respectable size model for a train of the late 1960's. The minimum radius of reverse curves at the ends of both the peninsulas is 66cm – not ideal but mostly trouble free. Any wider radius would have meant even more excavation under the house, which was really out of the question. The rails on some of these curves have been super elevated, not for performance reasons but purely for appearance.

The end result of this planning has allowed for a long mainline run, with lots of trains operating, rather more like an exhibition layout than a typical home layout. In achieving this, the result is a layout more linear than vertical. Most of the scenic and operating features are visible from nearly any vantage point in the room, rather than as a sequence of framed scenes which is often used by modellers.

To fit all the trackwork in, the track closely follows the baseboard outline, bringing the trackwork right up to the viewer. This is perhaps a design principle unpopular with many. To my eyes, this approach has worked really well, the 'linearity' of the layout being accentuated by a number of curved fascias that are both graceful and dramatic.

Lighting

Lighting is a very important, and in my opinion sometimes overlooked element of modelling. Because much of the trackwork on this layout can be viewed from either side, a 'front' and 'back' of the layout is not obvious. So, the placement of lights above the layout was critical to avoid having any shadows cast on trains or scenery. The best way to achieve this was to throw plenty of light into the room, and this was achieved with no fewer than nineteen soft white fluores-

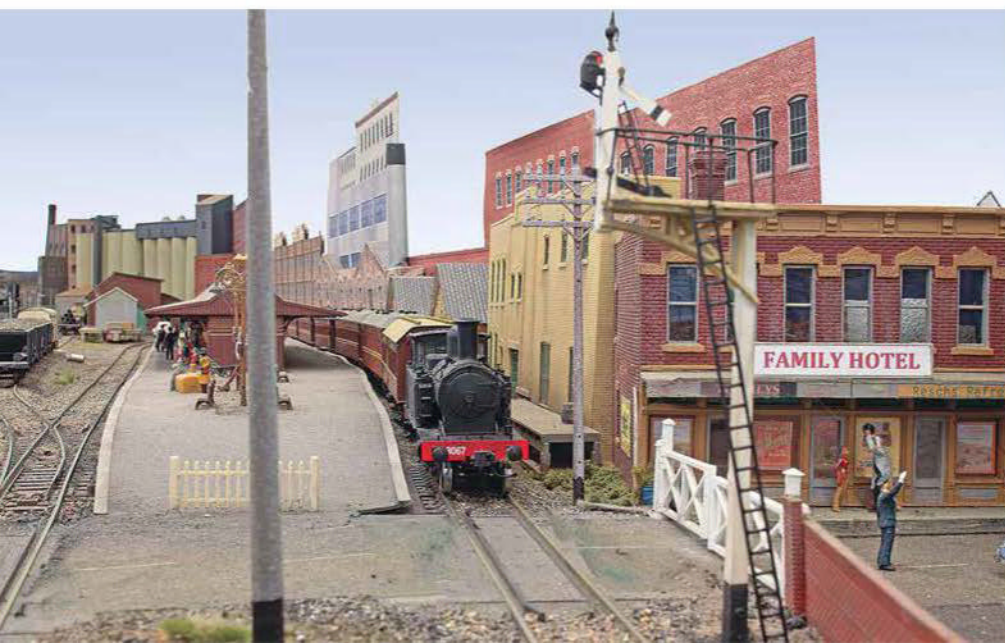
cent tubes. These were arranged in three rows running above Honeysuckle and the two peninsulas.

The Northmeadow Lines

The layout comprises a mainline, representing portions of the Main North, with Down trains running from the south into Northmeadow, then beyond towards Maitland. From Northmeadow, a line diverges to the terminus at Honeysuckle, and there is also a three-way junction allowing Up trains from Maitland to access Honeysuckle. The Wickham Branch, a goods only line, branches off the Honeysuckle line at Hunter Street station. Finally, back on the main line, a short branch serves the Blue Sky colliery.

Down trains from Gosford enter the layout from their respective goods or passenger storage sidings, and complete three loops each of the layout's two peninsulas which are joined in a figure of eight. An important design element here is that the main line runs around and under Northmeadow, rather than through it. Trains only run into Northmeadow after completing their run around the loops. Northmeadow is the junction station for the line to Honeysuckle, and boasts a large marshalling yard with a busy locomotive depot.

From Northmeadow, trains either run around one arm of the triangular junction that sends them on to the terminus at Honeysuckle, or they rejoin the loops and head for their respective destinations on the Main Northern or North Coast lines.

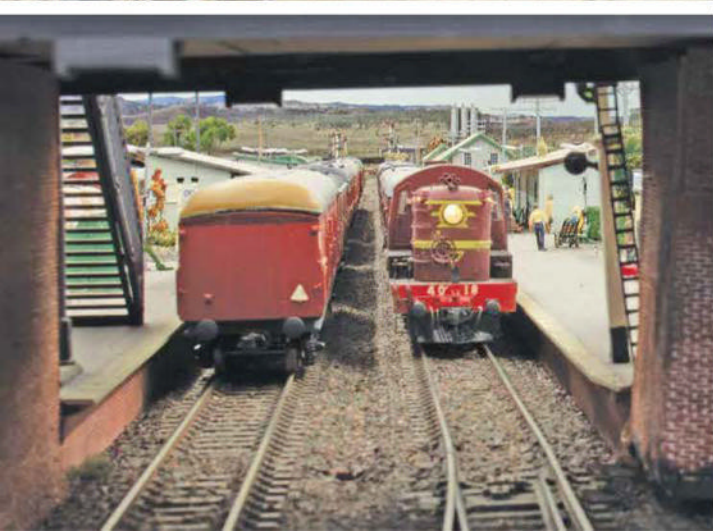


◀ *Hunter Street is the intermediate station between Northmeadow and Honeysuckle. Locomotive No. 3067 wheels one of the many daily local services away from the island platform and towards the terminus.*

Northmeadow locomotive depot is home to numerous steam locomotive classes.



Having just brought No. 13 Down Glen Innes Mail from Gosford, locomotive No. 3820 is making its way to the locomotive depot. Giel ejector-fitted No. 3616, a regular performer on this train, has taken over for the run north.



◀ *Northmeadow station has both Up and Down passenger trains to contend with at this moment. The old Alco locomotive No. 4018 has just left Honeysuckle with an Up train, while No.5 Kempsey Day Train in the Down platform has a long trip ahead of it.*

Goods trains return to storage on the traverser and passenger trains in their stub-end storage space. Passenger trains require stub end storage so that they won't be turned – they need to maintain their 'Sydney' end.

To supplement all this mainline action, the colliery branch provides a reminder of a large source of the traffic on this part of the system. Additionally, the goods-only Wickham Branch provides for plenty of shunting of wagons in and out of numerous industries. Add to this a continuous stream of light engine workings between the terminal at Honeysuckle and the locomotive depot at Northmeadow, and you get an idea of how busy this model can become. In fact, the operating sequence provides for one hundred train and engine movements each day. Each train in the sequence is an actual service appearing in the Northern Line Working Timetable for the period, and my Timetable refers to the corresponding train numbers.

If the layout is operated for a couple of hours, say three times a week, it can take up to a month to work through the timetable for one day. When friends come to help with operations, it seems to take even longer!! I am only attempting to run a representative sample of the traffic on the real Short North. The layout is set in 1968, although some of my better-informed visitors have observed at least a few of the locomotives or train consists being modelled, do not strictly adhere to this period. I have had to assure them they must be mistaken, and am certain that somewhere there exists photographic evidence from 1968 of, say, a 42 class-hauled Brisbane Express or locomotive-hauled Werris Creek or Kempsey Day Train.

Locomotives and rolling stock

Like many modellers of my era, my model railway journey began modestly: a Triang 'Jinty' with a few four-wheel goods wagons on the family dining room table. Who could have dreamed what lay ahead for Australian modellers? Well luckily, a few people did, and I have been an eager consumer of their products ever since. As previously mentioned, one of the main reasons for building a large layout was to create the space to run a large collection of NSWGR models – kits, r-t-r, kitbashed, you name it, they all get a go on the Northmeadow Lines. Some of these models date back decades, as my late father was as enthusiastic for modelling as I am. For instance, there is a Bergrs brass 35 class in regular service on the layout, which I purchased second hand from Joe's Casula Hobbies shop at Liverpool. It has to be 40 years old, but you wouldn't know it. Anything on the locomotive roster in 1968 or thereabouts has found a place here, plus a few ring-ins.

There is also a large collection of goods and passenger rolling stock. With a particular interest in passenger rolling stock, modelling the Short North has provided

A great shot of a classic locomotive on a classic train. No. 4018 is leaving Northmeadow with No. 72 Flyer.



Port Waratah's locomotive No. 5096, looking splendid after a tune up at Cardiff workshops, waits on the Blue Sky Colliery branch for her turn to join the main line as No. 4306 grinds uphill with No. 26 Express.



Locomotive No. 7923 is caught shuffling around Honeysuckle carriage sidings as another local passenger train approaches.

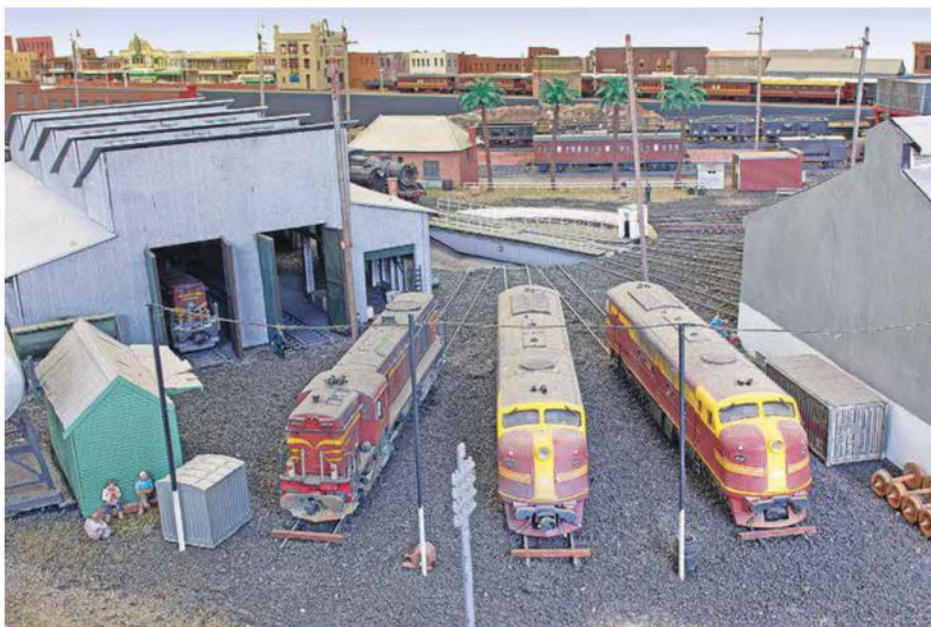
all the justification needed to have just about one of everything on the layout. This includes numerous sets of open-end platform cars for maintaining local services, as well as air-conditioned and non-air-conditioned long-distance sets, and the wonderful array of coaches, old and very old, that make up the two overnight mail trains and Brisbane Express (No's 3/4) that run on the layout. A real favourite is train No 17/18, Brisbane Express via Wallangarra, in its shiny new 1968 version, comprised of four remodelled N cars. At the opposite end of the glamour scale is No 19, an early morning all stations 'Paper train' consisting of a motley collection of coaches and vans usually hauled by a C38 class.

Northmeadow is set in an urban area and motor vehicles play a large part in creating realism. We are fortunate to have plenty of correct-era models available to us and there are lots of them on the layout. A few ex-Department of Government Transport (DGT) double deck buses in private owner liveries also add to the scene, and the incorrect 1:76 scale doesn't seem to offend anyone.

Under the baseboard

Nothing to see here really: DC operation and cab control. I figure if I'm modelling the railways of 1968, I can happily live with the technology of 1968. The layout is divided into 15 sections, powered by a four throttle Morley Vortrak controller. This controller has been running faultlessly for over fifteen years now. A panel of rotary switches is used to select the sections through which each train's controller will work.

PECO point motors are used for operating the two dozen points that are beyond reach of the central control panel, and all other points are thrown manually. While the slower, quieter motions of other brands of point motor appeal to many, personally I prefer the reassuring thump of the PECO solenoid. The Vortrak controller allows for walkaround use, and there are four stations around the room



Northmeadow locomotive depot with the Honeysuckle township in the distance.



Hunter Street, 1968. Steam trains, Leyland Double Deckers and the Emmy winning 'In The Heat Of The Night' playing at The Palace Theatre.



An interesting array of steam power is on shed at Northmeadow locomotive depot.

where distance from the central control panel requires the walkaround feature for shunting movements.

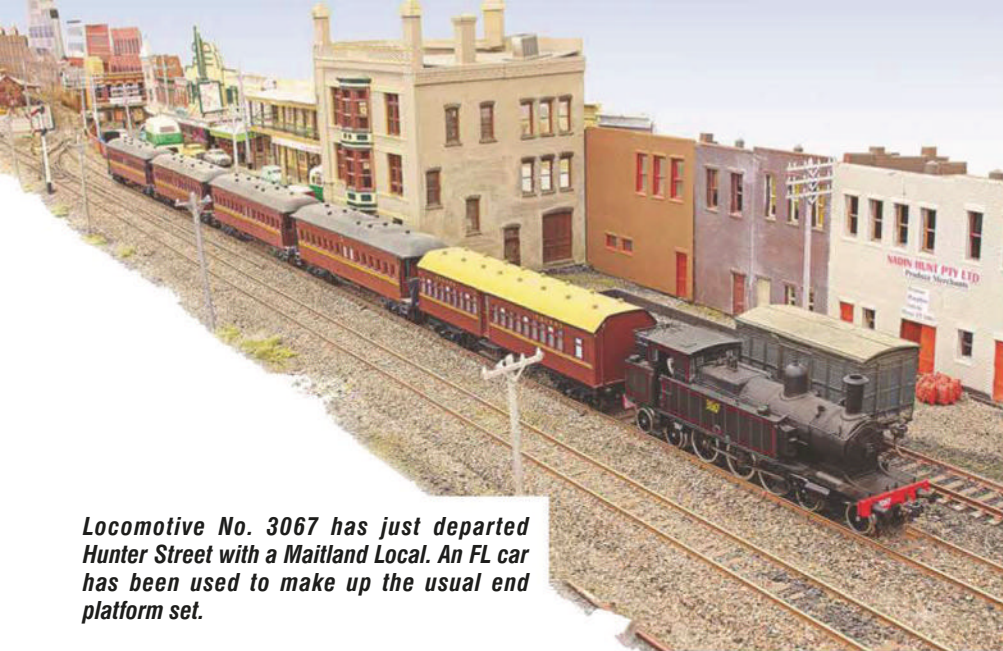
Giving the layout its identity

Track takes up most of the available space on this layout, so what little space is left for scenery is used to its best advantage. One of the layout's two peninsulas provides a home for the Blue Sky colliery, sitting atop the double track main line which doubles back on itself before entering Tickhole Tunnel. The rest of the layout is really an urban railway, featuring Northmeadow railway station, yards and locomotive depot. The Honeysuckle terminal and the adjacent business area are stretched out beside the railway line along Scott Street, and the Wickham branch runs through a crowded industrial area. Unfortunately, on this layout Scott Street runs down the wrong side of the tracks compared to the Newcastle prototype, but seeing as the railway isn't there anymore (thanks NSW Government), this small problem seems less relevant these days.

Scenery

Hills and cuttings on the layout are made from foam rubber. After chopping into the foam with an electric carving knife, I brushed on light, milky applications of Plaster of Paris. I then lightly apply watered down acrylic artists' paint. The foam will absorb as much water as you care to use, and the more you use, the harder the plaster will set. It helps to use photos of the area you are trying to model to guide you through this stage. There is one thing to be said for adopting a location like the Short North, as there is no shortage of photographic material available. Once the scenery base is dry, everything is dusted with Woodlands Scenics grass, shrubbery and foliage. Sticks and twigs from the garden are a preferred source material, especially small native bottlebrushes which have been fashioned into some quite convincing trees.

Many model buildings were needed to provide a backdrop to the railway line behind the Wickham branch, and where the line runs beside Scott Street into Honeysuckle. Walthers Cornerstone and other kits have been used as well as scratch built efforts to fill in nearly 10 metres of space. While this sounds like an expensive undertaking, like most other modellers, these kits had been accumulating for many years, and almost everything from previous layouts has been recycled. Also, because nearly all the buildings are modelled in low relief, most kits lend themselves to having their front and rear facades separated, thereby providing two buildings for the price of one. A Haskell rural backdrop along one wall is a real feature of the layout and never fails to draw favourable comments from visitors. The depth it provides really finishes the visual spectacle that had been hoped for, but my search for a compara-



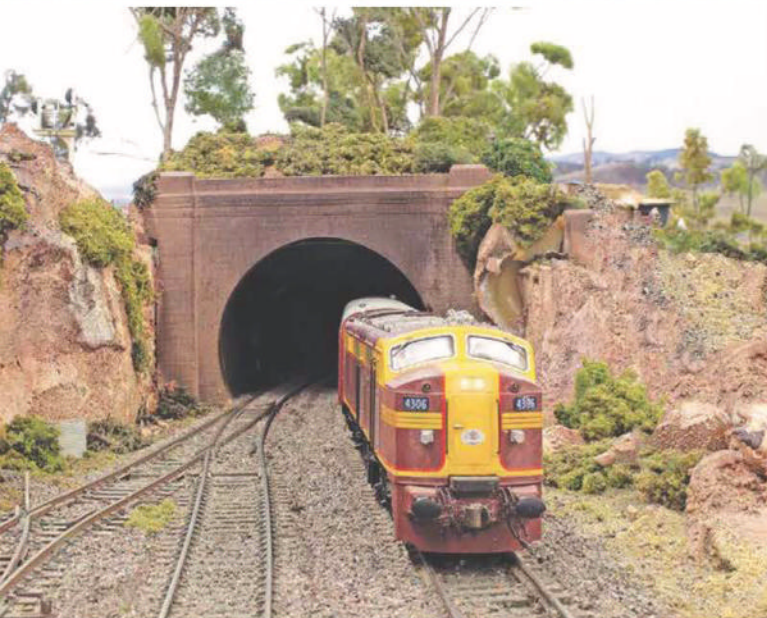
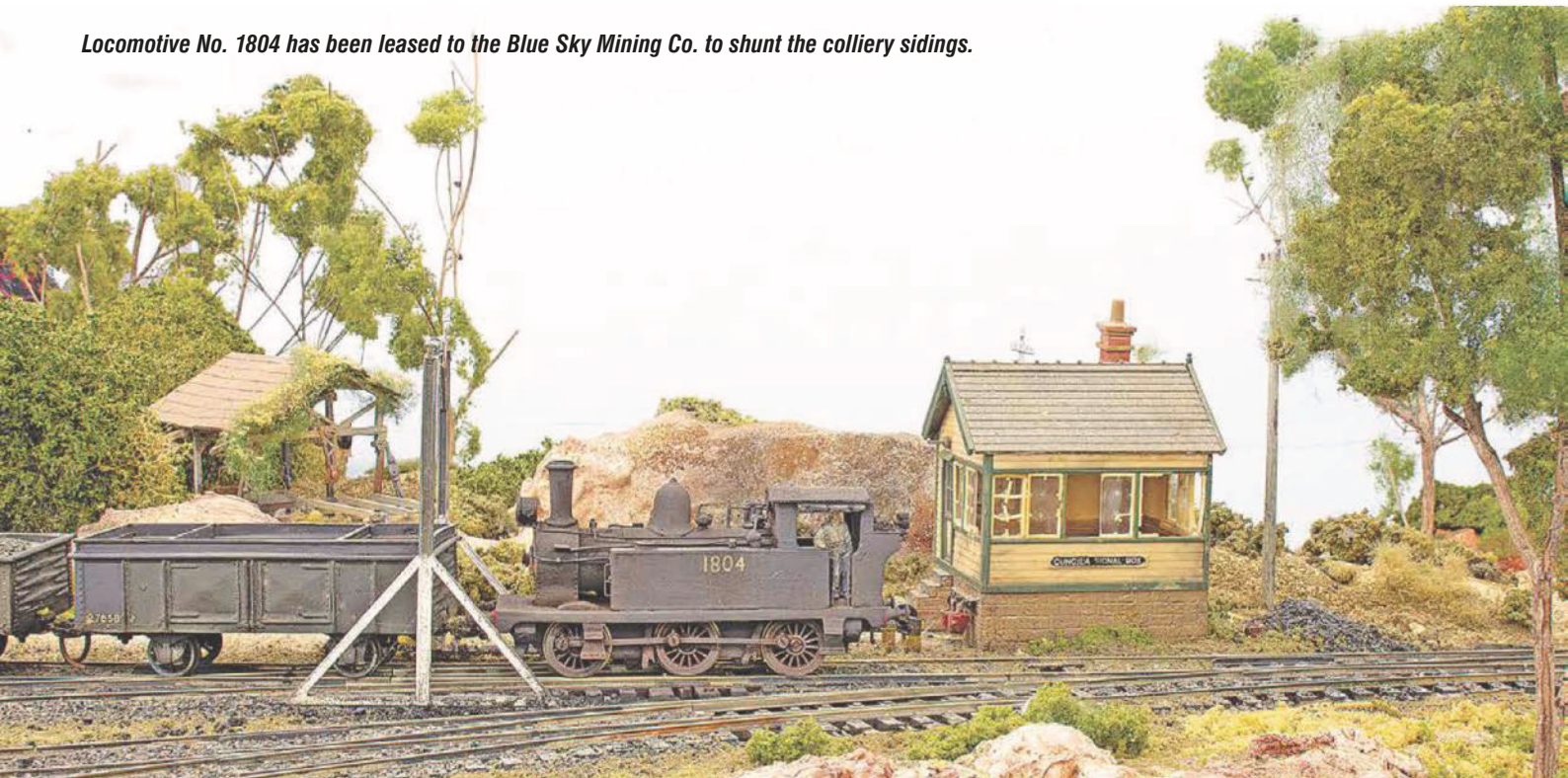
Locomotive No. 3067 has just departed Hunter Street with a Maitland Local. An FL car has been used to make up the usual end platform set.

ble quality finish for city and industrial areas continues.

Conclusion

Since the first trains ran on Northmeadow in early 2010, the layout has grown into the sprawling operation that I had always dreamed of. It has provided lots of challenges, but endless enjoyment. There is always more to do, including additional signalling and weathering of locomotives and rolling stock. I am fortunate to have like-minded friends whose knowledge and encouragement is much appreciated. Additionally, my wife Sue provides me with great support and understanding in all my modelling and train chasing endeavours. Now that I am retired, I have all the time I need to devote to our wonderful hobby, and long may it continue. 

Locomotive No. 1804 has been leased to the Blue Sky Mining Co. to shunt the colliery sidings.



▲ Locomotive No. 5369 seems lost in a maze of tracks and sidings as it runs around its train while shunting on the Wickham branch.

◀ Emerging from Northmeadow Line's version of Tickhole Tunnel, locomotive No. 4306 makes a fine sight at the head of another daylight express.



The Railmotor on a local service stands at the short Down platform provided for passengers at Newstan Junction. The Up platform is around the curve beyond the rail overbridge.



Locomotive No. 4107 is on the Wickham branch with Train No. 969 which works the oil sidings. Here she is beside the local abattoirs waiting to return to Northmeadow.



Leased locomotive No. 1804 shunts the Blue Sky Mine colliery sidings.

► The locomotive - normally a 32 Class - which brings No. 720, the Up morning train from Singleton, is often required, after arrival at Honeysuckle, to shunt sidings on the Wickham branch. Today finds 3230, running as No. 963 Pick Up, delivering assorted wagons before lifting traffic for attachment to north- and south-bound goods trains on returning to Northmeadow.



Locomotive No. 3523 is leaving Northmeadow with No. 9 Werris Creek Day Train.



A quaint scene at Rosedale, the terminus at the end of the Wickham Branch, where locomotive No. 2021 is returning to Honeysuckle with a workers' train.



Amby West Operations

Arthur Hayes outlines card operations for his Queensland Railways inspired layout Amby West.
Photos by the author.



The 1720 class locomotive No. 1760 is departing Amby West with a Up goods train.

For my new layout Amby West, a method of operation was required [Editors note: Amby West was featured in the April 2025 issue of the AMRM]. To keep things simple, it needs to flow from one session to the next, involve minimal paperwork and have no requirements to reset wagons into sidings. Before computers, up to around the 1990s, the movement of wagons on the rail network used a paper-based system. It involved tons of paper in consignment notes, invoices, wagon reports and accounting procedures. Although the same trains might run each day and the sidings didn't change, the movement of rollingstock in and out of the yard was different day-to-day. Each rail operator had their own system of labels (cards) which could vary in colour and size. The paper-based system used by Queensland Railways (QR) required a label to be fixed to both ends of the wagon. The limited information on the label was the means for moving that wagon to its destination.

Over time the labels/cards changed to meet the requirements that was needed for that era. From the mid-1980s, dangerous goods labels came in with marshalling requirements. Labels can be very easily made up using your favourite desktop publishing program (Microsoft Word etc) and printed to any size to meet the requirements of your layout. To give a prototypical feel to the operations, a facsimile of the standard QR wagon labels are used. The label is 103mm x 76mm (4 x 3 inches) in size, and six labels this size fit into an A4 laminating pocket.

The station 'from', was a station that routinely sends to that consignee. General goods usually come from Roma Street, the Golden Fleece fuel terminal was at Whinstanes, and so on, so any station could be used. The consignee is the person/company receiving the goods. The station 'to' is the name of the layout. Wagon number is the number on the wagon, given they are too small to read and to help operators who don't know

QR wagon classes, a photo was added to identify the correct wagon. A weight was shown, but is not required at this point, but may be something for a later date where there could be a weight and length required for a train.

Empty wagons being sent as orders had labels to show the wagon was required. Each wagon on the layout had a label just like the prototype. All labels were laminated for easy handling and are stored in a holder which was made from styrene sheet and clipped onto the front perspex fascia. To mix things up from time to time the labels can be shuffled. Some days there is a need to move wagons around the yard, and once an arriving wagon has been unloaded, it can be used to fill orders to send goods out for a different customer. For example, if a wagon arriving in the goods shed with general goods is unloaded and then is not required, this wagon could be used to load potatoes over at the Fruit Co-op, or go to the fuel depot to load drums. Like

Given the wagon was conveying a load of cranky freight [see AMRM issue No. 337 August 2019, for detail regarding cranky freight] and there is no siding for Amby Tractors, the label was endorsed 'O/H Crane' to show where the wagon should be placed.

Using a different colour label, shunt cards have been added. These sit in with the wagon labels. If one of these cards come out of the holder with shift instructions, the wagon is shunted as per the instructions. This wagon comes out of the goods shed and is placed at the Butter factory. If the train label (white) comes out at the same time, the shunt card goes back in the holder and the wagon becomes part of the departing train.



The departmental wagons in the yard also have shunt orders. The wagon of sleepers needs to be unloaded by the fettling gang. The wagon is picked up and placed where the fettling gang is working



Likewise for the wagon of water, it needs to go to the cattle yards to supply water for the stock. Two roadside tanks mark the location. If these two cards come out of the holder at the same time as the train label, the work shown on the 'shunt card' is carried out before placing the wagon on the departing train.

most things in life, we are all told where to go and what to do. Well, the railways are no different, where nothing happens without instructions or orders. At the end of the day, wagons with goods need to go places. Timetables have instructions on what work trains will do, stations have orders from customers for wagons, stations load wagons for other stations on the network and so on, so a plan is required for all of this to happen. For the layout, I wanted to shunt trains, and not read ten pages of instructions in various forms. I wanted something simple so I and other modellers could operate the layout without getting bogged down.

To keep everything uniform, the

instruction card was made the same size as the label. These cards were made up in Microsoft Word for each session or train to shunt and were numbered in shifts. Each shift flows from one to the next. What's on the layout stays on the layout, and there are no other sections for the train to travel to. All wagons on the layout can be accommodated in the sidings leaving the engine and van standing at the station. Each shift is a different scenario and requires a different approach. The cards were laminated in the same fashion as the labels and are stored in holders similar to the wagon labels. Provision has been made for the current shift card to sit in front of the

holder, and cards can be picked from the holder in a random order for some variety.

Trains at a station can do a number of different types of operations. Most large stations had a shunt engine to break up trains, place wagons for customers, pick up wagons and marshal trains. Shift one is to make up a train in the Up direction (shown by the arrow), and collect eight wagon labels (see photo No. 10). The label may carry instructions where some of the wagons needs to go on the train. Other than this, the wagons can go in any order, but if this becomes too easy over time, dangerous goods marshalling can be added, or wagons can go on the train in

A 402—Govt. Printer, Qld. **"Brakes Put Out"** Form No. 24523

QUEENSLAND RAILWAYS

WAGON No. **CM1 19520**

REPAIRS REQUIRED

MUST HAVE 3 WAGONS WITH WORKING BRAKES ON THE REAR OF THE TRAIN.

From **Roma**

To **AMBY WEST**

Date **SELECT ANOTHER CARD**



Wagons in traffic can develop defects. As much as possible, every effort is made to keep these wagons moving to their destination without causing delays to the customer. If a wagon develops a braking defect, the air brakes can be cut out. In doing so, the location of the wagon on the train needs to meet marshalling requirements for a wagon without brakes. The requirement for the layout is the wagon must have three wagons with working brakes behind the defective wagon, but my guess is that this will change from operator to operator, given only small trains are being made up on the layout. Another instruction could be the wagon must be marshalled behind the hauling locomotive. The 'Repair Required' label is stored with the other train labels, and when it comes out it is placed on the outgoing train lectern and is matched with the train label when being placed on a train.

Form No. 24507

QUEENSLAND RAILWAYS

DATE **4/5**

No. OF WAGON **21369**

STATION FROM **NATEUA**

CONSIGNEE **FAR WEST TANKS**

AT **AMBY WEST**

TO WEIGH AT AMBY WEST

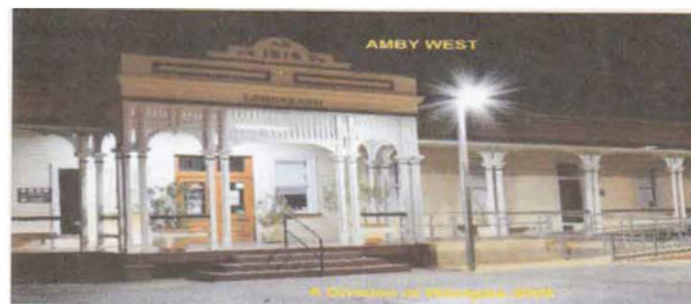
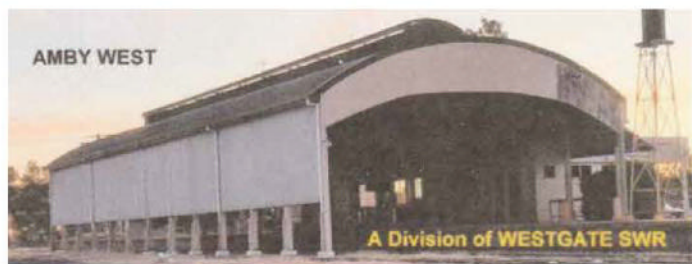
WEIGHED AT BY

A 356—Govt. Printer, Qld. Signature of Weighman.



NET **014 CRANE.**

Some goods are presented for conveyance with the weight unknown, loaded with logs, coal, grain, steel fabricated structures etc. So that freight charges can be calculated, the wagon/s are directed to a weighbridge during the journey to their destination. A special label is used as not all stations are equipped with weighbridges. A wagon weighbridge has been installed on the dead-end siding near the flour mill. Wagons with this label must be put over the weighbridge before being placed in their respective sidings. On the layout, the weighbridge and the sidings for these wagons are in opposite directions adding extra moves for the shunt crew.



Yard Shunt Train S1

Make up Train 568

Collect 8 Wagon Cards

Road Wagons to be marshalled on the Van.

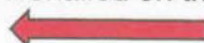
Livestock and **Fuel Tank wagons** must not be marshalled on the Guard's Van. **Shift 1.**



"UP" Shunt Train 574

Place 4 leading wagons in sidings as per Wagon Cards.

Collect 4 Wagons Cards and form Train 575
Road Wagons to be marshalled on the Van
Shift 11.



These shunt and work labels can be added and removed at random to provide additional variation during the shifts. The labels could be expanded by using the reverse side with instructions for departing trains, and destinations could be included and trains to be marshalled in station order. This is possibly something to think about down the track.

An example of shunt instructions.

the order picked from the holder.

The last shift can be to just place the wagons on the train at the platform in their respective sidings as shown on the label. To make the shunt a bit more complex, instructions like livestock wagons must be given high priority and be placed first could be given. Tank wagons (bombs) could also be included in the instructions.

Shunt trains on the network go back and forward up and down the line, and others may turn around and go back from a particular station on the network. All of this can be incorporated into shift and endless scenarios can be created.

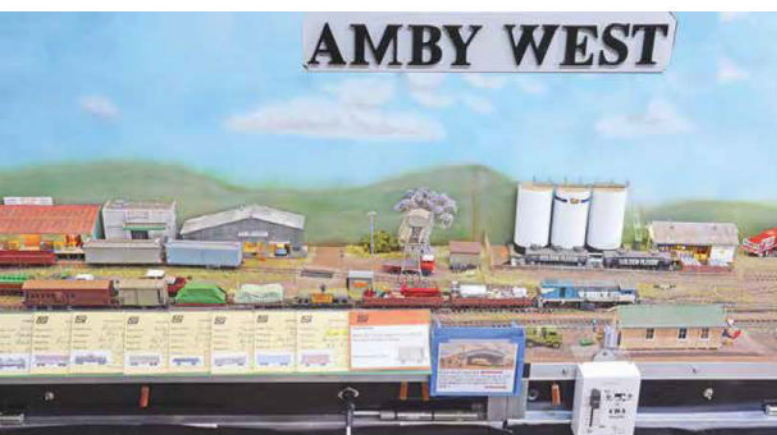
A train arriving could detach (drop off) four wagons from the lead for the train, place the wagons in their respective sidings and attach (pick up) two wagons as per instructions on the label picked from the holder. The train is set to continue in the same direction.

The next train could be a terminating

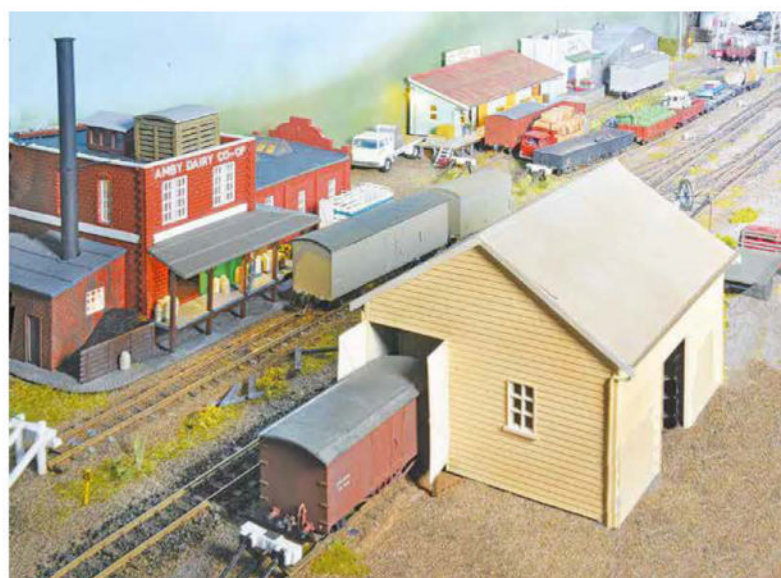
train, arriving as an Up train travelling north and returning as a Down train returning south. The train may be required to place all wagons on the train in sidings as shown on the label and pick up the same number of wagons for the trip south. Or, the train may have carried out shunting at other stations on the up journey, so some wagons arriving need to go back on the train. The number of wagons to be dropped off and picked up can differ from shift to shift, see example photo No. 01. The combinations are endless.

Each shift may take around 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The more you do the quicker it becomes. How one goes about it is their call, there is no right or wrong way to go about it. One way may be quicker than the other, and I'm sure if you were a QR shunt crew you would be looking for the shortest and fastest way to do the job. You can place all wagons off the train first and then set about

collecting the wagons to make up the train, which could be the long way. A shunter can do the job with their feet (the long way) or take a minute to think about it. The smart way is when you go to a siding to drop off wagons, you do the pick-ups (attaches) at the same time. Given there is limited room on the layout, another smart move could be to place wagons in sidings that don't have any attaches (pick up) first. Some sidings on the layout run in two directions, some run off the front of the engine, others run off the rear of the engine. It may work out best to shunt the sidings in one direction and then shunt the sidings in the other direction. In other words, shunt the siding on the rear of the engine and then the siding on the front of the engine. Knowing what fits where can reduce double moves. Sizing up what you have on the engine and the room that is available is very valuable. As they say, time is money. 



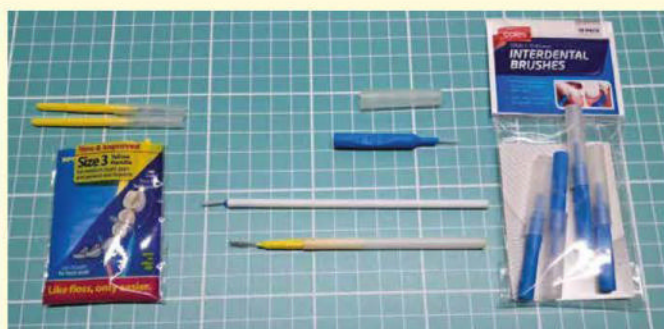
Lecterns to display the labels for both arriving and departing trains were made from styrene sheet, which clip onto the front of the layout. This places all wagon labels to be detached off the train and wagons to be attached in front of the operator.



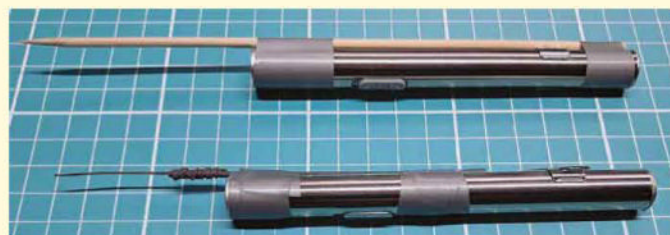
Amby Dairy – Co-op and the Amby West goods shed.

Un-coupling requirements

All wagons are fitted with Kadee No. 158 couplers, and for shunting these wagons you will need a good uncoupling device.



Over time various methods have been used, such as the ever reliable humble skewer. Small dental teeth brushes on an extended handle work great.



For areas where the layout is a bit on the dark side (out of the light), your favourite uncoupling tool fixed to a rechargeable pen light works a treat. Just like the real shunter, it's at work on the ground between the wagons with a shunting light.

A LOCATION TO MODEL

North Gawler, South Australia

Keith Pennington presents North Gawler, A South Australian Railways station on the fringe of the Adelaide suburban system and the Barossa Valley railway lines.

Photos by National Railway Museum Port Adelaide.

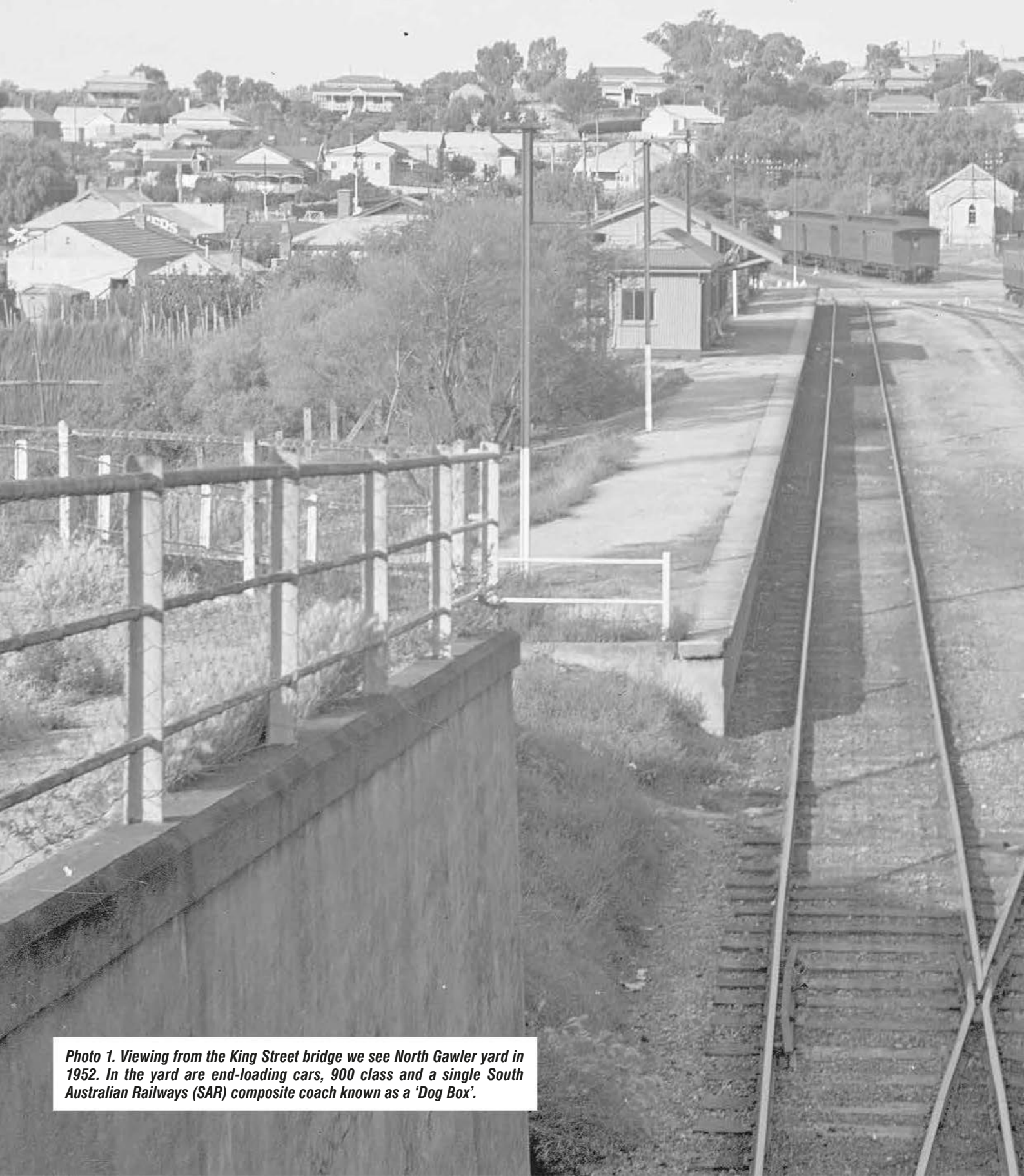


Photo 1. Viewing from the King Street bridge we see North Gawler yard in 1952. In the yard are end-loading cars, 900 class and a single South Australian Railways (SAR) composite coach known as a 'Dog Box'.

There are plenty of South Australian locations that 'look like railways,' but few offer the same blend of suburban and country operations as North Gawler in the late steam and transition era years. Set on the fringe between Adelaide's outer commuter belt and the railway lines in the Barossa Valley. North Gawler station hosted a varying range of operations such as terminating suburban services, a brill

railcar country passenger service or a mixed goods rolling through bound for Lyndoch, Tanunda, Nuriootpa, Angaston, Stockwell or Turo. For a home or exhibition layout, this location has a good mix of trains to operate, a continuous run for crowd appeal, plus meaningful shunting and prototypical movements to keep the operator busy.

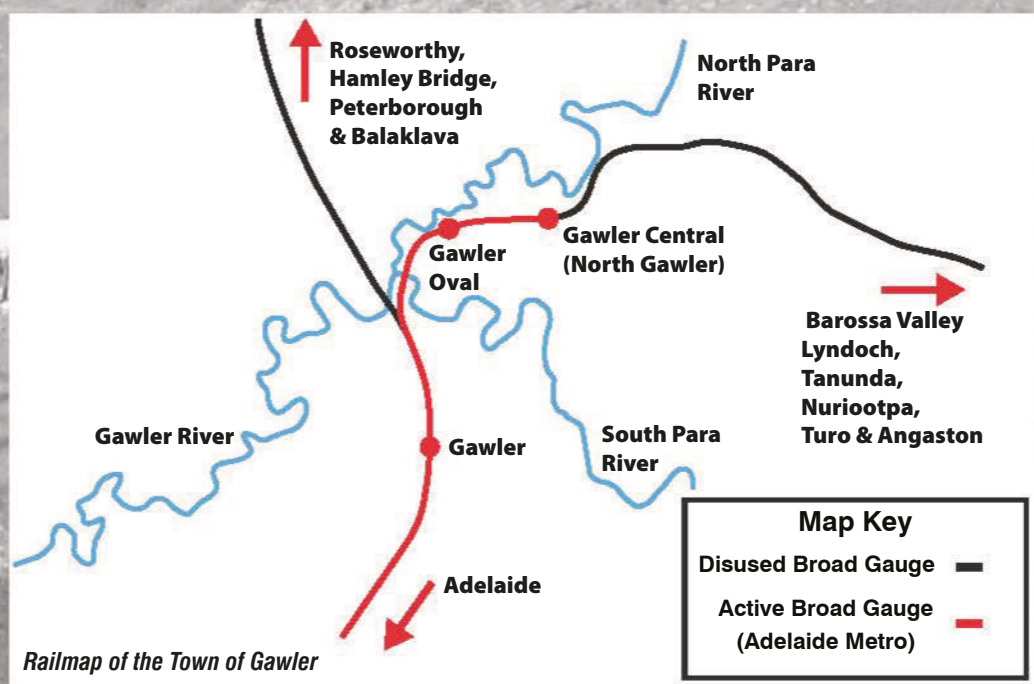
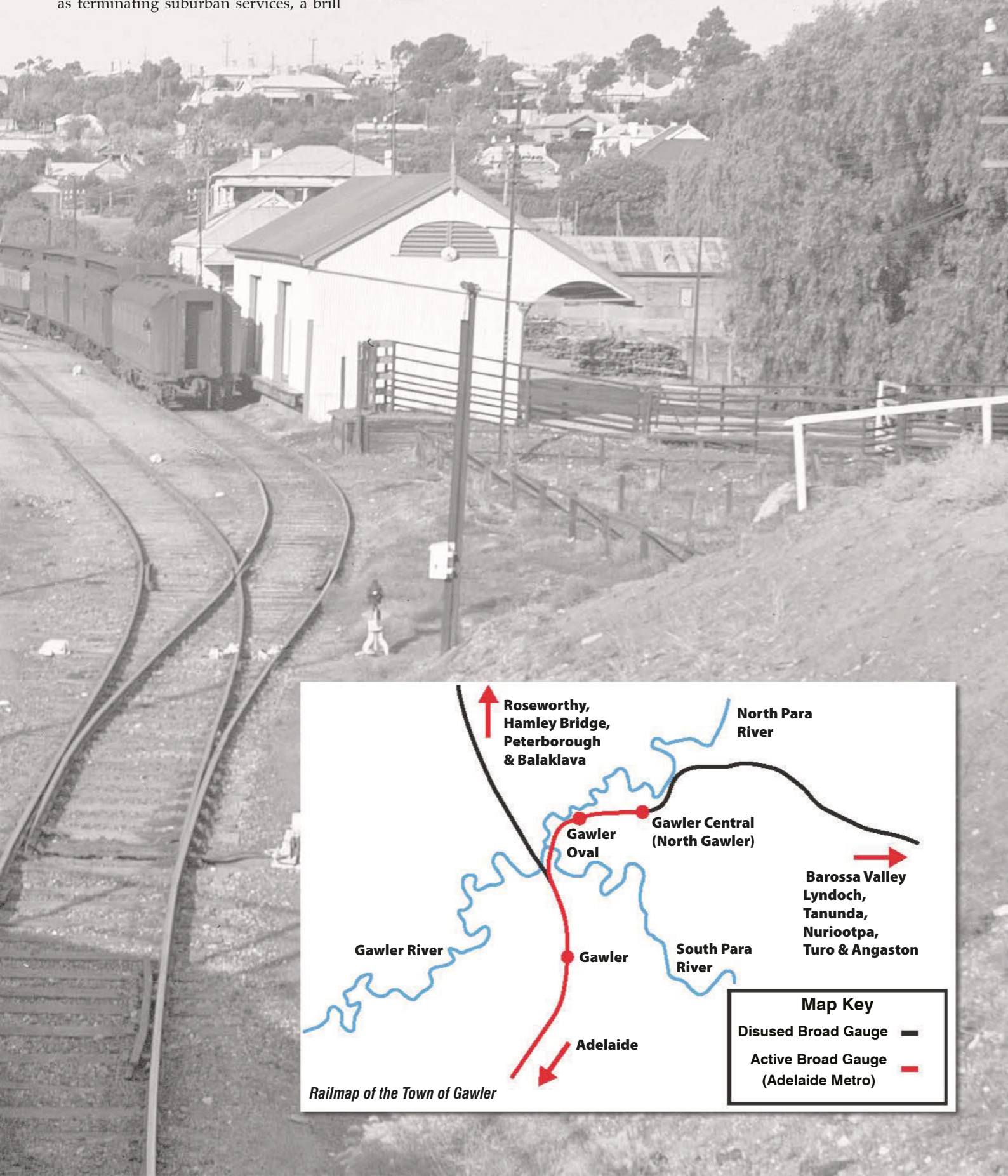




Photo 2. On the 30th of March 1964 a three-car set of Redhens (with a middle trailer car) is stabled at the North Gawler platform. Compare this image with photo No.1 in 1952 showing where the yard roads have had their track geometry improved.

The prototype location

North Gawler station opened in May 1911, initially named Willaston after the township on the northern side of the North Para River. Only months later it was renamed North Gawler (September 1911), and much later became Gawler Central (12th of February 1984). The station site sits in the South Australian town of Gawler, approximately 42.2Km (26.2Miles) from Adelaide Railway Station, and formed part of the route that continued north-east into the Barossa Valley.

By the early 1920s, the South Australian Railways (SAR) moved to extend suburban services to stations within a 40Km (25Mile) radius of Adelaide. North Gawler was positioned just beyond that suburban boundary, yet it still carried important commuter and regional traffic. Importantly for a modeller, the station

retained the 'staffed country station' feel for decades: from 1911 until 19th of June 1989 a station master was in attendance selling tickets and managing station yard operations.

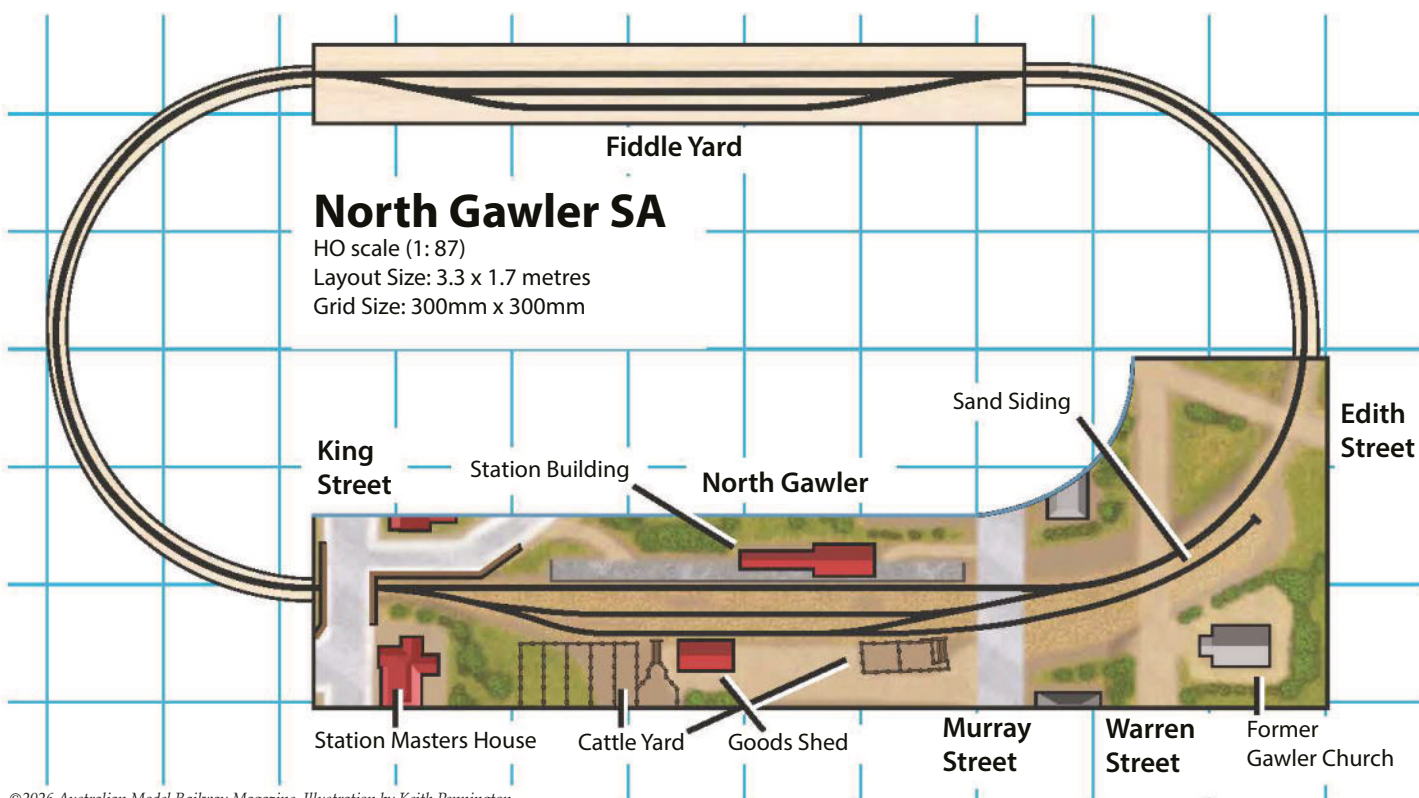
In modern times, the location is now the end of the Adelaide Metro Gawler line, but in the era we're targeting the late 1940s to about 1960, North Gawler was very much a place of through movements. Regional passenger trains ran into the Barossa, and goods traffic reflected the agricultural and extractive industries of the region—wine, grain, general goods, and later the traffic that would become synonymous with the area, the Penrice stone train, originating from the limestone quarry at Penrice.

How North Gawler looked

North Gawler's appeal as a location to model comes from the way the station

precinct naturally breaks into a handful of distinct scenes, each with its own purpose and visual identity. On the passenger platform was a substantial station building incorporating the ticket office, with an attached platform shelter which is still standing today. The platform extended to around 115 metres which in HO scale 1:87 works out at 1.3 metres long. This means you can run prototypical sized passenger trains for the era that terminated or ran through the station.

The yard facilities included a small goods shed, as well as sheep and livestock loading ramps. Those livestock ramps and the adjoining stockyard gave North Gawler a very practical, rural function, and they also introduce the kind of wagon traffic that adds operational variety. Together, the station building, the platform, and the goods yard create a coherent rural 'railway precinct' in a suburban



setting. The nearby the Station Master's residence adds a strong domestic note that is very characteristic of South Australian sites of the period.

At the Up end of the yard is the King Street Bridge, a concrete arch that spans across the rail corridor which makes for a striking visual landmark, and for the modeller serves as an ideal scenic break. Completing the period atmosphere are the lineside details that instantly place the scene in its era: telegraph poles in their varied configurations and SAR upper-quadrant semaphore signalling. The home signal near the Edith Street end (down end) provided protection for the yard and controlled up trains entering North Gawler. There is an upper quadrant signal located on the up end, positioned on the other side of the King Street bridge. This signal is lower in height than normal for sighting purposes through the King Street bridge, and was positioned as such due to limited space in the yard.

A particularly intriguing prototype quirk is the constrained geometry around the yard throat near King Street bridge. This limited space resulted in a point arrangement with multiple curves. This kind of prototype compromise is exactly the sort of character that translates well into a layout design. The quirk is a right-hand point and the trailing ends on the

points curve in a tight manner to align with roads two and three. Later the point changed where the trailing ends had their curve radiuses reduced allowing for a smoother transition as seen in images (1 and 2).

The sand siding

North Gawler also had a siding off the goods shed road. This siding crossed Murray Street and Warren Street, terminating before the Edith Street crossing. I learnt of this sidings true purpose when accomplishing work experience at the Town of Gawler Council. I visited the library archives and spoke with the portfolio manager, I was shown a photo of the banks of the North Para River displaying a lot of sand extraction. So, I asked where the sand was moved to and I was informed sand was extracted then moved to North Gawler for loading into open wagons. So, I asked where, and I was pointed towards the siding at North Gawler that sits in front of the old chapel. The council's information on this is non-existent besides the photo and second hand information.

From location to layout

This layout concept is designed to be compact, light and easy to move around such as for an exhibition. North Gawler is

ideal because it naturally supports three types of movement:

1. Through trains (country passenger and through goods)
2. Local shunting (goods shed, livestock facilities and the sand siding)
3. Terminating services (suburban railcar sets and short passenger workings)

Design parameters for this design

Scale: HO 1:87

Minimum mainline radius: 26 inches (660mm)

Operating movements: Continuous run with end-to-end and shunting.

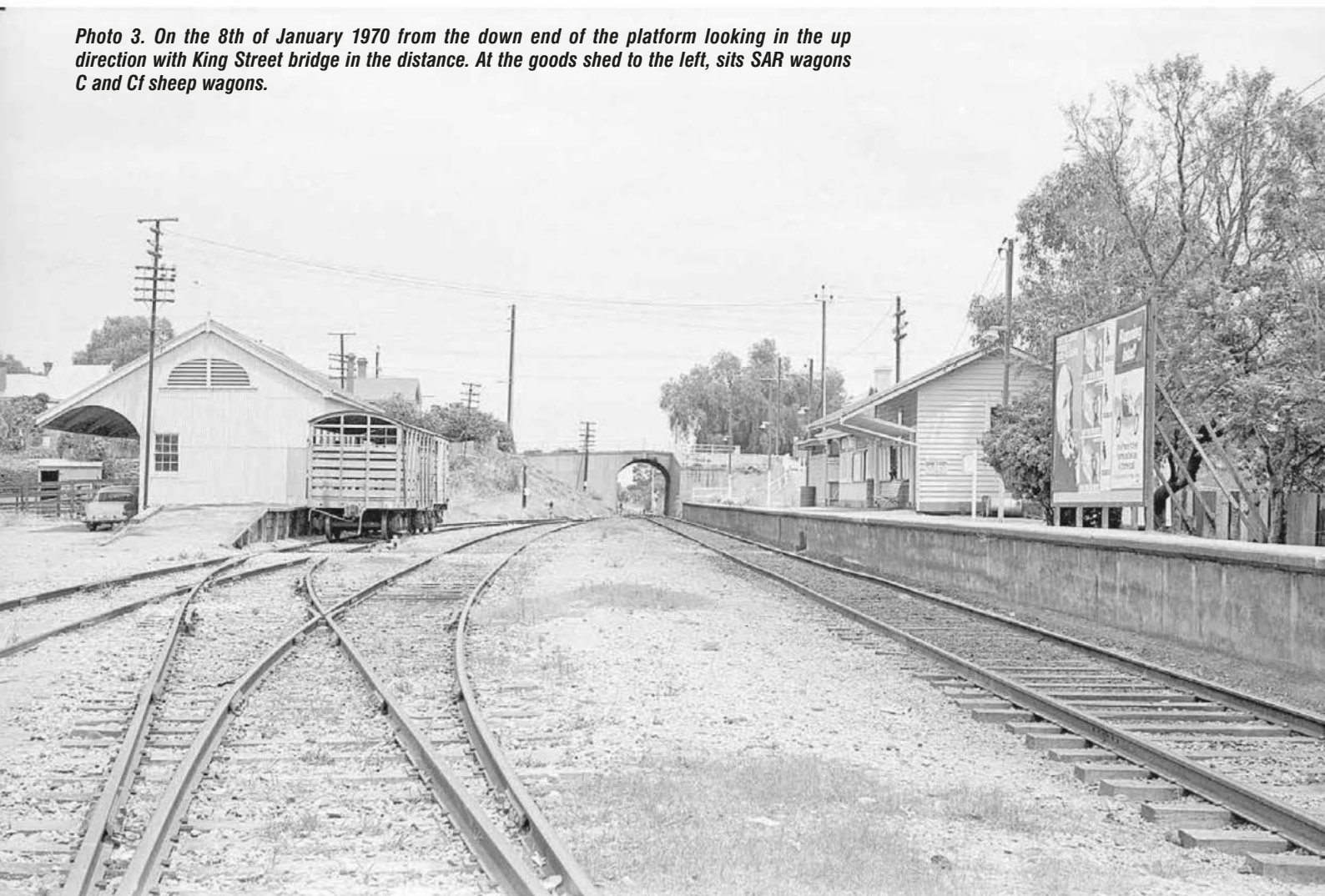
Two scenic boards:

- Board one (station precinct): 1.7m x 500mm
- Board two (north yard / road crossings / sand siding): 1.7m x 500mm
- Staging/fiddle yard: 1.8m total length, consisting of two 900mm x 200mm boards for transport and storage

Track plan

A design limiting factor is accommodating steam locomotives. The layout should be able to accommodate rigid-wheelbase steam locomotives without looking like a train set. For my plan I've set the mainline curve radius to a minimum of 660mm or 26 inches. The curve radius can be expanded out to 711mm or

Photo 3. On the 8th of January 1970 from the down end of the platform looking in the up direction with King Street bridge in the distance. At the goods shed to the left, sits SAR wagons C and Cf sheep wagons.





▲ *Photo 4. Redhen 400 class railcar No. 415 and 408 are waiting for their scheduled departure time to run back to Adelaide.*



◀ *Photo 5. North Gawler in 1965, two Redhen Railcars are in the platform road bracketing a 720 class trailer car, a couple of tarped O wagons are positioned in the sand siding.*

28 inch and still fall within the 3.3 metre space as seen on the track plan render. But if you plan to introduce a curve radius greater than 711mm, be prepared for the layout to take up more space.

This yard is designed mainly for small locomotives such as F, Rx class steam locomotives or 830 and 930 class diesel locomotives.

The track plan uses PECO code 83 track. For the strange wye point as seen in photo one and two, I have used a PECO number four wye point as its pretty close without having to resort to hand making a point. I have used number six points on the yard entry points and number fives in the yard roads and the fiddle yard. As per the prototype, the curves in the yard are quite tight

Scenic breaks and scene edges

The King Street Bridge is the obvious scenic break. I would suggest building this bridge in full relief and adding

roughly 3cm of terrain behind it. This would allow for any future expansion or attaching these modules to another layout.

The second scenic board on the north side of the station adds multiple level crossings (Murray Street, Warren Street and Edith Street), the sand siding, and a small chapel (now a private residence).

Station platform length

The platform length is to scale and can accommodate the following passenger consists:

- Five to six SAR centenary coaches
- Five to six Redhen railcars

Passenger trains

In the late 1940s through to the 1960s period, passenger traffic on the Barossa route varied. Steam-hauled passenger workings to destinations such as Truro and Angaston could be handled by locomotives such as the Rx class or 700 class,

while the route was also capable of hosting heavier power such as the 520, 720, and even 500 classes. In the post-1955 era, 300 and 400 class Redhen railcars can be used, with Redhens stopping at North Gawler and Brill railcars traveling onward into the Barossa Valley. Redhens could be seen in either two, three, four or five railcar consists of which an 800 or 860 class trailer car could usually be found consist between two Redhens.

Goods and mixed goods trains

Down goods trains hauled farming equipment/supplies, general goods bound for clients in the Barossa Valley, and up goods traffic included wine products and grain from the grain silos at Stockwell on the Turo line which branches off at Nuriootpa. If you want a strong 'signature' goods service, the Penrice stone train fits this bill. Depending on the year, you can run two small consists. In peak time the Quarry used to run two

trains a day to the now defunct Penrice Soda Products Plant at Osbourne near Port Adelaide.

Local goods

Local goods came in the form of live-stock, general goods and sand.

Locomotives

The proposed layout is set in the 1940's to 1960's as this enables the operation of a large range of locomotives and railcars. The Barossa valley railway could handle large SAR steam and diesel locomotives which included:

- Rx class
- 500 & 500B class (steam)
- 700 class from 700, 710, 720 (Steam)
- 750 class (Victorian Railways N class) (steam)
- 830, 900 and 930 class diesels

Passenger and goods rolling stock

Passenger SAR rolling stock consisted of:

- Wooden passenger coaches like the centenary, suburbans and composite coaches
- Suburban 800 and 860 trailer cars
- Goods rolling stock can include:
- Various SAR goods wagons ranging from W, O, OB, OBf, OF open wagons, D, M, DWf vans, and HS, stone hopper wagons, all available as kits or r-t-r.

Conclusion

North Gawler provides a blend of the suburban fringes and country feel of Gawler, making it a compelling prototype for a layout in the steam to transition era. The compact goods and livestock yard offer a genuine SAR prototypically accurate operating opportunity without

requiring a huge footprint or the need to take out a second mortgage. 

Acknowledgements

The National Railway Museum, Port Adelaide, for providing the photographs used in this article.

The Town of Gawler council Library for their 2nd hand information on the sand siding.

► *Photo 6. Redhen railcars No. 327 and 326 and an 860 class trailer car sits in the platform road, while in the goods shed road a Brill railmotor is stabled, in this undated photo from 1957.*

▼ *Photo 7. North Gawler in 1967 shows SAR Brill railcar No. 56 in the platform road.*



Photo 8. In this 1972 image the Penrice Stone train is being hauled by locomotive No. 959 into North Gawler and is crossing Murray Street. The station master is holding a stop board and is about to collect the staff from the crew.



Photo 9. SAR Redhen three car set with No. 346 leading stabled on the platform road at North Gawler.



◀ **Photo 10.** This 1952 image shows the short upper quadrant signal No. 2608 positioned at the up side of the King Street bridge. The reduced height of this signal enables drivers to sight the aspect through the King Street bridge.

Brett Watson Weathering Part Two

Brett Watson displays a selection of his collection. Photos by Scott Fitzgerald.



Locomotive No. 4102 is an Austrains model in Candy 'what if livery'. Weathered using SMS earth mix colour on the underframe, fuel tank and bogies, SMS Carc Black was used to spray the roof areas and Tamiya panel line for grilles and door lines.

Locomotive No. 4720 is a Trainorama 47 class, modelled from photos in the 1989/90 era and given the grimy look as I have indicated in my description of No. 4467. I have also added a rusty looking exhaust stack by hand brushing SMS old rust around the stack in layers and each coat given two or three hours to cure.



Locomotive No. NR105 is a Austrains 1st run NR class and has received yet another of my dirt colour mixes airbrushed on the bogies and frame. Black panel line helps bring a basic model more up to date. Weathering can really enhance a model if you study the prototype. I used a sponge technique to weather up the cab roof and blend that with SMS Carc Black and Matt black around the exhaust. I also opened up the pilot side steps by drilling and filing them out to enhance them.

Locomotive No. 847 is a Trainorama 830 class. Modelled as it was when on hire to NSW in the 1970's. Layered with sprayed dirt grime mixed by hand and applied with an airbrush. Again, dark brown and black Tamiya panel line completing the unloved look. The roof was painted in grime with SMS Carc Black used to highlight the roof line.

The 2026 Sydney Railroad Prototype Modellers event

Ben Gray reports on the first Sydney Railroad Prototype Modellers event. Photos by the author.

A NSWGR 30 class steam locomotive draws into the station with a short passenger train on Robbie Crouch's 'Wattamondara' layout.





Participants' models formed the centrepiece of the event, sparking many conversations about construction and weathering methods, and prompting discussions about each prototype.

Saturday 18th April saw the first Sydney Railroad Prototype Modeller's (RPM) event held in Australia at the Concord Community Centre in Sydney, New South Wales (NSW). As a completely new offering for the Australian scene, organiser Justin Mitchell describes an RPM as, different from an exhibition or modelling convention, in that participants join sessions at large tables organised around learning a particular skill, and watch an experienced modeller go through each step as the small audience watches on. Participants can ask questions, and models, tools, and equipment are passed around the table, and everyone is encouraged to get 'hands on.'

This style of event has been growing in popularity among the railway modelling community in North America, and after you join your first demonstration session it's easy to see why.

Topics for the Sydney RPM demonstration tables included introductions to airbrushing, soldering, hand-building turnouts, and applying decals, as well as applying scenery, painting figures, digital applications for signalling, and weathering.

On the scenery stand, Justin and his operating crew had built several dioramas with an initial layer of ground cover, track and sections of ballast glued down. To this, participants applied static grasses, shrubbery, and track weathering under the tutelage of Gary Ruming. Between stopping every two metres to talk to

someone – another great feature of events like this – I also managed to get to finally learn about airbrushing from Darren 'Daz' Lee. I also learned something new about applying decals from Steve Petit.

Just about everyone got the opportunity to paint a model figure, with the team from Andian Models offering one-on-one guidance on bringing the many 3D-printed figures now available in the hobby to life.

Like many of the conventions in the Australian modelling scene, attendees were also encouraged to bring along a model to display. These ranged across O, HO and N scales, and mainly reflected NSW, Victorian, South Australian and modern-era Australian prototypes, with a sizeable representation of North American models. In the small crowd of just over 110 attendees, it was fairly easy to locate the owner if a particular model caught your eye and you wanted to know more about it.

An outsider's perspective on the local modelling scene is always an interesting topic, and an episode of the popular 'Around The Layout' Podcast was recorded during the event, with host Ray Arnott flying out from the United States of America, and interviewing several of the attendees. This episode of the podcast should be available to hear by the time this article goes to print.

The event also featured two HO scale layouts – Robbie Crouch's 'Wattamondara,' and a 1830mm x 400mm

shunting layout built by Gary Ruming, which was used to demonstrate aspects of operations and DCC control, particularly the Protothrottle. The shunting layout was raffled off as part of the event, with one lucky attendee going home with a fully-scenicked, fully-operational HO scale DCC layout!

The event was also attended by a range of local Australian manufacturers, including SDS Models, Buckambool Models, Lyndons Trains, and Gordon Box. It was refreshing to be able to engage with these manufacturers outside of the frenzy of an exhibition, and chat about the decisions and processes that go into manufacturing the highly-detailed models we've become used to.

Overall, for me, the event lived up to the hype. The pace of modern life prevents many people from participating to the extent they would like to in clubs, where these skills are traditionally learned and passed on. As helpful as the internet has been for linking geographically-dispersed modellers with each other, sometimes a forum post or an instructional video doesn't answer the burning question you have before you dive in and spend money on trying that new skill yourself. Personally, I think this is a great concept, and I'm already looking forward to the next one.

Thanks to Justin Mitchell and the many modellers who gave their time to share their knowledge with attendees. A rising tide truly lifts all boats.

Putting the O into Casterton

Part Sixteen

Scott Whitaker describes his epic layout build. Photos by the author.



Photo one and two show the progress of the layout at the time of publication. To date, around 95% of the trackwork and 100% of the wiring has been installed and tested. With that part of the build now complete, attention is switching to the remaining infill scenery. The supporting structure for the backdrops on both peninsulas is almost complete. The work so far represents three years on site at the layout room, and some two-and-a-half years prior building modules at home.

The end of trackwork and electrics (for now)

Another significant milestone occurred when the last of the trackwork that makes up the return loops for the staging yard was completed. This section required a significant amount of carpentry and planning, to both support the track and the backdrops. Once the backdrops have been lined and painted, scenery will be built-up over the return loops to keep them hidden, and as previously described, the trains will run dark and silently, whilst in staging, with the sound and lighting activating when the train 'appears on stage'. Likewise, the track wiring has been completed and fully test-

ed. To handle the reversing section where the polarity of the return loop is not the same as the line it joins, Tam Valley auto-reversers have been installed. [Refer <https://www.tamvalleydepot.com/products/dccfrogjuicers.html>] Although these devices are the same as the frog juicers the company manufactures, a simple adjustment to the on-board jumpers reconfigures the board to act as a polarity reverser. Good practice suggests that the length of the reversing section should be equal to or longer than your longest train. Although it's possible to force a longer train through, if you are using metal wheels, there will be multiple polarity reversals each time a metal wheelset

crosses the insulating gap in the track which could lead to problems later.

Although the auto-reversers don't drain much power, the amount that they do means that my method of block detection will not work in the reversing sections. To overcome this 'problem', block detection signals will come from infra-red emitters/detectors placed across the track at several locations in each section. By using an extended delay function contained within the TrainController software, the system will operate without any electrical detection. There is still a little trackwork to do, such as for the turntable approach roads for the Coleraine Junction, Braxholme and Casterton loco-

motive facilities, but this will have to wait until the infill scenery has been completed at each location.

Hamilton (Coleraine Junction) locomotive depot

The impressive Hamilton locomotive depot, located about 1.25 km southwest of Hamilton station, came in to use in 1929 when the much-smaller facility within the Hamilton station precinct was deemed inadequate for the traffic on offer. The locomotive depot was built on a green-field site between the Portland and Warrnambool lines at Coleraine Junction. The facility included an eight-stall engine shed, a 70ft (22m) turntable, a large wooden coal elevator that could automatically refuel two steam locomotives simultaneously, numerous water cranes and tanks and staff quarters.

But just 14 years into its life, the depot was ravaged by a fast-moving grass fire. The coal elevator was a total loss, and according to contemporary news reports, the turntable bridge was melted and twisted into a fantastic shape. The elevator was not repaired but replaced with a more-traditional Victorian Railways coal stage, where the coal was first manually

unloaded off wagons to buckets on the stage, which, in turn, were used to replenish the locomotive tender. At its peak, the facility at Coleraine junction was busy, with multiple locomotives plying back and forth to take up their duties from Hamilton. It also looked after the many railmotors that served the Western District of Victoria. Interestingly, it was one of the few locations where light engine (a train comprising just an engine(s)) were permitted to operate without a guard's van. In VR parlance, a train of a locomotive and a guard's van was called a Bonafide goods or commonly called a Bona.

By 1965, when the demise of steam was in full swing, the locomotive depot was closed and relocated back to Hamilton to service the less labour-intensive diesel fleet.

On the layout, Coleraine Junction and the locomotive depot will be a prominent feature. Although not all prototypical trackage will be modelled, the major elements such as the eight-stall engine shed and the turntable will be replicated. Through careful planning I was able to orientate the engine shed to the viewing side of the layout, which will open a myr-

riad of internal detailing opportunities, including:

- Coal road. A dead-end road rising on a 1 in 40 grade. This road was used to push wagons up to the coal stage for unloading.
- Turntable road. A through road to the turntable, mainly used for locomotives to replenish coal.
- Ash road. A dead-end road with long ash pits between the rails to allow firemen to clean-out their fire boxes.
- Engine return road. A secondary through road to the turntable, used when the turntable road is blocked by a locomotive.
- Store road. A dead-end road that leads to the storeman's office.

All roads leading on and off the turntable have a one chain (20m) overrun to assist with balancing the larger locomotives on the turntable bridge.

The coal stage will be modelled initially as the simple structure that it was in 1965, although I do have plans to model the original coal elevator as it was in the early 1930s. This is a long-term project that will require a significant amount of research. All I have now is a very grainy and incomplete black and white photo-



The completed hidden staging yard and return loops are shown. The return loops have a minimum radius of 1.6m and include two double crossovers about midway along the left side of the aisle. After turning to the left, the two tracks become one and rejoin the mainline. As the return loops have created a reversing section, block detection will be supplied to LocoNet via infrared emitters/detectors placed either side of the track, rather than my usual arrangement of using current sensing.

graph. Although from that scant evidence, it appears to have similar dimensions to the concrete version erected at Ararat.

Snakes and Ladders

I've always had a policy of an open door to visitors, but, perhaps, I've been a little too generous given the last couple through the doors. Over the summer, I had two Eastern Brown snakes, the second deadliest snakes in the world, pop in to say hello. Living in North Queensland, you do kind of get used to these critters, but not totally. The first intruder, a mere baby at 60cm, was easily ushered out the door with a yard broom. But his daddy, perhaps 1.5m, was a different kettle of fish. He decided to escape into the area between the plaster internal walls and the external steel cladding of the shed. What

to do? I hastily blocked up his only point of exit, although they are pretty good at escaping most tight spots, and took a couple of the external sheets off the shed. A bit of loud banging on the shed wall, soon brought Mr. Snake out of his hiding place to slither across the front yard! I think they both got in around my roller door so it's with a bit of a rush that I will be fitting some sort of snake proof barrier, which doubles as a storm water protector, this is also handy for cyclones.

It is an unfortunate fact of life, that as one ages, one's sense of balance deteriorates. Ladder safety is vitally important, I have two and three-step stepladders for working near the edge of the layout, but I must continually remind myself what stepladder I'm on. I've given up counting the number of times I've tried to dismount the three-stepper, from the middle

step thinking I was on the smaller version. Likewise, as I need to go higher, I will invest in a sturdy work platform, and safety harness that will, hopefully stop me from plummeting to the concrete floor, or worse, onto a recently completed section of scenery.

Finishing off

After many months of electrical, carpentry and tracklaying I am now solely devoted to competing the infill scenery. This new phase will involve the construction of many structures and lots of detailing, which I expect to take around 18 months. As there will not be much news to report, my articles will change to an approximate six-month cycle, unless anything exciting happens in the meantime. Until then, enjoy the ride!

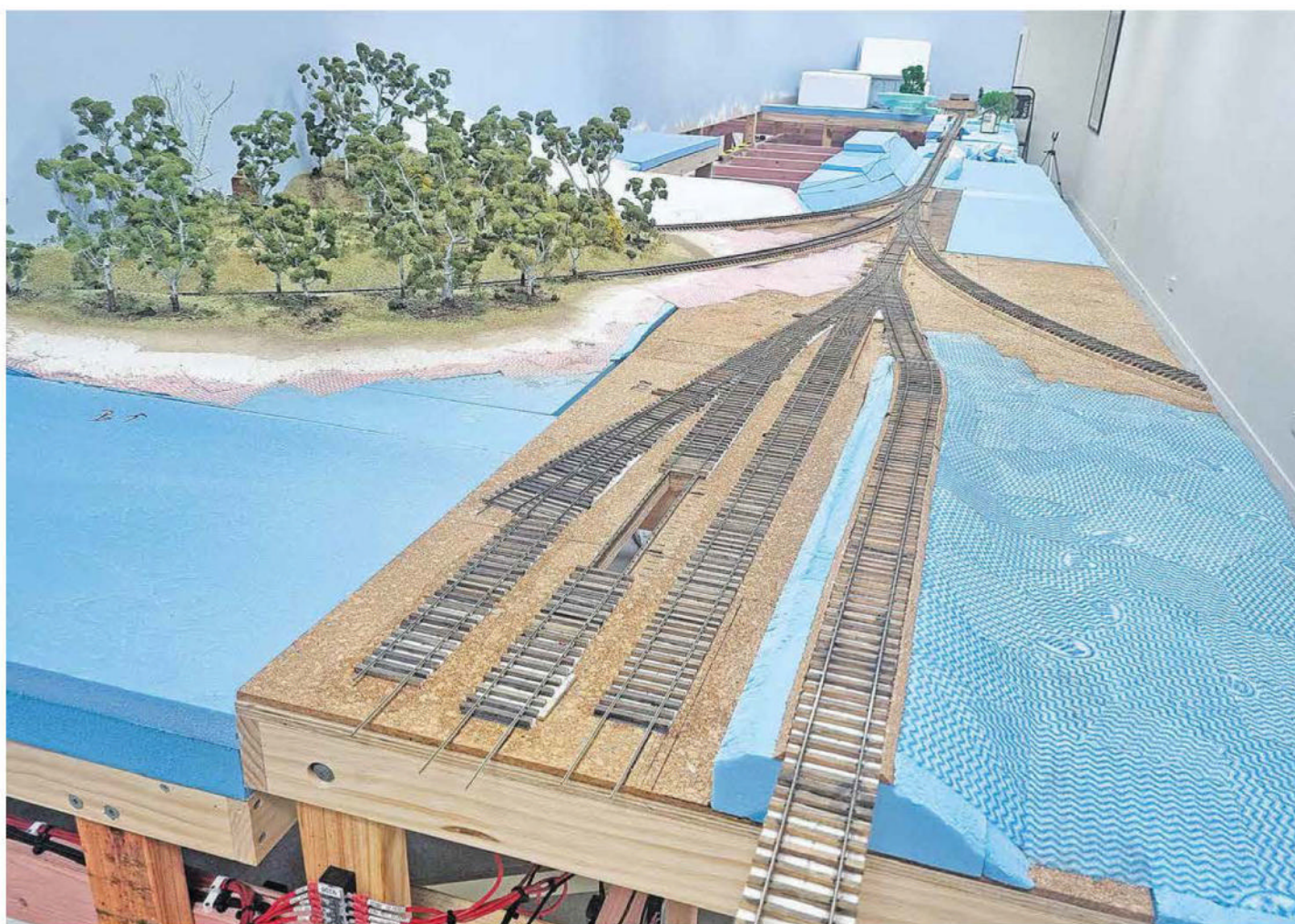
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Although I do take the occasional liberty where reality is turned upside-down to make the scene fit, it is unimaginable that a VR B class locomotive would have ever ventured up the Coal Stage Road. Still, it's nice to know that all the electricals work as expected.



As a point of reference, this photo of the incomplete benchwork was taken on 16th of July 2023.



Hamilton locomotive depot (at Coleraine Junction) under construction. The tracks from left to right are the store road, engine return road, ash road, turntable road, and coal road. Further back is the four-way junction known as Coleraine Junction. Again, from left to right, the tracks comprising the junction proceed to Braxholme, staging (the town of Coleraine on the prototype), onwards across Grange Burn creek to return to Casterton (Hamilton on the prototype) and to Koroit on the Warrnambool to Port Fairy line. This stub of track has been adapted to be an easy point of entry for new or repaired rolling stock onto the layout, or for visitors who wish to run their own trains. As you can see, there is lots of infill scenery still required.

Layout design and presentations ideas from the UK

Scott Fitzgerald shares layout design examples, presentation and operational observations from a recent visit to two exhibitions in the United Kingdom. Photos by the author.



Newton Ferrier' is a fictitious location built by the Perth Model Railway Group modelled in OO, this layout is nothing more than a double track mainline with two refuge sidings. Not every layout needs a station building, yard etc. to be interesting and operationally satisfying. A heavy-trafficked mainline will do the trick, and add in a gentle reverse curve, a gaggle of semaphore signals (lots of railway furniture), rolling hills and a sympathetic back drop and you have an engaging layout without a station. These are simple operations, and for the viewer, they see a train being put away, run through by a passenger service, then back onto the mainline to continue their journey. There are lots of locations in Australia where slow trains were put away in refuge sidings allowing fast trains to overtake etc.

The United Kingdom (UK), has a vibrant model railway hobby scene, with exhibitions being held almost every weekend throughout the year.

One of the main differences between the UK and Australia (apart from the obvious prototypical differences), is the UK home's overall lack of dedicated space for model railways. This has meant that modellers need to be inventive to produce impressive layouts that are space efficient. Most modern Australian urban dwellings are a lot smaller than they used to be, with the current real estate trends focusing on high-rise living. So, it's worth learning some tips from the 'masters' of space efficiency.

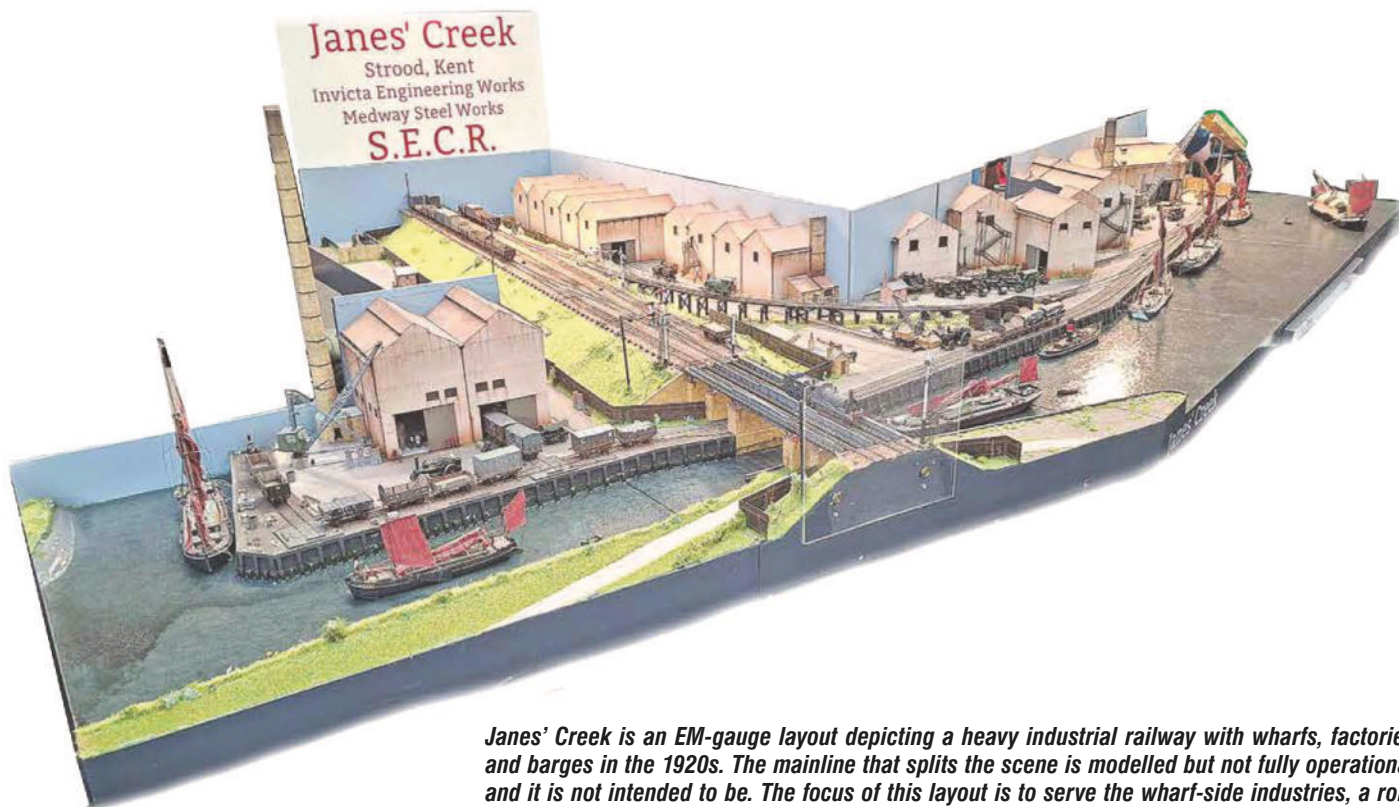
The two exhibitions visited were: the London Festival of Railway Modelling, and Model Rail Scotland (Glasgow). The UK has a big 'Club' following, where modellers get together and produce very accurate and detailed layouts that could only be built with the size available from a dedicated clubroom. These Club layouts show a high degree of era and prototype discipline. Usually there is a timetable available showing what is currently operating and what is coming up next. A dedicated operator is allocated for each fiddle yard, and they are well versed in the play book. Things on these layouts move slowly, and patrons patiently await each train or movement to observe the modellers'

handy work etc. This operational technique gives the layout a theatrical feel to it.

Smaller layouts (able to fit into the average small car) also subscribe to the operational playbook; again, you see at least two operators, one operating the scenic part of the layout, and one operator setting up trains in the fiddle yard, turning locomotives and consists or rearranging consists to suit.

There is nothing wrong with 'borrowing' good design and presentation ideas regardless of prototype.





Janes' Creek is an EM-gauge layout depicting a heavy industrial railway with wharfs, factories and barges in the 1920s. The mainline that splits the scene is modelled but not fully operational and it is not intended to be. The focus of this layout is to serve the wharf-side industries, a role filled by a diminutive 0-4-0 saddle tank locomotive which shunts the industries and interchanges with the mainline railway. Further operational variety is achieved by a mainline locomotive that shunts wagons to and from the interchange siding, which are picked up or dropped off by the 0-4-0 saddle tank. This layout is a great example of an industrial railway with a purpose, and interchange and dare I say it, open staging (the layout does not have a fiddle yard). However, you might have access to the rear of the factories to change out loaded and empty wagons. The layout is in a T shape, and even with its relatively small size it dedicates a lot of space to water traffic.



This quaint Irish narrow-gauge layout 'Castlefinn' in 00n3, proves that narrow gauge modelling can be spacious with plenty of negative space, even with a small footprint. This layout gives the impression of wide open spaces, without scenes being forced or full of clutter etc. The gentle curve also draws the eye away from the straight backdrop. Imagine this layout without a backdrop, it would not be as impressive as it is.

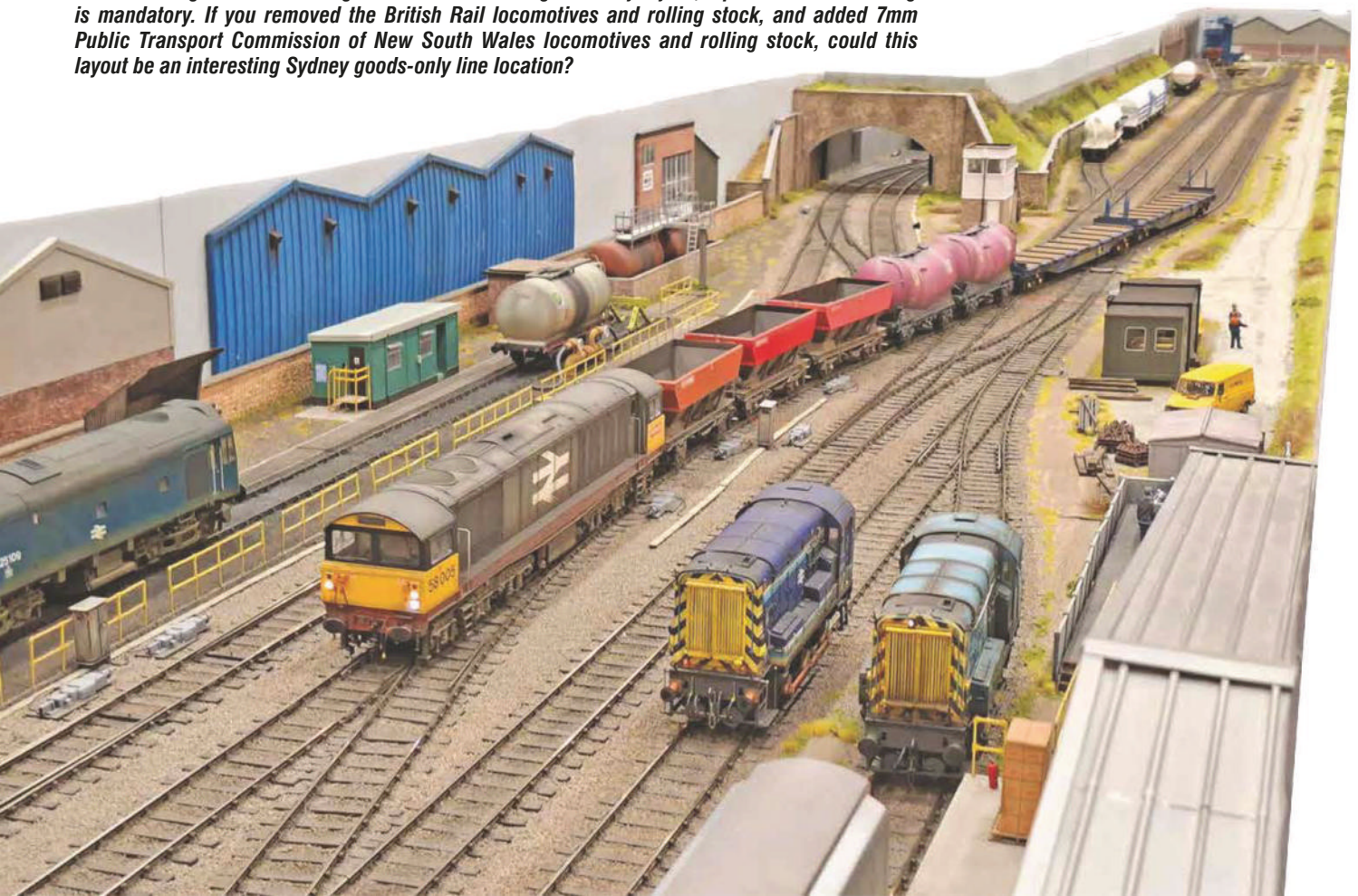


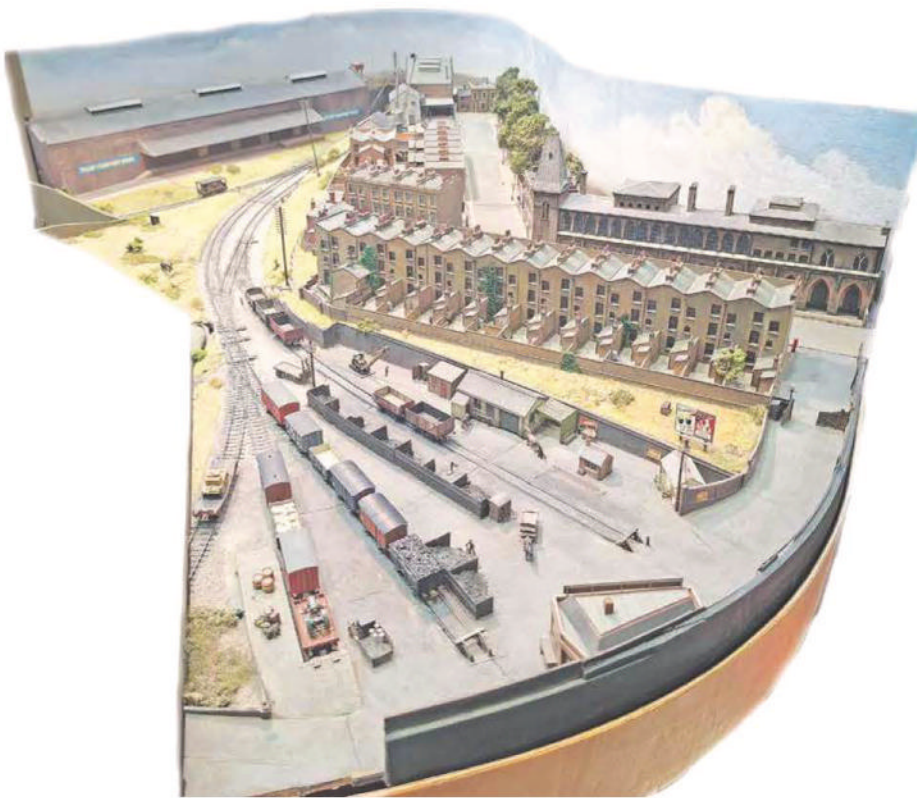
'Ingatestone' by The Model Railway Club, is a simple modern image 'Club' layout in OO. There are no sidings, just an electrified double track mainline, with a gentle curve at one end. While this might seem a bit lopsided, the one large radius curve is all that is required. Plenty of modelling space has been dedicated to the town buildings, hills and pastures. This approach helps the viewer immerse themselves into the scene. Finally, note the display boards are arranged in a sawtooth fashion. No doubt this is the result of a space consideration, however with lighting and a black curtain it is not noticeable until it is pointed out to you.



'Shwt' is modelled as a truncated branch line in EM gauge. You get the feeling that the goods-only operations are just hanging on, with closure looming. The high, curved backdrop draws the eye away from the existence of the corner of the layout. The boarded-up signal box, lifted track and closed level crossing, with high bushes also do their bit in disguising the corner. Even in a space-limited layout, a sizeable amount of space has been dedicated to vehicular traffic in the goods yard and open fields with brambles.

▼ O scale layouts (7mm) suck up a lot of space, this one 'Allerby' is expansive for its size but is also space efficient. The Class 58 No. 58005 is departing the four-track yard, and onto the mainline. To the left of the signal box the double track main leads to one of the two fiddle yards on this layout, effectively the four-track yard hides the fiddle yard at this end of the layout. The track flow is gentle and nothing seems forced. For a goods-only layout, a pair of shunters idling is mandatory. If you removed the British Rail locomotives and rolling stock, and added 7mm Public Transport Commission of New South Wales locomotives and rolling stock, could this layout be an interesting Sydney goods-only line location?

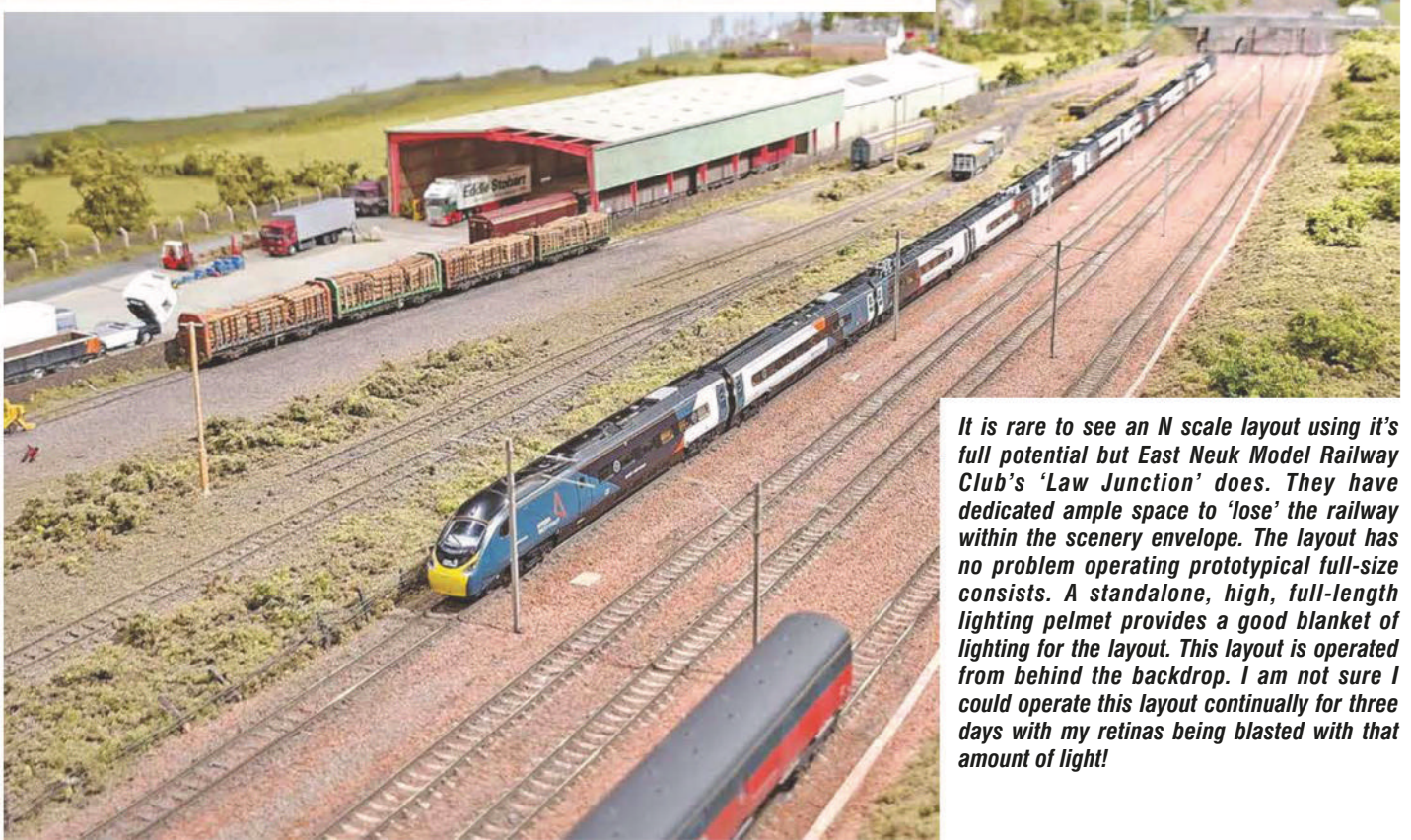




Space efficiency at its best, this is a fine scale N scale layout, truly diminutive. I would guess it would be no bigger than a third or quarter the average dining table in size if that. Placement of the buildings and the curved backdrop, really help this small layout 'pop'. The goods yard access road and gate draw the eye into the scene. Having the board curved facing the fan out of the goods sidings is also space efficient. The angles of the buildings and the roads disguise the vanishing points and the roads don't end facing the backdrop. An almost perfect use of space, shapes and curves.



◀ Signage and information are key, 'Hazellbank' in OO by the Scottish Diesel and Electric Group is an excellent example. Two big, roll-up posters provide detailed information on the group, publication, what they do, and QR codes will take interested parties to their websites for additional information. Well-presented story boards are also provided, in this case a printed article on the layout, which is easy to read, with colour photographs. Note that the cantilevered light boxes for the layout and the stands are painted matt black, so that they fade into the background.



It is rare to see an N scale layout using it's full potential but East Neuk Model Railway Club's 'Law Junction' does. They have dedicated ample space to 'lose' the railway within the scenery envelope. The layout has no problem operating prototypical full-size consists. A standalone, high, full-length lighting pelmet provides a good blanket of lighting for the layout. This layout is operated from behind the backdrop. I am not sure I could operate this layout continually for three days with my retinas being blasted with that amount of light!

Glendale's buildings

Bob Comerford presents a selection of buildings scratch-built by Dale Dawson for his New England based NSWGR layout 'Glendale'. Photos by the author.

Photo 1. A 900 class DEB set railmotor passes the backyards of residences and businesses of Glendale, all the buildings and fences in this image have been scratch-built by Dale Dawson.



Dale is a retired carpenter and uses various techniques for his building construction. For most of the buildings a solid timber core was shaped using a standard woodworking table saw and a mini hobby table saw. Where large doors are situated, Dale rebats them into the solid superstructure.

Dale creatively uses available materials for construction, this includes:

- Used timber venetian blinds, these are a good source of quality thin straight timber stock.
- Ice cream sticks.

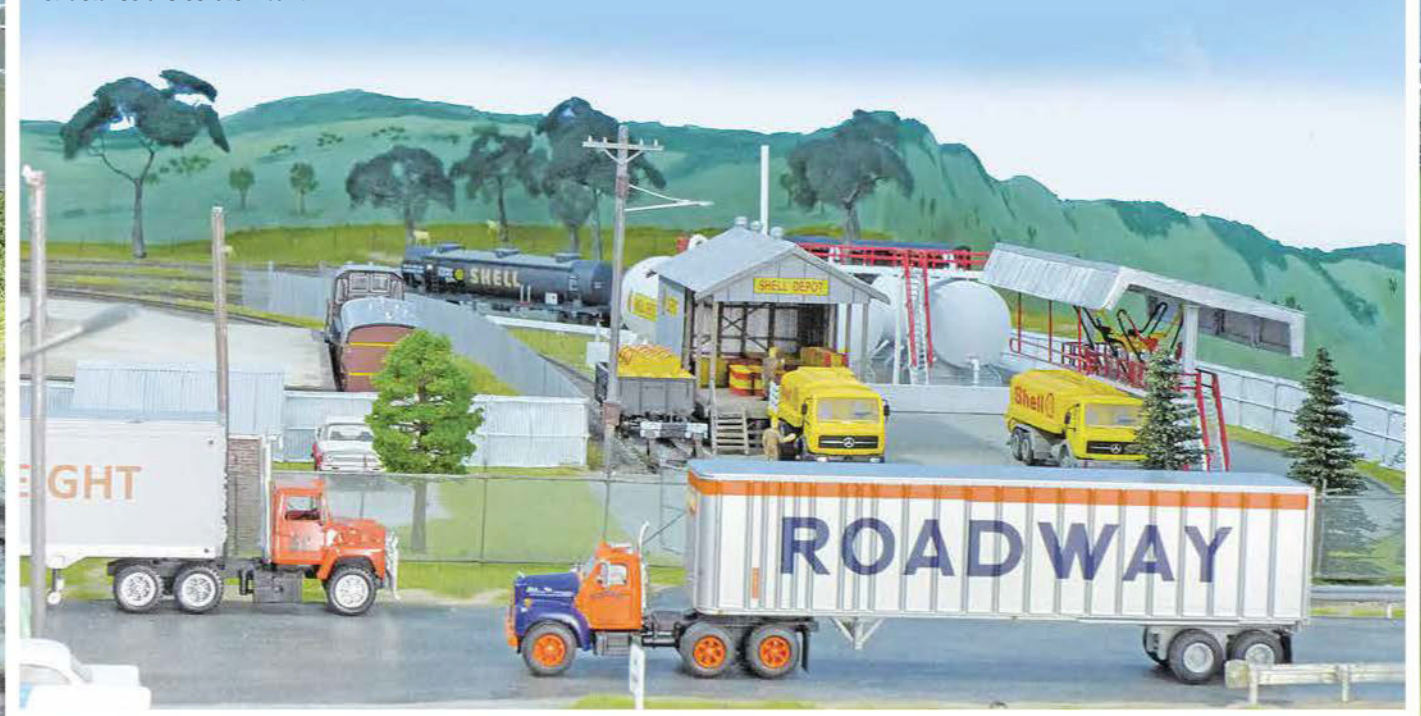
- Thin aluminium flashing can be used to create custom corrugated iron sheets (see photo 18)
- Standard A4 sheets of paper can be laminated to replicate timber siding

Water tanks are made from aluminium flashing pressed into a corrugated iron shape, then curved into an appropriately sized tank. This creates a mould that is filled with builder's bog, once set the aluminium flashing is removed and the tank is then painted an appropriate colour. This creates a robust model of a standard water tank.

Some buildings on Glendale are inspired from local prototypes; a lot of the buildings are created using standard building practices. A footprint is drawn to scale and decorated to match the period he is modelling. Dale is careful to ensure that not everything is 'perfect' as in real life, there is occasionally a miss matched paling or weatherboard plank, while these changes are subtle, they help bring scenes to life.



Photo 2. Glendale Fuel depot and siding. The fuel loading structure is a modified kit with two commercial fuel tanks, the remaining structures are scratch-built.





▲ Photo 3. A couple of Glendale's houses. Aside from the commercial windows, this building and the fences were scratch-built.

▼ Photo 4. Rear view of the Glendale hardware store. All of these structures are scratch-built including the fences which is made from a jewellery bag.



Photo 5. Rear view of the Glendale tavern, scratch-built with some commercial windows and doors.



Photo 6. The street view of the scratch-built Glendale Tavern.

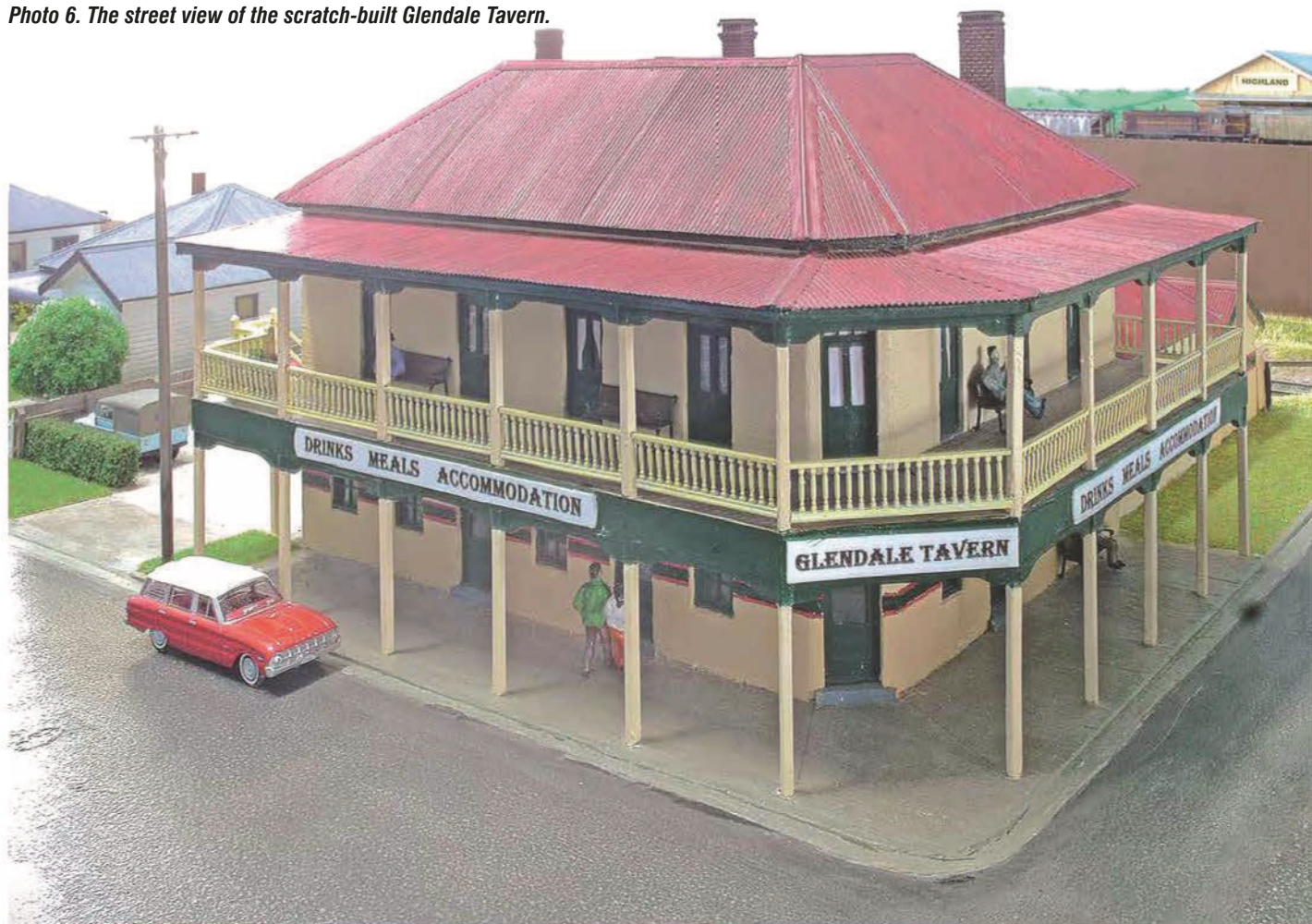


Photo 7. The rear view of some local industries, including Dexters Diesel. These structures are scratch-built with toilets, tanks etc. added.



Photo 8. Dexters Diesel mechanical workshop, all scratch-built.

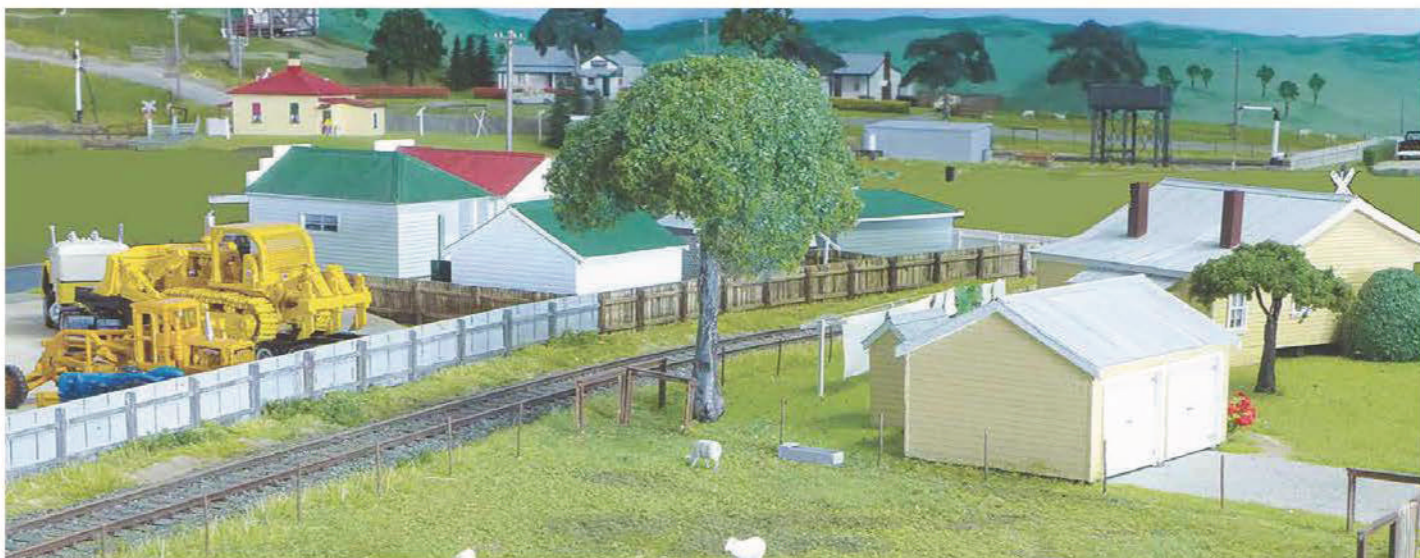


Photo 9. Rear view of the scratch-built J1 gate keepers house at Station Street crossing.



▲ Photo 10. The Station Store is also scratch-built. Visitors to Glen Innes by train will find this view familiar.



◀ Photo 11. Two more scratch-built businesses in Glendale for the ladies to spend their money.

▼ Photo 12. Glendale Readimix. All structures are scratch-built.

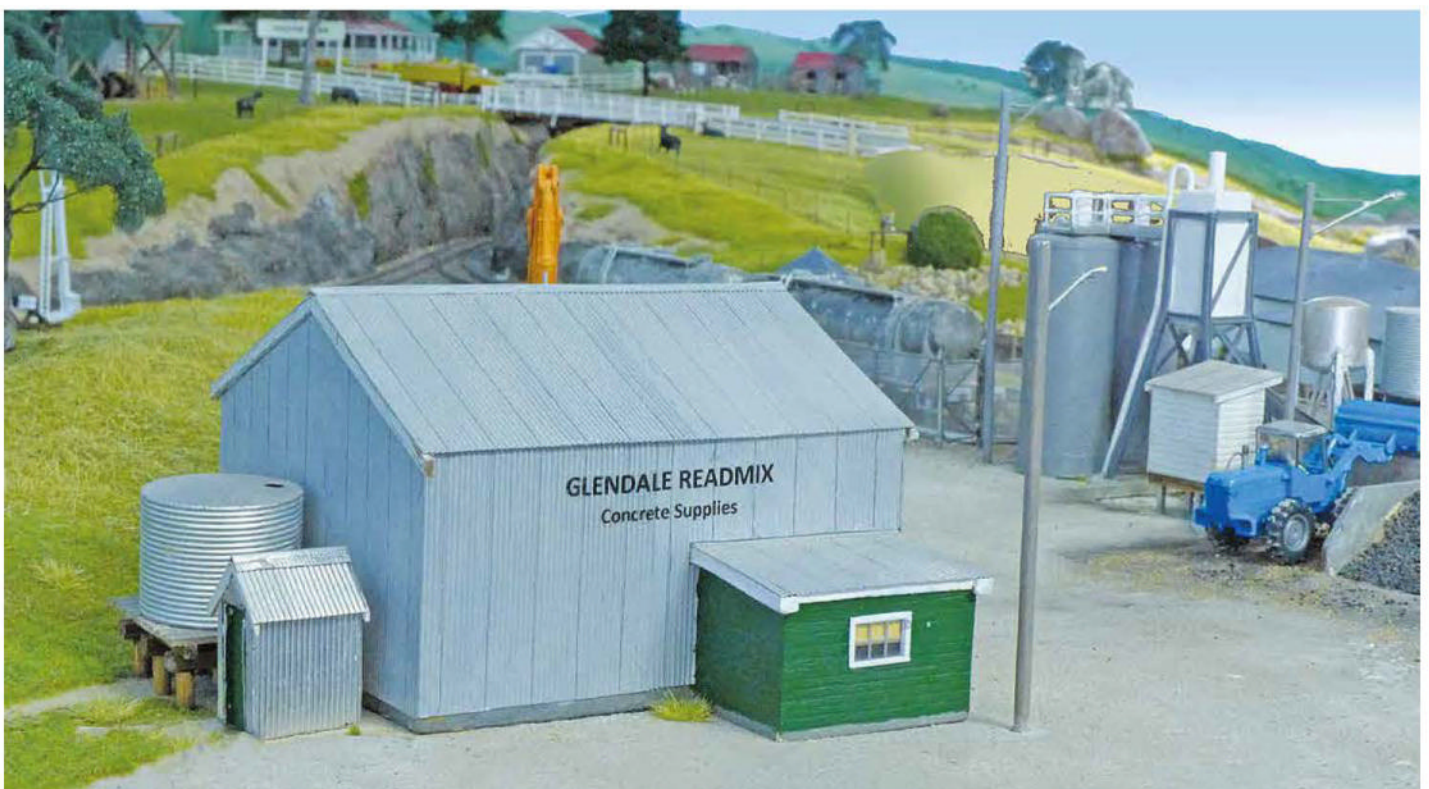




Photo 13. A low-relief Co-op Cold Store, scratch-built using a solid timber core.



Photo 14. Glendale Fertiliser, another scratch-built structure using low-relief to good effect.



Photo 15. The citizens of Glendale are very much house proud. This house and garage are all scratch-built.

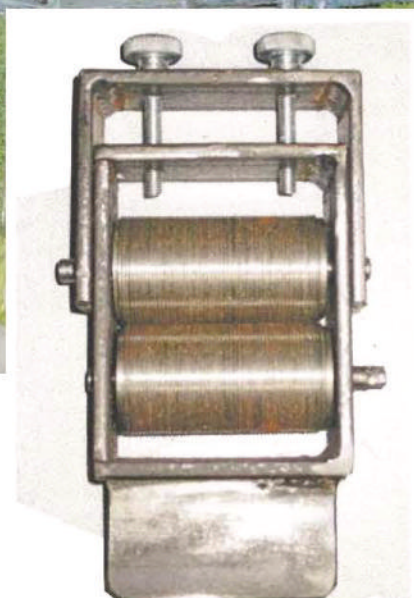


Photo 16. Hazor Park farm.



▲ **Photo 17.** Outbuildings on Hazor Park.

► **Photo 18.** Corrugated iron roller hand built from steel.



A Broadford Retrospective

Iain Hunter closes the final chapter on his Australian exhibition layout 'Broadford' and shares his experiences of exhibiting in the UK. Photos by Scott Fitzgerald unless otherwise stated.



Locomotive No. 8167 enters the standard gauge crossing loop, with a down superfreighter, crossing No. 8176 with an Up goods.

What would you do differently?

I'm not sure that I would do anything differently. Broadford was designed from the outset (it received its first invitation before any wood had been cut!) to be an exhibition layout. It was engineered (possibly over-engineered) to survive the rigors of being rolled into and out of hire vans, pushed around exhibition halls and erected and dismantled frequently. The choice of a traverser instead of the more usual ladder fiddle yards was driven by my decision to more accurately model the broad gauge tracks by hand laying them to 18.2mm (EM) gauge and my desire to both keep the layout length down and avoid the need to make the numerous turnouts that the traditional fiddle yard would require. I think that the fact that Broadford has survived for 16 years and 42 exhibitions without major repairs being required shows that the original design decisions were correct.

Interesting anecdotes from exhibiting an Australian themed layout in the United Kingdom (UK).

Despite the kangaroos and wombats populating the lighting rig pelmet and

the Australian flag pinned to the drops at the front of the layout, the presence of so many North American designed locomotives mean we are often asked where in the United States of America (USA) the layout is representing. At one exhibition, despite standing in front of Aussie Santa, one visitor confidently told his compatriot that it was obviously a Canadian layout! We have had many Australians viewing the layout as well as many Brits who have Australian relatives. Both groups routinely express their pleasure and surprise at seeing us. One family group asked permission to video the layout as a relative of theirs was the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of V/Line and they were sure that he would be interested in seeing it. I was more concerned about the fact that we were using the V/Line Logo on our corporate shirts without permission! We did also have one person who told us that he had recently visited a relative in Geelong and having seen us at a show previously had driven to Broadford especially to check whether I had modelled it accurately or not!

The most surreal event for me though, concerns an exhibition in Australia. When

visiting our daughter in Bauple Queensland, she had dropped me off at the Strathpine Exhibition while she, my wife and the granddaughters went shopping at the Brisbane North Lakes Centre. Whilst buying my ticket and having got past the 'you're obviously not from round here' conversation I was asked if I wanted to buy a raffle ticket. Querying what the prize was my attention was directed to a Hornby Great Western Railway (GWR) King train set. The result was the following conversation: "I don't model GWR", "What do you model?", "Australian", "Oh you must be Iain Hunter"! I should point out that at that time, I had an article published in AMRM, so the gentleman concerned was obviously an AMRM reader and had successfully made four from two and two.

When and why was the decision to retire 'Broadford' made?

Thoughts about retiring Broadford started in about 2019 when the UK Government announced that driving licence rules would be changed and over-70s (subsequently over-75s) would have restrictions placed on the size of vehicles



▲ A DRC coasts to a stop with an up commuter service, while two light engine X class locomotives idle in the up refuge siding, waiting for a suitable path.



◀ Iain and Andrew engage with a patron at the 2026 Model Rail Scotland exhibition.

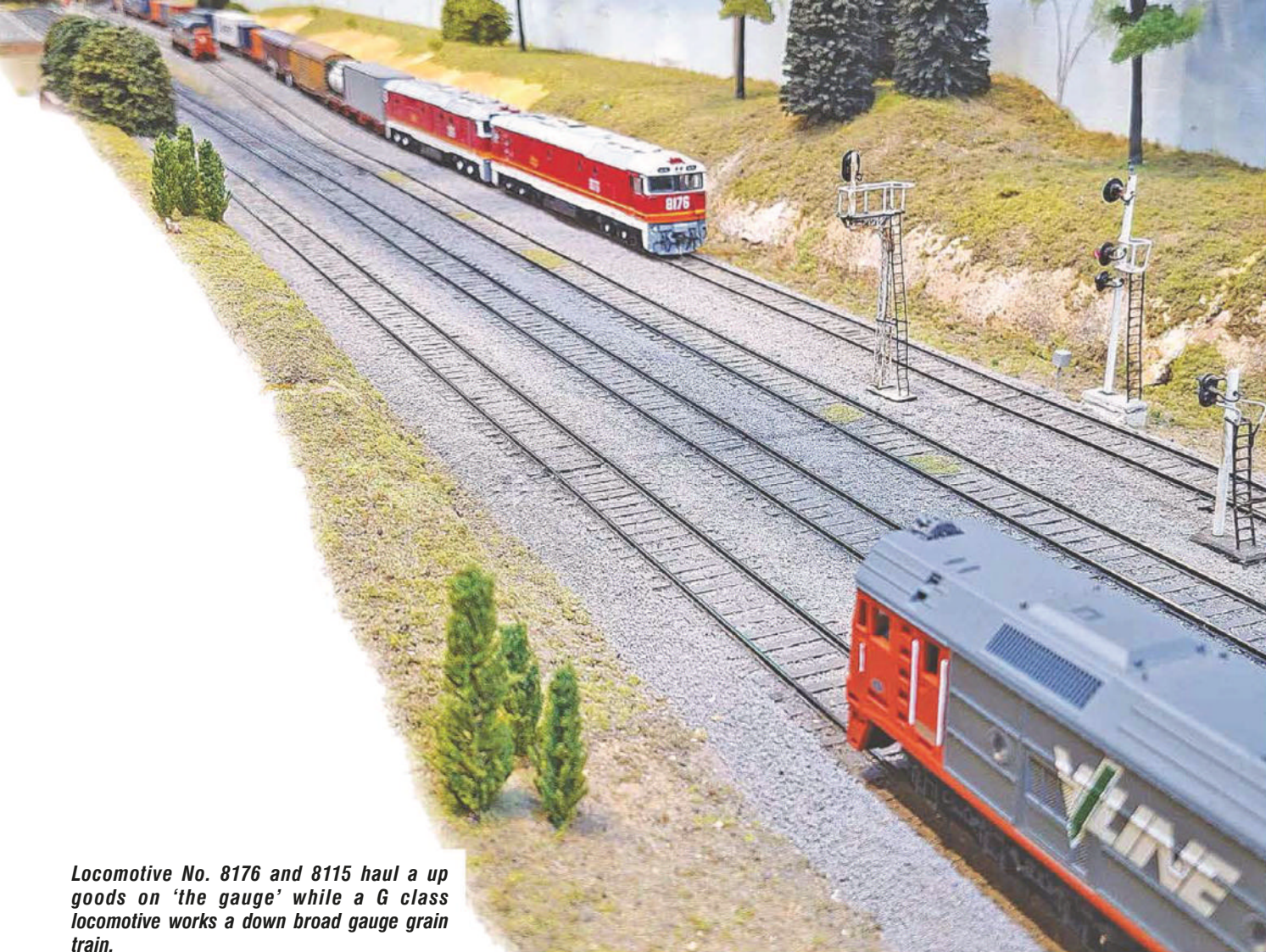
they could drive on a standard car licence. The decision was finalised in 2023 when advancing age and increasing infirmity (they don't tell you that playing sport can seriously damage your health in later life) meant that both Aileen, my wife, and I were struggling to get in and out of the internal operating area. The original retirement date was May 2024 at our local exhibition in Calne but that was quickly changed to March 2026 when we received a verbal invitation whilst at the York Exhibition over Easter in 2024 to

make a return visit to Model Rail Scotland in Glasgow in 2026!

What does your modelling future look like 'post Broadford'?

Although Broadford will be broken up with large parts scrapped, most of the traverser is going to be recycled into a layout by one of my friends and four of the straight front boards will be reused to make a 16 foot long tiny rendition of parts of South Dynon Depot. I already have a track plan incorporating both broad

gauge and standard gauge sheds which will allow me to retain all of my locomotive stock. I've been converting a PECO turntable to 18.2mm and have modified it to match photographs of Dynon's BG turntable. It wasn't intended to be an exhibition layout but at Glasgow I received a verbal invitation to take it to an exhibition in 2028 so I need to get started. At least I won't have to build any baseboards!



Locomotive No. 8176 and 8115 haul a up goods on 'the gauge' while a G class locomotive works a down broad gauge grain train.



Locomoitve G511 leads a down Wodonga goods through Broadford.



Ian Sandell and Andrew Burnham monitor the loading of the substantial rolling stock transit dolly for loading into the van, following Broadford's last exhibition appearance.



Broadford's final exhibition crew. Left to right, Andrew Burnham, Melissa Laidlay, Mark Laidlay, Aileen Hunter, Scott Fitzgerald, Ian Sandell, Iain Hunter, Alan Monk and Steve Davies. Photo by Nicola Smith.

Trains for Breakfast

Warren Miller takes a journey down memory lane, with breakfast cereal models. Photos by the author.



Some of the locomotives from the earlier 1959 series, apparently copied from model trains of the period.

Many years ago, the manufacturers of breakfast cereals encouraged children to consume their products by including a variety of small toys in the bottom of the pack. A new series of toys would be offered every few months and these were keenly collected by youngsters. Transport subjects were popular, covering aircraft, vessels, vehicles, spacecrafts, but for the young railway enthusiast, it was the trains that decided the choice of breakfast cereal.

The Kellogg company was a leader in providing promotional cereal toys, and one of the earliest railway series was available in 1959, comprising a range of five locomotives and a varied selection of goods and passenger rolling stock. They were one-piece mouldings using a soft plastic which resisted breaking. The locomotives were inspired by contemporary model trains (Hornby, Triang and Marklin) rather than being derived directly from the prototype. They came in a range of bright colours. It is likely that these were manufactured in Australia.

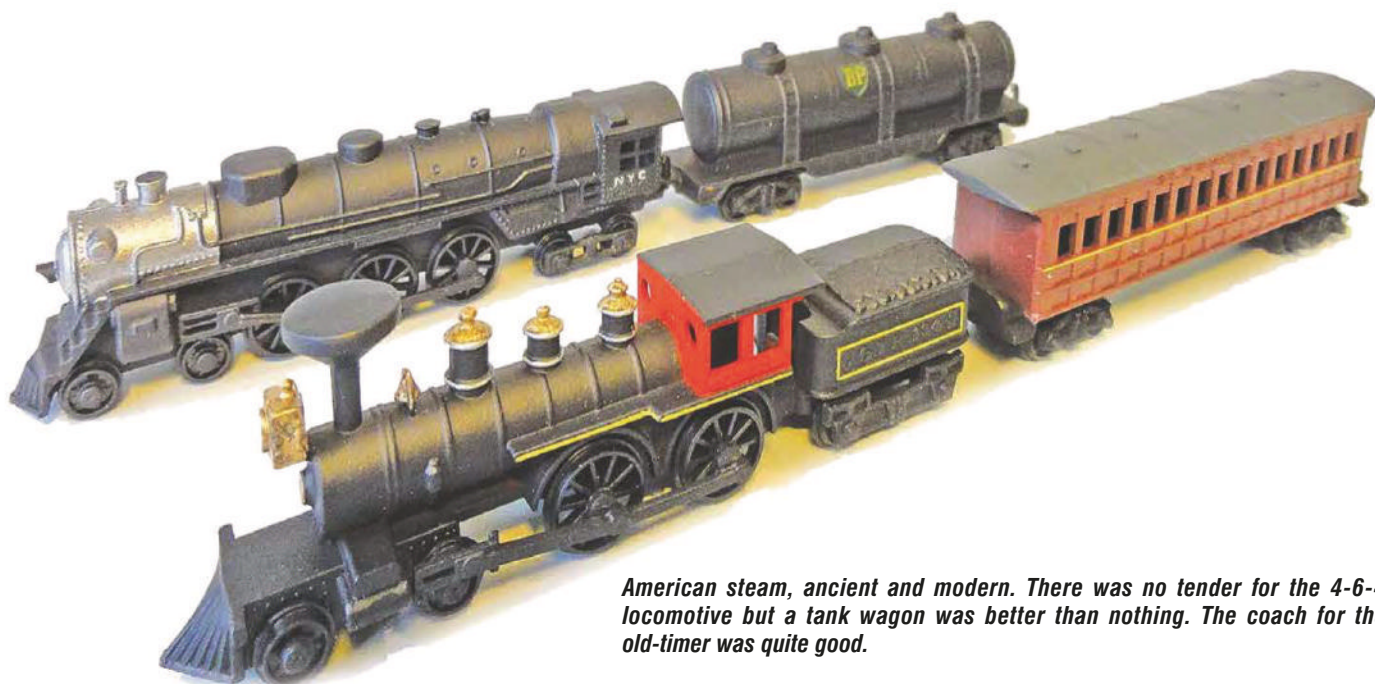
In the 1960s, the models found in one's cornflakes were greatly improved, and

came in the form of a miniature plastic kit, packed in a cellophane bag to avoid the parts becoming separated and mixing with the cereal. There were over 70 different series of models produced between 1959 and 1977. They were 'snap-together' but could be glued to make a more durable model. The main mouldings were again made in various colours, but for cars and trains the wheels were a separate moulding, in black for greater realism – quite sophisticated for a promotional toy! The manufacturer was an Australian company based in Melbourne, named Rosenhain and Lipmann (commonly known as R&L). In the 1970s some of the R&L models were available as separate toy sets via newsagents and similar outlets. The train series was attractive to young enthusiasts; the models were reasonably accurate and could easily be painted. The only drawback, there wasn't a tender for the New York 'Hudson'. There was also an accessory pack, with crossing gates and signals. As a nice touch, the station name on the sign was 'Breakfast Creek'. Kelloggs even provided cut-out cardboard models on the back of

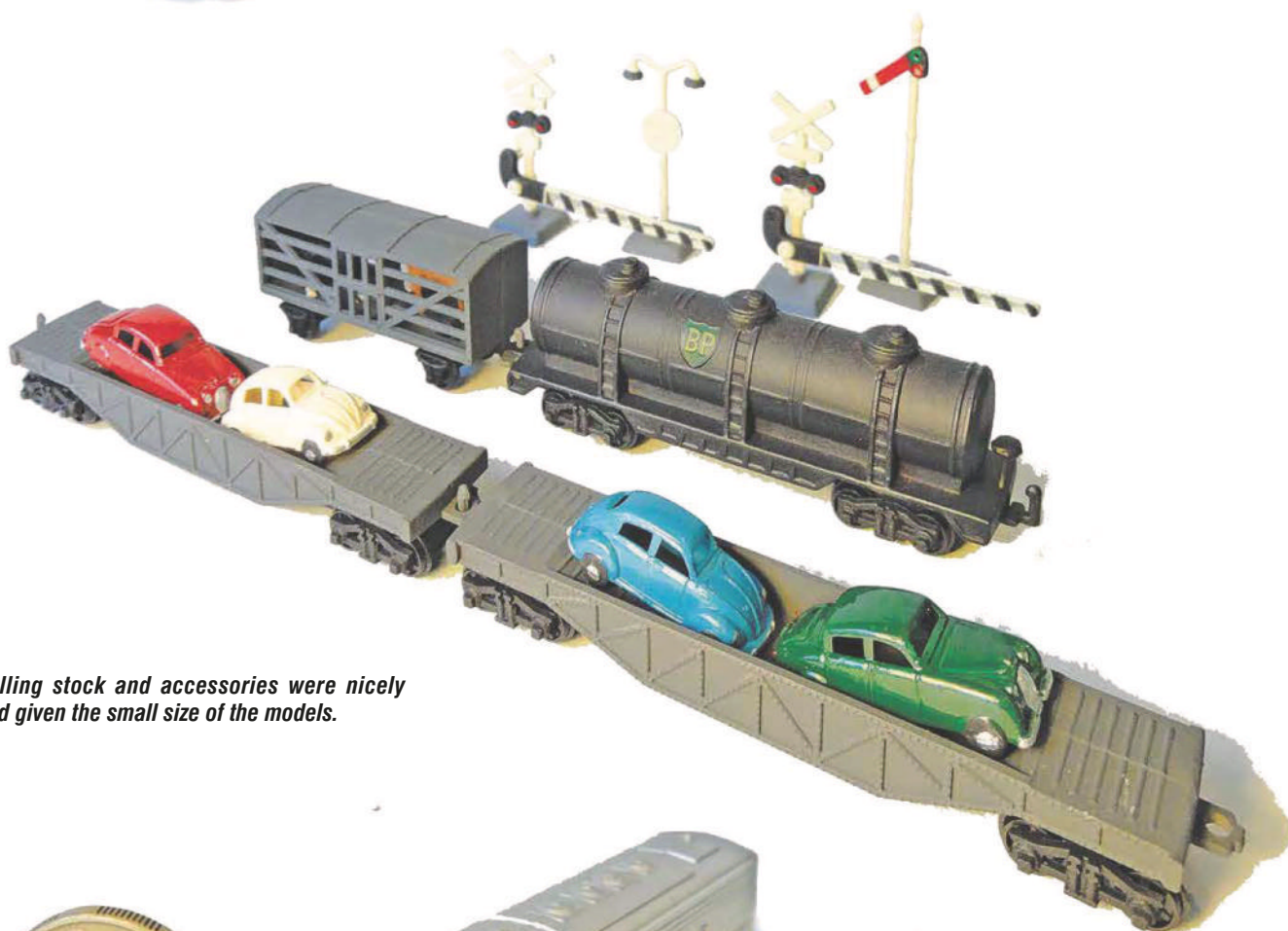
the cereal packs, to make up stations, signal boxes, locomotive sheds etc., but these were fairly crude. However, they were fun to make.

Sadly, these collectable little models disappeared from the breakfast table many years ago, as manufacturers moved towards other types of product promotion. No doubt the question of safety, relating to small, swallowable parts also played a part in the demise of these attractive models. The thousands of toys that came out of the cornflakes packet probably had a short life at the hands of young children. However, enough of these models seem to have survived to appear on internet auction sites or 'trash and treasure' markets, at 'collectable' prices, such as the price of nostalgia. Who can say whether any of today's more mature modelers had their appetite whetted years ago by the trains that came with cornflakes?

The R&L factory ceased operation in 1977 and the equipment and tooling were sold to a buyer in Mexico. 



American steam, ancient and modern. There was no tender for the 4-6-4 locomotive but a tank wagon was better than nothing. The coach for the old-timer was quite good.



The rolling stock and accessories were nicely detailed given the small size of the models.



Painting such small models was a challenge, but worth the effort. The Australian dollar coin indicates the size.

NSWGR 'American' end-platform passenger coach (Including FG Greyhound coach and branchline CCA coach), r-t-r in HO scale by SDS Models, PO Box 804, Winston Hills, NSW, 2153. Website: <https://sdsmodels.com>. AUD Prices in the text.

Originally released in 2012 by Austrains, these models were manufactured to the research and drawings of Ian Thorpe, this SDS Models release is an extensive re-tooled model. The research by Steven Pracy and Design Engineer Andreas Keller has added that SDS Models touch. Steven Pracy, is quickly becoming highly respected for his research, particularly with the fine details applied to reproduction of liveries and wagon codes. The products from SDS Models will only improve with his continual input.

The Prototype

The suburban end platform coach was an important vehicle on the New South Wales Government Railways (NSWGR), seeing service in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, but also in the country, sometimes specially modified. From first entering service in the 1890's, these coaches could be seen behind all the modern passenger steam locomotives (20, 30, 32, 35, 36 and 38) and the diesel locomotives in service before 1977. As well as being used to get folk to and from work, they were used for school trains, scout (Jamboree) trains and troop trains, this reviewer being transported from Sydney to Singleton for Citizen Military Forces (CMF) service in the early 1960s.

The NSWGR 'tourist' coach conversion came about with the 1926 electrification of the Sydney suburban system, with the new single-deck electric sets replacing loco-hauled rosters serviced by these coaches, and creating a surplus of relatively new passenger vehicles, so the opportunity was taken to upgrade the near-country services by replacing the 'throwover' seating in the existing 'American' suburban coaches with more comfortable, fixed, facing seating pairs with luggage racks, and the provision of toilets in the centre of the coaches.

Some were even rebuilt with enclosed end vestibules for the 'Caves Express', a service from Sydney to Mount Victoria for the gentry that then flocked to the picturesque Jenolan Caves.

Many services provided by the coach sets have not been fully recorded, especially those in use during the wartime periods. However, these were sturdily-built coaches and have stood the test of time, with a number preserved and still running to this day.

A more descriptive usage of the coaches can be found in Volume two of Eveleigh Press' 'Coaching Stock of the NSW Railways', written by Cooke/Beckhaus/Estell/Seckold and Toohey.

The 'American' end-platform passenger coaches were a characteristic of the NSWGR system for just over one hundred years (the last regular 'in service' journey took place on the Illawarra in 1977) and the 2012 offering from Austrains captured one of the most common variants of the breed.



HFO in Indian Red livery.



FA coach in Tuscan and Russet livery.

The origins of the end-platform coach came from actual imported American-built coaches, hence the common term 'American suburban cars' for all locally-built variants that followed. The design was adapted and built locally under the leadership of different engineers, saw the use of different roof styles.

These conversions involved mainly internal alterations to seating and provision of toilets, so the models, other than the CCA composite branch-line coach, could easily be 'back converted' to represent the suburban coach version. With such a large class of similar vehicles it is no surprise that some were converted for special purposes, such as the RG Greyhound coaches. The NSWGR catered for the working man's sports of pigeon and greyhound racing by having coaches specially fitted-out to transport the animals and their owners. The first RG was a clerestory roof end-platform coach, modified in the 1930s. The Mansard roof greyhound coaches were modified in the 1950s and operated for two decades or so. The RG had a row of two-person seats one side of the centre aisleway, and two tiers of kennels on the other side. The windows on the kennel side had been filled in and provided with longitudinal air vents.

The Model

The SDS offering for these coaches is enormous as follows:

- Eight-coach packs (\$880 AUD), Indian Red livery with mansard and elliptical roof and Pre-war Tuscan and Russet with full lining and elliptical roof
- Five-coach packs (\$600 AUD), 'Caves Express' Blue and Cream as repainted in 1932. Red and Russet livery as in service 1940s 1950s.
- Four-coach pack (\$440 AUD), Pre-war Tuscan and Russet with full lining.
- Twin-coach packs (\$250 AUD), Indian Red with mansard roof (four different numbered packs)
Single coach packs (\$125 AUD)

- CCA Pre-war Tuscan and Russet, Venetian Red and Russet (two different numbered packs), Indian Red (three different numbered packs)
- FO Venetian Red and Russet (two different numbered packs), Khaki
- BI Venetian Red and Russet (two different numbered packs), Indian Red, Khaki.
- FA Blue and Russet as introduced 1929, Blue and Cream as repainted in 1932
- W No. 462 Fettle's Training Car, W No. 547 Way and Works, L No. 836 Electrical Branch
- RG Greyhound car Red and Russet (two different numbered packs), Indian Red, (two different numbered packs).
- HFO No. 1165 Khaki

Model wise, these coaches will find a home on any layout set between 1895 and the 1970s.

The previous Austrains model was based on the Mansard roofed version (sets 28-59), introduced between 1895-1910 for Sydney suburban service.

Models reviewed: CCA in Indian red and Tuscan and Russet livery, FA in Tuscan and Russet livery, HFO in Indian red livery and RG in Indian red livery.

The SDS Models represented those coaches converted into 'tourist' coaches from 1929.

The 'tourist' interior has been nicely modelled.

There are subtle changes to the tooling of which will only be noted by the extremely observant. The end doorway profile has been replicated to represent that on the locally built coaches. The end of coach upper letterboard matches in height to side upper letterboard of coach. Material has been added to the underside of the end platform portion removing any un-prototypical gap. Covers have been added to the Anderson ventilators on the letterboard. The exterior end panelling on the CCA coach is correct. For the 'tourist' coaches fitted with toilets the highly detailed coach underside has two water closet (WC) chutes applied, and weathering will enhance all this detail. The

coaches depicting the VUB set feature enclosed vestibule end moulding and glazing. Furthermore, for the appropriate coaches, there is a low elliptical roof option version, in addition to the mansard roof option.

All coaches are fitted with interiors including seating and panelling between class sections.

Of special interest are the bogies; the bogie centres on Improved Guards End enclosed HFOs has been correctly lengthened by a scale 1'6". For the remainder, the bogie frames have been adjusted the suit the finer SDS wheel and axle length and adjustments to the underside of the model. The narrowing of the bogie is a significant change. The main problem with modelling the end platform coaches in HO scale is that the 'standard' model wheel and axle/axle box thickness, when added together, is wider than the scale prototype width of the end

platform coach. On many models the bogie sides sit proud of the coach sides. By using the finer Australian Model Railway Association (AMRA) standard and short pin point axles, plus finer axle box and frame mouldings, the SDS model is better presented.

The end platform handrail detail is fine; excellent even, and reasonably strong when accidentally bumped.

Just as important, the models have been given the excellent SDS finish in paint (colour and application) and coach coding. These are delightfully finished models; some roofs may be improved with weathering, but the colour schemes replicated are all backed up with photographic evidence. There will always be an argument as to the correct hue of Indian and Tuscan red and the Russett and Red livery, but there is nothing garish in the SDS offering. The

coach coding is delightfully applied; the light hue applied for the number and the darker shadowing. Easy to read, for those of us who need to make sure the right coach is in the train consist, one of the many benefits of modern model manufacturing!

For this reviewer, the end platform coach is a very important NSWGR model. It was a rake of these coaches (built by Phil Kelly) on display at a late 1960s Sydney Model Railway Exhibition that enthused other modellers to model the NSWGR. These accurate models, offered in so many period liveries, could be the basis for many layouts into the future. Probably good enough to last into the next century.

Bob Gallagher



CCA coach in Tuscan and Russett livery.



RG in Indian Red livery, passenger side.



RG in Indian Red livery, kennel side.



Coach underframe detail.



Elliptical roof version.

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▼ *CCA coach ends.*

► *Coach end detail.*



Recent Releases

Auscision Models N and HO scale

Has released the following models:
HO scale NR34 in Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) livery, r-t-r with and without sound and DCC.

► NR34 in RAP livery.

N scale Manildra flour hopper wagon MGFH r-t-r, available in single wagon packs in the following liveries: Blue and silver two numbers, weathered two numbers and weathered with seven different face billboards.

MGFH No. 1709-Q with face billboard 'Daryl "rum" Henschke'.

HO scale New South Wales Government Railways (NSWGR) 421 class locomotive r-t-r with and without sound. Available in the following liveries: NSWGR Indian red with redlining 42101, 42104 and 42102 with first through East to West panel. NSWGR Indian red with redlining and duck egg logo 42106 and 42107. NSWGR Indian red with redlining, duck egg logo and no pin stripes 42108 and 42110. NSWGR Indian red with white L7 logo 42101. NSWGR Indian red austerity with white L7 logo 42103 and 42108. NSWGR reverse 41204 and 42107. State Rail Authority of New South Wales (SRA of NSW) Candy with red roof and yellow L7 logo 42102. Candy with grey roof and yellow L7 logo 42107. Northern Rivers Railroad (NRR) blue orange and yellow 42109. Queensland Rail (QR) National eagle 42103. Aurizon (NRR patch) 42107. Chumrail restored Candy with white L7 'Chumster' 42103 and restored NRR 42105.

▼ 42101 in NSWGR Indian red livery'.

HO scale V/Line N class locomotive r-t-r with and without sound and DCC in V/Line PTV purple and yellow livery with Southern Shorthaul Railroad (SSR) patch, two numbers.

N466 'City of Warrnambool' in V/Line PTV SSR patch livery.

HO scale SSR BGKF grain hopper wagons r-t-r, in four wagon packs available in the following liveries: Faded SRA of NSW red with SSR logos (two different numbered packs). With and without black sides and faded SRA of NSW red with XCS bogies per broad gauge Victorian operations (two different numbered packs). Faded SRA of NSW with graffiti available in nine different single wagon packs. With and without black sides and faded SRA of NSW red with XCS bogies and graffiti per broad gauge Victorian operations in seven different single wagon packs.

SSR BGKF No. 1111-L in faded SRA of NSW red with XCS bogies and graffiti.



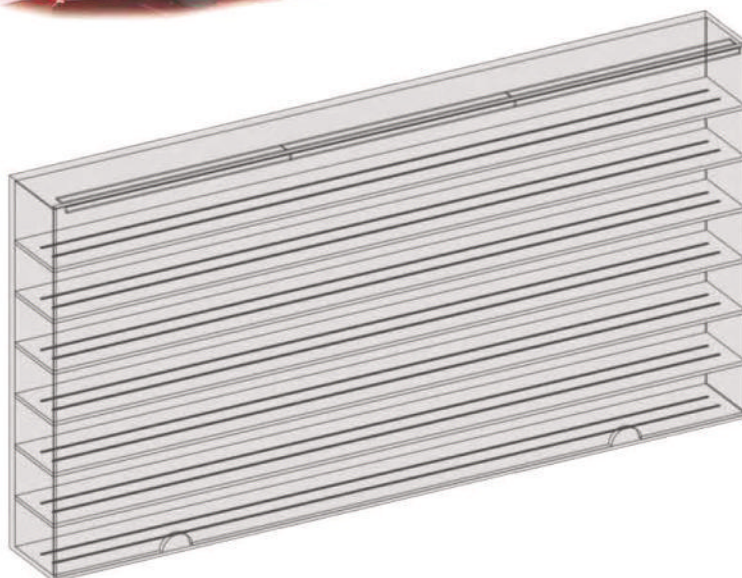
HO scale Mercedes Benz O305 MkII suburban bus, available in single packs in the following liveries: Public Transport Commission (PTC) blue and white with blue L7 logo. PTC 500th Mercedes Benz bus, red and white with blue L7 logo. PTC Sydney Explorer red with blue L7 logo, Urban Transport Authority 750th Mercedes Benz bus blue and white with Blue L7 logo. State Transit Authority (STA) Sydney Buses blue and white (PTC). STA Sydney Buses blue, white and red corporate livery. STA Newcastle Buses blue and white (PTC). STA Sydney Buses silver, black and blue 'Silver Service'.

Mercedes Benz PTC bus in Sydney Explorer livery.



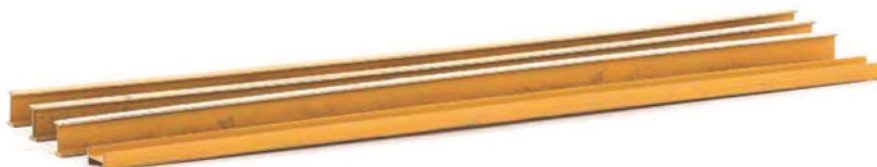
HO scale single and wall hung display cases. Single display cases are available in the following sizes. 20cm, 25cm, 30cm, 40cm, 50cm, 60cm, 100cm and 120cm Note cases 100cm long and above are only available in store (Aussie modeller). Wall hung display cases (dimensions length 93cm by height 54cm and depth 6cm) are available in three colours, black, white and Clear with a mirror finish. Features include: Acrylic construction, front door with hinge, wheel flange grooves in each shelf, holds up to 28 Locomotives or wagons and includes mounting screws.

Wall hung display case, digital rendering.



Wagon loads to suit the HO scale r-t-r A00X (GOX) open wagon. Loads include: H frame steel loads in steel and rust colour, steel wire load, pipe load in silver, yellow and black. Telegraph pole loads in brown and green colour.

▼ H frame steel loads in rust colour.



Pipe load silver colour.



Wire load.



Coil cradles available in three colours four per pack, and coils are also available in five sizes five per pack.

Refer: <https://www.auscisionmodels.com.au/>

A collection of various sizes of steel coils.



Recent Releases

Greg's 3D trucks and trains.

Aimed squarely at the toy market, these models are designed to use standard wooden play track such as the Lillabo series from Ikea refer: <https://www.ikea.com/au/en/cat/lillabo-series-11673/>

All models are 3D printed in colour so they are safe for the rough treatment that little ones inflict on their toys. Available with magnetic couplers or knuckle couplers, their catalogue includes shunters, locomotives, wagons, coaches and trams. Currently in development is an SRA of NSW XPT set. If you want to un-fairly influence your children, grand children or young family members to create future little modellers, these models should do the trick. Refer: <https://gregs-trains.square.site/>



Melbourne Comeng in metro livery.



Melbourne W class tram.



Melbourne A class tram.



V/Line PTV N class locomotive.



Victorian Railways Walker railcar.



Victorian Railways B class locomotive.



South Australian Railways 300 class railcar and 820 class trailer.



Melbourne red rattler.



Victorian Railways first series 'flat top' T class in pink and VR livery.



Victorian Railways F class shunter and S class locomotive.



MRW Models HO scale

Has developed an extensive range of truck trailer kits to suit various eras including 40ft trailers (1980s – 1990s) right through to ultra modern high capacity road freight trailers. Email: mrwmodels@gmail.com

Currently available are the following kits (prime movers are not included):

- Skel tri single and Quad single 40ft
- Skel b-double
- Skel 40/40, tri/tri, quad/tri and quad/quad
- Curtainside and B Ezi-liner -double
- Dolly two axle short and long drawbar
- Dolly tri long drawbar
- Flattop single and spilt tri-axle
- Flattop b-double
- Van single, b-double and Quad
- Drop deck double roadtrain and b-triple
- A-double skel with and without tri-axle dolly
- Flattop 19m B-double
- Flattop rigid body with trailer
- Tautliner B-double
- Skel 4A Single
- Skel single suitable for 20ft to 48ft
- Drop deck 36 pallet 4.6m high b-double and b-triple
- Flattop extendable tri-axle
- Flattop 80s/90s 2A 40ft.
- Container 20ft blank



T-liner B-triples.



High productivity B-double quad - quad.



Pocket flattop B-double 19m.



Quad axle Taughtliner trailer.



1990s twin axle flattop trailer.

Roundhouse Models HO scale

Has release the following vehicles as 3D printed kits

- Ford Falcon 2006 XR8 ute
 - Nissan Navara 2020 dualcab ute
 - Holden Special Vehicles VF 2015 Maloo ute
 - Toyota Landcruiser J40 ute
- Refer: <https://www.roundhousemodels.com.au/shop>



Ford Falcon 2006 XR8 ute.



Nissan Navara 2020 dualcab ute.



Holden Special Vehicles VF 2015 Maloo ute.



Toyota Landcruiser J40 ute.

Aurora Trains HO and HO $\frac{3}{2}$

Has in development a Queensland Railways (QR) trestle bridge kit, available in HO (standard gauge width) and HO $\frac{3}{2}$.



Engineering example of Aurora Trains QR trestle bridge kit, locomotive shown for display only, HO $\frac{3}{2}$ version shown.

Bergs Hobbies HO scale

Minimodels has announced a new release of r-t-r Sydney suburban electric parcel vans, delivery is expected in the 2nd half of 2026.

This expanded range includes operating marker lights and the newly tooled F bogie. Models will be DCC ready with an eight pin socket and will be available in single van packs.

Liveries produced include:

- Tuscan red with 'Fast Electric Parcels Van' lettering with buff lines, with and without lines on doors or headboard.
- Tuscan red with 'Parcels Van' lettering with duck egg logo
- Public Transport Commission of New South Wales blue and white
- Indian red with and without whiskers with white L7 logo, with and without 'Blue Spot Parcels' or 'TrackFast' lettering
- Candy ELCAR or Yellow Hornsby super shunter No. C3660

IDR Models

Have received a painted pilot model of their r-t-r Victorian Railways F class shunting locomotive in State Electric Commission Brunswick green livery.

Painted pilot model locomotive SEC3 in Brunswick green livery.



Auscision Models HO scale

Have received painted pilot models of their modern coils and coil steel containers for evaluation.



Painted pilot model 20ft coil container and jumbo coil.

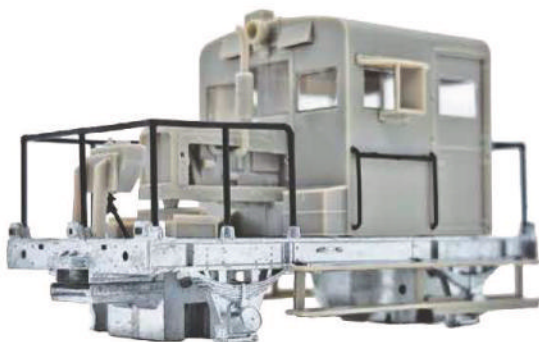


Painted pilot model matched 20ft coil containers with rust coloured coils.

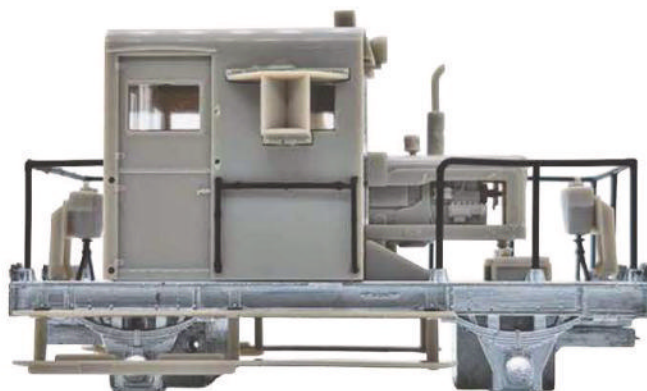
Ixion Model Railways HO scale

Have received images of the first test shots of their Victorian Railways (VR) RT shunting tractor.

Liveries for the RT model are being finalised and expect a pilot model to arrive soon for evaluation



Engineering test shots of VR RT shunting tractor.



Lyndons Trains HO scale

Have developed three Victorian Railways wagon kits.
H2C auto coupler transport wagon, Workmans shower wagon and Workmans sleeper wagon.

Also developed is a New South Wales Government Railways (NSWGR) BKF car carrier wagon kit, this kit represents the 49ft version.



VR workman's sleeper wagon, completed kit shown.



NSWGR BKF car carrier wagon, completed kit shown.

On Track Models HO scale

Have signed off on the tooling for the r-t-r Pacific National 94 class locomotive, and shortly after expect to confirm a production slot.

The next run of NSWGR supplementary interurban coaches will include a new tooled MH coach.

The 40ft curtain sided containers are currently scheduled for production and expect to advise on a delivery date when available.



NSWGR MH coach, digital rendering.

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Mountain View Workshops HO and N scale

Have developed a boiler load, this will be available in HO and N scale.
Email: mountainviewworkshops@hotmail.com



Boiler load pre production pilot model.

MRW Models HO scale

Has developed modern grain dumper trailers and expect them to be available soon. Email: mrwmodels@gmail.com



Modern grain dumper trailer kit, pre production example.

Powerline Models HO scale

The next production run of the r-t-r Mkl NSWGR 48 Class locomotive should be available by the time of publication.

Redfern Models HO scale

A new release is their 1855 Sydney Railway Company 3rd Class Carriage Kit

These carriages were imported from Wright & Sons of England and played a key role in the opening of the first railway line from Sydney to Parramatta in 1855

Refer: <https://redfernworks.com.au/?s=1855+3rd>



Completed kit of the 1855 Sydney Railway Company 3rd Class carriage.

TrainOrama HO scale

The factory has merged the production runs of the r-t-r VR S Class and NSWGR 42 Class locomotives together; With the joint production completion date scheduled for the end of August, 2026.

The provision of Kadee couplers to their factory has been delayed, however, the factory has advised that this won't affect production timing going forward.

The expected shipment plan will allow for four weeks in September for transit by sea cargo vessel, 10 days unloading and customs clearance. This schedule should hopefully see the release of both the VR S Class and NSWGR 42 Class locomotives in time for the October, 2026 Rosehill Gardens 'Great Model Train Show', if not before.

The books are now open for pre ordering through AlcoWorld in Ingleburn NSW, with 'no securing deposit' being required.

Train World – County Lines HO scale

Have received 3D prints of their VR Z, ZL, ZLP and C series guards vans. Newly announced is the production of the VR 64ft BW and ABW coaches and have received 3D prints of their designs.



3D prints of VR 64ft BW coaches and interior of the ABW coach.



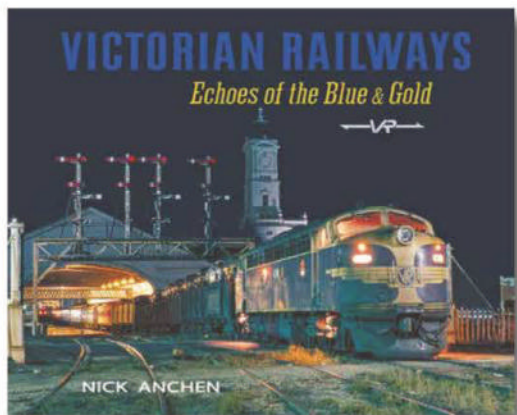
3D prints of VR ZLP guards van (top) and C series guards van and underframe detail.

Sierra Publishing

Is expected to release a new publication, Victorian Railways 'Echoes of the Blue and Gold', by Nick Anchen, in June 2026

The Victorian Railways of the 1960s and 1970s remained important to everyday people, with many country branch lines still in operation, and classic express trains gracing the rails.

The final decades of the famed blue and gold era were captured in living colour by some of Australia's most artistic photographers.



Cover of the forthcoming publication, Victorian Railways 'Echoes of the Blue and Gold', by Nick Anchen.

SDS Models HO scale

Have received a painted pilot model of their r-t-r Queensland Rail 2800 class in the most recent Aurizon livery and is currently being evaluated.



Painted pilot model locomotive No. 2812 in current overall yellow Aurizon livery.

Flat Faded Finish

SDS Models has introduced a locomotive ordering option, appropriately monikered, Flat Faded Finish. Based on prototypical states of specific road numbers, allowing the modeller to go to the 'next level' with their weathering, with the difficult fading and patch markings etc being already accomplished. The first locomotive to be offered this treatment is the State Rail Authority of New South Wales 81 class locomotive, these flat faded finish versions will be available in the next run.



Locomotive No. 8114, in faded and patched National Rail charcoal livery with blue air conditioner, digital rendering.



Locomotive No. 8118, in faded Pacific National intermodal livery with blue air conditioner, digital rendering.

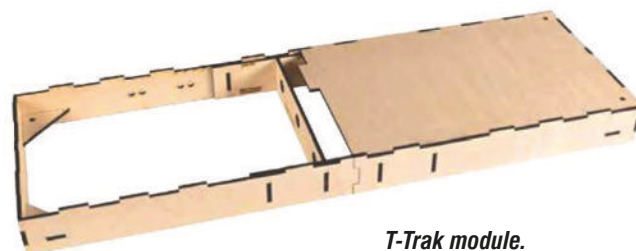


Locomotive No. 8145, in faded Pacific National bulk livery with blue cab roof and air conditioner, digital rendering.

Vision N scale

Have developed T-Trak module kits, features of these modules include: Pre-position markings for track alignment, adjustable legs are included and modules are made from 6mm plywood

Refer: <https://www.visionnscale.com.au/>



T-Trak module.

Vale

John Peter Rumming

31st of July 1968 – 5th of March 2026

I believe from a young age, John was an avid railway modeller and when I met him in 1988 - 1989 – we became instant friends. He was getting into Australian railway modelling (which I'd already begun doing too at that time), so we joined forces to create a big collection of 'Aussie' N scale models. John and myself were Western Australian based modellers, and as far as we knew, what we were modelling hadn't been achieved in N scale before.

Our first exhibition layout was called 'Gunnadoo' where we displayed John's and my collection of 'Aussie' N scale trains. This layout was first exhibited at the 1990 Australian Model Railway Association of Western Australia (AMRA WA) model railway exhibition. John displayed his WA tanker trains etc and I had several NSW trains along with my 'Indian Pacific' passenger train. By the mid 1990s we'd built another layout that was called 'Mt Kevrojon' this was the initial version of the layout which we later rebuilt by the end of the 1990s. In the mid 1990s John had developed skills in casting and made his 1st coach, which turned out nicely. He then embarked on casting about four other wagon types and together we operated an impressive 12 metre long N scale goods train which was using 134 out of 144 cast wagons, that we had at the time. John also cast three Westrail 'P' class diesel locomotive bodies with a Bachmann Dash 8/9 locomotive mechanism, which he'd used to haul that super long goods train. In the early 2000s John learned how to make brass etchings and water slide decals. John was asked by other N scale modellers, if he could



John Rumming, photo Kevin Bradney

make some of his cast wagons available for sale, which he did at a reasonable cost. In 2020 John started 3D printing and so his reputation flourished amongst the model railway community. John attended several N scale conventions and various model railway exhibitions around Australia. Modellers got to know him and asking for some of his products, with several of his models being purchased by modellers in NSW, Queensland, Victoria and South Australia.

John also had a big interest in computing and was my 'Go-to' guy for any computer issues. He had set up his own website and he had given me a copy of the same programme to help me create my own website. John also had a You Tube channel (Nuggles58). For around 38 years John and myself were always a team, whether we exhibited separately or together at the Perth model railway exhibition. John will be greatly and sadly missed in WA and across much of Australia too. He was like a brother to me and may he rest in Peace.

Kevin Bradney

Mailbag

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

Your Comment 'What's in a name - brand identity for young modellers' in the February 2026 issue of the AMRM presents a good debate about our hobby and how many youngsters recognise prototype liveries and brands and then possibly purchase the model of the prototype to join our hobby.

However, you have dropped the biggest hint as to why youngsters or indeed their parents find it hard to take up our hobby "However is there a gap in the market? Not every parent can afford or even need a highly detailed r-t-r model, is there model that can be a stepping stone, that is cheaper, more robust, more suitable to a younger modeller?"

The hobby in Australia has gone from strength to strength but it has also led to a group of youngsters and their parents who are hesitant to get into it because of the cost factor. Who remembers at one time when New South Wales Government Railways (NSWGR) coaches were retailing between \$55.00 to \$75.00 and now, they retail for \$150.00 because they are detailed. Also, the Australian prototype locomotives that at one time Lima produced were costing between \$75.00 to \$150.00 are now from \$300.00 upwards because they are also detailed and if you want the full kaboodle (i.e. sound and lights etc.) you pay more than \$400.00.

People reading this might say "its not up to the hobby to subsidise those that cannot afford it". Well the reality is that some overseas manufacturers seem to do things differently, they actually produce a model, have a small bag of detailed parts that the modeller themselves affix to the model with clear instructions on where to put them, hence the locomotive or even freight wagon or coach is sold at a price that the new modeller can enter it without breaking the money box- why Australian manufacturers are not doing this?

We have seen the train set market also change, towards presentation rather than price point.

I remember growing up in the 1980s and getting a train set each year for three years. It was produced by Lima and these sets whilst some coaches were not detailed they retailed at department stores from \$95.00 to \$135.00. The CountryLink XPT proved to be the most expensive of the lot. However, what was interesting was that LIMA sold its trainsets alongside its competitor Lifelike whom at the time were known for pricing between \$50.00 to \$75.00. They knew their train sets would sell well for the Christmas market hence some of the combinations for their rollingstock were sometimes not like the prototype.

Most modellers I know (probably even AMRM readers) remember the joy of getting

a train set for Christmas or a birthday present and having the time of your life setting it up and playing with it. If you had a parent or grandparent who had an interest also, you would attend model railway exhibitions to whet your appetite even more. Your parent or grandparent would help you build your first layout and smile at how much fun you are having compared to some other teenagers your age.

The problem is that the hobby has I think lost focus at times, failing to recognise that once the baby boomers disappear, the hobby will need to reset itself to encourage the next generation to take up our hobby. Manufacturers lost focus in thinking that every modeller in Australia wants a super-detailed model and will pay any price for it.

We need Australian manufacturers to take a step back and realise that not everyone can afford the super-detailed models that they produce, and that producing a train set with less detail but which retails for between \$150.00 to \$300.00 might also encourage modellers to enter the hobby, particularly if good marketing is provided. Combined with great after-sales service, these new modellers might in fact become the next generation of layout builders.

*David Beres
Holden Hill SA*

EXHIBITIONS & EXPOS

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 Road, Wayville.

Website: www.modelrailwayshow.org.au

GLEN WAVERLEY – VIC. June 6–8, 2026. Waverley Model Railway Club Annual Exhibition, Brandon Park Community Centre, 649 Ferntree Gully Road, Glen Waverley, VIC. 10am–5pm (Sat & Sun) 10am–4pm (Mon). Adults \$15, Children \$6, Family \$35.

Details: exhibitions@waverleymrc.org.au

PERTH – WA. June 20–21, 2026. Perth Model Railway Exhibition. Silver Jubilee Pavilion, Claremont Showground. Open: 9.30am–4.30pm (Sat & Sun). Tickets through TryBooking and at door.

Find us on Facebook

ZILLMERE – QLD. July 4–5, 2026. AMRA Qld Inc. Annual Brisbane Model Train Show 2026. Northside Indoor Sports Centre 20 Cambewarra Street, Zillmere, QLD. Adults \$20, Concession \$15. Children under 16 free if accompanied by an adult.

Tickets only available at the door on show days.

STAWELL – VIC. July 11–12, 2026. Grampian Model Railroaders Inc. SES Hall Sloane St Stawell, VIC. Open: 9.30am–5pm (Sat), 10am–4pm (Sun). Enquiries: Stuart 0438 545 233

Website: www.gmrinc.org.au

DEE WHY – NSW. July 25–26, 2026. North Shore Railway Modellers Annual Exhibition PCYC, 40 Kingsway, Dee Why. Email: exhibition@nsrma.com Website: www.nsrma.com

BRAYBROOK – VIC. August 1–2, 2026. Sunshine Model Railway Club Annual Model Train Exhibition. Braybrook Secondary College Sports Stadium, Burke Street Braybrook, VIC. 9.30am–5pm (Sat), 9.30–4pm (Sun). Adults \$10 Kids Free. Free parking. Contact: Ted 03 9311 8389 or Phil 0402 314 537. Facebook or Website: www.sunshinemrc.org.au

CAULFIELD – VIC. August 8–9, 2026. AMR Assoc. Vic Branch. Caulfield Racecourse, Station Street, Caulfield, VIC. Open: 9am–5pm (Sat), 9am–4pm (Sun). Enquiries: Clubrooms: (03) 9885 7034. Email: exhibitionamravic@gmail.com

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

GOULBURN – NSW. August 29–30, 2026. The Georges River Model Railway Club 3rd Goulburn Model Expo, Veolia Arena, Braidwood Road, Goulburn, NSW. Open: 9am–5pm (Sat), 9am–4pm (Sun). Adults \$15, Concession \$10. Children under 12 free. Website: www.goulburnmodelexpo.com.au

ROSEHILL – NSW. October 24–25, 2026. Great Train Show, Grand Pavilion, Rosehill Gardens Racecourse, Entry from 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.

Email: exhibition@eppingmodelrailway.org.au

Website: www.greattrainshow.com.au

Facebook: The Great Train Show Sydney.

SEMINARS & CONVENTIONS

ADELAIDE – SA. August 21–23, 2026. The 19th National N Scale Convention is being held in Adelaide in August. This three-day event will be at the Hopgood Theatre, located in the southern suburb of Noarlunga. For delegate and exhibitor registrations, partner program and merchandise information see Convention Website: www.nscaleconventions.au

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

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

ARMIDALE – NSW. November 21–22, 2026. New England Convention. Armidale Bowling Club, Dumaresq Street, Armidale. Open: 9am–5pm (Sat), 9am–3pm (Sun). Contact: Chris 0407 313 587. Website: www.nemrc.net

SALE DAYS

EPPING – NSW. July 25, 2026. Model Railway Market Day, Epping Creative Centre, Dence Park, 26 Stanley 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 Drive, Slacks Creek, QLD. Open: 8.30am–1pm (Sun). Adults \$5 Kids under 12 free. No cost to sellers. Please pre book by emailing your details to president@ldmrc.com. Seller's setup from 7am.

OPEN DAYS

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

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

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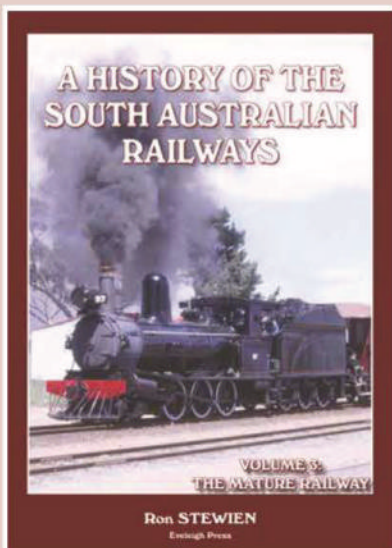
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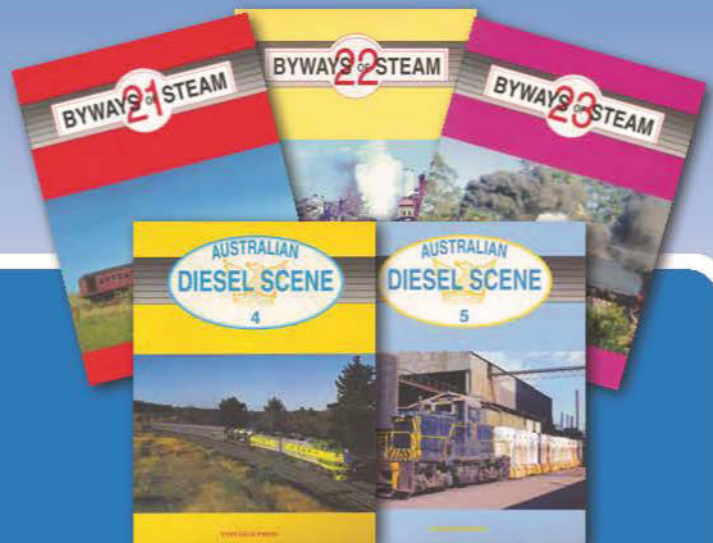
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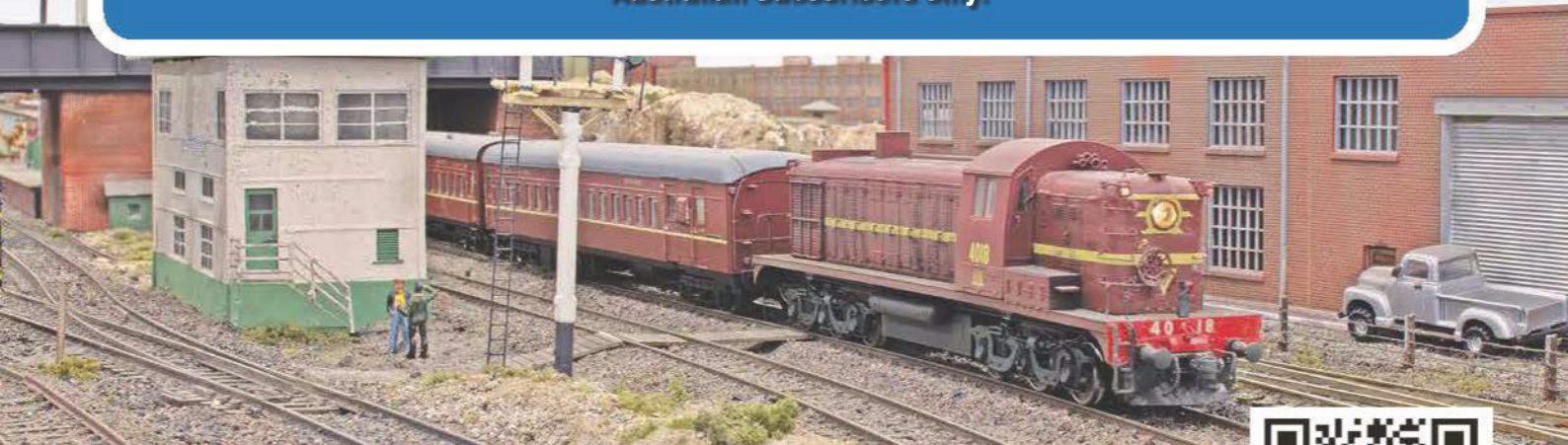
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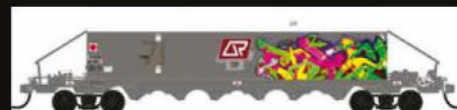
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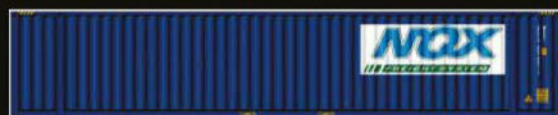
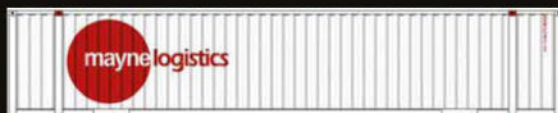
The VAK class coal hoppers were introduced in 1979 to upgrade an aging VO fleet & built in four batches. The last batch completed in 1981. All were converted to the VAKM class in 1991 with the fitting of tiebars & some converted in 2005 as the VAKMB class when fitted with straight airbrakes. Quick drop doors were fitted in 2006 becoming the VAKQ Class. VGK & VAKG class grain hoppers were converted from VAK coal hoppers in 2001. They were designed to replace WHE open wagons in 2001 and are fitted with *ecofab* fibreglass lids. Most were modified in 2011 as the VGKM class.

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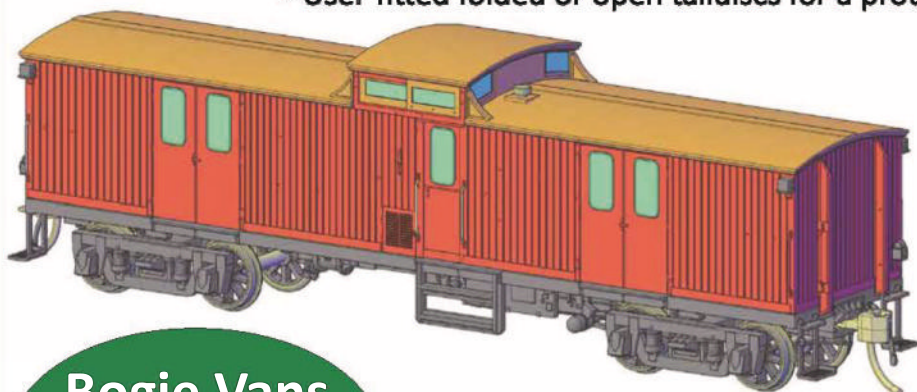
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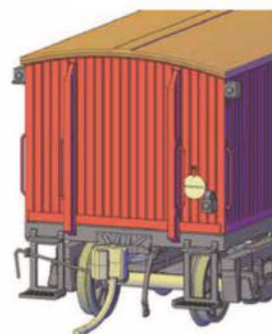


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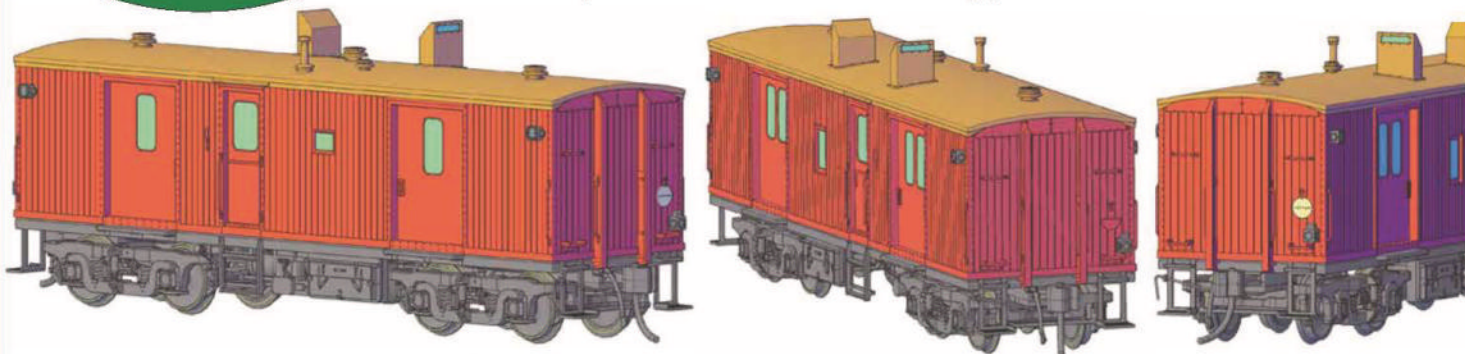


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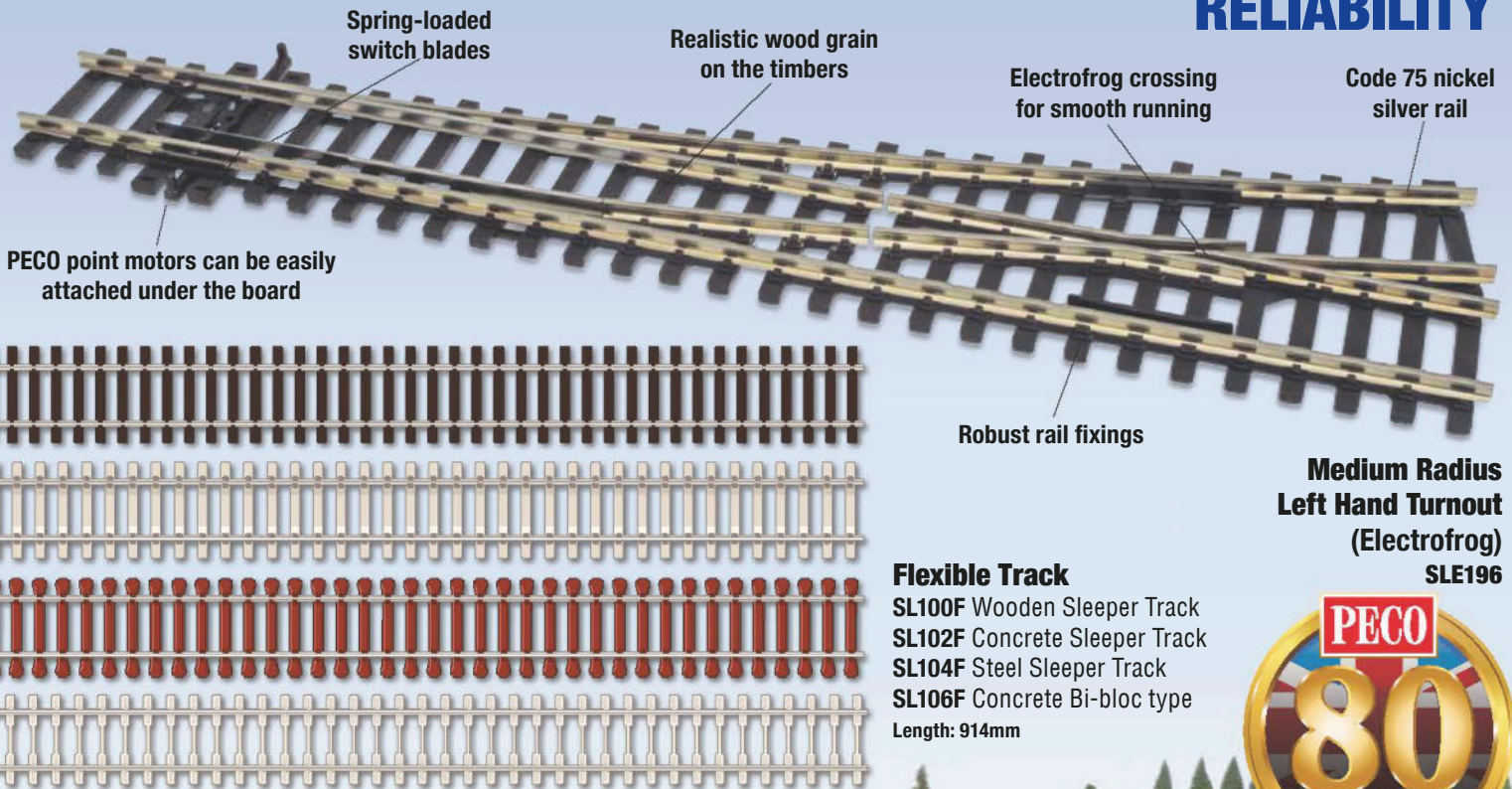


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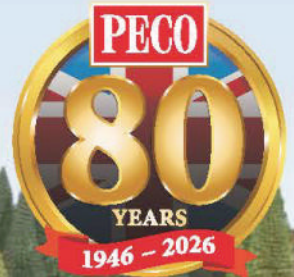
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