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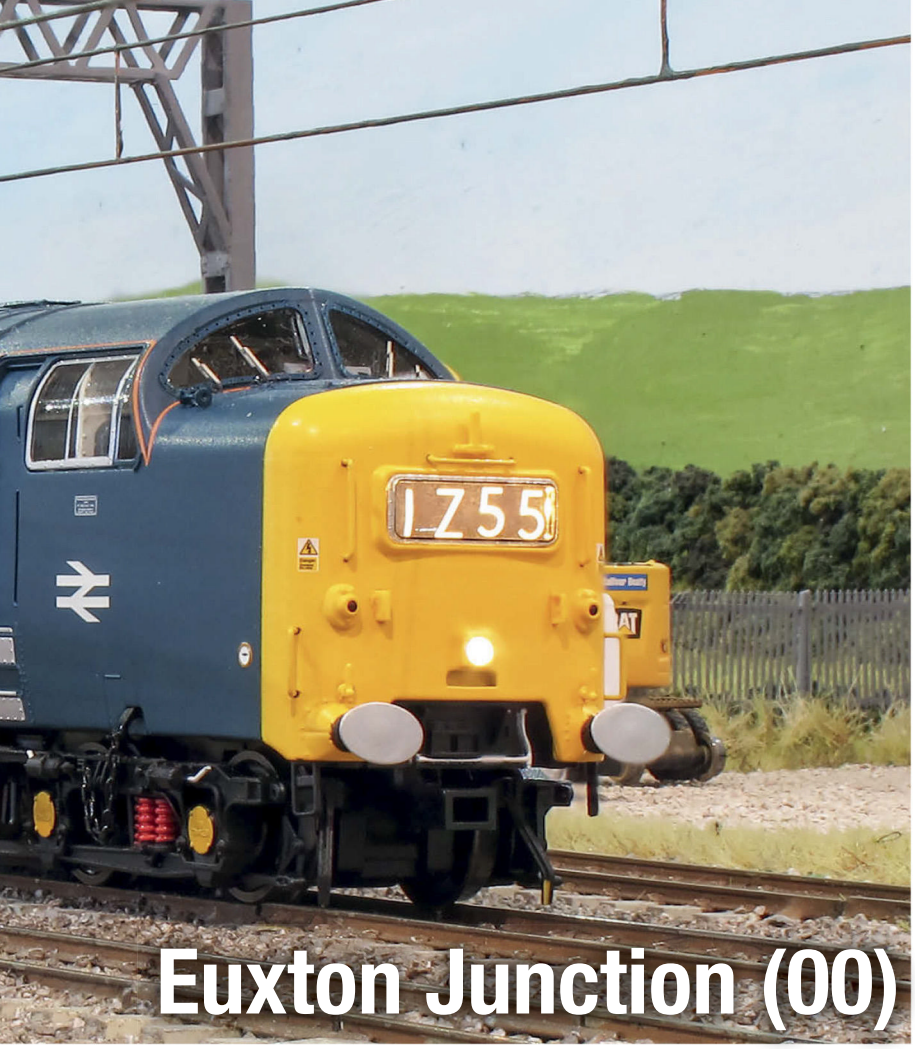
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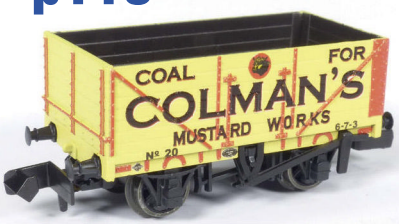


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BRITISH RAILWAY MODELLING
BRM

Welcome

to March

Why am I reading the March issue in January?"

It's a question we often get asked, and the answer is that BRM has 13 issues a year, with the additional Spring issue following after March. To fit in the 13th, the print schedules are pushed forward slightly throughout the year, with this March issue being the most obvious occasion of being out of 'sync' with the calendar year.

We've been doing the Spring issue for many years, and we hope you all enjoy getting that extra modelling fix over the 12 months. Attention has just moved to Spring 2023, and as there are some fantastic layouts and practical features planned, you're not going to want to miss it!

But before we get too ahead of ourselves, we have a March 2023 issue to enjoy.

When it comes to layouts, there's something for everyone in this issue, with modern locomotives, steam and diesels all featuring, as well as OO, N, S and P4 gauges. 'Euxton Junction' is our cover feature this month, and the layout features impressive modelling, including the intricate overhead equipment, which few dare to tackle.

'Tuemyll Junction' is up next, which showcases a stunning viaduct as its centrepiece. Although incredibly detailed, it wasn't as difficult to construct as you may imagine, albeit very time-consuming for its builder. 'Abergavenny Blackbrook', the new layout project from Newport Model Railway Society, also features in this issue and provides the platform to run some fantastic rolling stock.

Our final layout of the issue is 'Arcadia', a wonderful 'S' gauge layout abounding with detail. If you're planning to attend the London Festival of Railway Modelling, you'll be able to see- 'Arcadia', plus 40 other great layouts, for yourself. We've included a preview of the show on pages 80-83 and tickets are on sale now. Don't forget, if you book in advance, you'll gain early entry to the show, plus save a little money on some tickets.

Show season for us kicks off at The Festival of British Railway Modelling next month, on February 11-12, we hope to see you there! For more information about our shows, head to *www.model-railway-shows.co.uk.*

The BRM team

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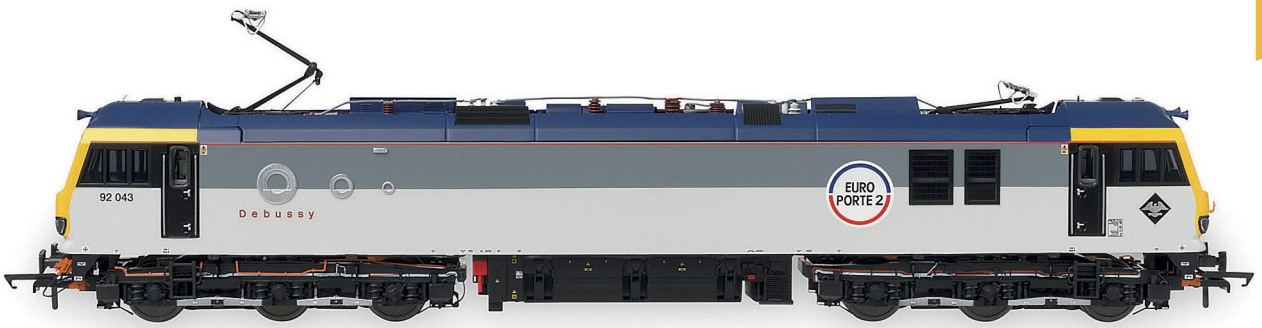
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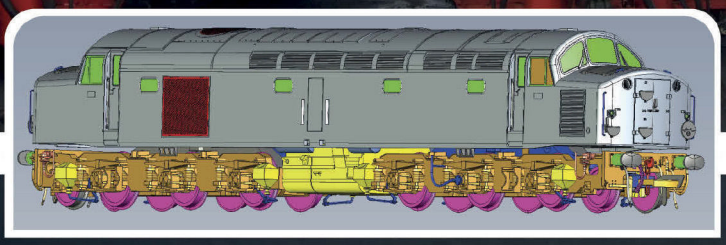


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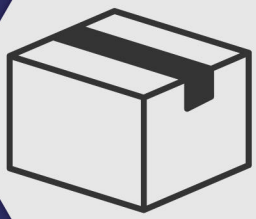
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N SCALE PN104

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N Scale
2 blocks of houses



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TERRACED HOUSES BRICK
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N SCALE PN103

00 Scale
1 block of houses
N Scale
2 blocks of houses





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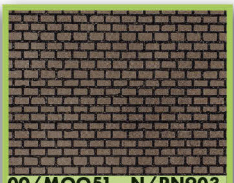
N Scale contains 2 Corner Shops in each kit, with the option to make 1 into a pub.





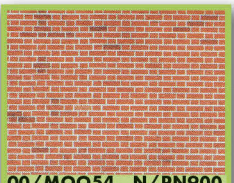
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00/MOO53
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RED BRICK

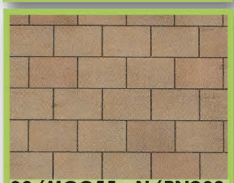
Individual Paving Slabs (00 scale only)



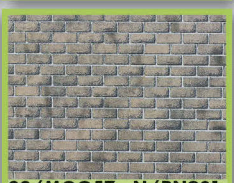
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00/MOO55 N/PN903
PAVING SHEETS


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00/MOO57 N/PN901
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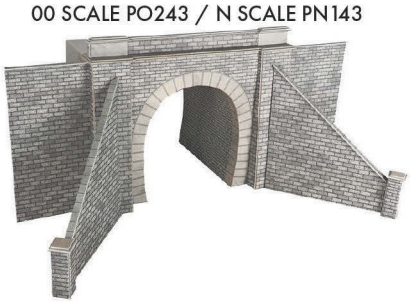


RAILWAY ARCHES
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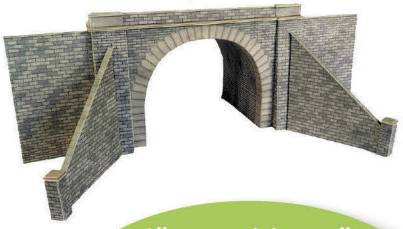


Under the arches in-fills. Designed to fit with the Viaducts kits. Comes with different designs and signs, 8 per kit. Can be used as fronts or can be combined back to back to create a complete under arch unit. **Viaduct not included.**

SINGLE TRACK TUNNEL ENTRANCE
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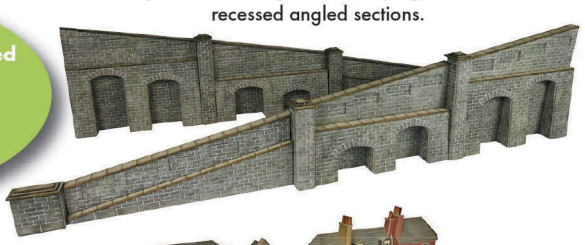
DOUBLE TRACK TUNNEL ENTRANCE
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TAPERED END WALLS - STONE & RED BRICK
00 SCALE STONE PO249 / 00 SCALE BRICK PO248
N SCALE STONE PN149 / N SCALE BRICK PN148



A pair of matching realistic sloping walls with recessed angled sections.

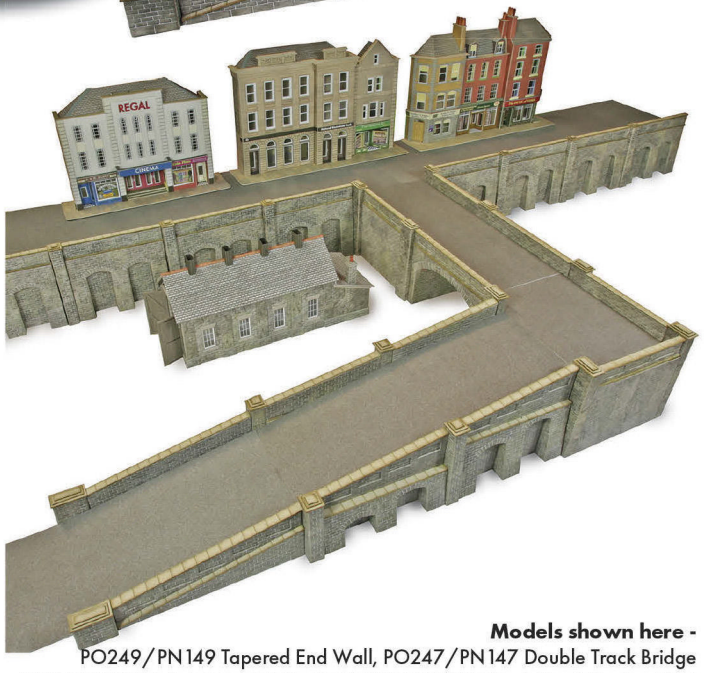


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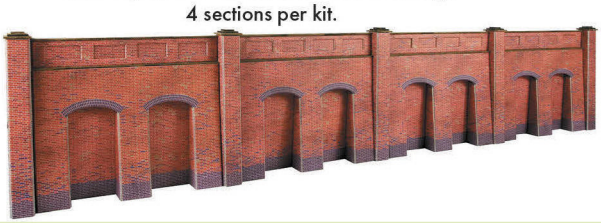
DOUBLE TRACK BRIDGE - STONE & RED BRICK
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N SCALE STONE PN147 / N SCALE BRICK PN146







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4 sections per kit.



Models shown here -
PO249/PN149 Tapered End Wall, PO247/PN147 Double Track Bridge
PO245/PN144 Retaining Wall x 2, PO332/PN932 Single Track Engine Shed
PO206/PN170 Cinema, PO271/PN971 Bank & Shop
PO205/PN972 Pub & Shop Fronts

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Stage: In production **Due:** Q1 2023
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Class 26/1
Stage: Engineering Sample **Due:** Q2 2023
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Class 31
Stage: Engineering Samples **Due:** Q2 2023
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Class 47
Stage: Engineering Sample **Due:** Q1 2023
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Stage: CADs **Due:** Q4 2023
Price: from £189.99 **Digital:** 21-pin



BR NBL Prototype 10800
Stage: Decorated Samples **Due:** 2023
Price: from £216.71 **Digital:** 21-pin

OO Gauge Multiple Units



Class 104 DMU
Stage: Engineering Samples **Due:** TBC 2023
Price: from £330.65 **Digital:** 21-pin

OO Gauge Rolling Stock



BR Mk1 Suburbans
Stage: Engineering Samples **Due:** Q3 2023
Price: £59.95 each **Digital:** N/A



BR Mk2B Coaches
Stage: Deco Samples **Due:** Q1 2023
Price: £59.95 each **Digital:** Yes



GWR 'Toplight City' Coaches
Stage: Deco Bodyshells **Due:** 2023
Price: £55.08 **Digital:** 6-pin



Wisbech & Upwell Tramcars
Stage: Engineering Samples **Due:** Q2 2023
Price: £63.71 **Digital:** N/A



Siphon G Vans
Stage: Deco Samples **Due:** Q1 2023
Price: £54.95 **Digital:** N/A



GWR B-Set Coaches
Stage: CADs **Due:** Q4 23/ Q1 24
Price: £144.45 (2 pack) **Digital:** N/A



SECR 6-wheel Brake Van
Stage: Early sample **Due:** Q1 2023
Price: £33.96 each **Digital:** N/A



14t Air Ministry Tank Wagons
Stage: CADs **Due:** Q3 2023
Price: £32.13 **Digital:** N/A



FNA-D Nuclear Flask Wagons
Stage: Engineering Samples **Due:** Q3 2023
Price: £74.95 (2-pack) **Digital:** N/A



SR 10t Banana Vans
Stage: Engineering Samples **Due:** Q4 2023
Price: £84.95 (3-pack) **Digital:** N/A



NER 20t Coal Hoppers
Stage: Engineering Samples **Due:** Q1 2024
Price: £84.95 (3-pack) **Digital:** N/A



JHA P&D Hoppers
Stage: CADs **Due:** Q3 2023
Price: from £46.75 **Digital:** 6-pin

N Gauge Steam Locos



LSWR Class M7 0-4-4T Retool
Stage: Deco Samples **Due:** Q1 2023
Price: from £89.92 **Digital:** PCB swap



SR 'Light Pacific' 4-6-2
Stage: CADs **Due:** Q1/2 2023
Price: from £189.98 **Digital:** 18-pin



Class 63xx Mogul 2-6-0
Stage: CADs **Due:** Q1 2024
Price: from £156.06 **Digital:** 18-pin



Class 2MT Ivatt 2-6-2T Retool
Stage: Engineering Sample **Due:** Q3 2023
Price: from £93.50 **Digital:** PCB Swap

N Gauge Diesel Locos



Class 44 'Peak'
Stage: CADs **Due:** 2023
Price: TBC **Digital:** 18-pin



Class 59
Stage: Engineering Samples **Due:** Q1 2023
Price: from £146.88 **Digital:** 18-pin



Class 43 HST (Updated Batch)
Stage: Engineering Sample **Due:** Q2/3 2023
Price: from £156.06 **Digital:** 18-pin

N Gauge Rolling Stock



FNA-D Nuclear Flask Wagons
Stage: Engineering Sample **Due:** Q3 2023
Price: £32.95 **Digital:** N/A



SECR Wagon Packs
Stage: CADs **Due:** 2023
Price: from £59.46 **Digital:** N/A



LNER Dynamometer Car
Stage: CADs **Due:** 2023
Price: £84.95 **Digital:** N/A



OAA Open Wagons
Stage: CADs **Due:** 2023
Price: £59.45 (3 pack) **Digital:** N/A

O Gauge Steam Locos



Class J94 Austerity 0-6-0ST
Stage: Early Sample **Due:** Q2 2023
Price: from £229.50 **Digital:** 21-pin



Class B4 0-4-0T
Stage: Deco Samples **Due:** Q1 2023
Price: from £213.78 **Digital:** 21-pin



Class 3MT 2-6-2T
Stage: Early Sample **Due:** Q2 2023
Price: from £527.85 **Digital:** 21-pin

O Gauge Diesels/ Electrics



Class 37/0
Stage: Early sample **Due:** 2023
Price: £568.65 **Digital:** ESU XL

Class 45 'Peak'
Stage: Early sample **Due:** Q3 2023
Price: from £568.65 **Digital:** ESU XL

Class 55 'Deltic'
Stage: Early sample **Due:** 2023
Price: from £619.65 **Digital:** ESU XL

Class 66
Stage: Engineering Sample **Due:** Q1 2023
Price: from £308.80 **Digital:** 21-pin

Class 73 'Electro-Diesel'
Stage: Engineering Sample **Due:** 2023
Price: from £662.15 **Digital:** ESU XL

O Gauge Rolling Stock

Stroudley 4 Wheel Coaches
Stage: Deco Samples **Due:** Q1 2023
Price: from £104.52 **Digital:** Yes TBC

Mk2 & Mk2A Coaches
Stage: Prototypes **Due:** Q1 2023
Price: from £254.15 **Digital:** N/A

LMS 50ft Inspection Saloon
Stage: Engineering Sample **Due:** TBC 2023
Price: TBC **Digital:** TBC

HIA Hopper Wagons
Stage: Engineering Sample **Due:** Q2 2023
Price: £68 **Digital:** TBC

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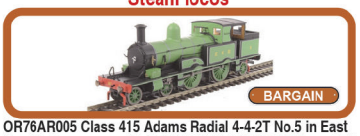
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OO Gauge (1:76 Scale)

Steam locos



OR76AR005 Class 415 Adams Radial 4-4-2T No.5 in East Kent Railway green (Oxf) (RRP £109.95)BARGAIN £74



4S-001-001S Class 78xx 'Manor' 4-6-0 7800 "Torquay Manor" in GWR green shirtbutton emblem - Digital sound fitted (Dap) £280.87



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R30039 Class E2 0-6-0T 326 in SE&CR green (Hor) £60.50



R3635 Class LN 'Lord Nelson' 4-6-0 30863 "Lord Rodney" in BR green early emblem (Hor) (RRP £205.99)BARGAIN . £150



R30232 Liverpool and Manchester Centenary (1930) Pack With 0-4-2 "Lion" and Three Coaches (Hor). £239

Steam train packs



R1285M Crash train set in Tri-ang RS30 style packaging LMS 'Jinty' loco, breakdown train and oval of track (Hor) NEW . £126

Diesel locos



2938 Class 07 423 in Army green wasp stripes (Hel) NEW . . £169.15



2935 Class 07 D2994 in BR green wasp stripes - weathered (Hel) NEW £177.65



2937 Class 07 D2998 in BR green wasp stripes (Hel) £169.15



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4D-005-001 Class 59/1 59103 "Village of Mells" in ARC (Dap) NEW £147.22
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4D-005-003 Class 59/2 59204 "Vale of Glamorgan" in National Power (Dap) NEW. £147.22
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4D-005-002 Class 59/2 59206 "John F Yeoman" in DB Schenker (Dap) NEW. £147.22
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Electric locos



R3569 Class 71 E5005 in BR blue (Hor) (RRP £206.99)BARGAIN £89

HSTs



R30098 Pair of Class 43 HST Power Cars 43004 "Caerphilly Castle" and 43155 "Rougemont Castle" in GWR Green (Hor) NEW. . . .£327



R30096 Pair of Class 43 HST Power Cars 43136 "Railway Heritage Trust" and 43189 in First Great Western Green and Gold (Hor) NEW. £327



R30218 Pair of Class 43 HST Power Cars 43400 and 43484 in RailAdventure (Hor) NEW £327

EMUs



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OO-IPA-461A IPA twin single deck car carrier roof & side covers in STVA red - pack of 4 (Rev) NEW £149.95



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OR76PIL002 Pilchard bogie engineers wagon DB990092 in BR grey (Oxf) £19

N Gauge

Steam locos



2S-017-008 Class 7MT 4-6-2 'Britannia' 70051 "Firth of Forth" in BR green late crest (Dap) NEW. £133.07

Steam train packs



2S-017-010 East Anglian train pack Class 7MT 4-6-2 "Britannia" 70039 "Sir Christopher Wren" in BR green and four Gresley teak coaches in BR crimson and cream (Dap) NEW £238.68

O Gauge (1:43 Scale)

Steam locos



H7-A3-003A Class A3 4-6-2 unnumbered single chimney, standard dome and unstreamlined corridor tender in LNER black 1941-1946 (Hat) (RRP £750)BARGAIN . . . £299
H7-A3-003B Class A3 4-6-2 unnumbered single chimney, standard dome and unstreamlined non-corridor tender in LNER black 1941-1946 (Hat) (RRP £750). . . . . BARGAIN £299

Diesel locos



2678 Class 26/1 in BR blue Inverness headlights - unnumbered (Hel). £551.65



2683 Class 26/1 26025 in BR railfreight red stripe orange cantrail stripe and Eastfield dog logo - weathered (Hel). £594.15



2679 Class 26/1 26037 in BR Blue - Weathered (Hel). .£568.65



2680 Class 26/1 in BR blue air brake equipment - unnumbered (Hel) NEW £551.65



2676 Class 26/1 in BR Green small yellow panels and tablet catcher recess - unnumbered (Hel) £551.65



2681 Class 26/1 in BR Railfreight red stripe white cantrail stripe - unnumbered (Hel) £551.65



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Coaches



H7-TC115-001 Gresley Teak coach Diagram 115 Corridor Third unnumbered in LNER Teak (Hat) (RRP £249). .BARGAIN. . . . £130
H7-TC186-002 Gresley Teak coach Diagram 186 Open Third 23956 in LNER Teak (Hat) (RRP £249) . . . . . BARGAIN £130



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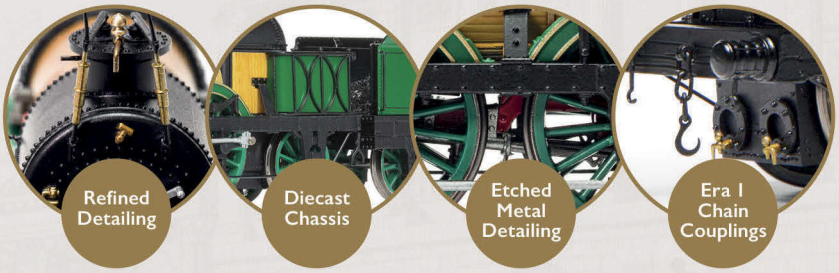
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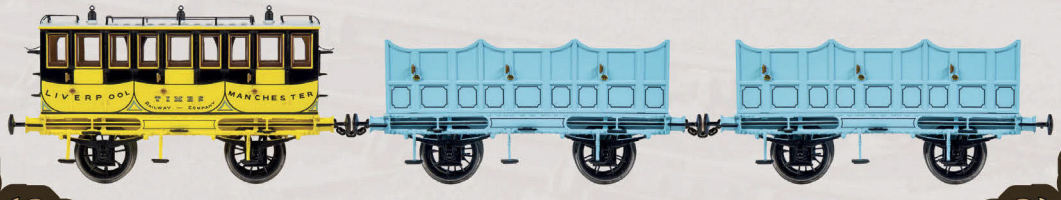
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E87022 ZCA Sea Urchin Open Wagon No. 460887 EWS - DB Schenker, light weathering.£33.95
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391-126SF Main Line Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Charles' Penrhyn Quarry. DCC Sound.....£246.95
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391-127SF Main Line Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Linda' Penrhyn Quarry, weathered. DCC Sound.£254.99



391-130 Main Line Hunslet 0-4-0STT 'Linda' Ffestiniog Railway Green.....£182.95
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PECO OO-9

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GRAHAM FARISH N



371-112B Class 31/1 Diesel Locomotive No. 31 309 "Cricklewood" BR Blue.....£152.99
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372-064 MR 3835 4F Steam Loco No. 43892 BR Black British Railways lettering....£131.95
372-065 MR 3835 4F Steam Locomotive No. 43931 BR Black L/C, weathered....£140.95
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EUXTON JUNCTION

Preston and District Model Railway Society's challenge was to keep pace with changes on the railway during the build of their intricate model.

Words: John Wilson **Photography:** Andy York





A solitary passenger waiting for a Northbound train watches a Northern Class 143 about to head south-bound.

18+

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The Preston and District Model Railway Society's old OO gauge layout, 'Bee Lane' had served the club well, but in 2014, the 'OO' group in the club decided to think about what was required on a future layout, so all went away to come up with an acceptable scheme.

Various proposals were put forward, but it was decided that a location further south of 'Bee Lane' on the WCML would be the most suitable. This would include certain prominent features in that area, mainly the junction off the West Coast Main Line to Chorley, Bolton, Manchester and beyond.

A distinct advantage of remaining in the local area is that site visits to take photographs and, where possible, measurements, could be made in minutes.

It was agreed that the main features should be starting at the north end of the layout with the M6 motorway bridge – this would also be the scenic break between the fiddleyard and front of layout, followed by the crossover pointwork forming the junction linking all four lines to Chorley and beyond (hence Euxton Junction). Next, is the notoriously narrow and low road bridge on the A49 Wigan Road (many a large HGV has had to reverse out of this location). Also in this area is the sub-station and associated equipment for the neutral section of the overhead power supply.

As with any layout, compromises had to be made, so a few miles of the main line had to be omitted to include the new station of Euxton Balshaw Lane, which was opened in 1998. It is located on the two slow lines only and includes a very long ramp for access to the south platform for wheelchairs, prams, and bicycles.

Challenge accepted

When the 'OO' group was satisfied with the proposed scheme, this was presented to the committee for approval, which was duly granted. However, this came with a caveat that the layout had to be presentable (if not complete) for our 2017 exhibition.

As this was to be the club layout, it also had to be available for membership use, so in the clubroom, it would be DCC and DC and anything goes, but when at an exhibition, it would be pure DCC and have stock based in the early 2000s era.

In early 2015, the project started with the abandoned layout dismantled, salvaging as much as possible for re-use.

> "When choosing a time and area, it is vital to take as many photographs and make notes of the particular location"



An EWS Class 66 accelerates north-bound through Euxton station dragging its cement train, while a Transpennine Class 350 heads south-bound.



A Class 92 eases a long china clay train north-bound.

Overhead equipment

The overhead wires are a necessary feature of this and many other modern image layouts. However, there are very few (if any) that include the power box building, feed to the overhead wires and transformer masts. These all had to be scratch-built using photographs and with the principle that if it looks right, it is right. Worthy of note are the two boxes on the transformer masts, which are actually grey in colour. However, due to atmospheric conditions when taking the pictures, they showed blue and look far better in blue.

The head-spans were all scratch-built in-situ from 'H'-section brass and 0.7mm brass wire. The five lattice gantries spanning the junction and the two lattice gallows adjacent to the station were built using the N Brass Locomotive range of structures. The cantilever masts, where fixed, are Peco items, as are the catenary wire spans with a mixture of lengths from 350mm to 500mm. A variety of supports had to be built for the overhead wires, as well as the distance between each support to take into account baseboard joints, the crossover junction and bridges. At the board joints, these spans had to be removable. Also, the wires are sprung-loaded at each end of the layout to provide tension so that locomotive pantographs are in contact with them.





A regular sight on the West Coast Main Line is a Pendalino heading south for Euston gliding over the ladder crossing under the portals spanning all five lines.

Construction of new baseboards commenced with special attention given to the location of points to ensure they were not near any baseboard framing. Re-using the existing fiddleyard determined the size of the layout (approx. 30ft x 11ft). The baseboard framing was constructed from 19mm plywood with 12mm plywood decking, with all joints glued and screwed. The plywood makes them strong but lightweight, which is important when taking the layout to exhibitions because our club rooms are on the first floor of the premises.

Towards the end of 2015, all the Peco Code 75 track had been laid, wired and tested and was found to be fit for purpose. This was made all the more difficult as each board had to be done individually due to shortage of space, and that we had to keep 'Bee Lane' running for members to use when the club was open.

It was now time to take the plunge and remove 'Bee Lane' and replace with 'Euxton Junction'. Some minor alterations had to be made to the electrics and trackwork, but, much to our great relief, all went well.

Setting the scene

When choosing a time and area, it is vital to take as many photographs and make notes of the particular location, as was proved with this project. No sooner had we started, we noticed the little bungalow adjacent to the narrow road bridge was being demolished and a new property was being built. The majority of trees close to the railway were removed, leaving the stumps in and the old boundary fencing replaced. Even seven years after starting this layout, the station shelters and the power supply equipment to the dead section have all been replaced, plus the electrification of the line to Chorley, Bolton, Manchester and beyond has been completed.

To return to the layout, areas around the trackwork were painted brown before ballasting commenced and this process proved very time-consuming, but while this was being done, certain fixed structures such as road bridges, access steps, or properties had to be in place to enable the scenery to be blended into them.

We were now at March 2016, a year from our exhibition, and the open scenery to the majority of the layout was commenced, with the only built-up area being adjacent to the station buildings, having both new and existing properties.





A rumbling EWS Class 66 is slowing for a red signal as it crawls north-bound through Euxton station.

A DRS top-and-tailed working of two Class 37s carefully negotiates the ladder crossing from the Chorley line across to north-bound slow lines.

Back gardens

Fencing is a mixture of card and Plastikard, scribed and painted as required.

I divided hedges with thick card, cut to size, and then applied scatter material of varying sizes and colours to obtain the effect. All buildings, from sheds to garages, are either scratch-built or modified kits, and finished to suit the location.

The majority of the hard landscaping has been built ad-hoc and finished using Metcalfe paving, brick and stone papers. Grass areas have been made using the usual method, again using different fibre lengths and colours to obtain the desired effect. Shrubs are from paper, cut to shape, painted, and finished with varnish to give stability.





Passengers board the local Northern service as it waits with doors open ready for the green light to continue its journey south-bound.

The scenery was constructed from thick cardboard profiles shaped to provide the topography. This then had thin cardboard strips glued to it to form an open lattice effect, blending it all into the fixed structures. This was then covered with numerous layers of small pieces of paper all glued down – similar to papier-mâché – resulting in a very strong but lightweight finish. The scenic areas were then given a liberal coating of brown paint before grasses were applied. Static grass was used throughout with differing textures to obtain the required effect. Trees were made from Gaugemaster sea foam sprayed brown, branches dipped into PVA glue, covered in various foliage, then sealed with hairspray.

The majority of structures had to be scratch-built as they are unique to their location. However, the terraced houses were obtained from the Scenery Builder range and modified to suit, and the two telecommunication masts were obtained from Scale Model Scenery.

Station platforms, roads and properties all have lighting, and there are working traffic lights either side of the narrow road bridge. The layout also has working signalling. The traffic lights have a prototypical phase sequence of changing and the signals include electronic interlocking with the junction pointwork, all being controlled via Arduino programmable processors.



A lone Class 37 pulls a lightly loaded short nuclear train that has come from Sellafield heading south to Hartwell.

Platform access ramps

These had to be made to fit the available space from the road bridge to platform level and the front ramp, and part of the long rear ramp had to be removable for the layout to be transported for exhibitions.

The main structural members are made of brass and soldered together to give the profile of the ramps, stanchions fitted to give stability and height to the ramps, and these were fixed into blocks to give the impression of concrete slabs.

Everything was then covered with Plastikard for the footway, which was glued to the brass profile.

The rest of the ramps were constructed from rail section, filed down to give an 'I' beam effect with all joints soldered, 0.5mm brass wire was soldered to each panel to form the bracing, the fine balustrading to each panel was made from thin card, cut into panels on a laser cutter and then glued to the rails.

The arches are for lighting – not fitted to the model. The ramp was then prepared for painting using a spray primer, then it was sprayed white. Footways and the underside were hand-painted black, with steelwork hand-painted green. The handrails are lengths of red cotton glued in-situ.





A view across the bridge over the main lines shows the traffic held by the bus stopping to let passengers off. Perhaps some will use the pedestrian access to Euxton station down the ramps from the pavement on the right?

A layout is never finished

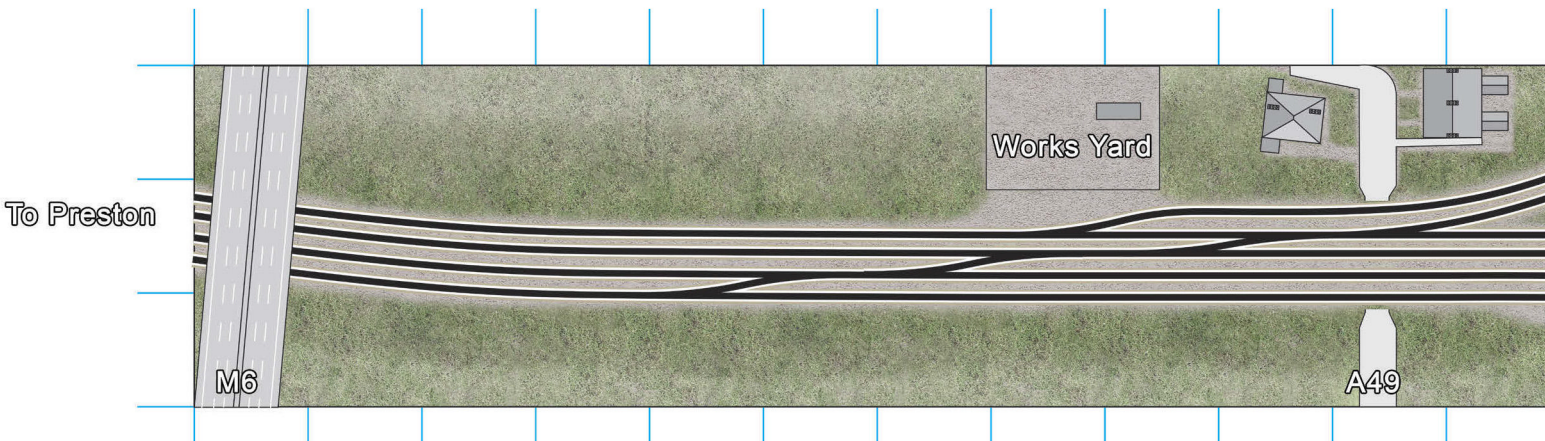
To provide extra operational interest, the hidden sidings under the properties at the rear of the layout have been linked into the main fiddleyard to give a better variety of stock movement. The electrical connectors underneath baseboards are being replaced, as the existing ones are showing signs of fatigue. DCC equipment has been replaced and eventually all our club layouts will use the same system. As far as possible, all stock has been fitted with lighting to locomotives, coaches and tail lamps, this is ongoing and is the responsibility of the stock owner. Most of the scenic work is also now complete, but I'm sure there will always be something that needs attention.

It has been a challenging project but, taking into account the limitations of the layout, we feel we have done justice to the locations chosen. This has been a combined effort of members within the club (too numerous to mention), but it was interesting to note individual preferences on their contributions. Also, thanks must go to members who regularly take the layout to exhibitions, and for the variety of their stock that is used. It cannot be said that the layout is finished, as their will always be something that needs attention.

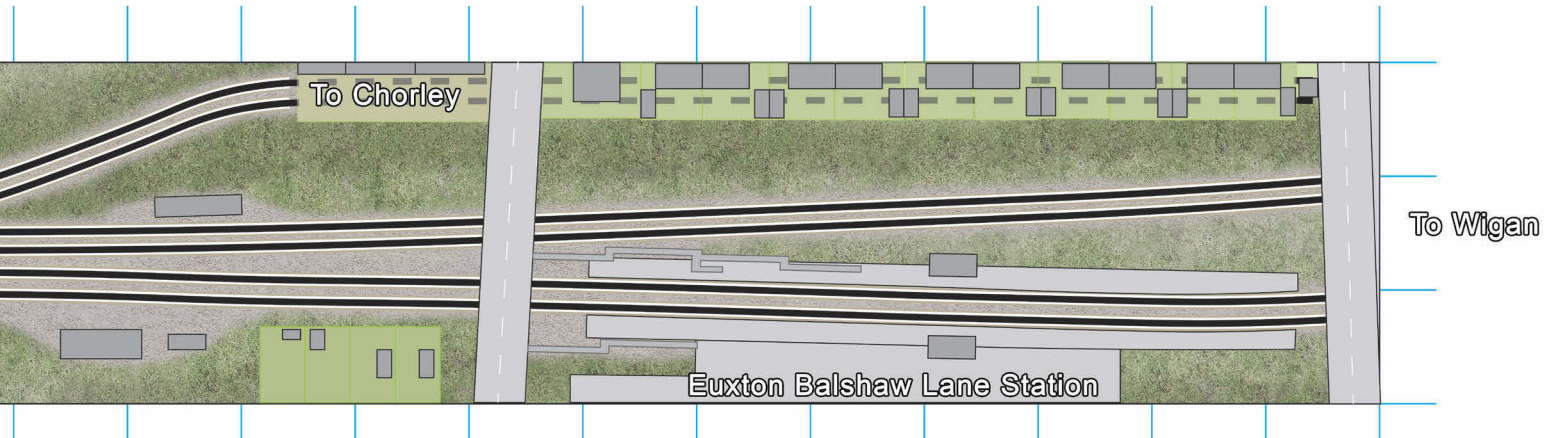
See 'Euxton Juction' in action at the Preston and District Model Railway Society Exhibition on March 4-5, 2023. Visit: *www.prestonanddistrictmrs.org.uk*



A Pendalino rushes south-bound on the fast line while a local Northern service stops at Euxton station, knowing it will be a few minutes before the signals will allow progress to be made, as the lines merge just south of the station.



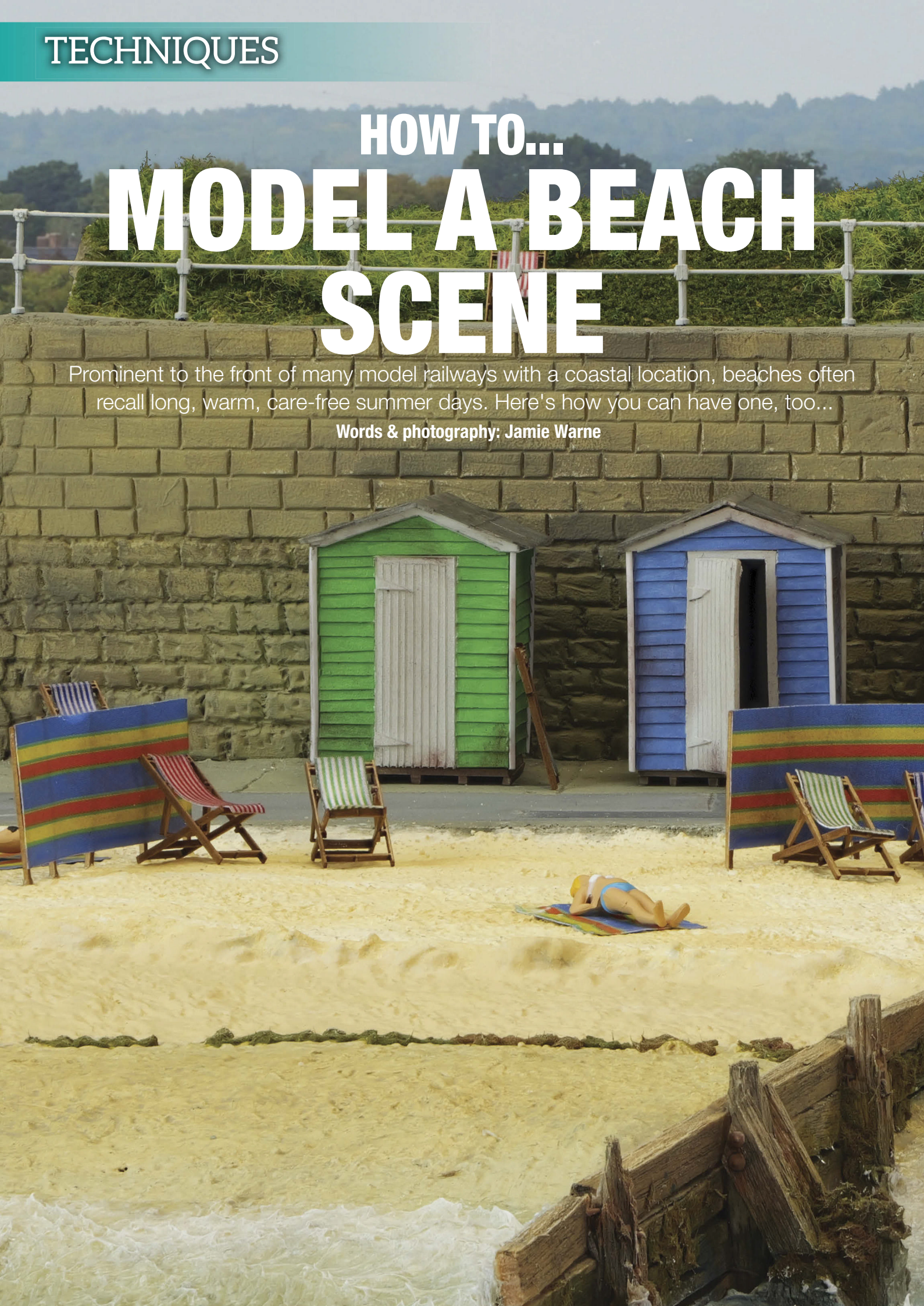

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Way out
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Explore


To Chorley
To Wigan
Euxton Balshaw Lane Station

HOW TO... MODEL A BEACH SCENE

Prominent to the front of many model railways with a coastal location, beaches often recall long, warm, care-free summer days. Here's how you can have one, too...

Words & photography: Jamie Warne




ISAAC'S ICES
ICES
TEAS
CANDY FLOSS
& MORE...

Railways played a huge part in bringing people to the coast, and helped turn these seaside locations into fully-fledged resorts. If you've built or designed a geographically generic terminus station, but want something to provide further interest, I think a promenade and beach sitting in front or at the end of the station is a fantastic option. In this article, I hope to show that it's also not a difficult scene to build – even waves can be created without much effort!

Getting started

The baseboard for this latest project started as a scrap of 12mm ply. Rather than waste rigid insulation board (or Styrofoam) building up to the promenade, a simple structure is made using four PSE softwood 80mm lengths, which are glued and screwed end-on to the ply base.

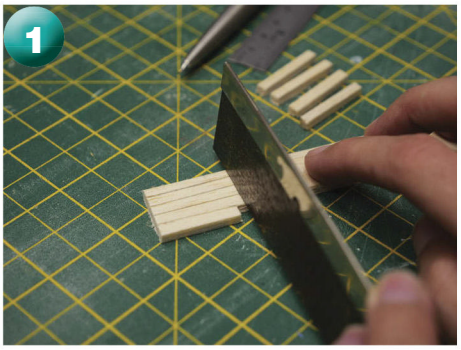
A 25mm thick rigid insulation board will form the beach. Additionally, a 3mm plywood board is glued on top at the back to form the lower promenade and another 3mm board is glued and screwed to the front of the earlier wooden structure as a solid base to build the promenade wall against. Note that all holes should be countersunk.

When you come to carve the insulation, pay close attention to the shape of your prototype beach - using photographs and aerial imagery to help whilst you draw contours with a marker pen. Once you're done, sand the insulation to further refine and smooth the terrain.

For the sea wall, there are numerous options – from brickpaper to ready-made resin wall sections. However, I had air-drying clay leftover from a previous diorama that needed using up! See my article in the April 2022 edition of BRM for sketches, information, and practical advice about modelling different types of stone walls.

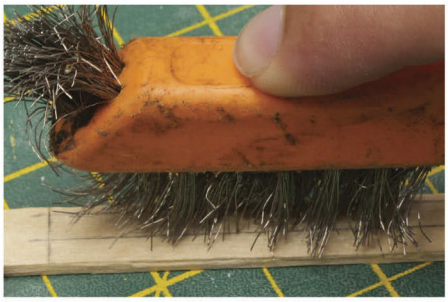
Having used plaster to build up the promenade, once cured, paint the concrete areas using Vallejo 'Buff' mixed with a tiny bit of 'Black Grey'. Tarmac is similar, but without the 'Buff' – you're looking to create a medium grey for newer tarmac, and a lighter grey for older sections – never black! Washes are applied once dry. Vallejo 'Black Grey' is great for emphasising cracks and general grime, and 'Middlestone' for areas where water frequently pools. This is all about experimentation, but it's best to build up watery layers that you can easily add to (and remove with a paper towel!).

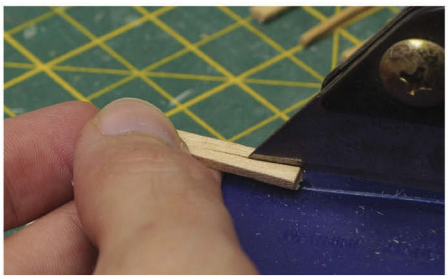
Now with the structure in place, we are ready to start adding the details...



Adding a groyne helps to break up the monotony of the beach. These come in all sorts of shapes and sizes; from simple wooden upright piles, to humungous stone/concrete examples jutting out hundreds of metres into the sea – often featuring rock armour protection. We'll be making a wooden one out of lollipop/mixing sticks and balsa to mimic a simple, common design. First, trim some 4mm thick balsa to length for the piles, allowing extra height so that you can later bury them into the sub-base. Note that I'm using leftover balsa sheet, rather than buying square-section lengths!

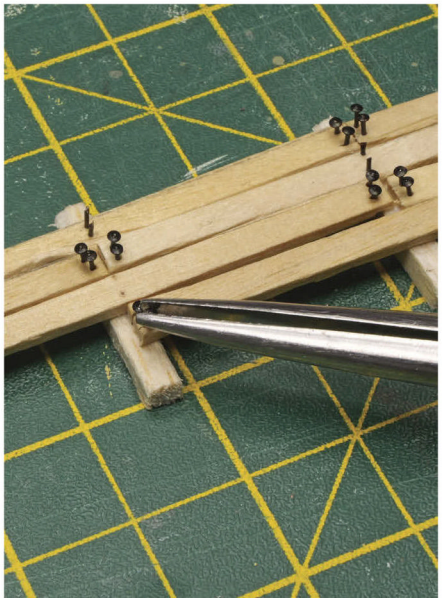




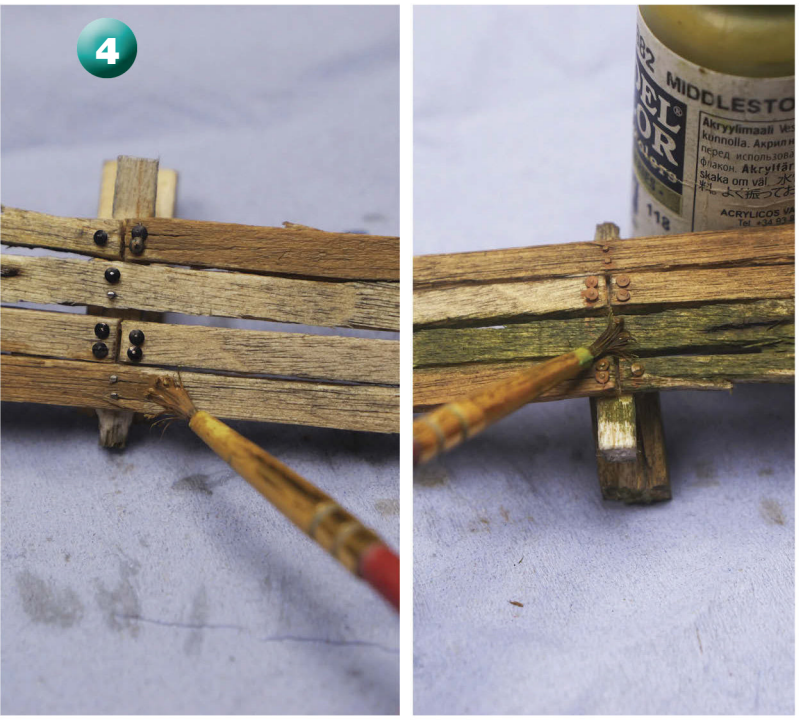


The planks are cut from lollipop sticks using a hand-held guillotine. Cut both curved ends from each stick, then chop them longitudinally to create boards that are 4mm wide and 64mm long. I'll also be adding diagonal supports perpendicular to the groyne, which are cut in the same way. Wooden groynes don't last long, so most parts need distressing! The most effective tool is a wire brush attachment on a Dremel. Otherwise, use a guillotine to cut chunks off, and a hand-held wire brush to add texture. For the soft balsa piles, employ a light touch!

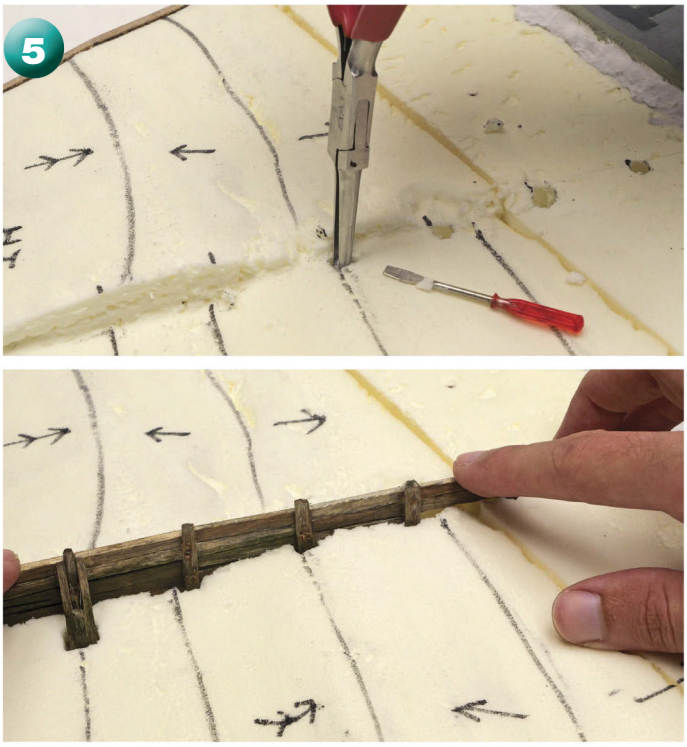




Carry out a dry-run of the groyne construction, trimming and staggering each layer of planks. Study your chosen prototype – some planks may be wedge-shaped to match the gradient of the beach. Tiny holes (two each end, and two in the middle of every full-length plank) are drilled. The planks will be attached to the piles with fine track pins, thus the holes will prevent the wood splitting. When you're ready, add PVA or wood glue, and attach each plank in turn – pushing the pins right into the balsa piles (which are spaced 32mm apart). Leave to cure overnight.



The next day, any excess pin coming through the other side can be carefully trimmed using a disc cutter in a Dremel. Now onto the painting! This is done with three washes; a wash of Vallejo 'Black Grey', followed by a mix of that and 'Brown Sand' to create a darker wood colour, and finally using 'Middlestone' on the areas that are frequently submerged by water. Once that's dried, dry-brush 'Pale Sand' to give a sun-bleached look. A finishing touch is to paint the heads of the pins with 'Brown Sand', and add a rusty streak below them.



Our finished groyne now needs to be put into place. Ideally, the insulation terrain we made earlier will only need to be removed where absolutely necessary to avoid unwanted gaps. I found that the holes for the piles were easiest to make by forming their perimeter with a narrow screwdriver, and using fine-nosed pliers to retrieve the waste. After checking that the groyne fits properly, add PVA to the bottom of the groyne, and slot it into place. Make sure that it is sitting fully on the plywood base, and that the piles are vertical.



For sandy beaches, I prefer using children's playpit sand, but it often comes in 25kg bags – enough for five lifetimes' supply! Peco 'Fine Sand' is a good alternative, but first, mix up some plaster with water and a little bit of creamy-coloured emulsion paint. Apply a thin layer of PVA to the terrain, and smooth the plaster over the beach; ensuring you avoid the wooden groyne. Sprinkle the sand on top while the plaster is still wet, and tamp it down with a brush. Once the plaster has cured, spray it with Woodland Scenics 'Scenic Cement' to secure loose grains.



Sand varies both in colour and texture with distance from the sea. Wet sand (stretching a considerable distance from the waterline) appears smoother, while drier sand further up the beach appears coarser, and undulates more. Wet sand can be produced by adding a thin additional layer of plaster to obfuscate the sand grains – dragging a brush towards the sea to represent wave scour on the areas nearest the water. You can also stipple the plaster to create texture. At this point, I also formed a prototypical raised berm above the high water mark. We'll come back to this area later.



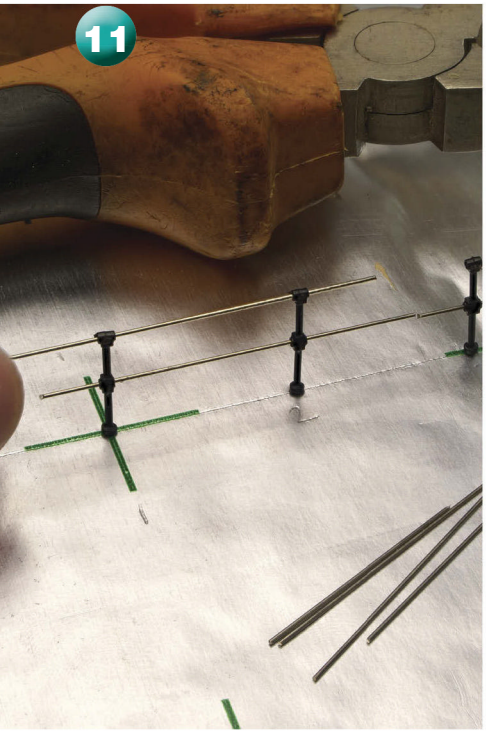
Colour-wise, I've painted the sea in quite a dark greeny-blue, with more green than blue - this isn't the Mediterranean Sea! Gradually, more tan/cream is introduced the further up the beach we go, until we end up with a colour that should match dry sand. You can add variety and tie the colours together using a wash of brown acrylic. Always be mindful of where your low and high tide lines are, as you'll need to colour accordingly; I ended up having to 'shift' all my colours down as my 'deep water' would've been too close to shore!

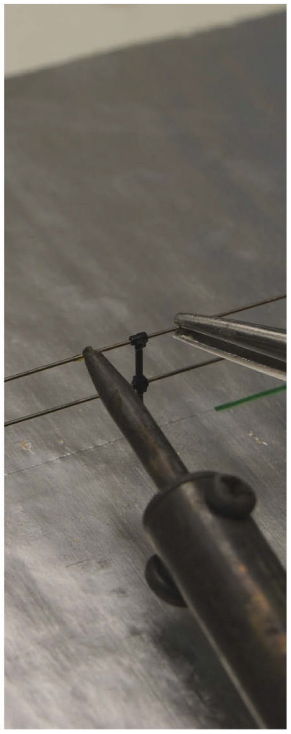


Most people probably aren't overjoyed at the existence of seaweed strewn along an otherwise pristine beach, but you'd be hard-pressed to find a beach without it. The best material I've found for this is Woodland Scenics 'Plant Hues'. Simply roll various shades in a murky green paint, and spread it along the high-tide mark, and along the groyne. Once dry, you can lightly dry-brush Vallejo 'White' to add some variation. Also consider adding other debris, like driftwood. I've found that the dried roots of real weeds are ideally suited for this; simply cut up and glue on with PVA.



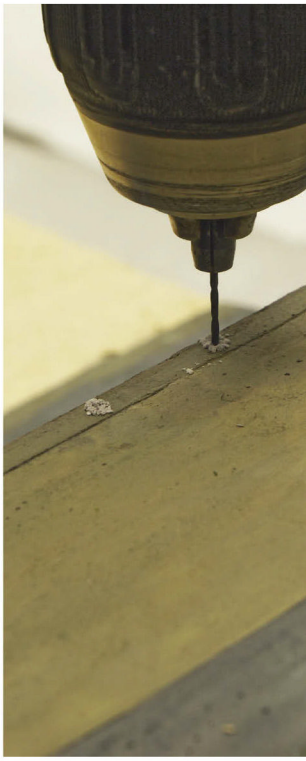
I wasn't happy with the texture of the dry section of sand – it was far too uneven, which the real one wasn't, and was too low anyway now that I had built the berm. Fixing this is simple, and after some experimentation, I found that a convincing way to represent dry sand was to add sand into the plaster mix itself. By dabbing it with various sizes of brush, I could also form the subtle undulations caused by localised wind that blows out small hollows. Further realism could be achieved by dry-brushing subtle sand colour shades on top.



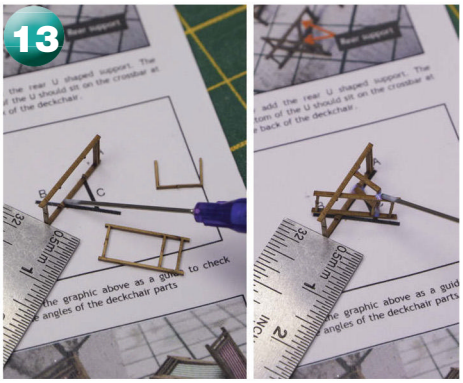


Elsewhere, the sea wall railing uses the Ratio (144) Double Rail Stanchions kit. Measure the length of your wall, and pierce small holes 22mm apart through an appropriately sized foil-topped insulation board. Push the required number of posts into place. Pre-emptively turn on a soldering iron while you thread the wires through the holes – for curved railings, pre-bend the wires. As the provided wires are quite short, stagger the top and bottom rails for strength. 'Tin' the soldering iron tip, apply flux to the wire joints, and very quickly touch with the iron while holding one of the wires with fine-nosed pliers.

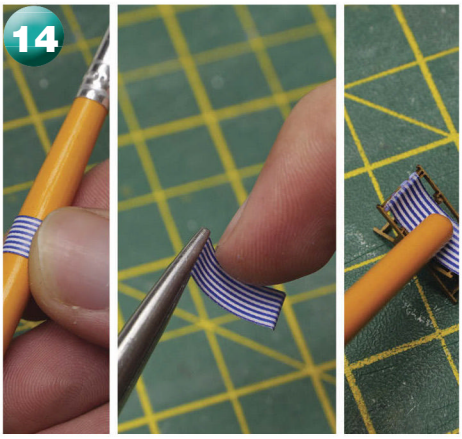




To secure each post, gently push each one aside, apply PVA to the wire, then push them back over the glue until vertical again. Leave to cure for at least two hours. Then, spray the railing with Plastikote 'Dove Grey' Chalk Effect from all angles to ensure full coverage – this spray is water-based, so will not attack the insulation. Two hours later, remove the railing and line it up to its intended location. Using the posts as a guide, drill small holes into the top of the wall. Glue the railing in place with PVA – ensuring it is completely vertical.



A beach scene needs deckchairs, and handily, Scale Model Scenery produces a kit that comes with 12 folded, and 12 unfolded chairs. The instructions took me a while to understand, but they are actually simple to build. Use the provided template to orient the pieces correctly – note that the corresponding parts are labelled on the laser-cut 'sprue', which I didn't notice until I had finished! I recommend using a glue with a very fine nozzle for assembly, such as Deluxe Materials (AD87). Note the rule used to hold the main frame in place during assembly.



Once the fabric for the seats has been cut out, pre-curve them by wrapping them around a narrow cylindrical object like a brush handle. Rather than glue them on straight away, it's worth grabbing the last millimetre of each end of the fabric, and bending them with fine-nosed pliers. This makes it less prone to slipping off the bars of the chair frame when you go to glue it in place. You can then use the handle end of the brush to gently push the fabric into place – holding it, while the glue grabs.



Also provided are some windbreaks and posts. With no guidance on how far apart the posts should be spaced, I settled on 10mm post spacings as I felt that's what looked right. This does, however, mean that I ran out of posts – so it may be worth being more frugal with them! In any case, once they've been glued on, leave them to cure. Later, brush 'Smoke Grey' weathering powder onto both the windbreaks and deckchairs to tone down their vibrancy and shininess. Finally, drill small holes for the posts, secure them with PVA, and complete the scene with the Noch figures.

QUICK TIP



The Scale Model Scenery deckchairs are a useful kit on their own, but you can get more out of it with a bit of lateral thinking, especially with the provided windbreaks. Instead of having all the windbreaks in use, why not roll some of them up once you've added the stakes, and leave them next to, or visible inside the open door of a beach hut? I found that there weren't enough stakes, so I also opted to cut some of them to beach towel size, then both softened and secured them to the sand with watered-down PVA.

Making Waves

The tricky part of modelling waves is not replicating them per se, but paying attention to how the real waves actually act; particularly around obstructions like rocks and groynes. There is no better substitute for this than going on a field trip, seeing this first-hand, and taking notes/photos. Modelling them is easily done using Woodland Scenics 'Water Effects'. Squeeze some onto the scene, and manipulate the material with a brush and/or other tools to shape it; typically using a combination of flicking, dragging, pushing, and stippling. Stippling and dragging/pushing for froth and backwash, and flicking for the waves.



'Water Effects' is self-supporting over small distances, making it ideal for breaking waves. Once dry, which usually takes between 12 and 24 hours, the substance will dry clear. You can then dry-brush the crests of the waves and any turbulent water with Vallejo 'White' to create that white-water look. I usually build this up in layers - it's very easy to overdo it. This is another time where it's worth paying close attention to photos of real waves. That said, I personally think it is the easiest water feature to pull off!



Conclusion

Whenever I take my seaside layout, 'Sandy Shores', to exhibitions, the first comment made (and at risk of accidentally quoting song lyrics) is along the lines of, "It's so nice to be beside the sea!". A seaside scene is always a hit at exhibitions, probably because people associate it with summer holidays and being able to 'take it easy'. Model railways can be a form of escapism from our busy lives, and a beach scene helps to reinforce this. As a bonus, with very few modifications, such a scene lends itself perfectly to any era. However, for Pre-grouping layouts, you may wish to swap the beach huts for bathing machines!





(SS92142) 5mm balsa square rod
(CX00022) Mixing sticks (Pack of 25)
(RW60000) 3.2mm hardboard sheet (500mm x 300mm)
www.modelshop.co.uk

(AD87) - Laser-cut Kit Glue
www.deluxematerials.co.uk

DAS Air-Drying Clay
www.fila.it
(Available from craft stores and model shops)

(R7188) Foliage, Wild Grass (Dark Green)
(AV0014) 'Smoke' Weathering Powder
www.hornby.com

(15841) Bathers (figures)
www.noch.com

(PS-344) Sand (fine)
(SL-14) Track Fixing Pins
www.peco-uk.com

(27109) Chalk Effect (Dove Grey)
www.plasti-kote.co.uk

(90720) 0.020in Styrene Square Rod
www.plastruct.com

(144) Double Rail Stanchions
www.peco-uk.com

(LX483-OO) Deckchairs (24 pk)
www.scalemodelscenery.co.uk

0110 - 0.010in (0.25mm) Plastikard
0120 - 0.020in (0.5mm) Plastikard
0140 - 0.040in (1mm) Plastikard
0160 - 0.060in (1.5mm) Plastikard
www.slatersplastikard.com

(FBS409) Corrugated Iron
www.sefinecast.co.uk

(70.862) Black Grey
(70.951) White
(70.837) Pale Sand
(70.976) Buff
(70.876) Brown Sand
(70.847) Dark Sand
(70.882) Middlestone
(70.902) Azure
(70.891) Intermediate Green
www.acrylicosvallejo.com

(ST1452) 'Smooth-It'
(S191) Scenic Cement
(C1212) Water Effects
(T49) Blended Turf (Green Blend)
(FS629) Plant Hues
www.woodlandscenics.com

You will also need 12mm plywood for the base, 3mm plywood (or thicker) for the promenades, short lengths of PSE softwood batten for supports, a small section of 25mm insulation board, and finally, an offcut of tissue paper.

NEXT MONTH
FIND OUT HOW JAMIE BUILT THE BEACH HUTS AND ICE CREAM SHACK!

Tenon saw
Drill, standard bits, and a countersink bit
Jigsaw, or another fine-toothed saw
Assorted wood screws
PVA glue
Sandpaper
Butter knife (or similar)
No.0, 2 & 8 brushes
Fine-mist spray bottle
Metal rule
Mechanical pencil
Craft knife
Dentist's pick (or similar)
Fine-nosed pliers
Styrene cement
Mini-drill with mini-drill bits
Hammer and panel pins
Hand-held guillotine (optional)
Wire brush tool
Rotary tool (Dremel) with cutting disc
Soldering iron, flux, and solder

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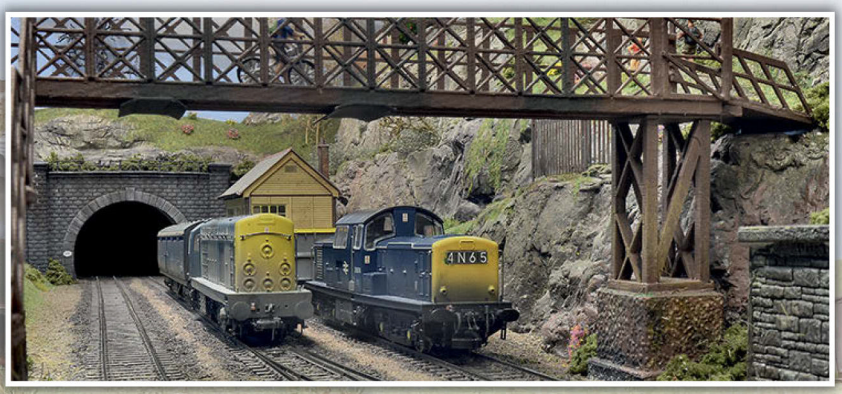


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LAYING TRACK

In his article about the superb Hayling Island model in January's BRM, Richard Barton mentions using Unibond Flexi Max adhesive for laying track/ballast and describes it as more flexible than PVA. I am laying some 7mm:1ft scale track (C & L ply sleepers) using Norman Solomon's method of laying the ballast immediately after the track but, as PVA sets hard, I would prefer to use something that produces a more flexible result and less of a sounding board. I have found Copydex to be too gloopy for the job, but Richard's method may well be the answer. However, I cannot find any mention of Unibond Flexi Max adhesive online, although there is mention of a Unibond flexible tile adhesive. I hope that it is not too much of an ask, but would you mind contacting Richard for me so as to point me in the right direction?

Dennis Matthews

Richard says: The correct description is Unibond Flexi Mix Additive. B&Q sells a 2L container for £13. The recommendation came from Trevor Nunn. He used PVA on 'East Lynn' but the additive for the later 'Nunstanton' extension, which he described in MRJ 199. Trevor used a grey tile grout powder to the ballast material, dampened with a small amount of the additive. When the ballast was in position, he flooded it with neat additive, applied with a pipette. On his later 'Trowland' layout, he positioned the ballast after lightly dampening with dilute PVA, then applied the additive. Either way, it is better than applying adhesive on to dry ballast, which can float on the adhesive, thus giving a very uneven surface to the ballast. I hope this helps.



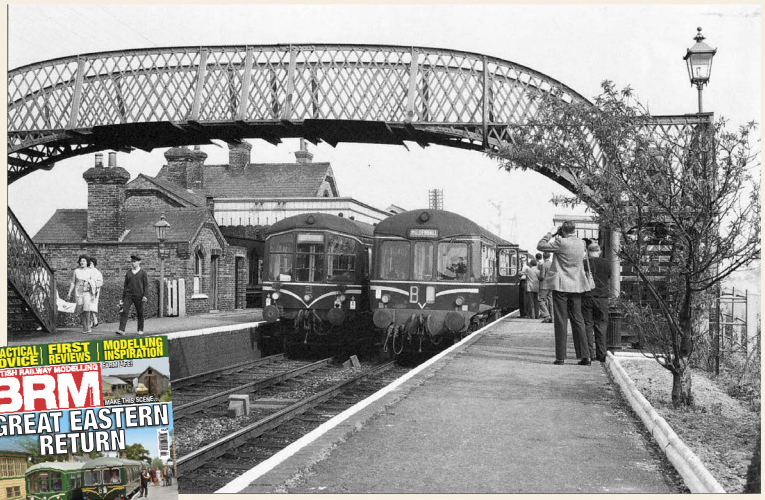
MEMORIES OF YORK



I would just like to congratulate you all for the article in the November issue of BRM, featuring Giles Baxter's 'York' layout. What a magnificent project this is depicting York Station, just as I remember it, in the 'fifties, as a young boy. I spent many happy hours trainspotting in and around this fascinating station and its surroundings. Giles is to be congratulated on his vision, determination and skill in representing such a large station in so much detail. Well done, keep up the good work in producing a fine magazine.

Brian M

UNCANNY RESEMBLENCE



The Great Eastern station scene on the front cover of BRM February 2023 seems to bear an uncanny resemblance to this scan from page 88 of Chris Leigh's book *A Railway Modeller's Picture Library* that I just happened to be looking through. Is it coincidence or inspiration?

Tony Blackman





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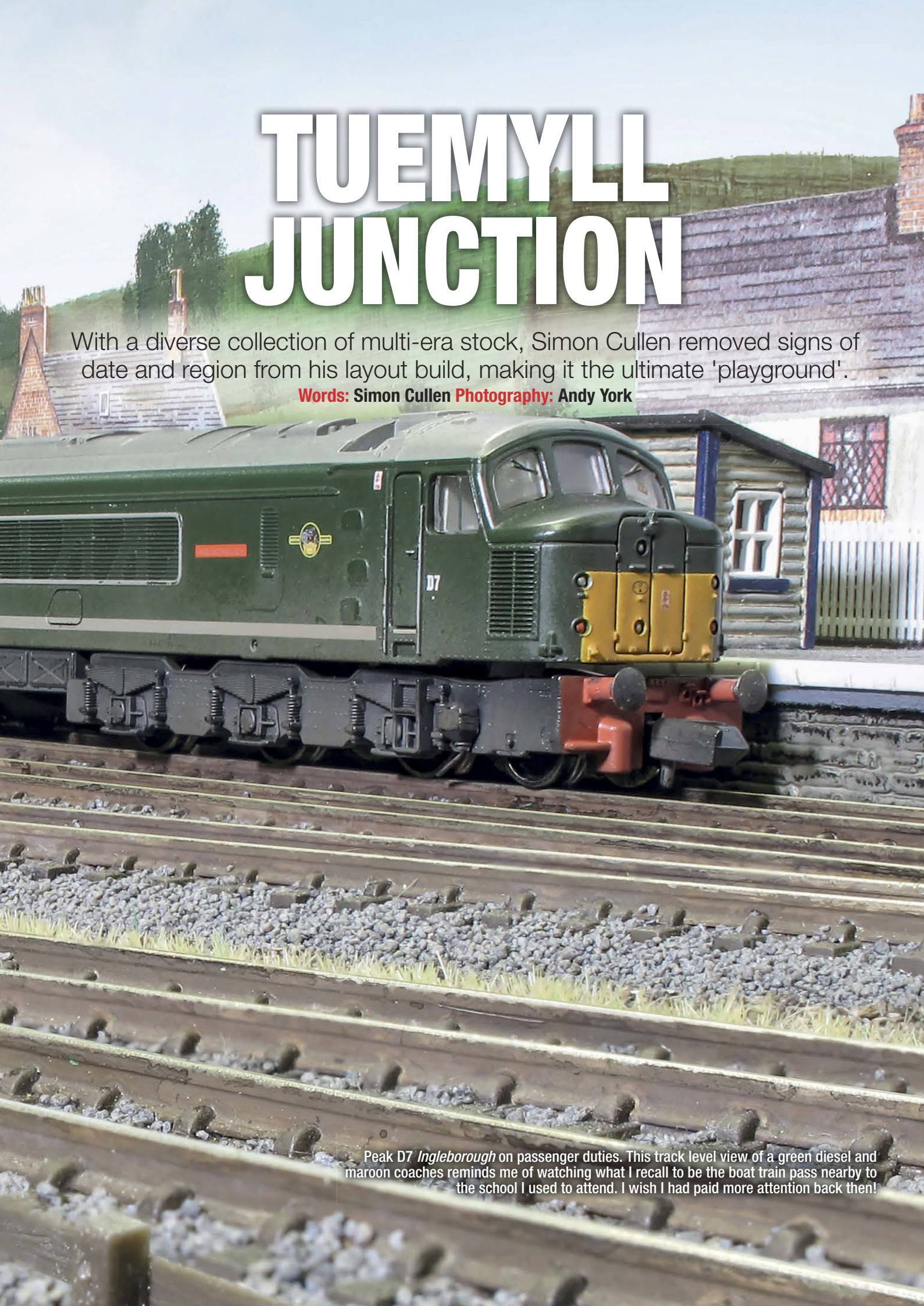
FACTFILE

Layout name: Tuemyll Junction
Scale/Gauge: 2mm:1ft scale/ 9mm gauge / N
Size: 10ft x 5ft
Era/Region: 1960s-1970s, generic region
Layout type: Continuous run, operated from middle

TUEMYLL JUNCTION

With a diverse collection of multi-era stock, Simon Cullen removed signs of date and region from his layout build, making it the ultimate 'playground'.

Words: Simon Cullen **Photography:** Andy York



Peak D7 *Ingleborough* on passenger duties. This track level view of a green diesel and maroon coaches reminds me of watching what I recall to be the boat train pass nearby to the school I used to attend. I wish I had paid more attention back then!

The layout resulted from wanting a continuous run as a change from my previous layouts, which had all been end-to-end. This only seems to have two obvious solutions, either operate from the middle, which necessitates having plenty of space, or a long thin layout that has tight curves at each end. The latter design often involves hiding the tight unrealistic curves and so limits the length of the scenic section. So, I considered a continuous run with long sweeping (almost 3ft radius) curves that could be operated from the middle, keeping the tighter curves to the fiddleyard and that was essentially 'D'-shaped. The rest is history, and this gave me about 9ft of scenic section in an area of 6ft x 5ft – this is the compact version of the layout.

It did occur to me that, since I usually exhibit my layouts, this would be a bit too cosy for two operators! Therefore, the exhibition version of the layout was born, which only required two straight sections to be added to give an overall size of 10ft x 5ft and a much larger operating space.

The layout is fictitious and has not been set for any specific region or period to keep the operational scope as wide as possible. I had seen a few layouts, which gave me some ideas; a part station so it could either be a through station or end of line; additional tracks disappearing off scene so it could also be a junction, plus a few sidings for shunting. In the exhibition version, exchange sidings are included for additional shunting.

A common question asked at exhibitions is "how long did you take to build the layout?" I, therefore, write the date of the first piece of timber I cut to save myself from having to remember. This layout was started in 2007 and first exhibited in 2019! I was modelling on my other N gauge and OO gauge layouts and their stock during that period, so it wasn't 12 years spent solely on this layout, though.

Layout basics

The construction of the layout is nothing special and uses 3mm plywood throughout, with bracing where necessary. It is very light and stable, and the use of thin plywood did make the construction of the curved baseboards relatively easy.

Apart from my first layout, all subsequent layouts have always been built as light as possible, having seen too many layouts that are hernia-inducing. The only comment I would make is "don't over-design the





A through Midland Pullman passing the 'Peak'. The curved turnouts give a pleasing view especially as their radius is compatible with the main radii chosen for the layout. I agonised for a short time about weathering the Pullman, but I bought it to be used so wanted it to look realistic.

An early Class 37 and tankers passing the exchange sidings. Just visible is a Class 25 and maroon inspection saloon, I have this combination on all my layouts because it provides a very short but prototypical train.

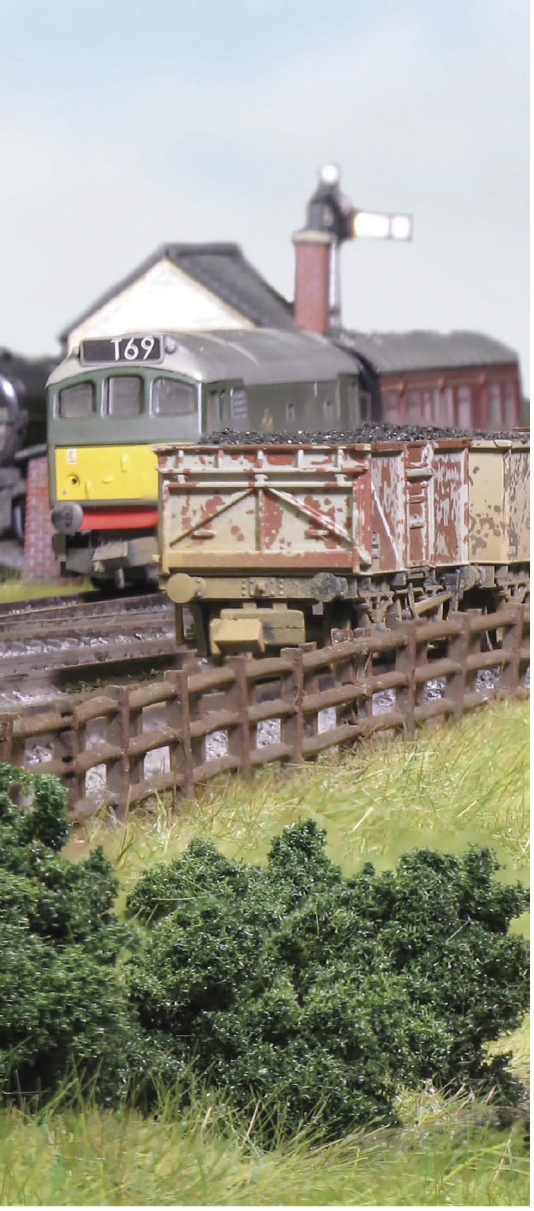
baseboards". Thin timber, suitably braced, is adequate – the layout only has to support itself and it's so much easier to use.

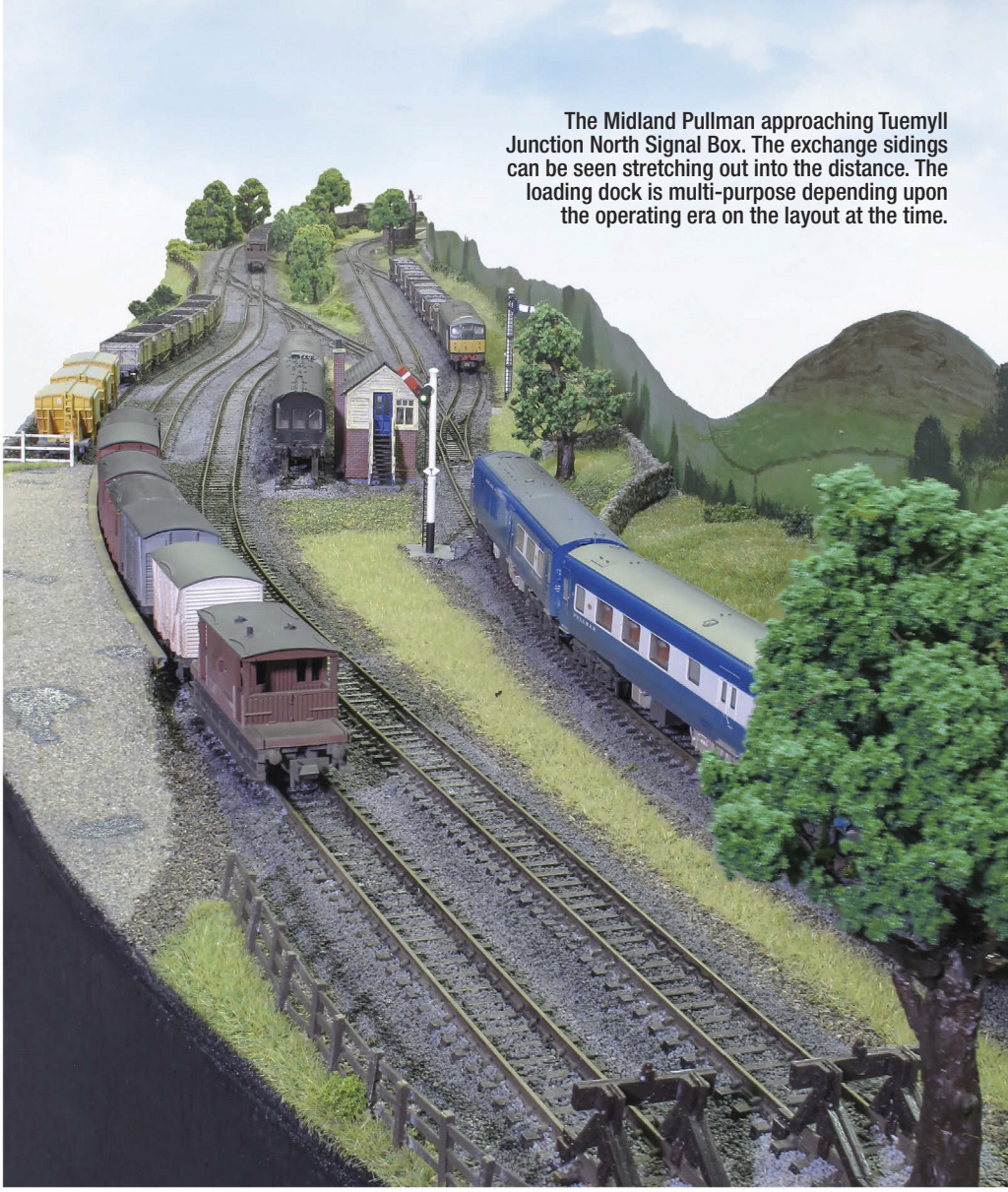
The track is Peco Code 80 except for the double slip – only available in Code 55 – and live frogs are used throughout. The turnouts are operated by SEEP solenoids, which also switch the polarity of the turnout frogs using the auxiliary switch. The solenoids are powered through capacitor discharge units, one on each baseboard, to minimise any potential voltage drop issues.

I don't rely on fishplates for electrical continuity, only alignment. I then solder dropper wires from each piece of track and connect them below the baseboard. If insulating fishplates are used in some places, the sections can be more easily changed. I use 25-way male-to-female 'D' connectors (computer serial cable, all pins connected) for the inter-baseboard connections.

The fiddleyard cassettes are constructed from the commonly-adopted aluminium angle, which allows whole trains to be changed without handling the stock. Power is supplied to the cassettes by phosphor bronze contacts, which touch the underside







The Midland Pullman approaching Tuemyll Junction North Signal Box. The exchange sidings can be seen stretching out into the distance. The loading dock is multi-purpose depending upon the operating era on the layout at the time.

A Class 24 approaches the station, passing a Class 25-hauled train in the exchange sidings' loop. The Code 80 track has a higher profile, but has the advantage of inside chairs as opposed to the Code 55. If carefully weathered and ballasted I think it still looks convincing.



of the cassettes.

The fiddleyard turnouts can be operated by control panels on leads for ease of operation from the front when at home. These also have the advantage of making operation at exhibitions a little slicker.

I am fortunate in having a dedicated model room (and sympathetic wife) that will accommodate the layout, albeit with some rearranging of the furniture. The room has always dictated my layout sizes because I always want to run them at home. I design layouts so they could be operated from the front at home, which usually gives the best view. This is after the first prerequisite – that they are portable, so can be easily transported, exhibited and sold.

Scenery

The scenery is standard, carved polystyrene, coloured filler, scatter and static grass. Some of the trees were hand-built from multi-strand speaker wire, and some commercially available but with extra foliage added.

The station building and signal boxes are from Peco, and the footbridge, which is a laser-cut plastic kit, is from York Modelmaking. I could not find a suitable small shelter for the platforms, so these were scratch-built from embossed sheet, but I think they were loosely based on the no longer available Hornby Lyddle End platform shelter.

The layout has working signals from Dapol, which were added more for visual effect than prototypical accuracy. They are probably not correctly placed nor sufficient in number.

Operating 'Tuemyll Junction'

The layout has been wired for straightforward DC, which can use any of the different controllers I have, such as Kent Control, Gaugemaster and RUH (which I purchased through Todmorden Model Supplies). To avoid issues with voltage drops, the main 16 VAC power feeds and 12 VDC controller outputs all use a ring main. I have some OO gauge DCC with sound, but I have so much N gauge stock that it would be impracticable to change it all over to DCC. Also, the need for DCC seems less obvious to me unless you want to add sound, given the running quality of the currently available

N gauge locomotives.

The layout is only operated with some reference to a specific location or period when green diesels are used and this leans towards anything appropriate to the Midland Main line. When operating with blue diesels, the layout becomes 'nowhere in particular' and the scope is much wider.

The rolling stock is a mixture of Farish and Dapol, all with some slight weathering to remove the 'new' look. I originally intended to operate with predominantly BR blue diesels, however, having acquired sufficient green diesels, I also run these depending upon who is assisting me. One of my helpers only models steam, but is getting to like green diesels!

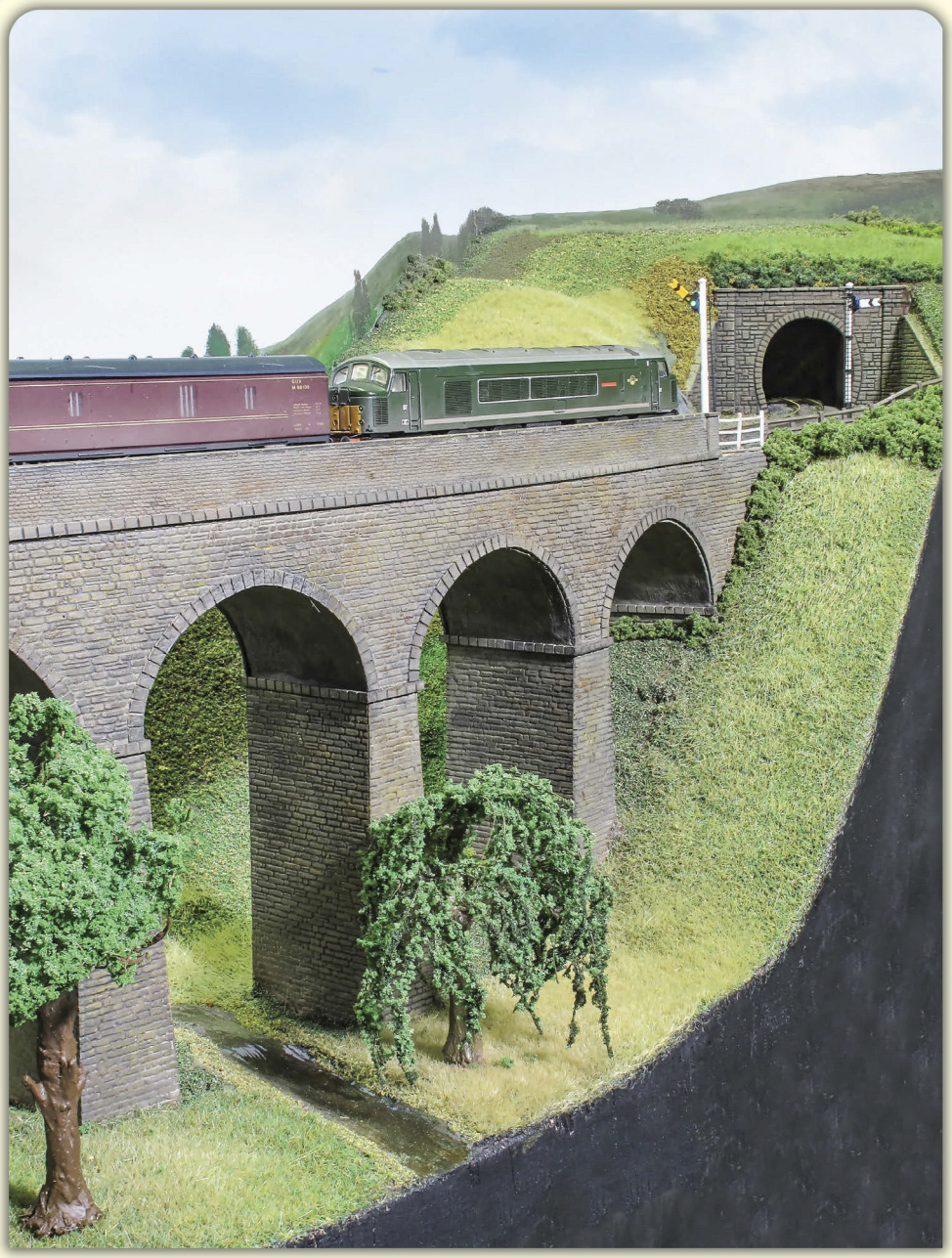
Most of the lengthy operating is at exhibitions where the main aim is to keep something moving with as much variety as possible and anything requested by the public – the Blue Pullman being very popular. I never operate to a schedule, I just try to maintain variation. I even have a small amount of Regional Railways for a change, especially when the compact version of the layout is operated at home.

As mentioned, the layout is fictitious and had not intentionally been set for any specific region or period. However, the backscene and viaduct were influenced by the Peak District near to where I live. I am a member of a local model railway club, and enlist operators from the club to help me. One of them suggested that, when operating BR green diesels, it resembled the now (unfortunately) defunct Midland Main Line and that a Blue Pullman would fit well on the layout. So, whenever it is operated with BR green and the Blue Pullman, it leans towards this line. There have been other purchases such as a green 'Peak' and hopefully the now-released Class 28 Co-Bo.

Future projects

Having never built a continuous run before, I think that the various crossovers in the fiddleyard could have been better placed and perhaps different track sections chosen. However, some of these shortcomings only become evident after prolonged operation at exhibitions. It would also require the control panels to be reworked.

I don't envisage major changes to the layout other than an additional control panel on a lead for the operating signals, which will hopefully make them more convenient to use. I have sold a few layouts to make way for future projects, but the operating



That Viaduct!

While using large radius curves is aesthetically pleasing, this required curved baseboards, platforms and a viaduct. The baseboards weren't too difficult and the scratch-built viaduct took time and effort to complete, but was fairly straightforward – a plywood framework covered with embossed Plastikard. The ring stones were individually stuck on and the caping stones were made from single plastic strip, grooved with a needle file.

The most challenging aspect was the platforms and creating a smooth platform edge. I opted to use angle section plastic strip, which was grooved with a triangular needle file, then joined into a single length, as with the viaduct caping stones. This was toned down with diluted black acrylic, which also highlighted the grooves to some extent. The platform surface – Metcalfe Tarmac, I think – could not be made from one piece, so joins would show. Therefore, numerous joins were drawn on it to disguise the real ones.

While some of the construction was very time consuming, I found the curved platforms and viaduct pleasing and worth the effort. These also attract favourable comments at exhibitions, so I think I got something right.



The backscene

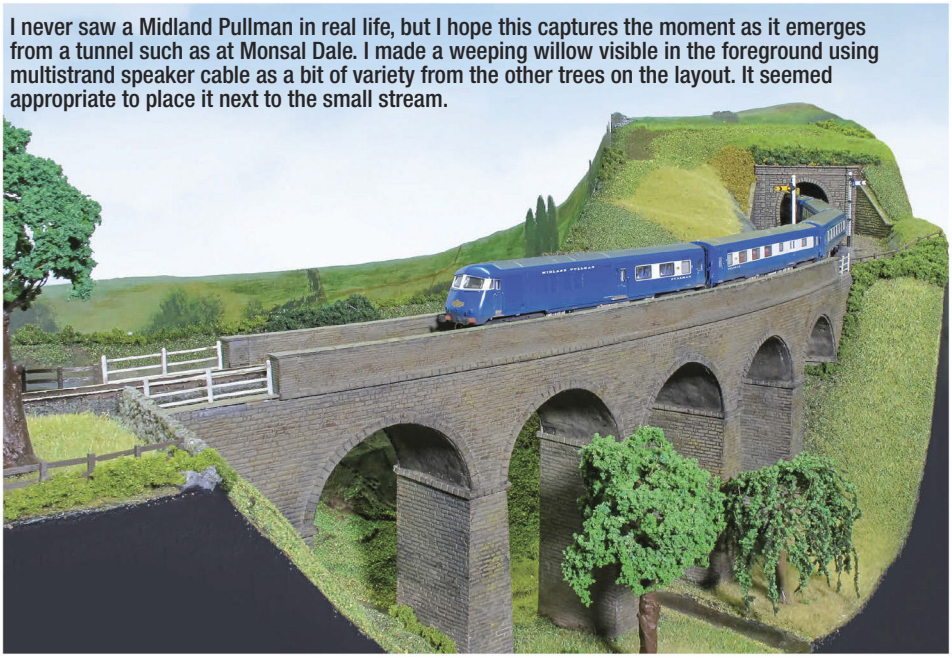
Difficulties were experienced with the backscene. I originally intended to use the photographic type, but couldn't find one long enough, and they cannot be easily shortened or lengthened or have sections inserted, so my only realistic option was to paint it myself. I was having difficulties finding or mixing suitable colours. Enter Dulux; I downloaded the Dulux Visualiser App onto my tablet and then took some photographs of the local hills. The App will then let you pick the colour of any part of the photograph and provide the information to purchase a small (250ml) tin of the emulsion paint, result! Then, not being artistic, I used the photographs as a guide to paint the backscene.



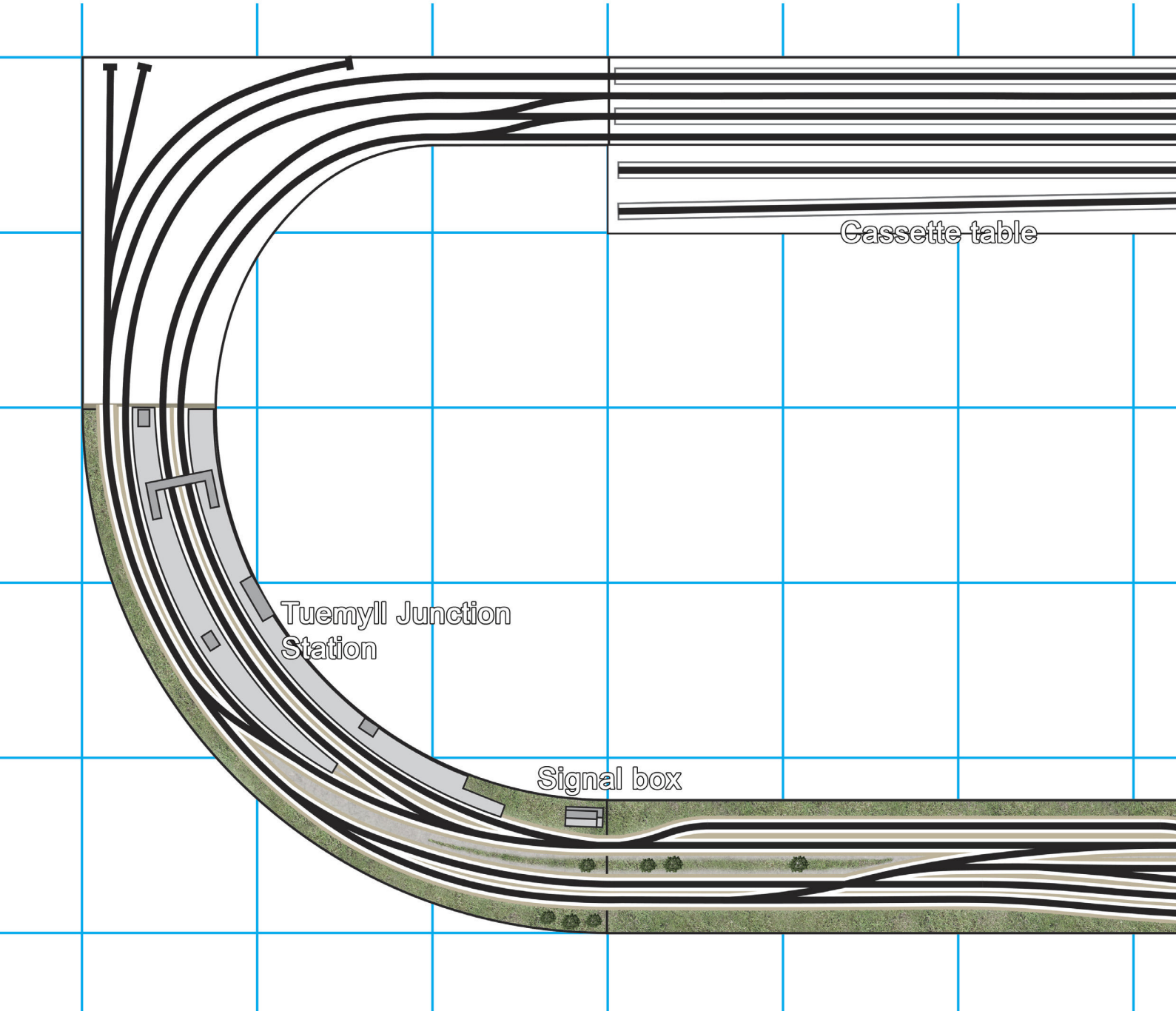
A Class 108 DMU in the station about to pass under the footbridge. The footbridge was another labour of love for this layout but satisfying when finally completed!

potential of this layout is such that I have no plans to move it on for the foreseeable future. I started building a sidings/depot layout in OO during lockdown using materials I had in stock, including hand-built copperclad turnouts with SMP track and even including a double slip, which was quite challenging. My current OO gauge layout 'Westmoor Junction' has a fiddleyard at each end and only half is scenic, so much of my professionally-weathered stock isn't visible. Therefore, this new one will have the majority of the stock on show, and only a small fiddleyard.

I would like to finish by thanking my fellow modellers, Martin and Rob, for their assistance at exhibitions and their guidance on what would work well on the layout.

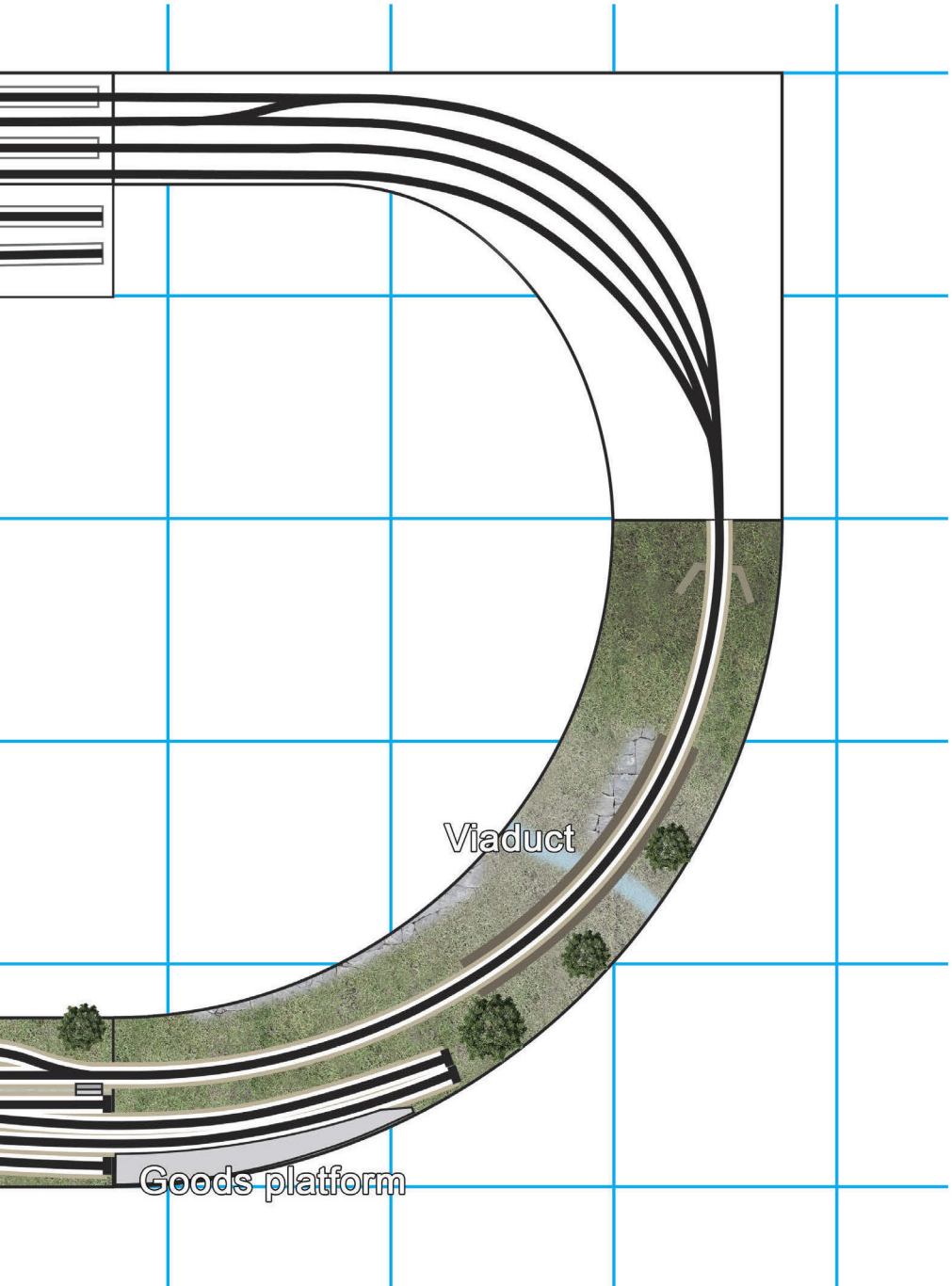


I never saw a Midland Pullman in real life, but I hope this captures the moment as it emerges from a tunnel such as at Monsal Dale. I made a weeping willow visible in the foreground using multistrand speaker cable as a bit of variety from the other trees on the layout. It seemed appropriate to place it next to the small stream.





A 'Peak'-hauled passenger train passes over another labour of love! One aspect of studying the construction of a local viaduct was that I noted that smaller stones were used above the string course, which can be seen in this photograph.



About the modeller

Name: Simon Cullen
How many years modelling: 25
Name of your first layout: 'Bridge Lane' N gauge, a small, easily portable branch line.
Favourite era/region: I started with BR blue, but I have now acquired a lot of BR green which is equally pleasing.
Favourite locomotive: Two-tone green Class 47

I had a model railway as a child but didn't really have it as a proper hobby until I had my own house and dedicated model room. I don't have anything against steam, it is just that, when I started more serious modelling, RTR diesels looked and ran better than steam, so I have stayed with them, only adding BR green to my original BR blue stock.

This layout is my third in N gauge and I have built two OO gauge layouts, with a third OO gauge and very small portable N gauge under construction. Currently, I have five layouts, so I think I will have to sell at least one if I want to build more.

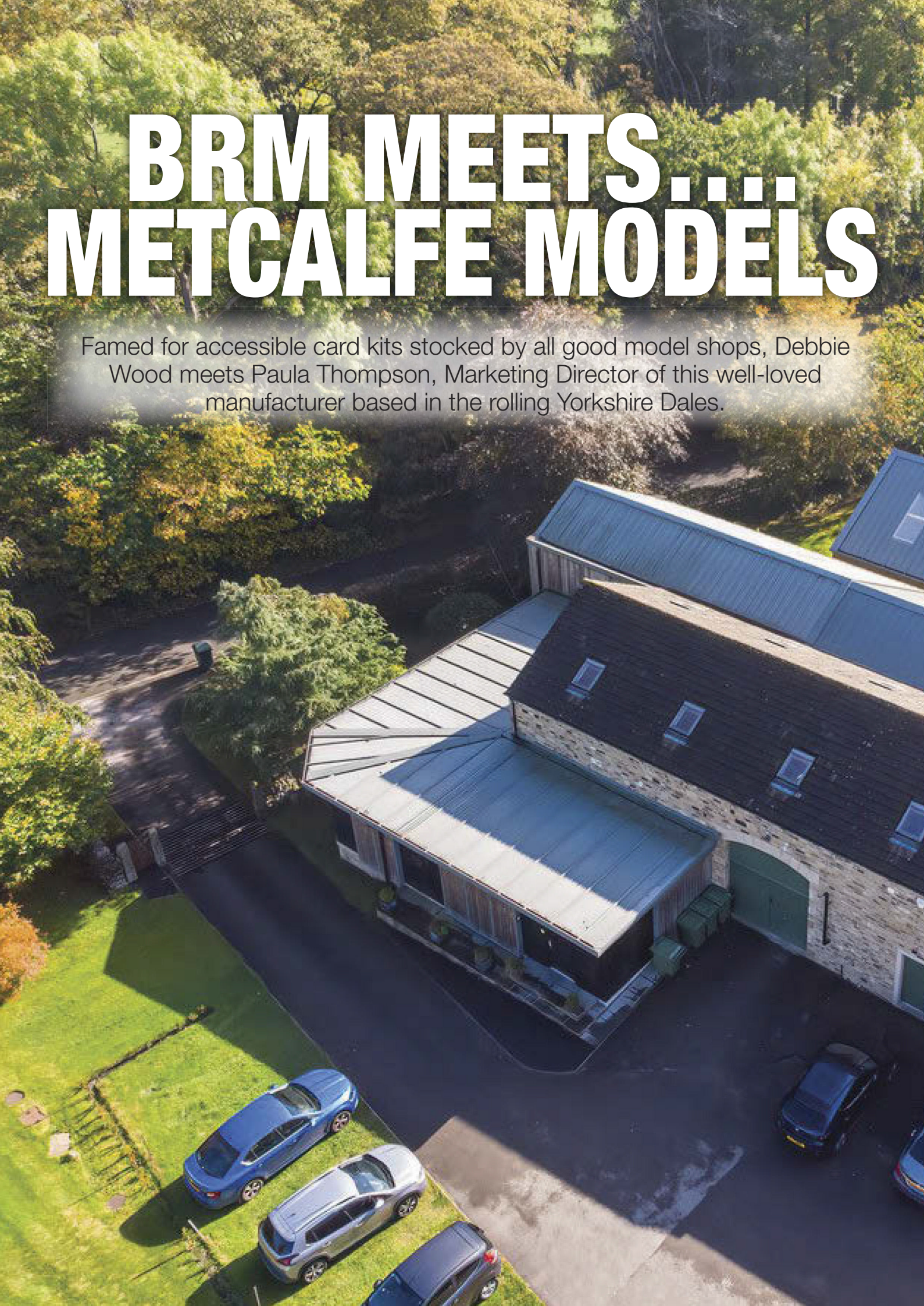
I have always visited exhibitions and bought model railway magazines and I archive interesting articles. I tend to pay more attention to smaller layouts, which I have a chance of using as inspiration. I take particular interest in anything Scottish because they don't involve long trains and so allow small, reasonably prototypical layouts to be built.

I often operate the compact version of this layout with my Scottish stock, Class 26s, 27s, Motorail, sleepers, grain traffic and OTA timber wagons.

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BRM MEETS.... METCALFE MODELS

Famed for accessible card kits stocked by all good model shops, Debbie Wood meets Paula Thompson, Marketing Director of this well-loved manufacturer based in the rolling Yorkshire Dales.





Driving up to where Metcalfe Models calls its home, you cannot help but feel intensely jealous of its stunning location. Nestled in the heart of Yorkshire, with the Settle-Carlisle line just a stone's throw away, the spectacular peaks, ancient woodlands and peaceful valleys, complete with dry stone walls and stunning architecture, provide the perfect backscene for this family-run business.

Father/daughter team Nick Metcalfe and Paula Thompson come to greet us, on what was a blustery autumnal day, the perfect conditions to see the Yorkshire Dales in its full glory.

Established in 1991, Metcalfe Models started life on the Metcalfe family's kitchen table, where Nick, armed with his love of architecture and graphic design, along with his wife Judy, created the first card kit of Embasy Station. Soon after, the company was commissioned to create a range of Settle-Carlisle railway buildings, and, by 1997, Metcalfe Models was manufacturing a range of its own card kits. Growth followed and demand from customers grew to the point that a new factory was necessary, with space for further expansion.

Although Nick and Judy are very much still at the heart of the business, bringing daughter Paula into the fold as Marketing Director seven years ago proved a key turning point. As Phil and Howard received a tour of the newly-expanded factory with Nick, I sat down with Paula to discuss how the company has grown during recent years and to find out what further plans for expansion are in the pipeline.

On joining the company, Paula's first task was to set up a trade network, something that was essential for growth plans. "We used to have Peco as our wholesaler, and they would buy in bulk from us as they had a database of trade customers. When my dad asked me to join the company about seven years ago, he had the idea of bringing the trade customer in-house," Paula explains. "My main aim was to establish a database and a relationship with the shops. We still have a great relationship with Peco – they helped us to build the brand, and we are very grateful for that, but it got to the point when we needed to do it ourselves so that we could expand."

Metcalfe Models currently supplies to around 350 shops in the UK, a figure that continues to grow, and it's not just in the UK where its kits are popular, you can also pick up a kit in a model shop in Canada and Europe, plus the company works with a

huge wholesaler in Australia, called Australia Model Craft, that supplies to the shops across Australia and New Zealand.

"It is always growing. After Covid, we saw a huge influx of people applying for trade accounts, which surprised us as we thought some shops may have closed. So, we were pleasantly surprised. We only sell to people that have a physical premises."

On the subject of Covid, Metcalfe surprised many by permanently closing its doors during the entire pandemic to protect its staff, only opening again in June 2021. Despite missing out on a potential sales 'boom', the like of which many experienced during the various lockdowns, the number of orders received, once the company reopened, was still phenomenal, so much so that the team of ten struggled to keep up with demand.

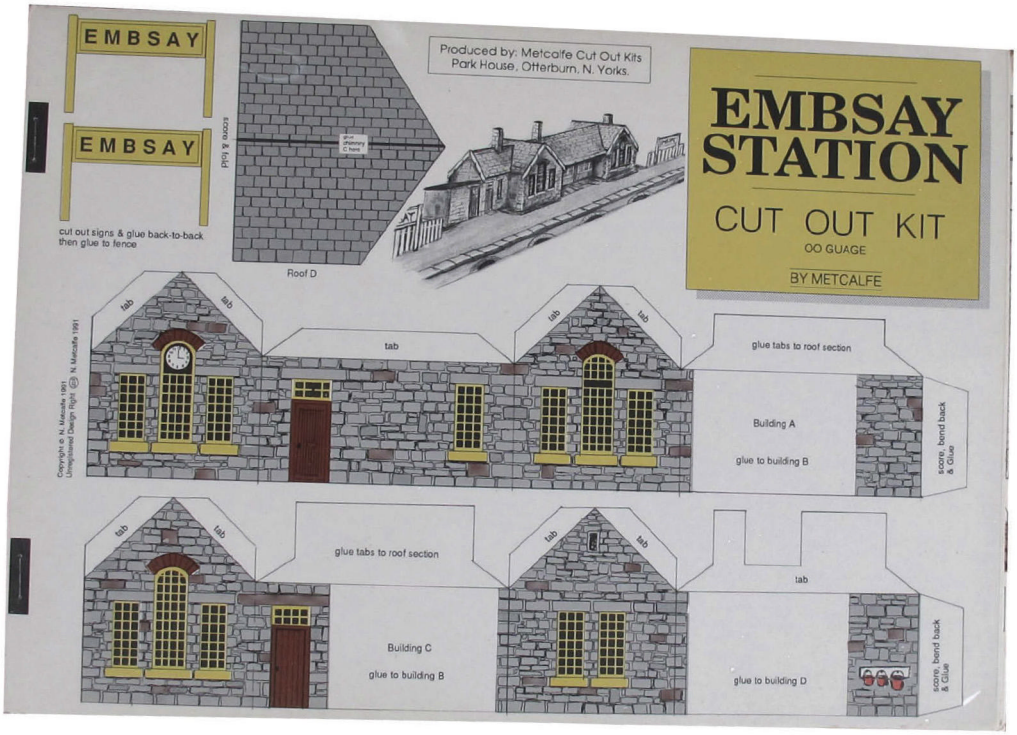
Since reopening, there's also been a great deal of new and exciting products coming out of the factory to supplement the current range, which is vast at over 134 different kits, including the Municipal Building featured in this issue and the Ramshackle Workshop, which Phil assembled in the December 2022 issue.

When asked if she had any favourites, Paula didn't hesitate. "The Castle range. It's something that my dad wanted to design right from the start, but railway buildings and houses kind of took over first. About three years ago, he started to design a castle kit and I think he was unsure about how popular it would be. We started putting the feelers out and a few people came back to us and said we would never be able to sell them, and railway modellers would not be interested. However, on the day we launched, we sold out within an hour, which we've never ever done before! To this day, it is our best-selling kit and its success really surprised us because we found that war gamers were buying it and other modellers who were not necessarily interested in railways."

A close second in terms of popularity is the Settle and Carlisle range, and the split across the two gauges, OO and N, is around 60/40 percent.

Nick Metcalfe is the principal designer in the company, alongside Matt Jackson, who joined the company in 2010. When it comes to inspiration for starting new ranges and buildings, the duo doesn't exactly need to look far.

"Buildings come from all over the country, but there is a lot of local influence as well. It certainly helps when you have the Settle-Carlisle railway on the doorstep," she explains. "A lot of the kits are also based on local buildings; the church, for example, is based on one just down the road, the ramshackle workshop was actually a building found on Google Earth, which is based in Harrogate, but there are also very similar buildings around."



One of the earliest Metcalfe kits, pre-dating the arrival of a die-cutting machine. Modellers had to laboriously cut the pieces out themselves.



Everything you see here, with the exception of the cars, is a Metcalfe product. We think there are eight different kits on view, obviously with several of the popular terraced house sets used.

Both Nick and Matt will draw inspiration from Google Earth and places they have visited for new kit ideas. The popular castle kit is loosely based on a combination of Windsor Castle and Warwick Castle and the town end cottage is based on a medieval stone cottage based in the village of Lacock, which has been used for several period dramas. For this kit, Matt contacted the people who lived in the cottage, who sent photographs to help him design it.

When it comes to timescales, getting a new kit designed, manufactured and into a modeller's hand varies greatly. Nick could do the initial design work for a new building within a few days, but the intricate details, like the stone or brickwork, can take weeks, depending on the complexity to create a realistic look.

"We don't set times, because there are so many factors that interfere, and because we are only a small family-run business. We're bringing out a new kit shortly, which has been designed for the past five to six months, but the castle kit range was probably a year in the making, so it depends on each project."

Once a kit has been designed and created,

then comes the task of producing the instructions, something Paula admits is one of the least popular tasks.

"I wouldn't say it's a challenge to do them, but it's something that can take a long time and you have to write them in a way that everyone understands. Some people read things differently, so you need to make it as clear as possible. It can take forever and it's not a popular job to do."

Looking ahead, the price of paper and card is proving a challenge, with costs more than doubling over the last couple of years, plus getting hold of card can be difficult at times, which then impacts design and production. However, the team has managed to ride the wave and kept production stable and is even looking to invest in more technology, specifically 3D-printing, to help speed up the prototyping of new kit designs.

Although plastic has grown in popularity, Metcalfe Models' heartland will always be card. "We have looked at producing additional plastic accessories, like downpipes and guttering, but we would have to produce thousands of them. We have plastic elements to our kits that are produced by a company in Skipton, but we have to order tens of thousands of these items at a time, which can be risky."

"Producing plastic is also a whole different process, and we are a printer, that's what we major in. We have just brought a new full digital press, so we're still investing in card. We are also looking at some new machinery to ease up the laser-cut parts of the kit because we have six lasers running from the minute we get in, to the minute we close every day and we still can't keep up!"

The range is constantly being reviewed and, although Paula admits that they don't produce as many new kits each year as people would like, getting that balance right so that they don't end up with a range that isn't so big that the trade customers can't stock it, is essential, which means some kits will get discontinued from time to time.

Over a quarter of a million kits are produced by the team at Metcalfe Models every year, a figure that is hard to put into context until you venture into one of its many storerooms. Although operating like a well-oiled machine, the company has a lot of heart, which is evident in the camaraderie within its staff and the passion and dedication of Nick, Judy and Paula to continue to deliver top quality exciting new products to modellers.

The future looks as picture-perfect as the view from the factory window.



Just a small selection of kits produced by the firm. Many more were dotted on shelves around the foyer, including several still in development.



One of the stunning dioramas produced to show off the castle range, demonstraiting how the buildings can be incorporated into a scene.

Metcalfe: at a glance

Established: 1991
Current team: 10 people
Number of kits in the range: 195
Number of kits produced each year: 250,000 approx.
Card and paper used each year: 250T approx.
Most popular kit: The Castle range
Most-complicated kit to build: Settle-Carlisle Goods Shed
Quickest kit to build: Watch Tower (part of the Castle Range)
Top tip for building Metcalfe kits: Read the Instructions!

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

We test Metcalfe's latest card building kit in a style familiar to many, often seen in more urban locations – and the results are quite satisfying.

Words & photography: Michael Russell

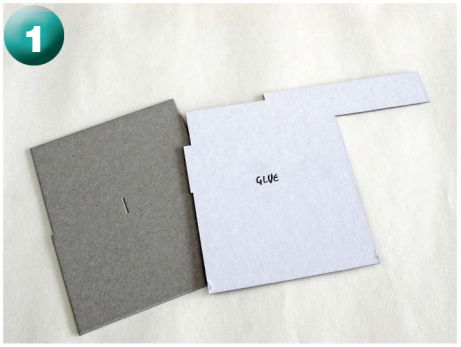


Municipal buildings are those run by the local authority. I think it fair to say that they are ubiquitous. This new card kit from Metcalfe is ideal for such a structure and the kit comes with options for modelling a hospital, police station, or school, for instance. You could just change the signage or go for more major alterations.

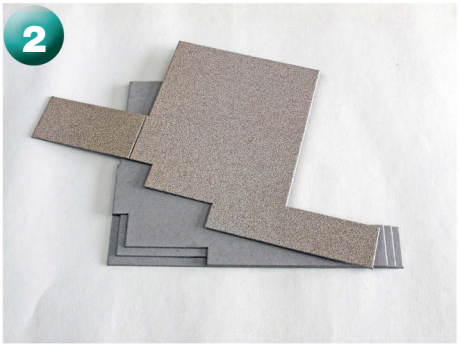
I have chosen to model a building dedicated to youth support, providing health and employment advice to young people. I have replaced a door with a window and omitted a canopy, all utilising parts from the kit. You can also add new detail or replace existing detail, and this example has drainpipes added.

There's lots of flexibility, and you can adapt the building to the level of detail of your existing structures. Try to find a level that you are happy with and apply a holistic approach so that there are no incongruities. It is not so much the level of detail, but consistency that matters. There are no right or wrong answers to this, it is purely down to personal preference and factors such as time, money and modelling ability.





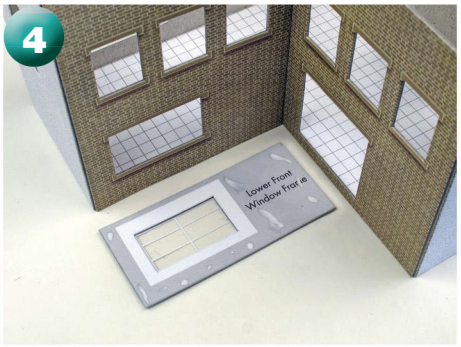
When assembling the bases, apply the glue to the reverse of the higher number pieces as these have smaller surface areas. As soon as you have lightly pressed the pieces together and aligned them, place them under some book weights.



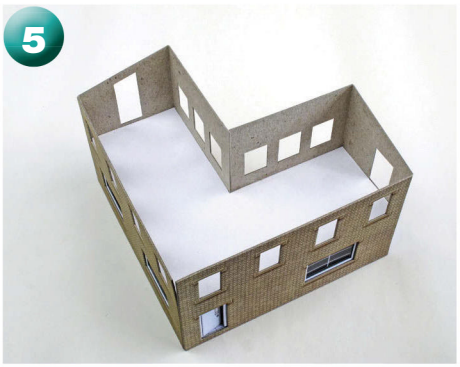
Glue the rear top steps together to get an idea how quickly your glue grabs, then proceed to the larger pieces. To minimise the risk of damage from excess glue, affix the final detailed layers in place once the first three layers are assembled and have dried.



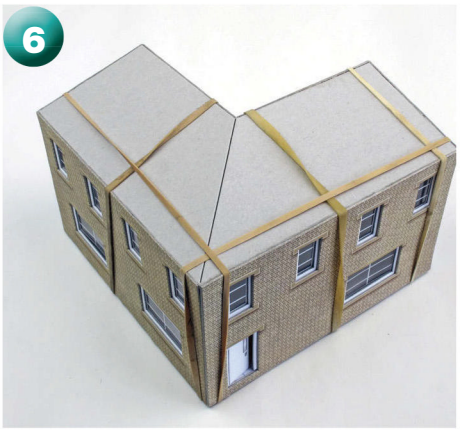
I stuck the windows in place with a contact adhesive, but be very careful with this glue because it is stringy and very easy to damage the visible area. You only need to apply a small amount around the outside and lots of overhang is provided for this.



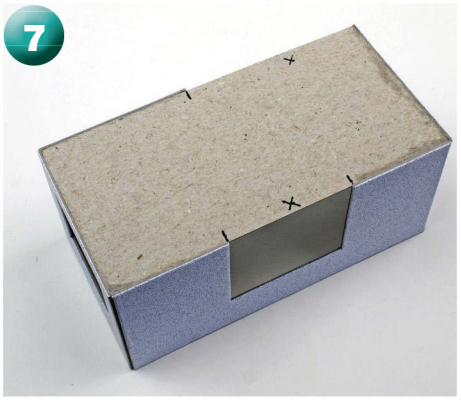
Glue the frames in place so that the white window borders are visible from the outside. Fit in place with PVA, adding evenly-spaced small blobs in the grey areas only. Press into place immediately and line up windows centrally.



Ensure that you test fit the support pieces before removing and then gluing in place. As the buildings have been cut accurately, you will find that no adjustments are necessary.



Fit the roof support in place, one side at a time, and use rubber bands to hold everything square until the glue has set.

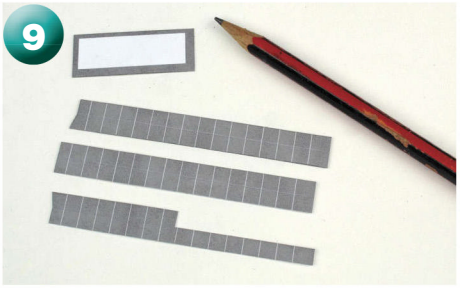


When wrapping the walls around the extension floor, it is easier to mark the areas where glue needs applying beforehand from underneath. Be sure to apply a thin, even layer of glue.



I decided to remove the large door on the extension and replace it with a window. Cut a hole in the 'extension walls' insert to match the door glazing and form a new window. Make a wrapper for the piece by scanning the kit wall and printing it out onto plain paper.

WEATHERING



To disguise the white edges of the card, use an HB pencil. Vary the pressure to match the darkness of the adjacent surface. Don't press on too hard otherwise you will deform the card. Use a putty rubber to erase any mistakes.

TOP TIPS

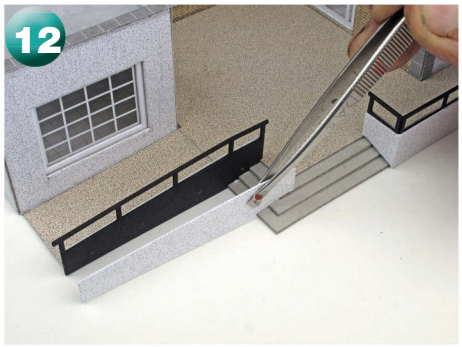
Much of the kit needs building sequentially, but there are some sections you can build in parallel. You could build the extension from step 5 and the canopies in step 6 as sub-assemblies ready for fitting when the main building is ready. This would speed things up and allow you to continue work while glue dries. Ensure that you have caught up with the main building in the instructions before adding the sub-assemblies.

Although you need to handle the kit to build it, try to keep contact to a minimum, as the edges of the card will show signs of wear otherwise. You also need to ensure that your hands are clean, as the card will pick up dirt and can't be removed as it is absorbed into the surface. The buildings are easily damaged by water and grease, so you may find it best to refrain from eating or drinking near them.

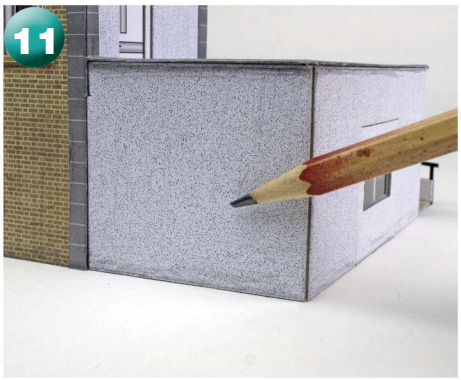


Use an HB pencil to add weathering. Shade a border inside the roof to add a shadow and along the top of the walls beneath the roof. Add lines at the edges of windowsills where rain has run down and along the base of walls where dirt has splashed up.

FINISHING



When fitting the railings, it is best to fit the inner black part first, then add the cladding. This ensures that the trim is set at the correct height in relation to the ground and steps.

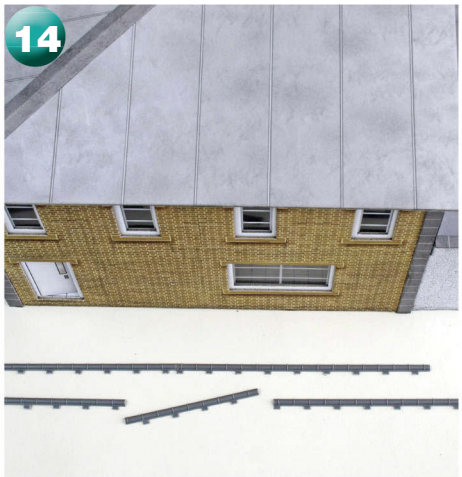


For ease of access, delay adding parts and assemblies, such as the corner strips and canopies, until after you have added the weathering. An HB pencil dragged lightly down walls will help simulate water streaks and dirt.



I made some bespoke signage using Microsoft Publisher, although any graphics tool would suffice. The notes on the door are typical of most establishments and lend an air of authenticity.

FURTHER REFINEMENTS



Cut the gutters from the runners so that a tab is left that you can use to mount the gutters to the building. Cut a section out of the middle, so the gutters match the roof length. The sections are handed and this allows placement of the downpipes at the outer ends.



After painting, the final step is to glue the gutters in place with contact adhesive or superglue. Then add the downpipes, shortening them to suit the height of the building. Ensure that the vulnerable bottom end of the downpipe is secure to the building.

Craft knife
Rule
Rubber bands
'Self-heal' cutting mat
Scissors
HB pencil
felt-tip pen
Cocktail sticks for applying glue
Mitre box
Putty rubber

Metcalfe Models
(PO362) OO/HO Scale Municipal Building
www.metcalfemodels.com

Golden Valley Hobbies
(41609) Auhagen gutters and drainpipes
www.goldenvalleyhobbies.com

Expo Tools
(47040) 250ml Expo Fast Set PVA
(49012) 35ml Tube UHU All Purpose
(41032) Liquid Poly
(DB0033) Humbrol Acrylic Dropper No. 33 Black
www.expotools.com

CONCLUSION

This is a strong and simple-to-make building that is relatively quick to assemble and requires few tools. Thanks to the pre-cutting of the parts, there is very little knife work involved, making it ideal for beginners and those that lack physical strength or precise motor skills. The instructions are comprehensive.

It is easy to repurpose the building and to make refinements. A further enhancement that you may wish to consider is to fit windows that have some depth to them, and designing and printing your own window frames, using 3D printer technology is probably the best option. The existing glazing will aid you, giving all the dimensions you require, and could be re-used with the frames.

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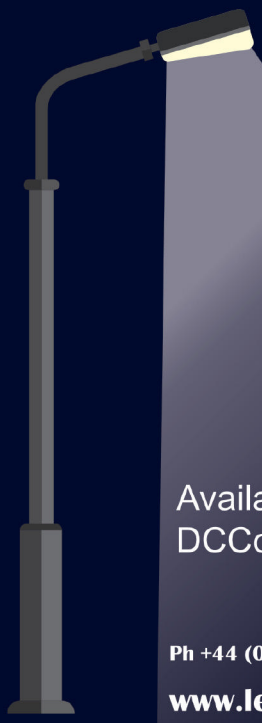
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Croydon Model Railway Society



Richard Millington of the Croydon Model Railway Society chats with us about sharing skills with new members and building a new club OO layout.





BRM: Although a small club, you have many projects on the go – are you on the lookout for more members?
Richard: We welcome new members skilled in every discipline, not least as we are still in the middle of constructing our O gauge layout, and are at the very start of constructing a much larger OO gauge layout, which requires contributions in track laying, signalling, landscaping, weathering, building construction, and more.

We also welcome new members who are new to the hobby and without particular skills – we love sharing with them all the tricks of the trade.

The current members have a wealth of experience, from scratch-building track to locomotives, rolling stock, and scenic items, to kit-building and ready-to-run detailing.

BRM: So, do you model in all gauges?
Richard: In the clubhouse, there are layouts in 'N', 'OO' (under construction), 3mm:1ft scale (one complete and the other under construction) and 'O' (under construction). We also have a Tram layout.

There is also a test track for N gauge, OO gauge and O gauge, both analogue and DCC. We have frequently used a mixture of Peco Setrack and Flexitrack, though members are interested in the new Legacy range from DCC Concepts, too.

Over the years, the club membership has had many exhibition layouts in different scales and gauges.

BRM: What does a normal club night entail?
Richard: Conversation, coffee, and sometimes a lecture on electronics and layout building. Joining a club is great if you enjoy other people's company.

The club is in South Croydon and has members from Croydon, Thornton Heath, Warlingham, Caterham, Purley, Kenley, Addington and Carshalton.

The regular club meeting is from 7.30 to 10.00 on a Wednesday evenings, but members frequently attend the club on Wednesday afternoons to work on layouts, and can come along at other times by arrangement, as we own the clubroom and do not lease it. There is also a meeting of local MERG members at the Club on the second Friday evening of each month,



which a number of Club members attend. Presentations have already been planned up to next January.

The club is welcoming, and if you have any questions about railway modelling, there is always sure to be somebody there who can give you a helpful answer.

BRM: Do you have a favourite layout from over the years?
Richard: 'Acton Mainline' in 'N' – it was great for visitors, but very hard for the operators. I would have to say that we prefer the steam era because of the variety of operations required.

BRM: Any plans for 2023?
Richard: One of our main aims for the next 12 months is to get the 'OO' layout to the point where members can bring in their own rolling stock and operate it. Many members do not have room for expansive layouts at home and this will give them the chance to make up their own trains and consists and take them round the layout and shunt as they wish. And staying afloat!

BRM: How can people learn more about the club?
Richard: The club has a website with a regularly updated homepage, a Facebook presence, and a quarterly digital magazine called Exchange Sidings, which covers news, visits to other railways and exhibitions, railway historical articles, and updates from members on their railway constructions at home and modelling tips. Recent articles have covered Garratt locomotives, Railways in Art, the TOPS system, and a visit to the Elizabeth Line.

Quick facts

When was the club founded: July 30, 1947
How many members: 20
Club nights: 19.30 to 22.00 Wednesdays
Membership fee: £140, annually
What age to become a full member: 18





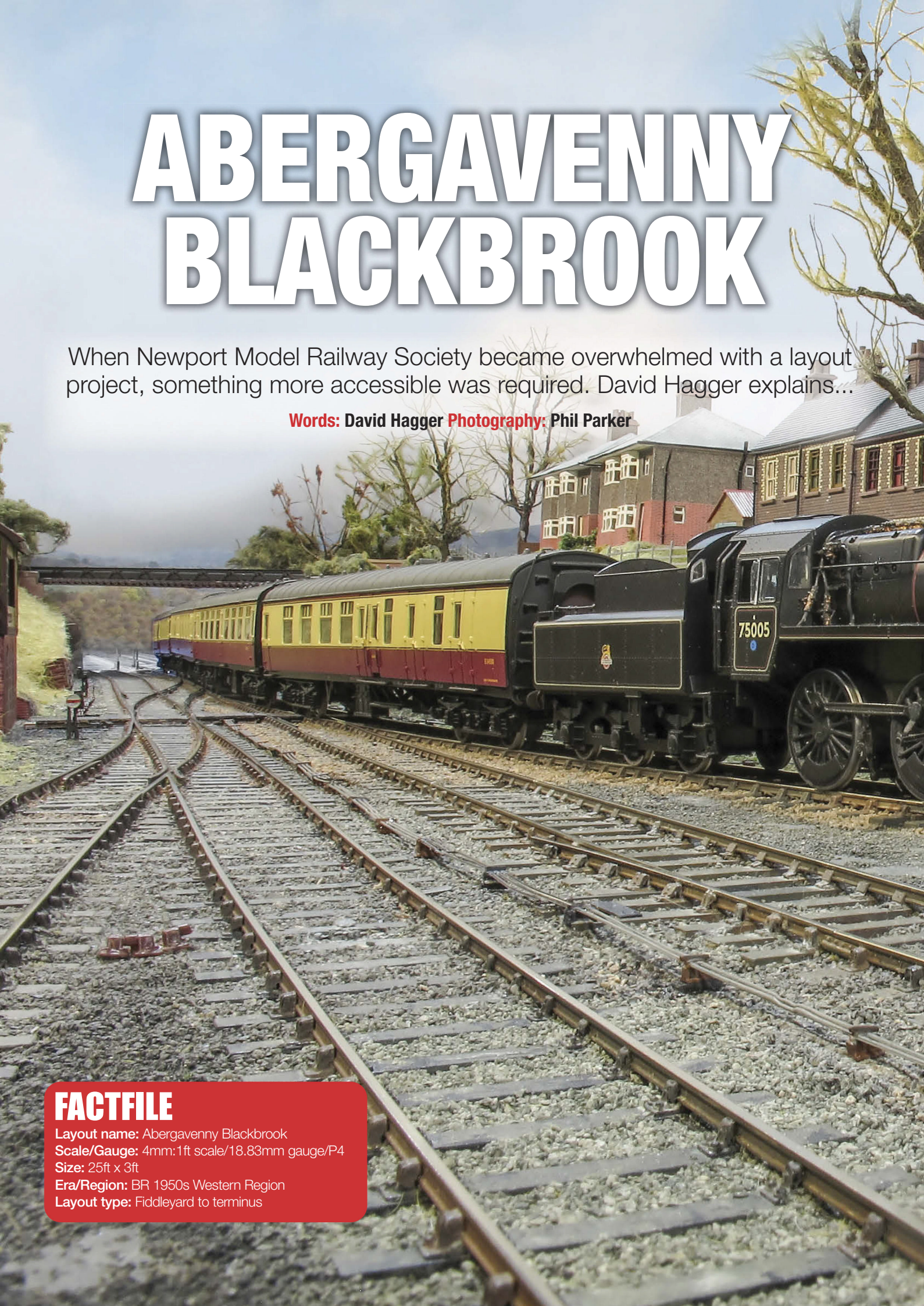




ABERGAVENNY BLACKBROOK

When Newport Model Railway Society became overwhelmed with a layout project, something more accessible was required. David Hagger explains...

Words: David Hagger **Photography:** Phil Parker



FACTFILE

Layout name: Abergavenny Blackbrook
Scale/Gauge: 4mm:1ft scale/18.83mm gauge/P4
Size: 25ft x 3ft
Era/Region: BR 1950s Western Region
Layout type: Fiddleyard to terminus



Redolent with post-war optimism, BR standard class 4 75005 eases a train of Mk. 1 coaches, in their smart, new carmine and cream livery into 'Abergavenny Blackbrook' station. Sadly, for railways at least, the tide was soon to turn and Abergavenny would lose its town centre station, residents being obliged to use the mainline station, Monmouth Road on the outskirts of town – assuming they used rail at all – and the only-just-run-in locomotive would be consigned to Barry for scrap.

A few years ago, the club (for reasons we'll not go into!) embarked on a very ambitious P4 project, which, if ever completed, would comprise more boards than the ageing membership could shift and be larger than many exhibition managers would want. Progress on this layout, 'Little Mill Junction' (LMJ), proved to be slow, and with the sale of a previous P4 layout we were left without a manageable, or working 4mm:1ft scale layout but we still needed a testing ground for the stock that we were building for LMJ.

Meanwhile, the club owned a relatively small O gauge layout ('Frecclesham'), which was proving popular with club members and exhibition managers. It was the relative success of 'Frecclesham' as a fiddle yard to terminus layout and the perceived need for a modest P4 exhibition layout that proved the key catalysts in the creation of 'Abergavenny Blackbrook' (ABB).

Initially, the idea was "Let's just replicate Frecclesham", but given the club's eccentric predilection to making the easy into something complicated, this was not quite what we did. Taking the terminus idea, we decided to look at a variety of prototype termini to see if any matched our criteria closely enough. A search through RJ Smith's *GWR Stations 1947 Part Two* threw up a suitable candidate in the shape of Dowlais Central, the Brecon and Merthyr terminus. While ABB is in no way a model of Dowlais, having a prototype in the background has been a useful reference when faced with making decisions about the layout – "would a cattle dock really go there? Yes, it did at Dowlais!".





Ex-GWR 6693, a South Wales staple, coasts into Abergavenny Blackbrook with the afternoon workmen's train returning from ROF Glascoed.

We wanted the layout to be portable for exhibitions, well presented, but quick to build. So, we opted for laser-cut baseboards, standard Exactoscale point kits, and ready-made buildings. Thankfully, we managed to constrain the size to three 1.2m scenic boards plus a fiddle yard. This will all fit into two estate cars, and, above all else, is manageable by the ageing membership.

As we were building the sort of stock that one would see in the Pontypool area in the mid-'50s, that in turn dictated the presumed location for the layout. After discussing a number of possibilities in the general locality, we eventually lighted on Abergavenny as the location. In our version of history, the town of Abergavenny had developed to a larger size and warranted a further station to service the expanded population. This provided extra traffic, enough to make it worth diverting some local main line services into the station, though not the full expresses. There are some shuttle connections to the main junction on the line to the North and also to the ex-LNWR line to Merthyr. However, the main goods facilities are elsewhere in the town; with ABB having just a few facilities aimed at agriculture.

Scenic work

When we came to designing the scenic side of the layout, we had several goals in mind. To strike a balance between operational interest, and overcrowding the layout's modest size; to evoke the look of a medium-sized market town; to maximise the use of commercial ready-to-plant buildings and to achieve a convincing scenic break.

In choosing which railway company buildings would appear on the model, we closely followed the design of Dowlais, the major exception being that we decided not to include an engine shed, as the supposed location of the model would be fairly close to the sheds at Abergavenny. In its stead, and to achieve a degree of balance, we decided to install a provender store. For this, we used the Bachmann model as a basis, combining three to provide a triple-length building. The station building and the goods shed are also ready-to-plant buildings (Hornby and Bachmann respectively), and in all cases, the buildings have been weathered; for example to reduce the over-scale texture of the slate roofs.

For the signal box, we couldn't identify anything that looked appropriate from proprietary sources, so a heavily-adapted laser-cut kit has been used and this has replaced the mock-up that was on the layout when the accompanying photographs were taken. The coal cells are also laser-cut wood kits and we have carefully graded the contents using a series of sieves of different apertures.

Outside the boundary fence, we have tried to suggest the expansion of the town through the use of a stone-built, agricultural house, brick-built Victorian terraces, and finally two pairs of 1930s semis. Behind the station, we have a number of light, industrial buildings and this is an area where we are continuing to develop the model.

The boundary fence is made (very expensively) of etched brass from our own artwork, grass and ground cover is static grass and the usual foams and materials. Trees and bushes are hand-formed on wire armatures with scatter and sea foam representing the foliage.

The backscene has received some favourable comments, so it's probably worth describing the thinking behind it. Our criteria were that it should be continuous without breaks along its length; it should be high enough that most people can't see 'over the sky'; there should be no sharp angles in it and the colouring and level of detail should be subdued and soft enough that it doesn't draw the viewers' eyes away from the model. When we were building LMJ, we obtained a series of drone shots of the terrain to the west of the station. While this isn't perfect for our chosen location of Abergavenny, it is close enough to evoke its south-east Wales location. As luck

Rolling Stock

The locomotives we run reflect those seen on the North and West line, but given the size of ABB, we tend to avoid the four-cylinder ex-GWR classes, and the ex-LMS locomotives are probably under represented – we could probably do with the addition of a 'Jubilee' and a 'Coal Tank'. Maybe a G2, too. Turning to passenger stock, we were helped by the way North and West trains were made up using various sets with different destinations; for example, there was common use of the 'M set', comprising two brake thirds, an all-third and a composite. We operate these 'M sets' as single trains on ABB. Apart from the use of an auto trailer with the obligatory 1400 and a diesel rail car, both of which were intended for the Usk branch on LMJ, the other stock is made up of a set of four non-corridor coaches that are intended to replicate the Workmen's train to the ROF establishment at Glascoed. These are affectionately known as the Dumpers as they served the arms dump. Freight stock tends to be a raggle-taggle mixture, but we try to aim at the prosaic rather than the exotic. The items are a mix of kit-built and modified proprietary from many sources.



Another South Wales staple, this time a 42XX, paused at the signal box for the driver to exchange a few pleasantries with the bobby. The model is of Hornby origin, re-wheeled to P4 standards. The signal box seen here has since been replaced by a heavily improved laser-cut model.



INSET: Not long new out of the works, BR(WR) 'Pannier' 8436 is caught on film shunting. Its next manoeuvre will be to remove the vans from in front of the provender store to allow the workmen's train to be stabled in that siding overnight.

6845 *Paviland Grange,* a converted Hornby model, runs around its train, en route from Cardiff General to Birmingham Snow Hill.

would have it, it turned out that the day of the photo shoot was overcast and wet so provided exactly the sort of atmosphere that we wanted. After that, we were helped by Art Printers, who manipulated the images and printed them out to size. When on show, the continuous sheet is unrolled, then slid and clipped into place. Otherwise, it is safely stowed to prevent damage.

Control and Route Setting

The club has used DCC for well over 10 years and this layout uses a mix of electronics. The DCC control is via NCE hand-helds and feeds into a MERG power booster. As well as controlling the locomotives, we use DCC to operate points, signals and de-couplers.

From the outset, we elected to implement a route-setting approach. The trackplan is not complicated, but at 4pm on a Saturday after a full day's operating, mistakes are easily made. To facilitate the route setting, we use NCE Mimic Panel units. These enable a single push button to set all the points on the chosen route, which then makes the signalman's job a little less stressful. The points also have individual switches (also controlled through the Mimic unit) as a back-up, but this is mainly so we can test the points individually. As it is possible to have multiple Mimic panels, we have the unusual facility of providing the Station Driver position the possibility to also set a limited number of points. This allows the Station Driver to do basic manoeuvres, such as initiating a run-around, without waiting for the signalman. To be candid, some of us (especially the electrical department) thought this was a recipe for disaster. However, it actually works and speeds up movement while at a show.

Points and signals are operated using servos controlled by MERG boards fed by Hornby DCC controllers. We could have used MERG decoders, but the electrical department decided it was a busman's holiday building circuits, so took the easy way out! The layout stock uses Dingham auto-couplers, and originally we used electromagnets (also DCC-controlled). However, we kept burning out electro-magnets. In the end, the electrical department got so tired of the problem he fitted permanent magnets that are raised and lowered by servos. This has a few advantages – uncouplers can be both deployed for longer and as many as the operators feel they need!



One of the larger locomotives regularly seen in Abergavenny Blackbrook, an ex-GWR 'Grange', pauses at a ground signal, before it completes running around.



A BR Class 3MT 'Prairie' tank shunts wagons to the goods shed. The shed is a resin ready-to-plant model from the Bachmann Branchline range, weathered, particularly on the roof to reduce the texture to something closer to that of slate.

A running session

Here we have followed our standard club practice of having a signalman in overall control, with drivers controlling the trains. The station driver works trains from the fiddleyard towards themselves and into the station, while the yard driver brings trains into the yard. The signalman also has a controller for movements that need filing in.

We nearly always operate to a fixed sequence, which becomes ingrained by the end of a two-day show, though the freight movements do have variations. We find the set timetable helps reliability as the same stock is always on the same train using the same track, so should couple and uncouple successfully, making operation more enjoyable.

The sequence tries to follow a day's activity, with the early departure of the Workmen's train to ROF Glascoed. This leaves the siding empty to receive a train of vans to the provender store to unload. Meanwhile, a through passenger train will have arrived, the connecting Push-Pull departed and the passenger locomotive run around has also departed. This passenger cycle will be repeated with different stock and interspersed with freight for the coal siding and goods shed. Towards the end of the day, the vans must be cleared from the provender store ready to stable the returning workmen's train. The signalman's job can be challenging, but fun.



We anticipate introducing variation by having a market day, when the bay will be full of cattle vans, and extra passenger trains run. We would also like to add parcels and newspaper traffic.

Fiddleyard storage is on cassettes, which we have used successfully on a few layouts. These are built from aluminium angle as the running surface with a base of stable plastic. A Formica sheet provides a smooth surface to the fiddleyard. The cassettes come in small (locomotive), medium (freight), and large (passenger) sizes. Thin brass clips provide alignment and electrical continuity.



Conclusion

On the whole, we are pretty happy with the way that the layout has turned out. The goals we set ourselves in terms of transportability and ease of set-up have been achieved at the handful of exhibitions that the layout has so far attended.

The use of ready-to-plant buildings doesn't detract from the overall appearance on the layout but where we have not found suitable items available commercially, we have been happy to scratch-build, or kit-build buildings as necessary. Having to adapt the geometry of the layout to match that of turnout kits hasn't proved to be the problem that at least one of our members envisaged. The completed trackwork seems to have a natural flow to it, which is not always the case when one adopts commercial items.

If we were to start the design again, we might well allow ourselves a few more inches at the back of the layout behind the station, where the scenic break is a bit too abrupt. This is an area where we might do some rework. Similarly, some of the trees don't quite look the part and need a bit more attention.

The layout is fun to operate, has enough operational flexibility to keep us interested, and, as it settles down and we fettle here and there, its reliability is increasing.

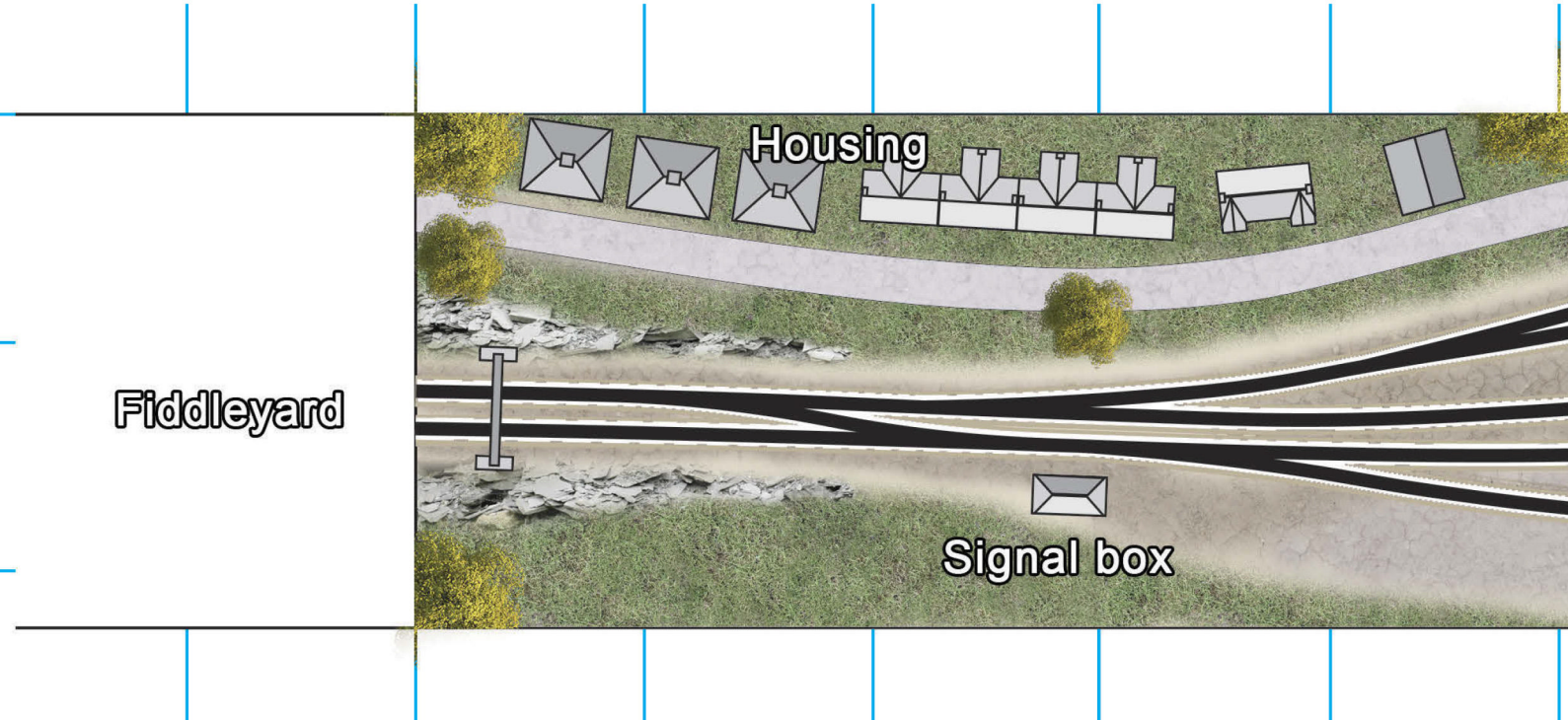
On a final note, we have a set of 21 baseboards with trackwork for a large P4 layout available to interested parties...



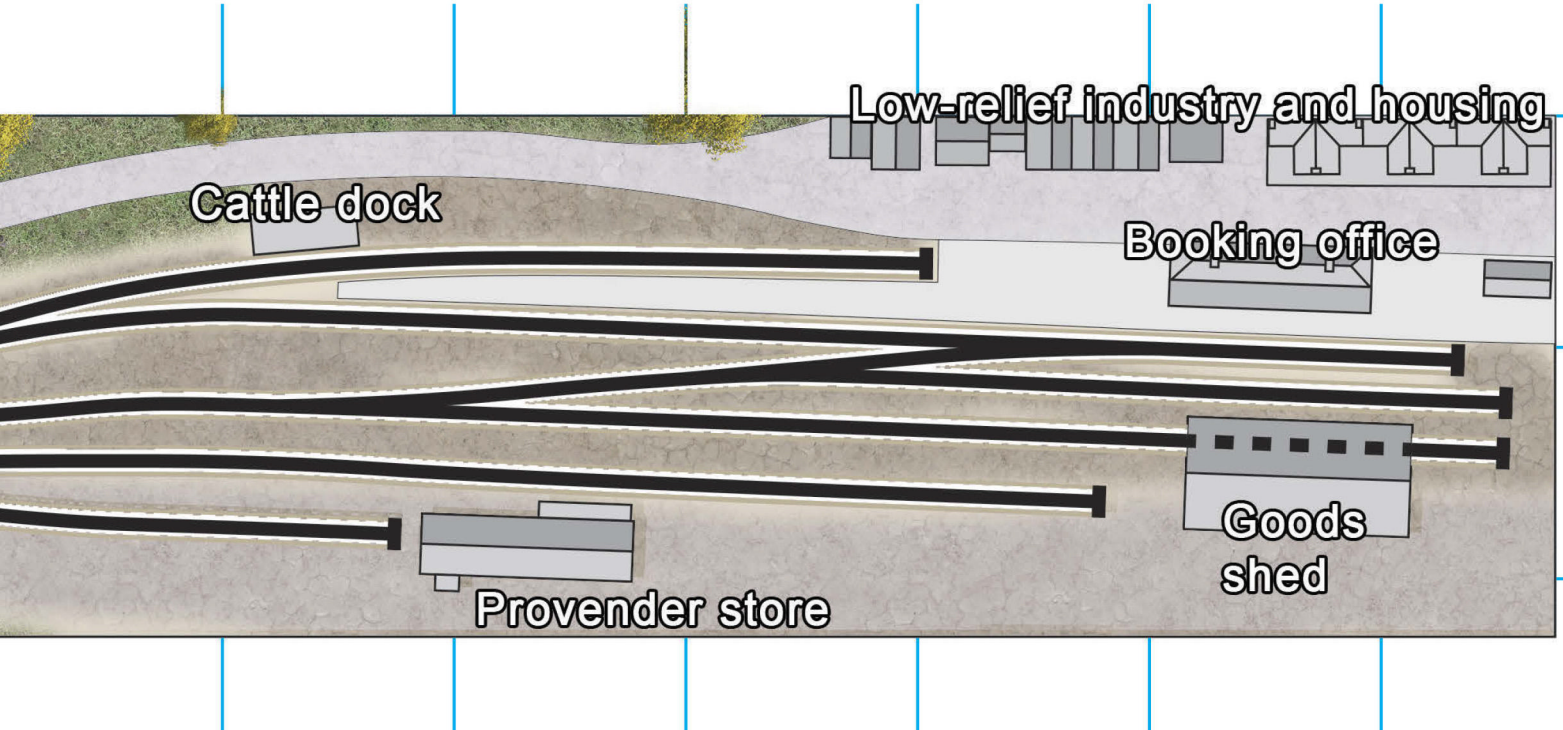
The scenic break into the fiddle yard is achieved by a combination of the cutting, trees and bushes, and a pair of pipe bridges, the larger one carrying water from the Grwyne Fawr reservoir; the smaller, that of the Grwyne Fach.



'Just' a ready-to-plant resin station building from Hornby perhaps, but weathered and set into the platform it can be quite effective. To the right is one of several telegraph poles on the layout, each of which was custom designed and built for its location.



The station was built on the edge of the Victorian town. With the coming of the railway, the town prospered and grew, as evidenced by the terraced housing giving way to the 'semis'. In the cutting below, an 0-6-2T enters the station.



MODELLING ON A BUDGET: PART 1

Words & photography: Tony Wright



After I'd completed 45017 (including further weathering on the chassis), I handed it over to my good friend Geoff Haynes for weathering. He's made it look very natural indeed. It's just as unlikely as its sibling to be seen on 'Little Bytham' (this time on the ECML), but both carry the correct lamps. Of course, real coal in the tenders is essential as well.

We're currently in a time of rising inflation and witnessing, effectively, a potential drop in our living standards as purchasing power is eroded in a most-pernicious manner. Model railways could hardly be called 'essential', compared with the need for food and shelter. However, its impact on mental well-being should never be underestimated. Certainly, at some times of difficulty during my life, I've found this most-creative hobby to be of great assistance.

So, how can we combine the two elements – still create things for our model railways, yet keep costs under control? Without doubt, the current costs of new RTR items are rapidly rising, because of a variety of factors, though, it could be argued they still represent good value for money – if one has enough!

But, when money is tight, what can be done? How about looking at the second- (or third-) hand market?

Some little time ago, I was presented with four Hornby 'Black Fives' by Howard Smith, bought off Ebay for around £30.00 - £40.00 each. They're not the earliest Hornby manifestations of the class – no, not the pretty-grim earlier tender-drive versions, but the more recent (and much better) examples. With Hornby's announcement of a forthcoming all-new 'Black Five' (in so many variations), more second-hand examples should be entering the market as potential buyers look to 'upgrade'. That said, don't expect 'perfect' ones to be cheap.

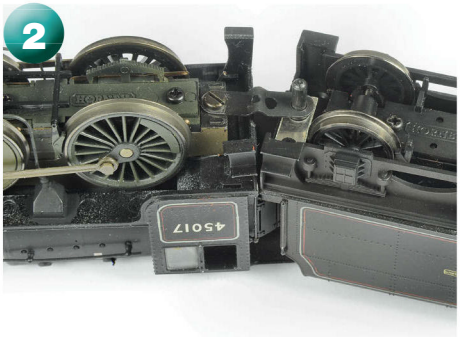
We're after ones that need a little work – a little 'personal' attention to rectify potential problems and improve/detail/weather a basically-sound starting point. However, buying things 'cheaply' can present one or two problems – let's see how I got on...

1



This is how one arrived; a repainted locomotive attached to a pre-weathered tender! Unfortunately, the painter had neglected to remove the cab glazing before spraying the thing (with Halfords 'rattle can' car acrylic), which is a real problem. Not only that, its chassis was a bit of a 'dud' – the final gear wheel had split, resulting in the motor merrily whirring away but with no motion. On investigation, the pick-ups made bids for freedom, and the spring pressing on the rear driver has been lost forever in the turmoil of my workshop. I shoved the lot in a box in disgust!

2



As supplied, none of the four's tender pick-ups worked. In fact, one system caused an immediate short circuit. Since I'm not a fan of tender pick-ups anyway, I removed the locomotive-to-tender connections and took the opportunity to shorten the drawbar by merely bending a joggle into it. This example had been repainted (after the cab windows had been temporarily removed, thankfully).

3



The repainted example had been done quite well, with a start made on the mixed-traffic lining. One early improvement was to install a decent front coupling shackle. Yes, that has a cost imperative, but it's far superior to the original puny plastic protuberance (which was merely pulled out with pliers).

4



The shortened drawbar is seen again, but it's the crew that is the principal interest here. These are Bachmann items, and I used them because of time expediency. Of course, they come at a price because they're pre-painted. More-prudent modellers will paint their own crews, because a driver and fireman are essential in any layout locomotive's cab.

5



Because the 'industry-standard' coupling is the (ghastly, in my opinion) tension-lock, most RTR bogies have a protrusion at their front to be able to hold this coupling. Since Black Fives rarely ran tender-first on trains, and I can't stand the tension-locks, I just lopped off the protrusion with a junior hacksaw, painting the shiny exposed Mazak with matt black enamel.

6

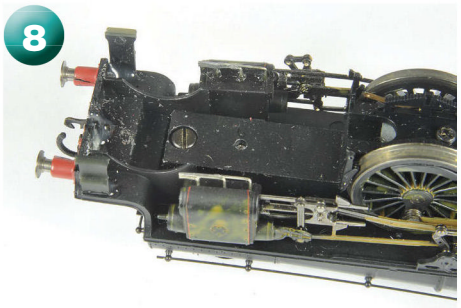


A third example came like this; with part of its motion dismantled, missing a cab step and minus its smokebox door dart. Despite its broken combination lever/union link/crosshead assembly, its chassis was a good runner, so I exchanged the valve gear from the dud chassis. I also 'stole' the step and the dart from the previously-seen duffer.

7



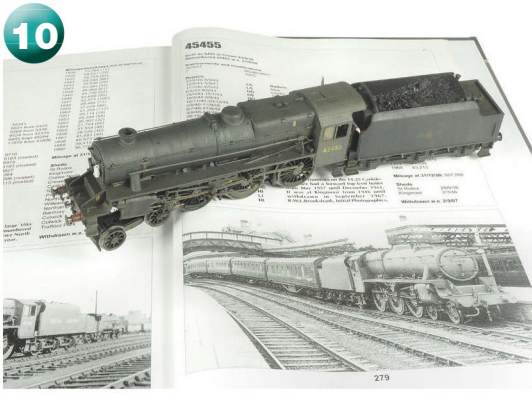
Here's another part-repainted example, on a chassis that has received some 'interesting' weathering. However, it was a good runner...



The locomotives came (in some cases) with extra parts to be added, including the front steps. I fixed these initially with superglue, finally reinforcing the joints with fillets of five-minute epoxy. That was also used eventually to repair the split buffer stocks. Whoever had done the weathering had also fitted some rather nice cylinder drain cocks (not supplied by Hornby).



I opted to use the body of 45455 without resorting to renumbering, but decided that weathering was essential. It's representative of a class member late in its life, with lining dispensed with and the top lamp iron lowered to '3 o'clock' on the smokebox door. Weathering was by my usual method of dry-brushing enamels, using a limited palette of matt black, matt greys and matt brown.



As with any modelling project, reference should always be made to prototype sources – in this case, the appropriate volume in 'The Book of the Black Fives' series by Irwell Press. Note here that the prototype shot shows the locomotive carrying a different boiler from the model, though the model is correct for late in the locomotive's life.



The front end of 45455 complete (in very cruel close-up). Strictly speaking, the central lamp iron on the front platform should be moved to being below the one at '3 o'clock' (an oversight on my part). Note the triangular supports for the steps (made from brass section, glued in place). These prevent the steps from being bent – just like the prototype!



Students of 'alternative history' might like to ponder how a Carlisle Kingmoor-allocated Stanier Black Five came to be running on the Midland/Midland & Great Northern section of Little Bytham, especially because – one: 'Black Fives' were too heavy for the route and – two: the line had closed years before 45455 received its lower lamp iron and had lost its lining. Still, I like the imagery. I added further weathering to the 'weird' original stuff on the chassis.

13



I completed the part-repainted example by finishing the lining (Modelmaster's transfers). It would seem its chassis had been factory-weathered by Hornby – not entirely convincingly.

14



An interesting comparison, especially with regard to 'budget modelling'. The nearer 'Black Five' is one of the featured Hornby ones. All in all, with what it originally cost and what I've spent on it, it's probably come out at around £35.00-£40.00. Yes, new bogie wheels would have been an improvement, but they're not cheap, and the originals (though a bit coarse) run well. Behind is a Model Loco/DJH 'Black Five' I built for a friend (that Geoff Haynes professionally painted). Interestingly (and a bit of a shock?), it cost 20 times as much!

15

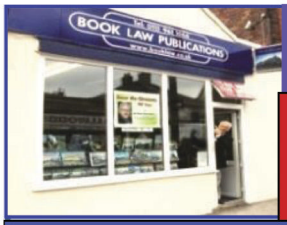


What's left, running-wise – a bit of a mix-and-match, I know, but a subject for improvement for another day and another modeller (all these models will be sold-on with donations made to Cancer Research UK). The fourth example has the black cab windows and the dud chassis, and will be sold only as spares (it's probably beyond repair).

Conclusion

For an outlay of around £120.00 for four Hornby 'Black Fives', I've ended up with two 'finished' ones and one to complete, all of which are good runners. The fourth, as noted, will go as spares. Worth it? Definitely, especially as I'd expect to get quite a bit more for the completed ones now. For a modest outlay (including added items) and a few hours of most-enjoyable modelling time, I've ended up with two 'unique' 'Black Fives' and a third that just needs finishing, plus a source of spares. I recommend this approach; however, remember to make sure you match the right numbers with the boilers and tenders. 'Black Fives' were subject to many variations indeed, making them an excellent starting point for modellers looking to add personalisation to locomotives.



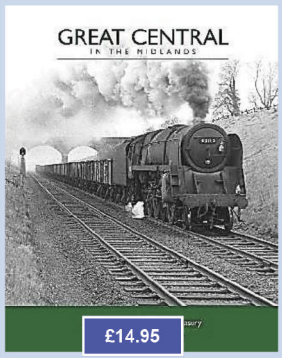


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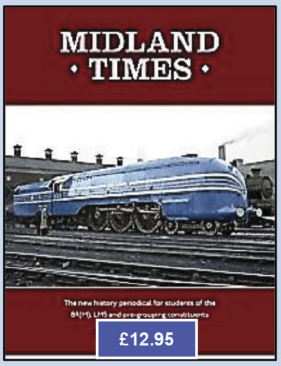
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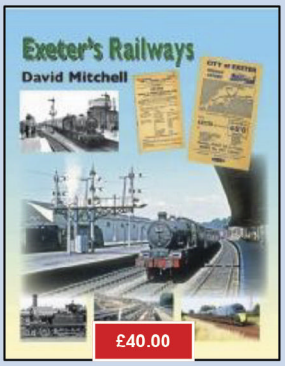
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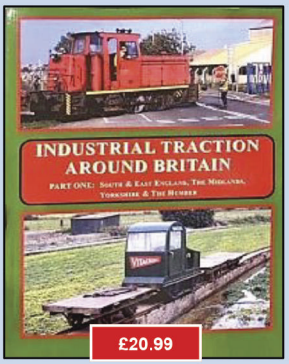
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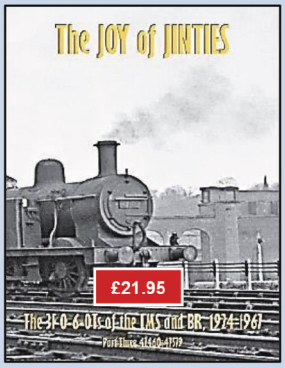


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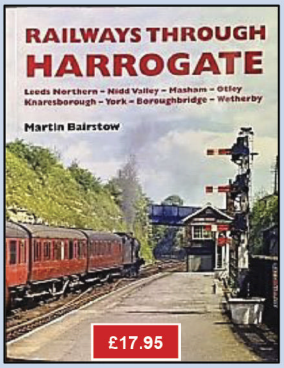


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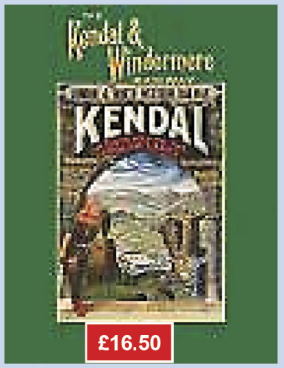




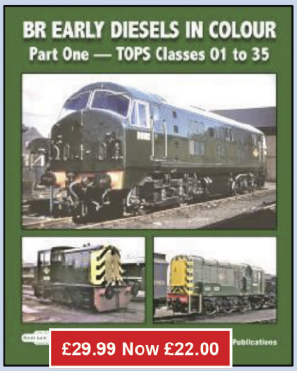
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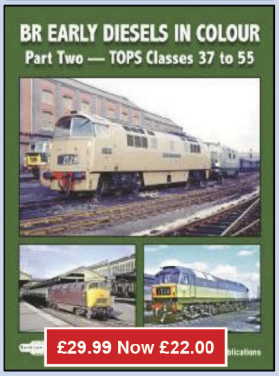
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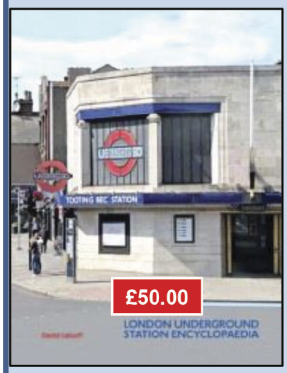
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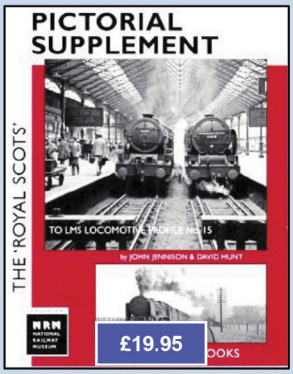
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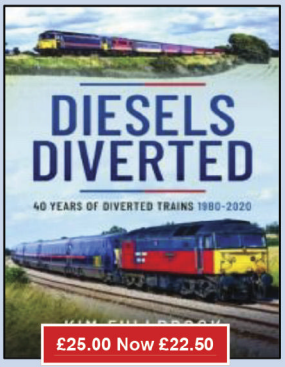
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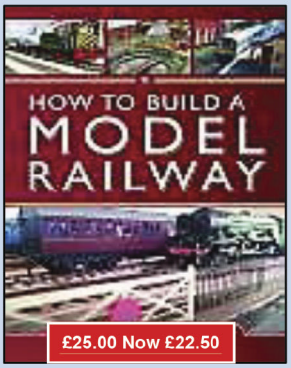
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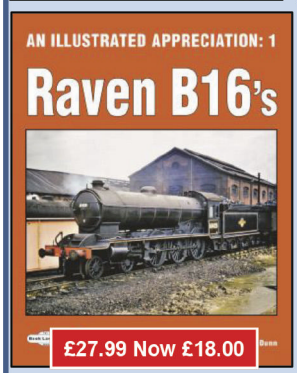
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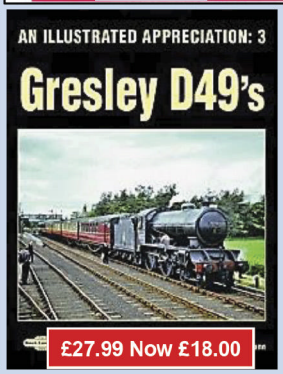
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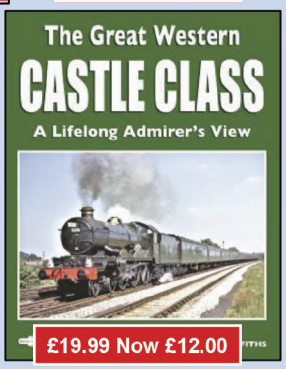
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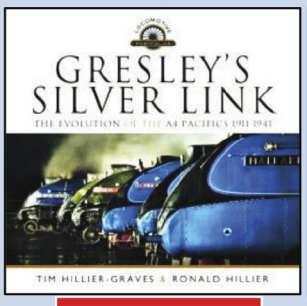
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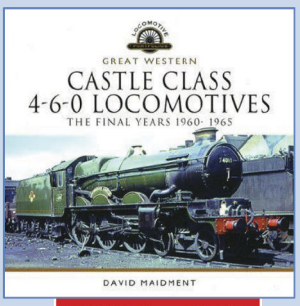
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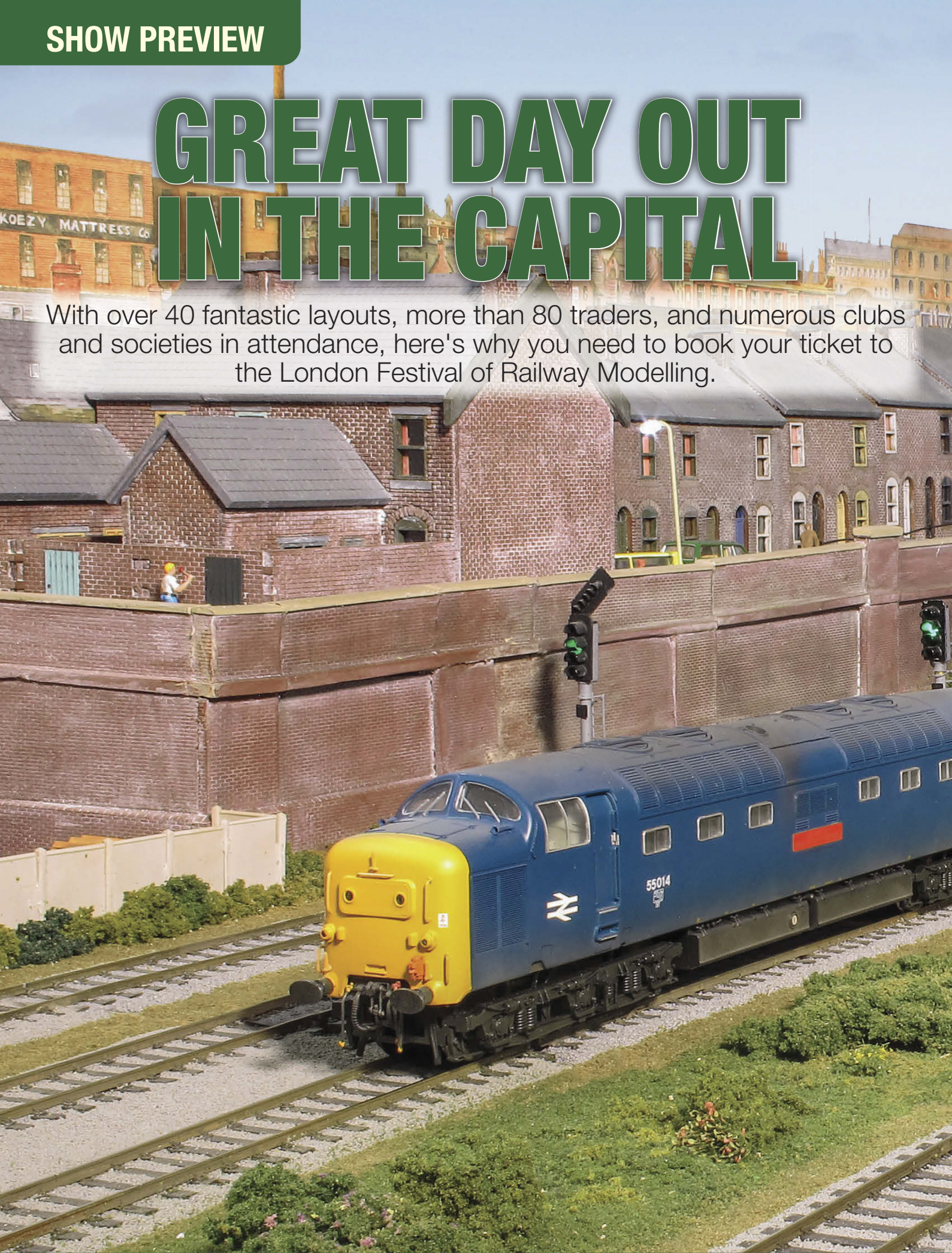


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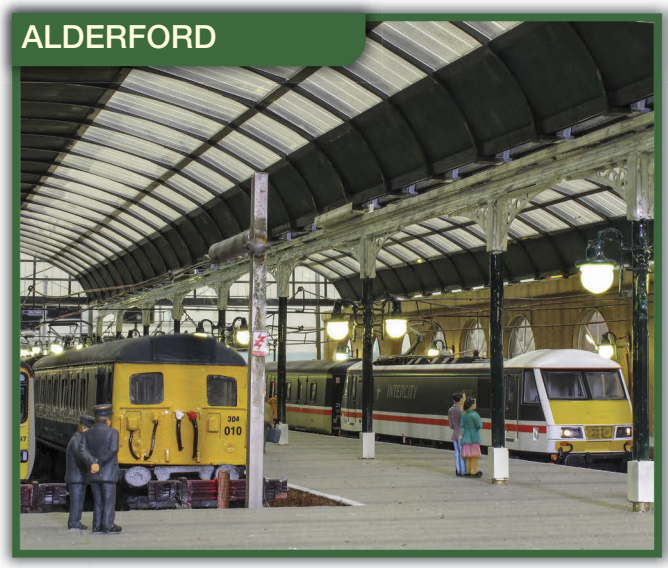
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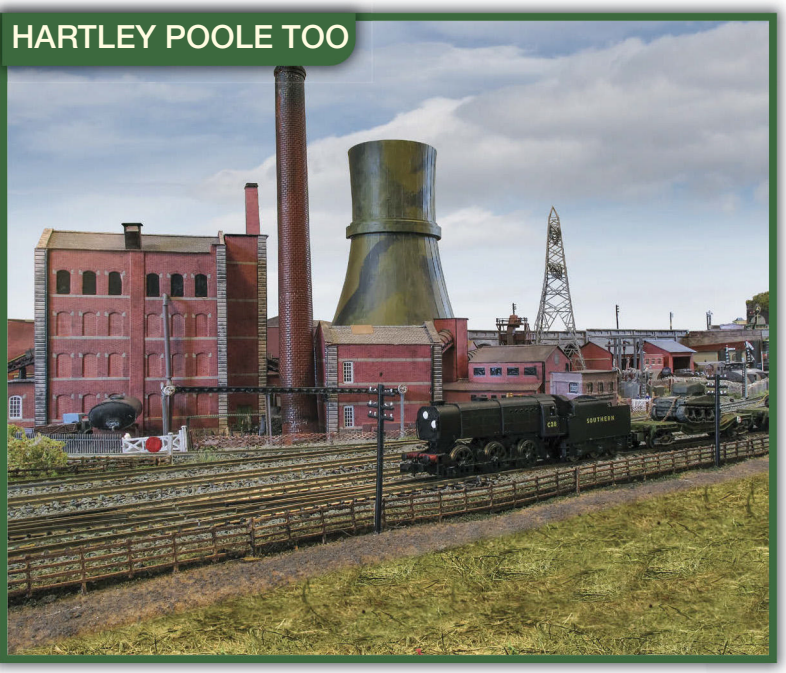
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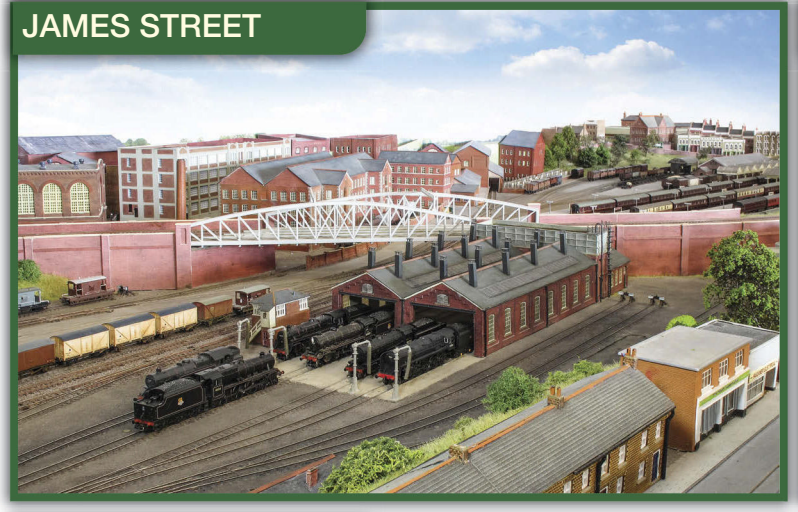


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IMAGE BY: MARK CHAPPELL

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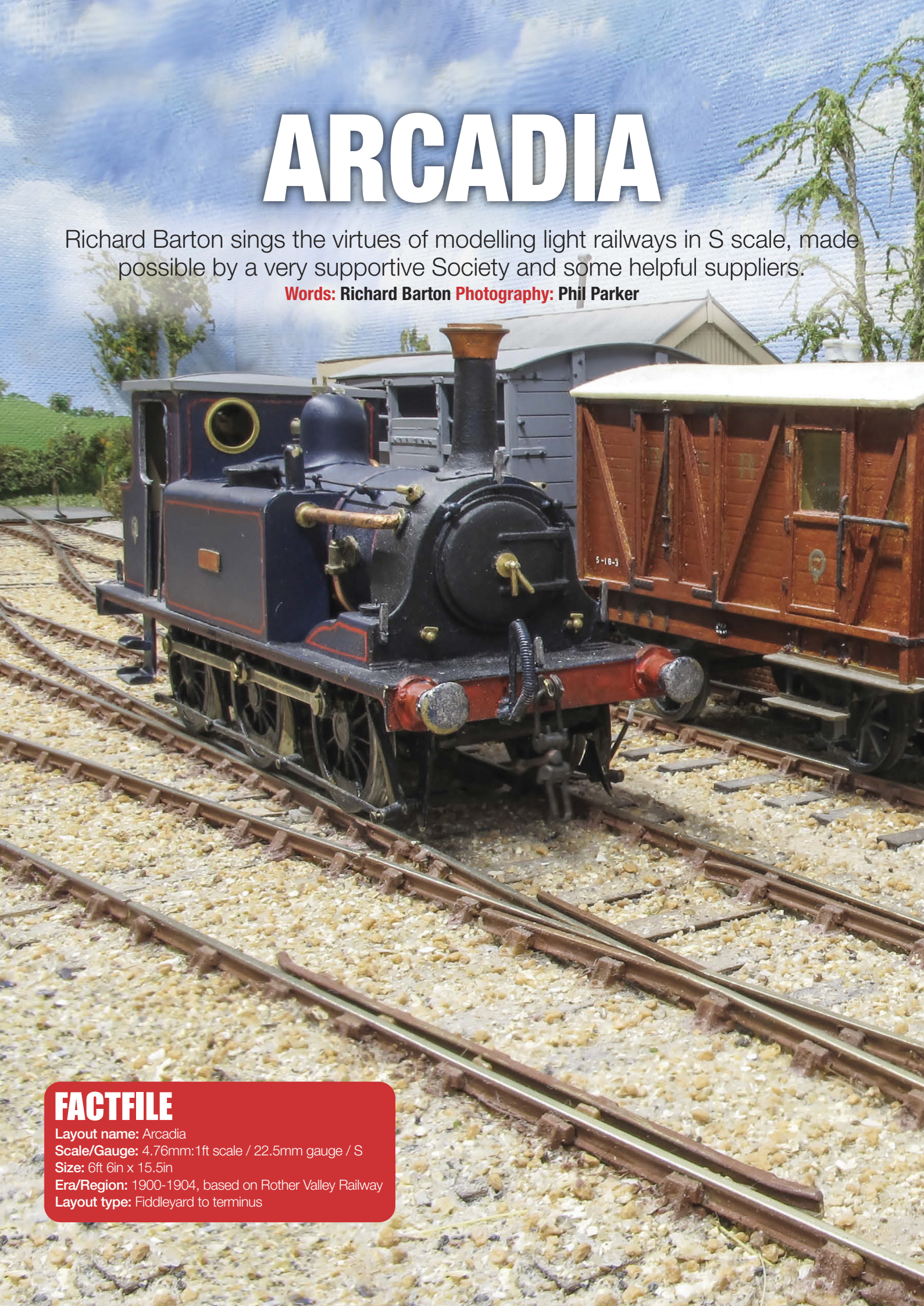


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ARCADIA

Richard Barton sings the virtues of modelling light railways in S scale, made possible by a very supportive Society and some helpful suppliers.

Words: Richard Barton **Photography:** Phil Parker



FACTFILE

Layout name: Arcadia
Scale/Gauge: 4.76mm:1ft scale / 22.5mm gauge / S
Size: 6ft 6in x 15.5in
Era/Region: 1900-1904, based on Rother Valley Railway
Layout type: Fiddleyard to terminus

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Ex-LB&SCR 'Terrier' No. 3 *Bodiam* runs round a mixed train, which includes RVR Third No. 5, Passenger Brake Van No. 7 and an ex-NER cattle wagon.



Hawthorn, Leslie 2-4-0 *Northiam* delivers two wagons of coal to the goods yard.

There is a progressive relationship between the smaller scales, 2mm:1ft, 3mm:1ft and 4mm:1ft, but a huge gap in size between 4mm:1ft and 7mm:1ft. 'S' scale at 4.76mm:1ft fills that gap.

I was first attracted to 'S' scale having seen Trevor Nunn's 'Wicken Fenn' in the late 1970s, and later his inspirational Great Eastern layout 'East Lynn and Nunstanton' (BRM March and April 2012). At the time, I doubted I had sufficient skill to work in the scale, but a chance conversation with Trevor in 2016 led to the acquisition of a set of parts for my favourite locomotive, the Brighton 'Terrier', which the S Scale Society had commissioned some years ago. I built it, loved working in the scale, and was hooked!

Never having been blessed with enough space, many years ago I built a small LBSCR layout, 'Alfriston', in EM gauge, using the folding baseboard design that Peter Denny used for his original Leighton Buzzard station. When I began modelling in 7mm:1ft scale in the late 1980s, I re-used the baseboards for an O gauge light railway layout, which, with a fiddle yard, was only 9ft long. This second 'Alfriston' was described in the Gauge O Guild's first book of 'Small Layouts'. This used a small turntable at the platform end to save valuable space. I have a shelf in my modelling room just under 6ft 6in long and, searching for a small project as a test in S Scale, I revived this plan – a third 'Alfriston' layout.

Many years ago, I researched the Cuckmere Valley Light Railway, which was planned in the late 1890s but never built – happily, as the valley remains one of the few unspoilt parts of the Sussex coast. Work had just started on the layout when S Scale Society member Leslie Bevis-Smith kindly gave me a backscene that had been beautifully painted by his mother, Ivy, well over 40 years ago. It was far too good not to use, but the scene depicted oast houses. As there was none in the Cuckmere Valley, the layout was moved 40 miles east to the Tenterden area. Its new name was 'Arcadia', the name of a small hamlet just to the east of Tenterden and also, more specifically, to remember a good friend, the late Martin Brent, whose 7mm:1ft scale layout 'Arcadia' I thoroughly enjoyed operating at exhibitions.

Under the Light Railways Act of 1896, which allowed the building of more lightly constructed lines to open up rural areas not yet reached by the main line companies, the



Bodiam about to depart with a mixed train. Note the SER wagon marshalled between the locomotive and the carriages, a practice which upset the Board of Trade.

Rother Valley Railway opened in 1900 from Robertsbridge to a terminus a mile short of Tenterden. This was renamed Rolvenden when the line was extended to Tenterden Town and then on to Headcorn, becoming the Kent and East Sussex Railway.

Building foundations

I have also been strongly influenced by the writings and layouts of Iain Rice, which have good practical ideas and advice, particularly for use in small spaces. His recent book 'Cameo Layouts' recommends using a proscenium arch presentation to frame the layout, but this was not feasible for 'Arcadia', as the backscene was only 7½in high. Baseboards were built of good quality 6mm and 9mm ply–offcuts from a friend's layout. The same friend, Tudor Watkins, offered me three sets of point blades and crossing 'V's in Code 75 bullhead rail. I used them with bullhead rail of similar section from my 4mm:1ft scale layout, which was dismantled 40 years ago. Never throw anything away!

The Rother Valley used half-round sleepers, but I'm not that masochistic, so used ply sleepers and cosmetic chairs from the S Scale Stores, a combination that looks perfect for a lightly-laid line. The track was laid on a cork base, ballasted with a mixture of chinchilla dust and horticultural and silver sand, fixed in place with Unibond Flexi Max Additive, as used by Trevor Nunn. As the name suggests, it remains a little more flexible than PVA after drying.

The backscene, only 4ft 2½in long, determined the extent of the scenic area and the remainder of the 4ft 6in baseboard provided space off-scene for a GEM lever frame. This operates the three points and one signal by steel wire in plastic tube hidden under the track bed. The levers activate micro switches to change polarity. The small turntable was built from parts supplied by Kitwood Hill Models. Though designed as a wagon turntable for 7mm:1ft scale, at 4½in diameter, it is perfect for small S Scale locomotives. It is normally used as a sector plate for running round a train, but can be rotated through 180 degrees, for which there is a switch to reverse the polarity of the turntable. Operation is by an SPDT switch from two 1.5V batteries. The turntable is very slow running, making alignment by eye easy. Electrical switches are contained within a lean-to adjoining the locomotive shed. Wiring has been kept as simple as possible and is contained entirely within the main baseboard. Control is by a Gaugemaster Walkabout W hand unit.



Northiam **at rest outside the engine shed.**

The fiddle yard is just under two feet in length, with cassettes of 12mm MDF, 2½in wide, to which are glued sides of 1in aluminium strip. Each is mounted on a base of 0.120in black Plastikard.

Initially, to minimise handling, I intended the cassettes to be 18½in long for the train and 5in for the locomotives. In practice, they proved to be too fiddly to manoeuvre in such a small space, and all cassettes are now 23½in long. This gives just enough space for a 'Terrier', three four-wheel coaches and a brake van. There is no wiring to the fiddle yard: square brass bolts from the main baseboard plug into square brass tubes on the cassettes to give electrical contact and precise positioning.

On show

At short notice, I took 'Arcadia' to a small exhibition in place of a friend who was ill and was very surprised to receive invitations to a number of other shows. Perhaps the layout is useful to show what can be achieved in a very small space – in 4mm:1ft scale, the length would only be an inch or two over 5ft.

At exhibitions, 'Arcadia' is operated from the rear to avoid standing in front of viewers, while fiddling with manual couplings. With a track height of 39in, the low backscene allows the operator to reach the levers and switches mounted at the front. An extension cable, leading to a second-hand control socket at the rear, has the polarity reversed. Thus, trains always travel in the direction indicated by the hand control. A steel 1in square tube was bolted vertically to each end of the main baseboard for the lighting support. Two 'L'-shaped wooded mouldings were glued together to create a channel to hide the 12V LED lighting strip, obtained from LED Lighthouse of Elland in Yorkshire.

The station building is based on Bodiam, with the signal box from a ground frame at Tenterden Town. Both used Wills corrugated iron sheets intended for 4mm:1ft scale, but acceptable for S Scale.



Northiam **shunts two ex-NER cattle wagons, No. 14 now with KESR lettering and No. 13 still in RVR livery. Note the hop pockets in the foreground awaiting despatch.**

The locomotive and carriage sheds are typical light railway structures, and their size and positioning hide all three exits to the fiddle yard. The starting signal was constructed using 4mm:1ft scale parts. There is little room for scenery on such a narrow baseboard, but the hedges are rubberised horsehair and the trees are from the range of armatures from Model Scenic Supplies, covered with suitable lump foliage. The foreground has a small area of rushes and water, with swans and mallards from Dart Castings. On the goods loading platform is a pile of hop pockets (again 4mm:1ft scale parts) awaiting despatch, and some incoming wagons bring poles for the hop fields.

Motive power

For the opening, the Rother Valley Railway purchased two small 2-4-0 tank engines from Hawthorn, Leslie *Northiam* and *Tenterden,* and I acquired a model that had been part-built by the late Robin Fielding. This is now *Northiam*, the prototype achieving fame as *Gladstone* in the 1930s Will Hay film 'Oh Mr Porter'. A still, downloaded from that film, provided details of the rodding on the top of the left-hand side tank, not shown on contemporary photographs.

The RVR decided it needed a third locomotive and, in 1901, bought a 'Terrier' from the LB&SCR for £650 – good value as it is still running as *Bodiam* on the preserved Kent and East Sussex Railway today! Ace Products rescaled its 7mm:1ft scale 'Terrier' etches, nickel silver for the chassis and brass for the body. All went together well, apart from a problem with the tanks. To achieve economy, Stroudley diverted part of the exhaust steam into the tanks to preheat the water. Thus, the sides and ends of the tanks are cladding, which were bolted to the tanks. The top of the tanks were below the level of the cladding and new tops were fabricated. We tend to view our models from above, so such details are very important.

S Scale member, David Provan, produced the masters for some lovely lost wax castings. Constructing a chassis is my Achilles' heel: Simon Bolton of Ludlow produced free-running chassis for both locomotives using Mashima motors with High-Level Road Runner gearboxes. Both locomotives were sprayed with Halfords Vauxhall King's Blue and lined with a bow pen. The lack of a black border to the lining is barely noticeable to the naked eye, but is very obvious in Phil Parker's excellent photographs, so that is another job for the future! *Bodiam* has brass nameplates, as I lacked suitable transfers to replicate the painted name originally carried. It has a representation of the RVR garter on the cab sides, visible in one very early photograph. Don't look too closely, as they are from 4mm:1ft scale Stroudley carriage transfers!

The third item of motive power is the Pickering Steam Railmotor, which arrived on the KESR in 1905. Thus, it is

slightly outside my timescale, but useful at exhibitions to give an extra working, while trains are being remarshalled in the fiddle yard. The body was a 3D print supplied in S Scale by Shapeways (*www.rue-d-etropal.com*) but is actually in post-1907 condition. As originally supplied, the vertical boiler was underpowered and to remove and replace it, a door had to be cut into the front of the railcar. By a stroke of good fortune, the wheelbase of the railcar was identical to the Branchlines replacement chassis for a Dapol Park Royal Railbus, which I built with a Mashima 1016 motor, 30:1 gears and a flywheel. It runs well, if a little fast. Livery is Kentish Brown (Hycote Ford Rio Brown) with ivory panels from Humbrol 121 plus a little added yellow. Window frames were painted with Vallejo Mahogany.

For its opening, the RVR purchased six Hurst Nelson four-wheel coaches, four third class saloons and two first class, plus two brake vans. In 1904, the saloons were returned to Scotland to be converted into three bogie coaches to ease the issuing of tickets. Colonel Stephens had been in a running battle with the Board of Trade over the practice of the guard, to issue tickets, having to use the outside footboards to climb from one coach to the next while the train was in motion. This was another reason for choosing the pre-1904 period, as the bogie coaches would have been too large for the layout. Worsley Works are willing to rescale its etches and I purchased three, which made a very attractive train. After spraying a primer, they were given an undercoat of Halford's Vauxhall Yellow, with a little dry-brushing in black to give an effect of graining, followed by Phoenix Precision Paint's Weathered and Golden Teak. Humbrol 186 Brown was dry-brushed to try and achieve a little variation between each coach. A brake van was scratch-built in Plastikard to accompany the saloons. The ornate gilt lettering for all vehicles was a potential problem, but I managed to locate in the USA some suitable rub-down transfers, Woodland Scenics MG703 Roman R.R. Gold, which is unfortunately not stocked in the UK. I was given two early GER coaches built by Norman Pattenden many years ago, with additional subsequent work by other S Scale members. This was another stroke of luck as they were identical to coaches 9 and 10 bought from the GER by the RVR in 1901. I made new roofs with oil lighting rather than gas, this being their condition when they were purchased by the RVR.



Goods wagons have come from many sources and are mostly those seen in contemporary photographs. There are four open wagons scratch-built in Plastikard, two in RVR livery and two in KESR. The Curator of the excellent Colonel Stephens' Museum in Tenterden rescued many years ago a bundle of papers from an abandoned station building, which turned out to be a listing of every incoming coal consignment to Tenterden between 1904 and 1906. Many shipments were in Midland Railway wagons, but others were in private owner wagons belonging to coal factors or local coal merchants. Of particular interest were wagons of anthracite from South Wales, which was used for hop drying. They included a wagon from Griffith Thomas of Onllwyn, which I modelled. I find this social history absolutely fascinating, and it adds another dimension to modelling.

The KESR acquired an ex-GWR brake van, which was built from laser-cut museum-quality card parts produced by David Provan. The prototype was little used as mixed trains had unfitted wagons marshalled between the locomotive and the passenger coaches, to make shunting easier at intermediate stations. Once again, this was met with the severe disapproval of the Board of Trade! Other wagons were from rescaled 4mm:1ft scale kits, both etched and cast, together with dumb-buffered PO wagons produced in resin by Maurice Hopper. There is excellent published information in Lightmoor Press' Private Owner Wagons of the South East Volumes 1 and 2. Membership of the very friendly Colonel Stephens Society is also highly recommended.

Final thoughts

For exhibitions, the layout is usually operated to a sequence, to ensure stock is in the right position and to speed up the sequence of trains. At home, I just 'play' or use the layout as a test track for my latest models. 'Arcadia' has been a very enjoyable project and was completed using normal modelling tools without the use of a lathe, though I did have much help from skilled members of the Society. To model in S Scale requires scratch-building, but there is more available than you might think, not only from the S Scale Society but also from suppliers, who are willing to rescale kits or parts. The development of laser-cutting and 3D-printing has made much more available.

A mixed train about to depart. The two oil-lit coaches Nos. 9 and 10 were acquired from the GER in 1901.



Northiam on the turntable.





KESR Steam Railcar No. 6, built by R.Y.Pickering of Lanarkshire in 1906.

Of course, there isn't the range of specialist parts available in other scales, but there is great satisfaction in finding something suitable or fabricating it yourself.

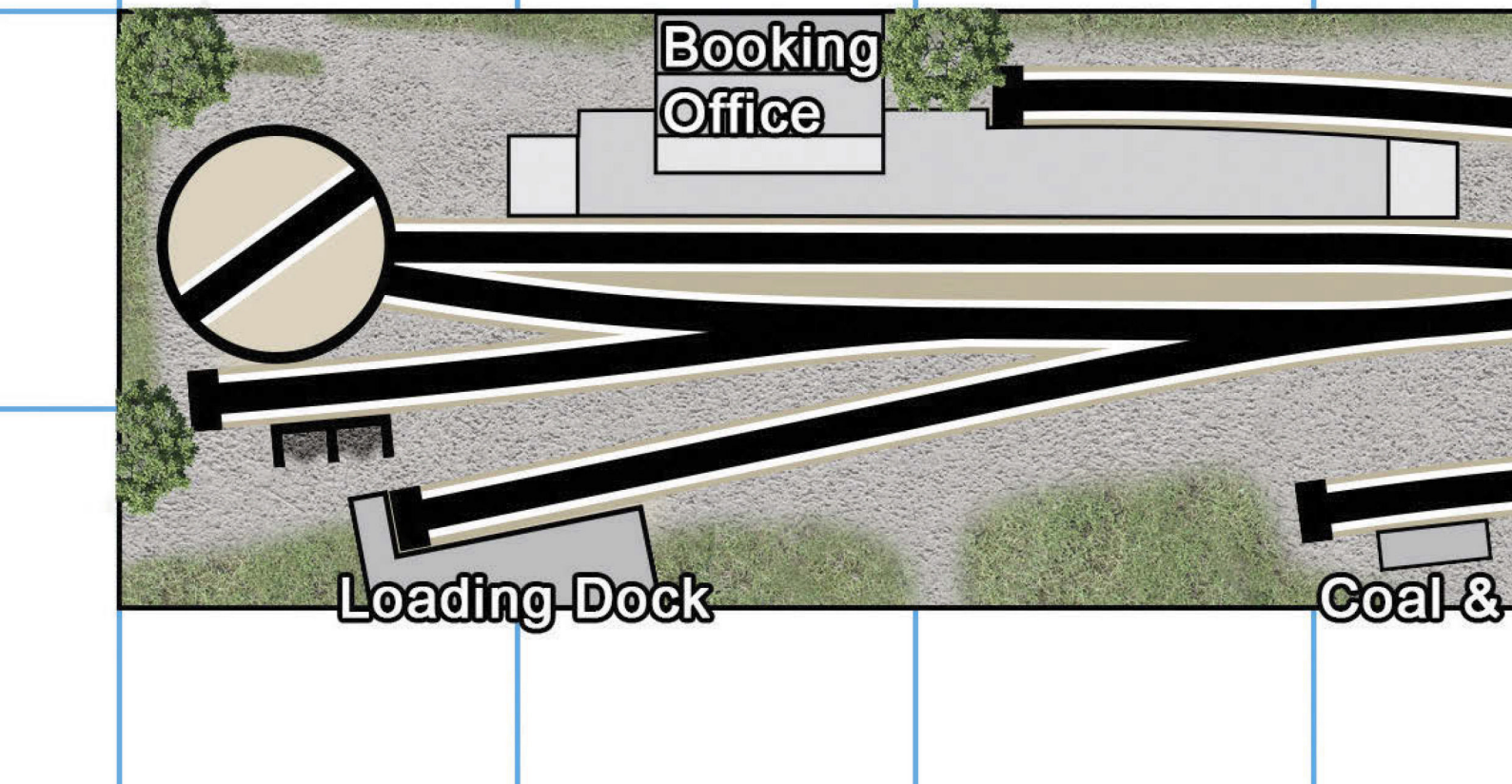
'Arcadia's' design makes it impossible to extend it without major surgery. For the future, I could build that second Hawthorn, Leslie tank and the two four-wheeled ex-Cheshire Lines Committee coaches, which arrived in 1902. Realistically, I have enough stock for such a small layout – perhaps too much, but I like building!

I made the platform, station buildings and signal box removable and have already constructed Cambrian and Great Eastern replacements. By building two locomotives and coaches and a few wagons, I can indulge my interests in other companies, without building a new layout each time. I must, however, make a very large tree to hide those oast houses!

S Scale is 1/64th full size and 4.76mm to 1ft. It is thus considerably larger than 4mm scale but a layout requires much less space than in 7mm scale. The S Scale Model Railway Society was founded in 1946 and details of standards, available parts, layout photographs and forthcoming events are on the website at www.s-scale.org.uk.

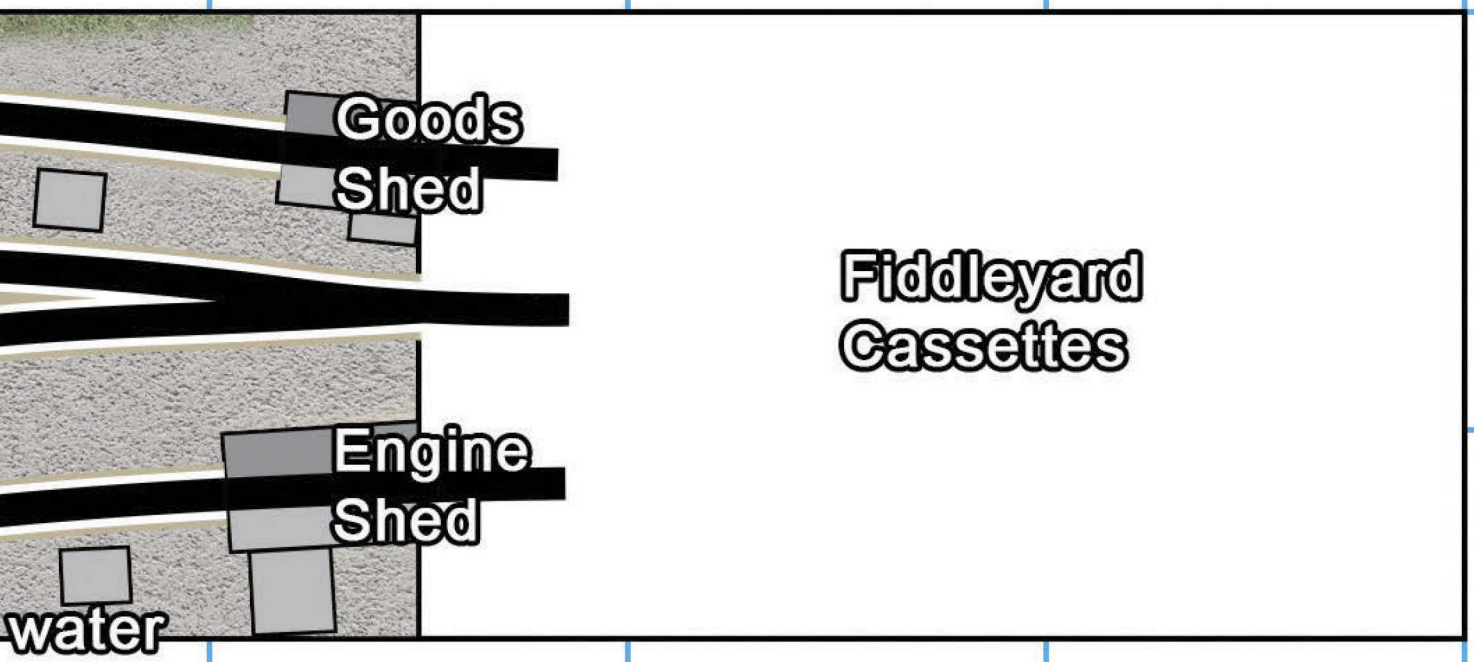


Bodiam on the turntable.





Northiam delivers timber and hop poles. The leading wagon is now repainted in Kent and East Sussex livery.



HOW TO...
BUILD A MINIATURE RAILWAY

Encouraged by the release of a new 3D-printed layout accessory by West Hill Wagon Works, Phil Parker shows how railway interest can be added to the smallest of spaces.

Words & photography: Phil Parker

I love a miniature railway. Quite how the little locomotives manage to haul a train of people around the track is a bit of a mystery, but it's great to watch them doing it. Better still, take a ride to feel the wind and smoke in your hair.

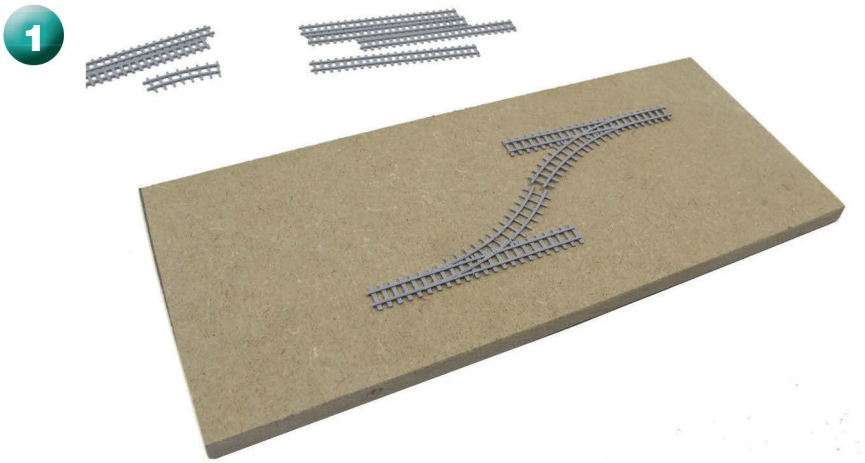
Models of miniature railways are rare. If you want to do the job properly, it takes more than simply using a smaller train. The carriages are specially designed for the job for a start, and the diesels are often more practical than scale designs. Worse still, if you are a OO gauge modeller, the 'smaller scale' is going to be Z or T gauge; hardly a cheap scenic addition!

Fortunately, the team at West Hill Wagon Works visited a local 7 ¼ gauge line, measured some rolling stock and 3D-printed it, along with some track. I couldn't resist trying it out, although creating the scene turned out to be more involved than I expected.

There's a lot of detail in a small space, as you can tell from the shopping list. The buildings are all modified from plastic kits – a process called 'kit bashing'. Put simply, it's treating the kit parts as raw materials, ignoring what the designers intended them to be, instead turning them into the model you want. So, a garage becomes an engine shed, and a privy, the ticket office. Plastic parts can be cut easily, and stuck together with normal cements and solvents, and given added detail with scraps of plastic sheet.

Few people will want to build a miniature railway on its own, but if your layout has spare space, such as the corner of the baseboard, it could be the perfect way to fill it for a bit of fun.





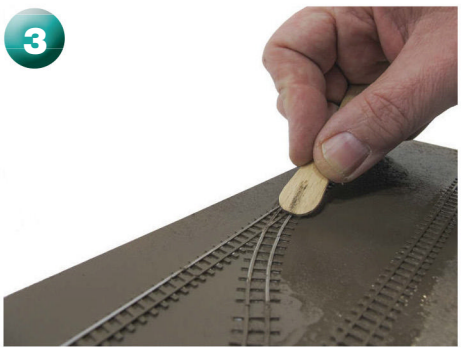
My baseboard is a piece of 9mm thick MDF, 120 by 290mm, so the diorama will fit in a shoebox for storage. After playing around with the track pieces, a simple crossover looks to be the best option. Spare track is available for those with more space.

2



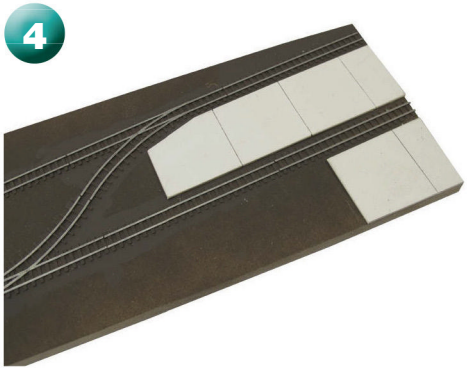
With sleepers just over 1mm thick, care has to be taken not to bury them with glue. A very thin smear of Deluxe Materials Speedbond holds everything in place, but I put weights on top to ensure it's flat on the board, and doesn't move while drying.

3



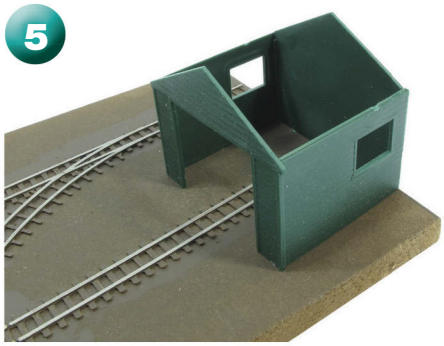
Painting the track is easy enough – a spray of Railmatch Sleeper Grime. Before the paint has time to dry fully, I rub it from the rail surface with a wooden lollipop stick. The grey colour isn't bad, but touching up the railhead with silver paint makes it looks suitably metallic.

4



Miniature railway platforms are normally very low, and these are cut from Daler Board, then painted a concrete colour. Since concrete slabs are cast in sections, I scribe some lines on the surface before painting with the back of a scalpel blade.

5



Our engine shed is a converted Wills garage kit, something you often see on the prototype. Because it will have to sit on the edge of the board, the sides are shortened and the back moved in a bit. If there was more space for the model, this wouldn't be necessary – fortunately, kit-bashing is easy and fun.

6



The doors have to be shortened to allow the track to pass underneath. The building is offset from the centre to allow our little crews to be able to walk in and out more easily without standing on the sleepers.

7



Thin sleepers demand a very fine material for ballast and I'm using some ash that has been sieved to remove large lumps. If you know anyone with a coal fire or log burner, they will have lots of it to throw away. If not, fine scatter material will work just as well.

Dapol
(C010) Platform Canopy

Dornaplas
(B5) Outside Toilet

Model Scene
(5004) Gas Lamp Posts

Ratio
(270) N Single Post Signal Kit

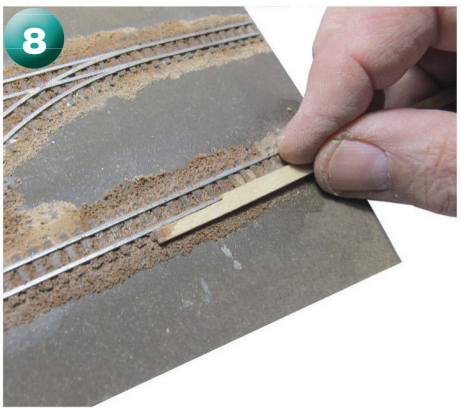
Scale Model Scenery
(LX012-OO) Laser-Cut Wood & Concrete Benches
(LX015-OO) Laser-Cut Planters & Troughs
(LX293-OO) Midland Railway/ LMS Fencing
(LX295-OO) Midland Railway/ LMS Platform Gates
(LX470-OO) A Frame & Pavement Swing Advertising Signs
(S022-OO) Early Steam Era Station Signs

West Hill Wagon Works
Ride On Garden Railway - Peak Set - OO Scale
Ride On Garden Railway - Additional Track Pack - OO Scale

Wills
(SS13) Domestic Garage
(SS44) Larch Lap Fencing

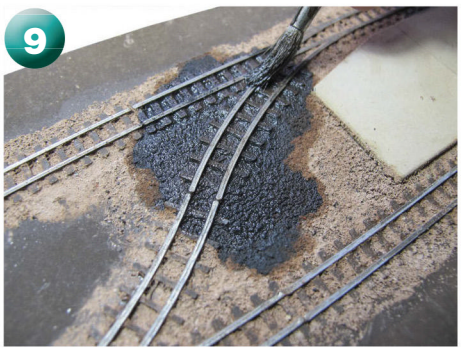
Woodland Scenics
(A1908) Sixteen Passengers

8



Flooded with thinned PVA, the ash needs to be cleared from the sleeper tops before it dries, and for this, I make a little tool by trimming a wooden coffee stirrer to fit between the rails.

9



Unlike granite ballast used on our main lines, this has to be painted once the glue is dry, a process involving washes of thinned black, grey and brown paint. Let each colour dry before moving to the next one, as it changes shade quite a bit from the wet state.

10



More kit-bashing, this time a Dapol platform canopy. Yet again, it has to be shortened to fit the site, and I also replace the support columns with simple square section plastic to give a nice homemade look.

11



If I'm honest, I've never got on with the glazing in Dapol kits – that's just me as others manage fine – so it's replaced with plain Plastikard, covered in corrugated iron sheets, both from Slater's. Be sparing with the glue here or it's possible to warp the corrugations.

12



Our ticket booth starts life as a kit for an outdoor toilet! Cutting the door down, adding a counter, and replacing the seat inside works perfectly.

13



Fencing on miniature lines tends to be more garden than railway, and some Wills Larch Lap is ideal, as well as providing a nice background for the scene. I stick the length together on the bench, keeping it flat. Once dry, some 2mm holes are drilled for the posts, and the fence is glued in place with PVA.

14



Along the public side, the enthusiasts running the line have decided to use something more 'railway-like', in this case, a Midland Railway-style platform fence, which on the model is from the Scale Model Scenery range.



15



Railways need signals, but small ones. Replacing the post in a Ratio N gauge signal kit from square plastic allows me to make it taller as well as fitting the miniature scene better.

A question of scale

This model required many colourful figures and spotting a ready-painted Woodland Scenics set in a local model shop, I realised they would save me much time. The only trouble is, these are HO (3.5mm:1ft scale) and look a bit short compared to the OO (4mm:1ft scale) of the guard. With a little careful positioning, they look fine though – people are all of different heights, after all.



There's not much space for greenery, and what there is should be reasonably neat. A mix of coarse and fine Woodland Scenics scatter is pressed into dribbles of PVA along the bottom of the fence. This looks good, and hides gaps.



Along the front, the same scatter is used, but with extra colourful pieces to represent flowers.



Passengers are going to need somewhere to sit, and some Scale Model Scenery bench kits are quick and easy to assemble. These are park benches rather than railway station ones – again, appropriate for the prototype we are modelling.



The finishing touch is a selection of decorative metal signs. These came from an old, and slightly faded, Tiny Signs sheet. For added wear, each is matt-varnished and dusted with rust-colour weathering powders.



The train is a set of 3D-printed carriages to be pulled by a diesel, which has a 'Peak' outline, but looks like a Class 37 and 40 hybrid. A riding truck is included if the driver doesn't want to sit on a coach to control his machine. Finding figures with their legs splayed wide enough to ride on the coaches defeated me – perhaps a possible new addition to the range?

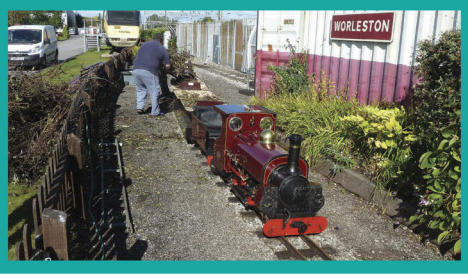
Prototype Inspiration



The Isle of Man Steam Railway runs beside the Crogga Valley Railway for a short distance, producing some wonderful opportunities to see 3ft and 7 ¼ gauge railways beside each other. On your model, the main line could just as easily be standard gauge, just like at the Severn Valley Railway. (Photo: Crogga Valley Railway)



On the Evesham Vale Light Railway, we find a canopy very much like the one I've built on the model. Most miniature lines aspire to something like this to keep passengers dry, and they all look very similar.



Crewe Heritage centre, where the 7 ¼ gauge line runs alongside the real-life APT – a unique bit of scenery!



Howard and I visited the Stapleford Park miniature railway to learn how to fire up a small steam locomotive, and toured the entire line. You can watch this in the November 2022 episode of WOR TV, and see more footage with a WOR+ subscription. Visit *www.world-of-railways.co.uk* for more details.

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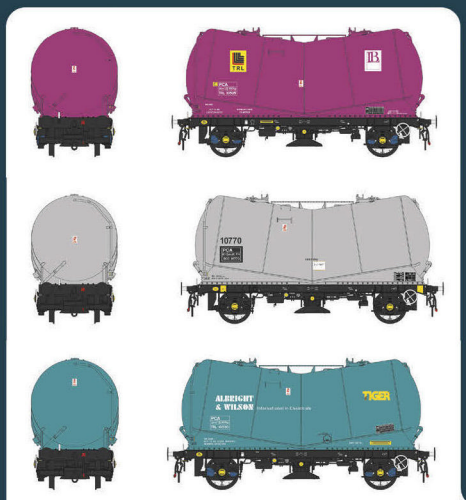
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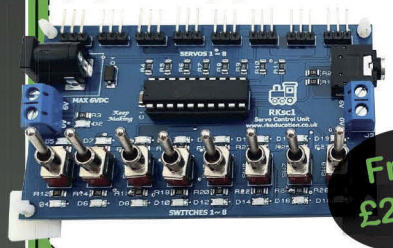
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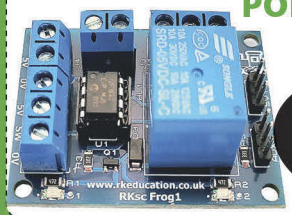
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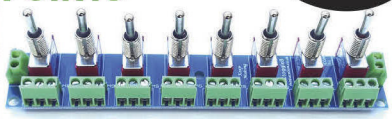


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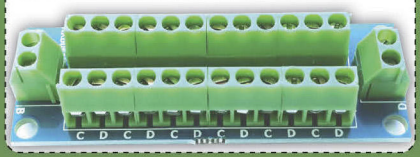
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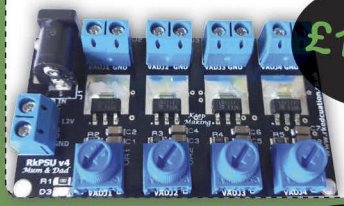
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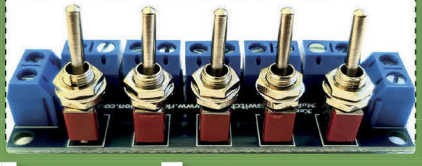
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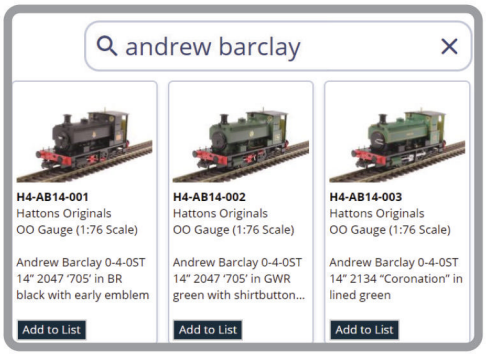


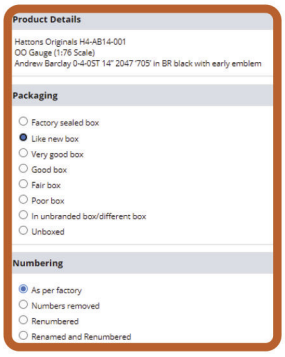
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HORNBY 2023 RANGE

Hornby has outlined its plans for its 2023 range. During its annual presentation to the model press last December, its plans for the year ahead were laid out – this time, in addition to its TT:120 range announced in September, 2022.

With numerous issues affecting manufacturers in the Far East recently, from a shortage of electronic components used in the printed circuit boards of models to the many lockdowns during 2022 in China, Hornby's supply chain has also had to 'weather a storm', and the manufacturer's Marketing and Development Director Simon Kohler led the presentation with a round-up of projects that have been delayed. These include its BR Class 2MT, Industrial 88DS, 4-VEPS, Turbomotive, Trans Pennine Class 802/2, Lumo Class 803, Class 755/3 – 4, LNER Class P2 and LMS/BR 'Black Five'.

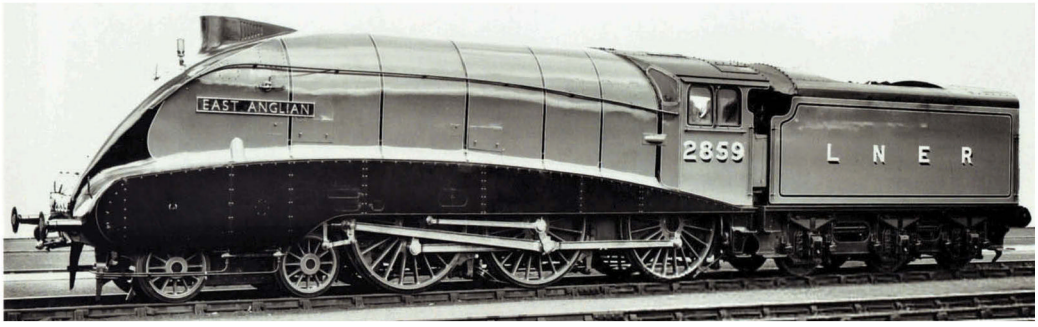
From the presentation, Simon Kohler emphasised that Hornby intends to return to announcing models that it can deliver within a year. "2023 is the year to press the reset button", he said, adding, "customers can get tired of waiting long for products".

Though at first glance, Hornby's 2023 range might appear streamlined – indeed, some of its chosen model prototypes are – taking into account the many variations of tooling on its newly-announced products, combined with its recently-launched TT:120 range sees Hornby's design team kept more than busy. "We've recruited many new designers" said Simon, adding, "we've kept the design team working on TT:120 separate from those working on the OO gauge range, so that capacity isn't reduced."

We've listed the complete range of Hornby 2023 products on our website, World of Railways, which includes video footage of a new Hammant and Morgan Bluetooth control system, as demonstrated by the manufacturer. You can also view slides from the Hornby presentation on our forum, RMweb.

The newly-tooled highlights from the main range are as follows:

New Steam (OO)



What?
(R30137) LNER Class B17/5 4-6-0 No. 2859 *East Anglian* Era 3
(R30136) BR Class B17/5 4-6-0 61870 *City of London* Era 4
When? Dec 2023
How much? £209.99



What? (R30233) L&MR No. 58 'Tiger' Train Pack
When? Jan 2023
How much? £229.99

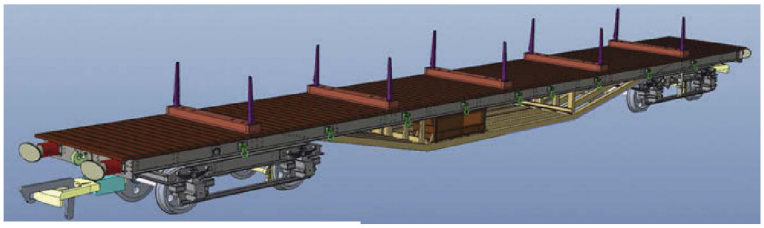
New Diesel / Electric (OO)



What? (R30297) BR English Electric DP1 Co-Co 'Deltic' - Era 4
When? Dec 2023
How much? £320.99

Promising a high-specification with directional lighting and a die-cast body for greater tractive effort, models of the prototype 'Deltic' are to be produced in retro Hornby Dublo packaging.

New Rolling Stock (OO)



What?
(R60203) BR, YMO 'Salmon' Bogie Wagon - Era 6
(R60204) BR, YMO 'Salmon' Bogie Wagon - Era 7
(R60205) BR, YMO 'Salmon' Bogie Bolster Wagon - Era 7
(R60206) BR, YMA 'Salmon' Bogie Wagon - Era 8
When? Oct 2023
How much? £38.49



What?
(R60207) BR, TTA Tanker Wagon, Shell 67004 - Era 8
(R60208) BR, TTA Tanker Wagon, Esso 56046 - Era 8
(R60209) BR, TTA Tanker Wagon, BP 67765 - Era 8
When? Oct 2023
How much? £34.99



What?
(R60210) GWR, Bogie Bolster 'Macaw B', 107287 - Era 3
(R60211) GWR, Bogie Bolster 'Macaw B', 107292 - Era 3
When? Oct 2023
How much? £26.49



What?
(R60212) BR, Bogie Bolster 'C', W32798 - Era 4
(R60213) BR, Bogie Bolster 'C', W32876 - Era 4
When? Oct 2023
How much? £26.49

See the full range of announcements from Hornby for its 2023 range, with additions to its Playtrains, Skaledale and Railroad ranges on World of Railways, and our forum, RMweb.

New Accessories (OO)

Though the industry standard, tension-lock couplings (now almost always fitted in NEM sockets with newly-tooled models) are often replaced by modellers for more discreet solutions, which don't detract as much from the scaled realism of models. In line with products manufactured by some after-market specialists, Hornby has introduced a range of NEM-mounted magnetic couplings for models – a direct plug-and-play swap for tension-lock couplings. While two sets in differing lengths of 17 and 20mm are designed to mimic vacuum pipes, a third set seeks to depict buckeye couplings, as fitted to Gresley and BR-built rolling stock.



What? (R7399) Vacuum Pipe Magnetic Coupling Pack - 20mm
When? Apr 2023
How much? £15.99



What? (R7400) Vacuum Pipe Magnetic Coupling Pack - 17mm
When? Apr 2023
How much? £15.99



What? (R7398) Buckeye Magnetic Coupling Pack
When? Apr 2023
How much? £15.99

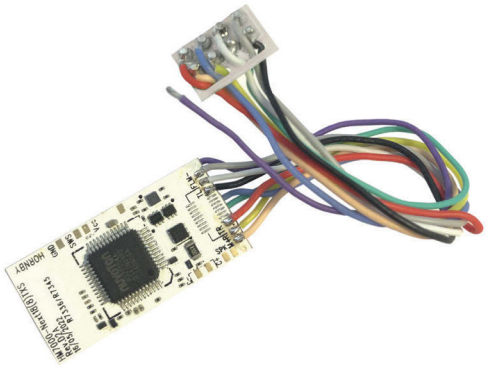
Bluetooth Control from Hammant and Morgan

Hornby has unveiled – and demonstrated – a successor to its App-controlled Hammant and Morgan HM6000 DC-controlled system – the HM7000. Whereas its previous HM6000 was more akin to a 'smart' DC control system, with sounds played through the speakers of the controlling device (a smart phone or tablet), the HM7000 is more akin to a DCC control system, though differs in many ways.

Locomotives must be fitted with a new range of bluetooth-enabled decoders from the manufacturer, made available in eight-pin, 21-pin and Next18 formats with options for sound too, under the new branding, 'TTX Triplex'. Locomotives (or accessories) fitted with the new HM decoder range take DC or DCC power from the track, and when connected to energy storage devices – 'stay-alives' – commands can still be received, even several seconds after power to the track has been interrupted.

Hornby is hopeful that the new system will simplify problems with traditional DCC sound decoders whose audio output is often noticeably affected when encountering dirty track.

TTX Sound decoders



An (R7322) HM7000-21TXS 21-pin decoder measuring 29.5mm x 15.5mm x 4.7mm with an RRP of £69.99 and available now, a Next 18 decoder (R7345) HM7000-N18TXS measuring 28.5mm x 14mm x 4.7mm (RRP: £69.99) available now, and an eight-pin (R7336) HM7000-8TXS on a harness measuring 28.5mm x 14mm x 4.7mm, (RRP: £64.99) available May 2023 are promised.

Joining these, and available now (RRP: £15.99), is the (R7377) HM7070 powerbank, compatible with the range of decoders via a plug-and-play connection.

Pictured above is an example of the (R7336) HM7000-8TXS DCC sound decoder with harness on an eight-pin socket.

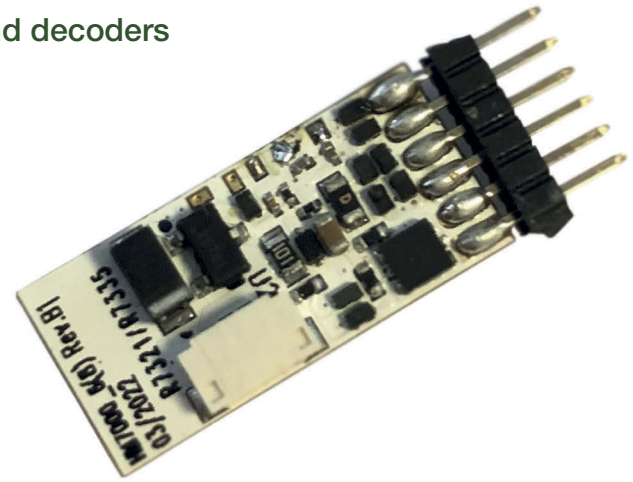
The new Bluetooth sound decoders can be updated, changing the sounds on each from a range available via Hornby. A decoder can be re-used in a different locomotive by a user, without the expense of having its sounds re-programmed, as would be the case with a traditional DCC sound decoder.

RTR models with TTX sound

Hornby has revealed that a number of its forthcoming models for OO gauge and TT:120 will come pre-fitted with TTX sound. Models for 'OO' include its (R30097TXS) BR InterCity Executive Class 43 HST Train Pack Era 7 £402.99, BR Class 9F 2-10-0 92002 in BR black, early crest - Era 4, £282.99, (R30301TXS) BR Class 08 0-6-0 D3069 in BR green - Era 5 and (R30155TXS) BR Railfreight Class 56 Co-Co 56060 *The Cardiff Rod Mill* - Era 8 £263.99.

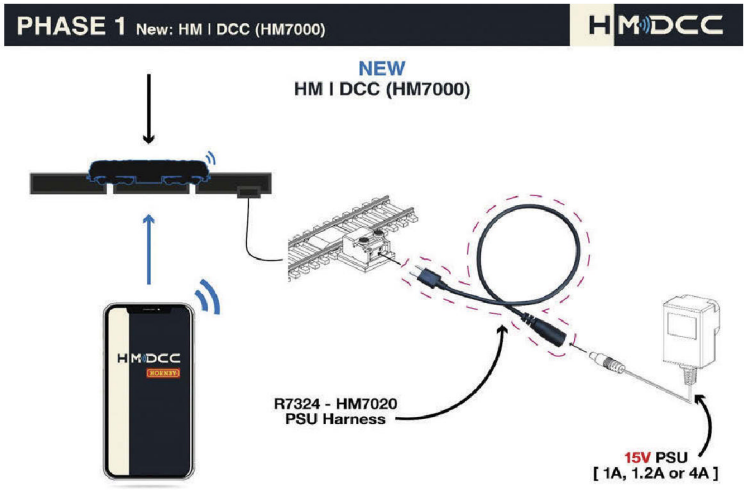
Meanwhile, for TT:120, models fitted with TXS sound include its Scotsman and Easterner train sets, with its A1 and some A3, A4 and Class 43 locomotives being equipped, too.

Non-sound decoders



Joining these is a selection of non-sound-fitted variants in six-pin (R7321) HM7000-6, eight-pin (R7335) HM7000-8, and 21-pin (R7402) HM7000-21 £44.99, available 2024, and Next 18 (R7401) HM7000-N18 formats.

Sound decoders have three sound channels, allowing for the simultaneous play of multiple sounds, including engine/steam or 'spot' sounds such as horns, whistles, brakes, coal shovelling, wheel slip, or injectors. Marketed as 'TXS Triplex', locomotives in Hornby's range fitted with its new TXS Bluetooth sound decoders will bear a blue TXS Triplex sound logo on the box.



Hornby demonstrated the HM7000 in a 'beta' test phase in December, and while there were still some minor changes to be made, the system was found to operate no differently to a conventional DCC system, until a locomotive was removed from the track while running, placed on a desk without track, still running, where it continued to do so for at least 10 seconds, while still accepting – and executing – change of direction commands.

The HM7000 and app can be used by itself with a 15V PSU wall transformer, or used to 'upgrade' other DC or DCC controllers by using their track outputs to provide power, while connecting a Hammant and Morgan (R7326) HM7040: Bluetooth® Legacy Dongle, available May 2023 with an RRP of £39.99.

Learn more about the Hammant and Morgan HM7000 and TXS Triplex sound decoders by watching our video of the system in action on World of Railways, alongside more of Hornby's 2023 range announcements.

POST-PRESERVATION 'MAINLINE HUNSLETS' REVEALED



Made public ahead of Christmas, Bachmann has removed speculation over forthcoming locomotive additions to its OO9 range.

The manufacturer has revealed *Linda* in early-Ffestiniog Railway condition, with original 0-4-0 wheel formation, but coupled to a four-wheel tender giving the 0-4-0STT configuration – 0-4-0 Saddle Tank with Tender. Finished in Ffestiniog Railway Green livery, the new Bachmann Narrow Gauge OO9 Scale model sports all the hallmarks of the non-tender locomotives released in recent weeks.

Driven by a coreless motor and flywheel with all-wheel pick-up, a Next18 DCC decoder socket with pre-fitted speaker is present, along with firebox lighting to bring every model to life. Available in standard format (391-130) or with sound fitted (391-130SF) and with a recommend retail price of £214.95 (391-130) and £314.95 (391-130SF), both versions are now with stockists.

Bachmann said, "Following a bumper season of new releases in OO9 scale, including the Quarry Hunslets, and the Mainline Hunslets in their original Penrhyn Quarry Railway condition, [we have] announced a final surprise [to our] Narrow Gauge range.

"Since the original Penrhyn Quarry Mainline Hunslets were unveiled as part of Bachmann's Winter 2022 British Railway Announcement, there has been much talk about whether models depicting the locomotives in their post-preservation condition would follow, and today these wishes were granted."

To reserve your models, visit your local Bachmann stockist.

WAGON EXCLUSIVES FOR PRESERVATION SOCIETIES



A limited-edition OO gauge wagon has been produced to raise funds for two preservation societies. The cooperation between the General Steam Navigation Locomotive Restoration Society and the Medway Queen Preservation Society (a GSN shipping Co ship) sees a fourth wagon produced by Dapol exclusively for the two societies.

Based on the manufacturer's 14T rectangular tank wagon, models are lettered General Steam Navigation and Number 4. The wagon is available in either bauxite red or grey liveries, priced at £17.50 each. Visit the General Steam Navigation website for more information on the project.

DEPOT DETAILS FOR 'OO'

3D-printed accessory specialist, West Hill Wagon Works, has created further diesel-electric locomotive details for 1:76 scale.

A set of OO gauge details for Sulzer-powered Class 45s or 47s sees 12 pistons, some with and some without end caps fitted on the connecting rod shafts, plus four-cylinder liners. There's also a selection of loose end caps to add to a bench, or floor of your model workshop, included, plus a pair of racks to hold the pistons. The details are priced at £5.95, and parts will require cutting and painting from the print.

In addition, eight sets of connecting rods for smaller shunters also join the range, also priced at £5.95. With holes at 20mm centres, they are a close match for a Class 08 shunter, but would look equally at home on the supplied rack in an MPD for steam or diesel use.

Rods can be secured to the footplate of a shunter whose rods have been removed so it can be towed between its workplace, and a depot for maintenance, as was common practice when higher line speeds were required.





LIGHT RANGE INTRODUCED



DCC Concepts has introduced a 'Legacy Skyline Lighting' range to the 4mm:1ft scale market. The detailed lights are designed to be easily installed on any OO, EM or P4 layout. The range also boasts the first "up-to-the minute, modern image, true-scale, height-adjustable LED street lamp available in the UK".

Tooling for the models sees an impression of the bolts that secure the lamp to the top of the pole, to optional platform speakers, even a detailed access door on the base.

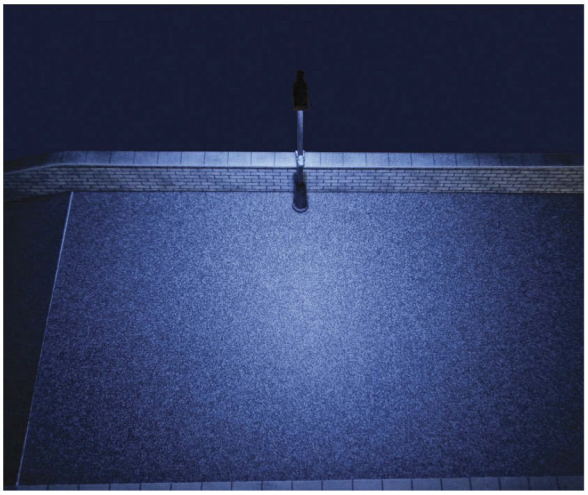
The manufacturer commented, "the pool of light from the lamp is accurately achieved, so your layout even looks the part when modelling night-time running".

The modern station lamps use daylight white LEDs to recreate the cool colour of modern lighting. Height adjustment is achieved by sliding the base up or down to the required height, and allows them to be used for footpath, platform, street, or main road use.

Resistor boards are included, and modellers can connect three of the lamps to one board. Boards can be powered by a regulated DC power supply of between 6 and 15V. The manufacturer recommends its DCP-PS12.

Gas lamps and swan-neck lamps also form part of the range, and are also height-adjustable thanks to the base, which can be removed entirely, or cut to the required height. An additional length of brass tube is included for each lamp post. The gas lamps and swan-neck lamps are available in maroon, black, green, and brown and use 'warm white' LEDs to give a gentler light than the modern-image versions.

Legacy Skyline Lighting is available in a variety of packs from this month, with prices starting at £12.95 for its lamp post-mounted cameras and speakers pack. Orders can be placed either direct with DCC Concepts, or your local stockist.





NEW O GAUGE SHOW

The Gauge O Guild has revealed dates for a new southern show, to take place on Saturday, May 20, 2023 at Kempton Park Racecourse. Though only two weeks before its Summer Show at The Barnsley Metrodome, the Guild expects that the two shows are far apart enough geographically, that they are likely to attract members from different parts of the country.

According to the Gauge O Guild, there is a lot of interest in this new show, which will include layouts, demonstrations, and traders. Doors will be open from 10:00 to 16.00, with entry to advanced ticket holders from 09:30.

Tickets are on sale online now at £8.00 for members, £12.00 for non-members (advanced tickets), or £1.00 extra on the door.

COOPER-CRAFT PRODUCTS TO RETURN

Most of the former business of Cooper-Craft (trading as Paul Dunn) has been saved. Encompassing the range of 4mm:1ft scale wagon, vehicle, and lineside moulds, and 16mm scale wagon and lineside moulds, the business also retailed the Kirk and Mailcoach 4mm:1ft scale coach kits. Cambrian Model Rail and Phoenix Precision Paints has issued a joint statement that with effect from mid-December 2022 before the business was sold.

The Cooper-Craft 4mm:1ft scale wagon, vehicle and lineside moulds and 16mm scale wagon and lineside moulds have been acquired by Cambrian Model Rail, with the Kirk and Mailcoach 4mm coach kits acquired by Phoenix Precision Paints.

A statement on the website read, “Cambrian Model Rail Limited have now completed the purchase of the Cooper-Craft Moulds. As part of the purchase, we also have the rights to the Cooper-Craft brand and the Website. We have not purchased any part of the business formerly run by Paul Dunn and trading as Cooper-Craft. Any queries regarding transactions on Cooper-Craft kits before December 11, 2022 still need to be addressed to Paul Dunn at the old trading address given on the contact page.

The Mailcoach and Kirk Coach moulds have been purchased by Phoenix Precision Paints Limited. Again, they have not purchased any part of the business formerly run by Paul Dunn and trading as Cooper-Craft. Queries regarding transactions on the Kirk and Mailcoach kits before December 17, 2022 still need to be addressed to Paul Dunn.

It is hoped that some of the Cooper-Craft moulds will return to production by February, 2023.

Further details can be found on the Cambrian Model Rail and Phoenix Precision websites.

NEW GWR WAGONS FOR 'OO'

Rapido has unveiled EP samples of new models, depicting the Diagram O11/O15 five-plank opens and the Dia. V14/V16 'Mink As'. The announcement comes following the news that its GWR 'Iron Minks' and four-plank open wagons are due to arrive in the UK in January.

Design work on both projects is complete but liveries and running numbers have yet to be confirmed. The manufacturer plans to take orders early in 2023, with tooling to start soon.

Both the five-plank opens and the 'Mink As' have been designed by Rapido's UK design team. The opens feature external and underframe details, and come supplied with enough parts to fit the Williams patent sheet supporter, either in the up position or 'at rest'. The 'Mink As' will be offered with spoked or disc wheels, long or short rain strips and horizontal or vertical planked doors.

A step change in GWR open wagon design occurred in 1902 when a fifth plank was added to its four-plank design. The five-plank became the GWR's standard wagon design and, essentially, variations on the post-1904 version with a 3ft 3in deep and 8ft body continued to be built well into the 1940s.

Both the Dia. O11s and O15s were introduced in 1911 and are virtually identical – they had a 10t carrying capacity and used a 16ft underframe with GWR self-contained buffers. However, the Dia. O11 was unfitted whereas the Dia. O15 had vacuum brakes. The GWR built 10,815 Dia. O11s between 1911-1919 and 2,105 Dia. O15s up to 1922.

It's not known exactly when the last of these wagons were withdrawn because they slowly disappeared over the years but they lasted well into BR days. Several Dia. O11s survive, including vehicles based at Didcot and the Avon and Severn Valley Railways. The GWR used the telegraphic code 'Mink' for the majority of its general-purpose vans. The code is most closely associated with the distinctive metal-bodied 'Iron Minks' and so it's often forgotten that the GWR built thousands of wooden-bodied 'Minks' from 1892 until the 1940s.

The virtually identical 'V14s' and 'V16s' were introduced in 1912. These shared the same body, underframe, 'W' irons, DC III brakes and axleboxes. The 'V14' had vacuum brakes, whereas the 'V16' was unfitted. The last of the 5,506 Dia. V14 'Mink As' were built in 1927, and production of the Dia. V16s had ceased in 1923 with 2,759 built.

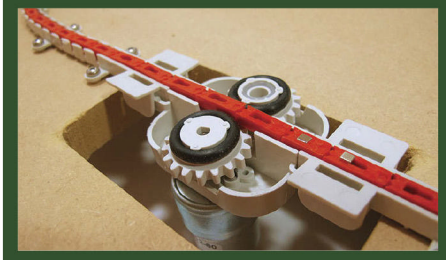


ON WOR THIS MONTH

See our website www.world-of-railways.co.uk to enjoy the following videos, interviews and features:



'Little Bytham' running sequence
Watch a selection of trains in action on a return visit to Tony Wright's OO gauge layout.



Installing the Magnorail system
Learn more about this system for animating your model railway with our installation guide.



How to make a shunting tractor
Adapting a die-cast model tractor to represent those used in small industrial railway operations.

EXHIBITION TO RAISE FUNDS FOR CHARITIES

After a break of three years, The Association of Bexley Charities '78 has accepted the generous offer from the Erith Model Railway Society to fundraise through a raffle to be held at its exhibition. Taking place on January 28 and 29, 2023, at The Longfield Academy, Main Road (B260), Longfield, Kent (DA3 7PH), eight local charities and voluntary organisations, which endeavour to help and support their members in difficult circumstances, will benefit from raffle ticket sales.

Supported by World of Railways via donation of prizes, members to benefit from the fundraising opportunity include the Alzheimer's Society, Bexley Branch, Bexley Down's Syndrome Group, Bexley Smile, The Children's Society, Demelza Hospice Care For Children, Irish Community Services, Lupus UK, Spirits Rest Horse and Animal Sanctuary.

For details on the Erith Model Railway Society's 2023 event, which promises at least 30 layouts, trade support, societies, demonstrations and refreshments, see its website.

RAPIDO TRAINS CLASS 28

Words & photography: Howard Smith



Every bit the part of a rebuilt Co-Bo, the scale of the model is evident only when looking at the Rapido coupling and wheels. We didn't fit any accessories from the pack, but these only enhance what is a good-looking model.

Built by Metropolitan Vickers at its Stockton-on-Tees factory in 1958/1959, the 20 MetroVick Type 2s (later unofficially Class 28 Co-Bo) Class members (D5700-D5719) were withdrawn from revenue-earning service by the end of 1968. Famed for their poor reliability and use on the Anglo-Scottish container door-to-door 'Condor' container services – often double-headed – the Class was relegated to local duties around North-West England. Only D5705 was retained for departmental duties until 1985 and is under long-term restoration at the East Lancashire Railway.

Rapido Trains UK has opted to produce models in their post-1961 rebuilt form, with flat screens. This is the manufacturer's first locomotive for the scale and a sign of things to come, with development on its forthcoming Class 44 for N, also underway.

Models are fitted with a Next18 decoder socket, directional lighting, NEM coupler sockets and options for DCC sound.

We've been notified by Rapido Trains UK of some quality control issues affecting a limited number of models. These range from bogie pipework to printed circuit boards incorrectly installed. For models that have been affected and reached customers, the manufacturer is resolving the issues – we'd recommend testing and examining a model to ensure it's correct before purchase, however. Our review sample of non-DCC D5700 in plain BR green (905007) was fine in all regards.

Seven other variants are available covering the locomotives' lives in BR green, BR green with yellow ends, BR green with yellow





The roofline, and the exhaust ports, modelled in full, make use of the thickness of the plastic to create a sense of depth.

datafile

BASICS

Manufacturer: Rapido Trains UK
Catalogue Refs:
(905001) D5709, BR green
(905002) D5711, BR green with yellow warning panels
(905003) D5713, BR green with yellow warning panels
(905004) D5707, BR green with yellow ends
(905005) D5705, BR green with yellow warning panels
(905006) D5701, BR blue with yellow ends
(905007) D5700, BR green
(905008) 97281 in BR research department red and blue
(905009) Rapido Class 28 D5702 BR green with small yellow panel (KMRC exclusive)
RRP: £119.95. (£219.95 DCC Sound)
Gauge/scale: 9mm gauge, 1:148 scale N
Company/Operator: British Railways
Weight: 74g
Chassis: die-cast **Bodyshell:** plastic
Minimum curve radius: 263.5mm (R2)
Accessories: bufferbeam pipes and MU connectors, dummy screw-link couplings, headcode panels

warning panels, BR research department red and blue, and BR blue with yellow ends, (see information panel) while an exclusive to retailer Kernow Model Rail Centre sees D5702 in BR green with small yellow panels.

At first appearance, there's no denying that the shape of the locomotive is every bit that of a 'Co-Bo', the cab being a highlight for me – the flush glazing and thin frames scaling down to 2mm:1ft scale exceptionally well. Though difficult to see unless handling the model, cab interiors aren't empty, with a representation of the control cubicle, seats and bulkhead all moulded in plastic.

Separately-applied side and cab handrails, an etched roof fan grille, windscreen wipers and underframe pipework elevate exterior appearances of the intricate tooling. However, the last-mentioned, moulded in white self-coloured plastic fouls a little on the twin axle bogie. This might vary among models, so it might be worth testing around the track of your layout to check.

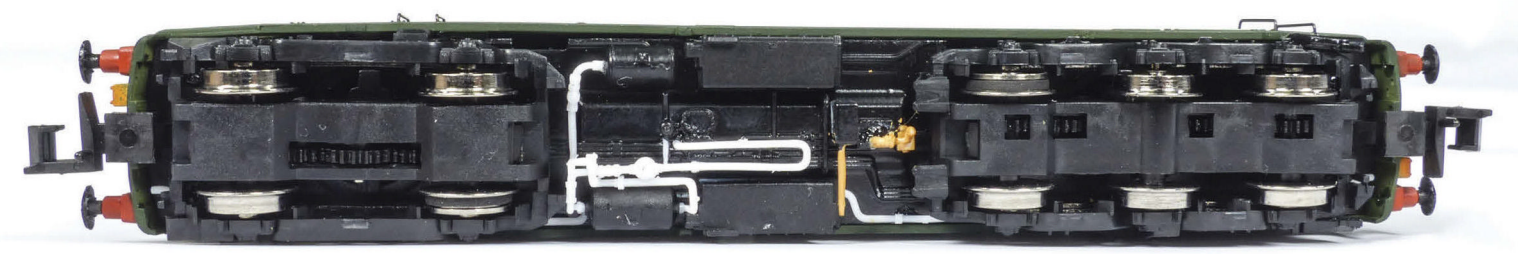
A 'wand' is provided. The powerful magnet inside the injection-moulded handle is waved over the centre of the model – you can feel the magnetic resistance – and turns the lights on or off on DC. Though not a new concept, it's great to see such a feature replace intricate switches that were often placed on the inaccessible underside of models not so long ago. Full marks to the manufacturer, here.

Underneath, this model proves to be a true Co-Bo, with all-wheel drive. The gear train is accessible for applying small amounts of lubricant for routine maintenance, while the bogie side frames offer sufficient 'heft' to make it less prone to damage. Two traction tyres are fitted, one per bogie for better tractive effort.

A few small niggles aside that are limited to certain models – again, worth checking before purchasing – this locomotive fills a long-awaited gap for the transition-era modeller, and is an ideal pairing for the manufacturer's newly-released 'Conflat P' wagons.



Side grilles are picked out in the optimistic white of the livery, and colour contrasts are razor-sharp along edges. Budding modellers will probably look to paint wheel faces black, and disguise the plated pick-ups running atop the bogie frames, which, though hidden from this angle, are more obvious when viewed on the level.



All-wheel drive and all-wheel pick-up – well, perhaps not so much the wheels fitted with traction tyres. The left bogie rubbed a little on the white pipework, but might be an isolated issue. Tight tolerances often come with the territory of high levels of underframe detail.

RAPIDO TRAINS CONFLAT 'P' WAGONS

Words & photography: Howard Smith



Terence Cuneo's 1959 painting 'Night Freight' immortalises a sense of optimism and the future of freight on Britain's railways. Depicting a pair of newly-introduced Metro-Vick Type 2 Co-Bos (later Class 28), at the head of a rake of Conflat 'P' wagons – this was early block train movements of containerised goods.

Manufactured and released to coincide with its new RTR Class 28 for N, Rapido Trains has also delivered models depicting the 60 BR modified Diagram 1/60 Conflat 'P' wagons, as rebuilt from Diagram 1/431 and 1/432 'plate' wagons.

Modifications to the original 'plate' wagons saw sides and floors removed, while fitment of roller bearings would improve reliability and decrease maintenance schedules. The suspension was revised too, while a new transverse bolster support allowed the vehicles to transport one Type BD and a Type A container.

The Conflat 'P's served the 'Condor' service, as it became known, until 1964, when they were displaced by a batch of Ashford-built bogie wagons. The following year the 'Condor' service was withdrawn,



Rapido has revealed that the back-to-back tolerances with the wagon chassis are too tight, acting as a brake on a limited number of wagons. Ours weren't affected and are both smooth runners, but it's worth checking. Plastic can be carefully filed away behind wheels if problematic.



Spot the difference – as it happens, not as many as you'd expect on maroon container variants where tare, charge and loading capacities are displayed as identical for A and BD container sizes. Smallest of errors aside, these additions scale out beautifully for 2mm:1ft scale, being ideal for road vehicles too.

datafile

BASICS

Manufacturer: Rapido Trains UK
Catalogue Refs:
(921003) Conflat 'P' B933061, BR bauxite with crimson containers
(921013) Conflat 'P' B933648, BR bauxite with bauxite containers
RRP: £29.95
Gauge/scale: 9mm gauge, 1:148 scale N
Company/Operator: BR
Weight: 25g
Chassis and bodyshell: plastic
Minimum curve radius: 263.5mm (R2)
Accessories: Air hoses and cosmetic coupling hooks

to be replaced by the new Freightliner container service.

The Conflat 'P' wagons soldiered on, being rebuilt as timber carriers – dubbed Timber 'P' – and were a common sight in Scotland until 1981.

Two review samples were kindly sent by the manufacturer, both carrying the also newly-tooled 1:148 scale Dia. 3/050 Type BD and Dia. 3/001 Type A containers, two in crimson, two in later bauxite with 'door to door' branding.

The models with containers are quite weighty for a two-axle design – five times the weight of a Peco two-axle seven-plank mineral. Most of the weight is in the containers, however, and these can be carefully removed from wagons with relative ease by pulling to break the small glue bond. Their locations are guaranteed through small holes in the wagon chassis, into which small spigots on the containers fit.

Some modellers have found that Rapido's Class 28 is at its limits on a scale-length train of these wagons. While double-heading with a second locomotive is an attractive proposition, already modellers have sought a more wallet-friendly alternative by making the wagon containers lighter. Once separated from wagons, the floor of the Rapido containers can be carefully levered out with a sharp knife to reveal a series of three weights that can be unscrewed from the floor. The number of weights can be returned according to preference – none, one, two, or as delivered, three.

From a detail perspective, the wagon chassis look great, with vacuum cylinder and diagonal pipe separately-applied to the underframe, complete with all its truss members. It's a shame most aren't seen with containers atop!

My favourite aspects are the buffers, which have scaled down very well, and kinematic coupling housings, which, being screw-mounted, can be easily removed and substituted, if desired. Brake levers, brake shoes, and brake hangers have all scaled down well, too.

Even in the smallest of rakes – made easier by the manufacturers' wagon triple packs – behind a Type 2 Co-Bo, the nostalgic feeling of 'the future of transportation' can resonate once more. Let's wish for a collectors' set of wagons, boxed with a Metrovick Co-Bo in Cuneo-inspired packaging, perhaps even with a die-cast Scammell Scarab? Rapido – please, make it so! Highly recommended.



Containers are secured neatly on wagons thanks to their weight, their locating spigots, and the raised plastic corner profiles on wagons.



The wagon chassis look at their best when unloaded, and the wheel profiles look great for the scale. In fact, if couplings were removed – achieved easily via a single screw – you could be fooled into thinking these were 4mm:1ft scale wagons...

PECO FFESTINIOG RAILWAY STOCK

Words & photography: Howard Smith



The expansion of OO9 RTR offerings has been steady, promoted by a handful of manufacturers. Three recent releases by one of these, Peco, sees modelling the rolling stock of the Ffestiniog Railway just that bit easier with the release of a four-wheel quarryman coach (GR-570A), four-wheel brake van with balcony (GR-580A) and four-wheel brake van with two balconies (GR-590A).

We kindly received a sample of all three from the manufacturer for review. Quarryman coaches arrived on the Ffestiniog in 1867, carrying workers to the quarries surrounding the line. The manufacturer has had access to photographs of quarryman trains of the late-19th century for historical reference and research purposes, one of which showed no fewer than 25 quarryman coaches making up the rear of the Saturday mid-day departure, headed by a Double-Fairlie.

From 1885 to 1887, 18 of what are now referred to as the 'Type 3' Quarrymen's carriages were built, featuring sprung axle boxes, one central door on each side and droplight windows. More of the same design were made to replace the older carriages and there was a total of 36 in the 1900s.

Quarryman coach No. 8 in brown, a double-balcony four-wheel brake van No. 7 in green, and single balcony brake van, No. 6, also in green, will add colourful interest to the tail of a rake of passenger coaches.

All three full-size prototypes of the chosen models can be found at the Ffestiniog today, making access to accurate dimensions easier for the manufacturer. To simplify tooling, and reduce manufacturing overheads, all three models share a modular chassis platform with rugged underframe brake shoe and tie-rod detail.

Vacuum pipes fitted to the ends are well-captured, creating small points of interest to the simplistic designs of the prototypes. Plain-liveried examples are promised too, for freelance modellers. With 'bug box' coaches and slate wagons already available, coupled with Ffestiniog Railway motive power manufactured for the scale with the Peco/Kato small England locomotives, and Bachmann Double-Fairlies, these latest additions are ideal for the budding OO9 modeller with an interest in one of the UK's most scenic of narrow-gauge railways.





datafile

BASICS

Manufacturer: Peco
Catalogue Refs:
(GR-570A) FR Quarryman Coach
(GR-580A) FR Quarryman Brake Coach, Green (double balcony)
(GR-590A) FR Quarryman Brake Coach, Green (single balcony)
RRP: £30.00
Gauge/scale: 9mm gauge, 1:76 scale OO9
Company/Operator: Ffestiniog Railway
Weight: 9g (each)
Chassis and bodyshell: plastic
Minimum curve radius: 228mm (R1)

PECO MINERAL WAGONS

Words & photography: Howard Smith



Peco's range of N gauge steam-era rolling stock increases further still, with more liveries applied to its newest tooling of the 9ft Railway Clearance House (RCH) seven-plank side and end-door, and 9ft RCH seven-plank side door wagons.

Six examples have been sent for review, all based around the manufacturer's 2019 tooling of the 9ft wheelbase wooden-type chassis (NR-120), also available to purchase separately with an RRP of £5.99.

This new selection of additions covers pre-grouping to BR liveries on its end-door wagon, with NE, LMS, SR and BR, and a private-owner variant in the attractive and high-contrasting yellow and red of Colman's Mustard, with a GW livery for its side-door tooling.

Thousands of private owner wagons circulated prior to nationalisation, often seen far from their base when collecting coal, or minerals, or delivering finished goods. Many a collector or modeller has purchased a private-owner wagon because its livery looks good. The creative excuse to run it on a model railway can be an afterthought. And, if you don't have a layout, there's always room in display cabinets!

All wagons supplied feature very free-running wheels on pin-point axles. Detail to wagon bodies is carried out to a high standard, with a scale appearance to plank lines, wagon strapping, hinges, and rivets. Fractions of a millimetre distinguish the impression of the steel supports on these vehicles with wooden chassis. Importantly, none of the detail is lost through livery application, which across all models is sharp.

Though RCH buffers and the brake lever appear a little over-scale – for strength, no doubt – the 'wall' thickness of plastic to the upper body looks a match to scale, while interior plank detail is present, too. In addition, the finely-detailed wagon brake shoes align with wheel treads. These wagons can withstand being handled, while having a very respectable scale appearance when viewed from above.

All told, great models for steam-era railway modellers, collectors, or anyone who can appreciate the many wonderful colour schemes to have been applied to private-owner wagons.

datafile

BASICS

Manufacturer: Peco
Catalogue Refs:
(NR-7001E) 9ft seven-plank open wagon, NE
(NR-7002B) 9ft seven-plank open wagon, SR
(NR-7003M) 9ft seven-plank open wagon, LMS
(NR-7004B) 9ft seven-plank open wagon, BR
(NR-7006P) 9ft seven-plank open wagon, Colman's Mustard
(NR-7000W) 9ft seven-plank open wagon, GWR
RRP: £15.95
Gauge/scale: 9mm gauge, 1:148 scale N
Company/Operator: Various
Weight: 5g
Chassis and bodyshell: plastic
Minimum curve radius: 263.5mm (R2)
Couplings: NEM-mounted Rapido

HELJAN UPDATED CLASS 35 'HYMEK'

Words: Howard Smith **Photography:** Tony Wright



For our November 2018 issue, it was revealed in our interview with Heljan's Ben Jones that its Class 35 'Hymek' was one of his favourite models. Fast-forward four years, and we find another batch of these ever-popular models with stockists, poised to find new buyers – for those that haven't sold already – but this time, with upgrades to better suit the needs of present-day modellers.

The new arrivals, in six variants for OO gauge, cover a selection of BR green- and BR blue-liveried examples, with some available in weathered conditions, and the patina effects are carried out to a high standard.

Lifting the bodyshell from the chassis via the four hidden plastic clip protrusions gains access to the internals, which now feature a PCB-mounted 21-pin digital decoder socket, while locomotives have LED lighting in another first for the tooling, providing working cab, directional and tail lights. Decoder choice for the power requirement is plentiful, and provision for a 28mm round speaker is made for sound enthusiasts.

Surprisingly, the original tooling for the model has now reached its second decade, with the last batch of models released in 2018 with eight-pin decoder sockets. However, the resulting models have 'aged' very well, being ahead of their time for power and detail. The smooth delivery of torque from the centrally-located five-pole motor on-board is assisted by all-wheel drive and pick-ups, providing ample 'grunt' to haul the mixed-traffic trains with which their prototype counterparts were associated.

Models are supplied with an accessory pack containing alternative headcodes, bufferbeam detail and NEM couplings. Of the six newly-released liveries, attention to livery detail is to a high standard – we received an example of (3532) D7094 in BR green with full yellow ends, weathered to reflect the state these locomotives were often found in.

The standard of weathering is high, the model seeing expertly-applied washes and sprays to create a convincing weather-beaten look. A favourite is (7052) in BR blue with small yellow panels, where paint has been 'faded' prior to weathering. Other liveries include (3531) D7041 or (3533) D7050 in BR green with small yellow panels, or (3535) D7058 or (3536) weathered D7081, in BR blue with full yellow ends.

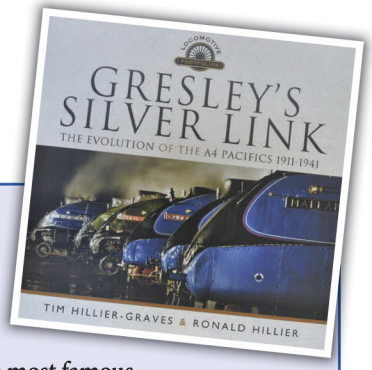
For BR Western Region modellers of the mid-1970s, such an example is surely of very high interest. With many retailers offering these models for less than £200, temptation is only a step away!

datafile

BASICS

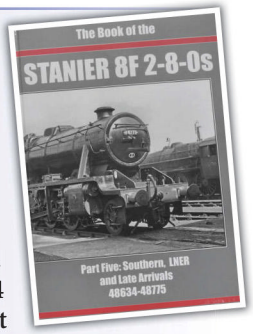
Manufacturer: Heljan A/S
Catalogue Ref:
(3532) D7094 in BR green with full yellow ends
RRP: £219.95 (£209.95 non-weathered versions)
Gauge/scale: 16.5mm gauge, 1:76 scale OO
Company/Operator: BR
Weight: 530g
Chassis: die-cast **Bodyshell:** plastic
Minimum curve radius: 438mm (R2)
Accessories: bufferbeam pipes and alternative headcodes

NEW BOOKS as reviewed by Tony Wright



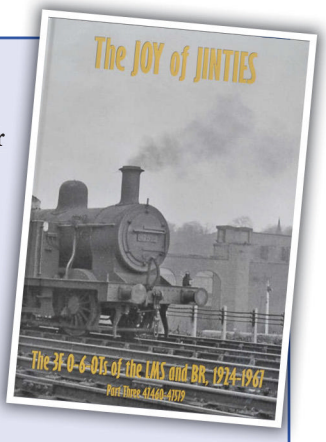
GRESLEY'S SILVER LINK THE EVOLUTION OF THE A4 PACIFICS 1911-1941
by Tim Hillier-Graves & Ronald Hillier, Pen and Sword. PRICE: £35.00

This is the latest book by Tim Hillier-Graves, following in a series where he's written works on Gresley and his locomotives, Edward Thompson and Arthur Peppercorn; an LNER theme indeed. I have these other books and they're rather good, so I looked forward to reviewing this latest one. In the main, I'm not disappointed. Rightly acknowledged as one of the greatest British steam locomotives of all time (the jury's out on which is the most famous British locomotive of all time – *Flying Scotsman* or *Mallard*?), this scholarly work takes an in-depth look at the development of the A4s, right from Gresley's appointment as the GNR's CME in 1911 through to the early years of WWII. I'm delighted that mention is made throughout of the members of his team. Perhaps it's not before time that those men's contributions are acknowledged. However, it's not just the immediate team that is mentioned; the influences of some of the great contemporary worldwide designers/engineers are also acknowledged, not just with regard to railways, but all aspects of design. Stanier's equivalent streamliner is also considered, but it's interesting to note that underneath a streamlined 'Princess Coronation' there is still a fully-dressed locomotive. Take off an A4's cladding and it's virtually naked! Divided into seven chronological chapters, it makes for gripping reading. The other locomotives designed by Gresley and his team are also described in great detail, especially the A1s and A3s, which were the direct precursors of the A4s. It's right that his late relative, Ronald Arthur Hillier, is given an appreciation, for he clearly influenced the author in a great way, but it's a shame poor proofing has reduced his name to Hiller at one point. In fact, poor proofreading is my principal criticism of this work, for there are too many typos present. As an author myself, I realise this is a blight, but typos should be intercepted more than they have been in this work. Produced on excellent-quality gloss stock, the general presentation and reproduction are to a high-standard, though I feel several of the photographs (many of which are new to me) could have been printed larger. That said, there's a marvellous 16 pages of contemporary colour, including photographs, drawings, artwork and advertising – simply splendid. On page 171, we're given to believe (or it's purported) that both pictures show the Up 'Silver Jubilee', yet, the lower shot shows the Down train (at Welwyn Garden City). On page 199, we're told that both shots show the Up 'Coronation', yet both show the Down service – at Potters Bar in the top image, and Newcastle in the lower one (the third rail at Newcastle is at the east end of the station). The picture on page 198 is a famous one, showing the inaugural run of the Down 'Coronation', taken at Harringay on July 3, 1937, not the 5th as suggested – moral, never believe what's written on the back of a print! The above 'observations' should not detract too much from this good book, because it's brought together the early A4 story in a way never written before. It should be on every railway enthusiast's library shelf, and is good value for money.



THE BOOK OF THE STANIER 8F 2-8-0S PART FIVE: SOUTHERN, LNER AND LATE ARRIVALS 48634-48775 by Ian Sixsmith and Richard Derry, Irwell Press. PRICE: £34.95

Two from Irwell this month, beginning with this final volume describing Stanier's most-successful 2-8-0s. There can't be many locomotive types designed by one of the 'Big Four' companies that ended up being built at works of the other three as well, not to mention those built at private works. It's important to state right at the outset that I have an 'interest' in this work, because I assisted in a small way with the writing of some of the captions. That this work (and the Jinties one, too) is first-rate has very little to do with me! It concludes the story of these numerous locomotives (not all of which ended up in BR stock; some were lost at sea during the War), including the last ones taken into BR stock as late as 1957. Glancing at my crumbling 1957 Ian Allan Combined Volume, I see the scribbling of an 11 year old noting 48773, 48774 and 48775! The work follows the usual format of high-quality reproduction (all B&W) on best-quality stock, with at least two photographs of every individual locomotive, 288 pages being needed for this. Pictures illustrating the class throughout its life are included, from brand new to the last rites in 1968. Comprehensive doesn't begin to describe the book! Repair dates, with locations are noted, as are boilers, tenders (several of the class towed Fowler tenders at various times) and allocations. Anyone building or detailing a model of a Stanier 8F at any point in its life will find this volume invaluable, as would the other four in the series. It's principally a work of reference – the 'standard' work in my view – but that doesn't mean it can't be picked up and enjoyed as a wonderfully relaxing activity. For a work of this quality, it's outstanding value for money and I thoroughly recommend it.



THE JOY OF JINTIES THE 3F 0-6-0S OF THE LMS AND BR, 1924-1967 PART THREE 47460-47579
by Ian Sixsmith (Tables by Richard Derry), Irwell Press. PRICE £21.95

I suppose the LMS 'Jinties' were 'joyful', busily bustling about their business, frequently overlooked, especially at major stations where much more exotic motive power could be seen, by the trainspotters like me, yet performing the most vital of tasks. This book takes us as far as 47579 – the fabled Tri-ang 47606's prototype will have to wait until the next volume, which will probably be the last. As with the other 'Joys of' in the series, (almost) every locomotive gets at least one picture. 47482 gets four, because of its unique Darlington-style of large numerals on the tankside – strange that a Crewe Station shunter should be repaired in the North East. There's a great shot of 7491 racing along the ECML just north of Finsbury Park on probably a Broad Street- Hatfield service – 'Jinties' were not only shunters, though sadly a photograph of a 'Jinty' racing a Gresley Pacific has yet to surface. Locomotives fitted with Push-Pull apparatus are duly noted (47477-81). Tables for each locomotive include where they were built, shopping dates, allocations and boilers fitted. As with all Irwell's books, everything is well-reproduced on best-quality stock. Of course, anyone making a model of a 'Jinty' in the number series must have this work. It is a joy to pore over and is exceptionally good value for money. Entirely recommended.

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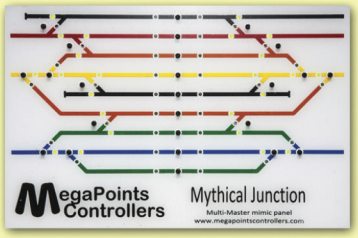
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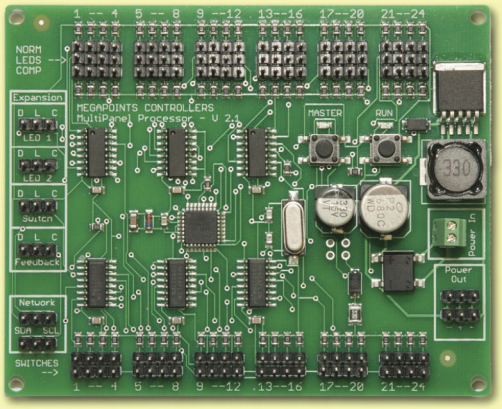
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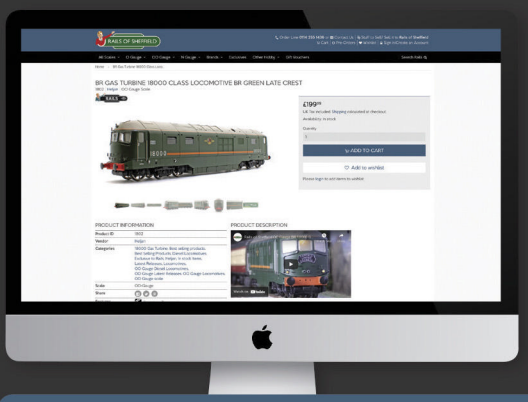


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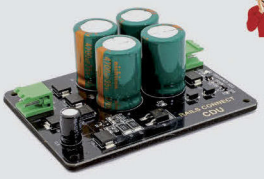


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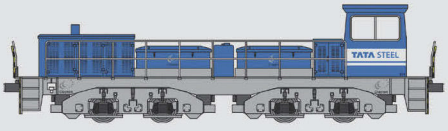


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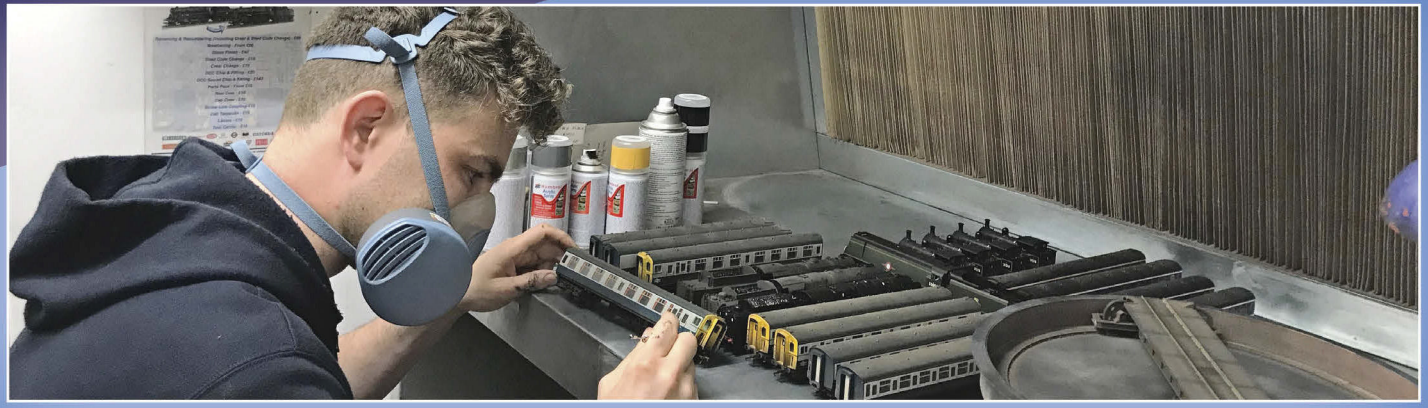
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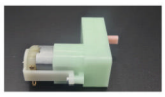


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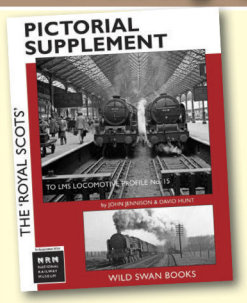
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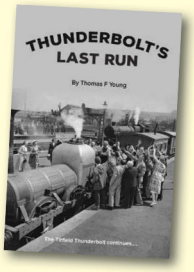
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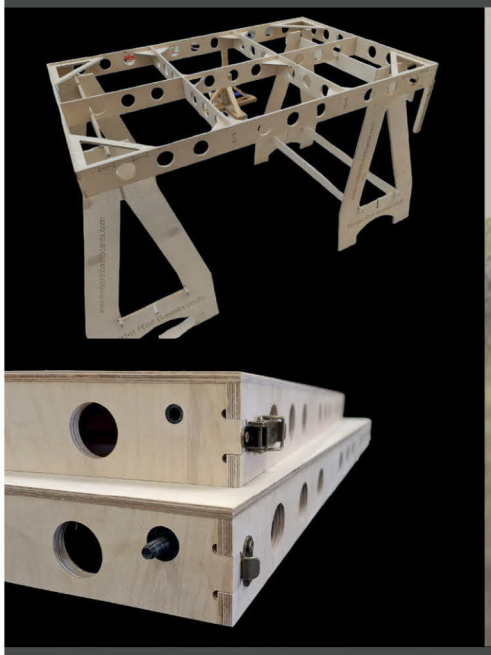
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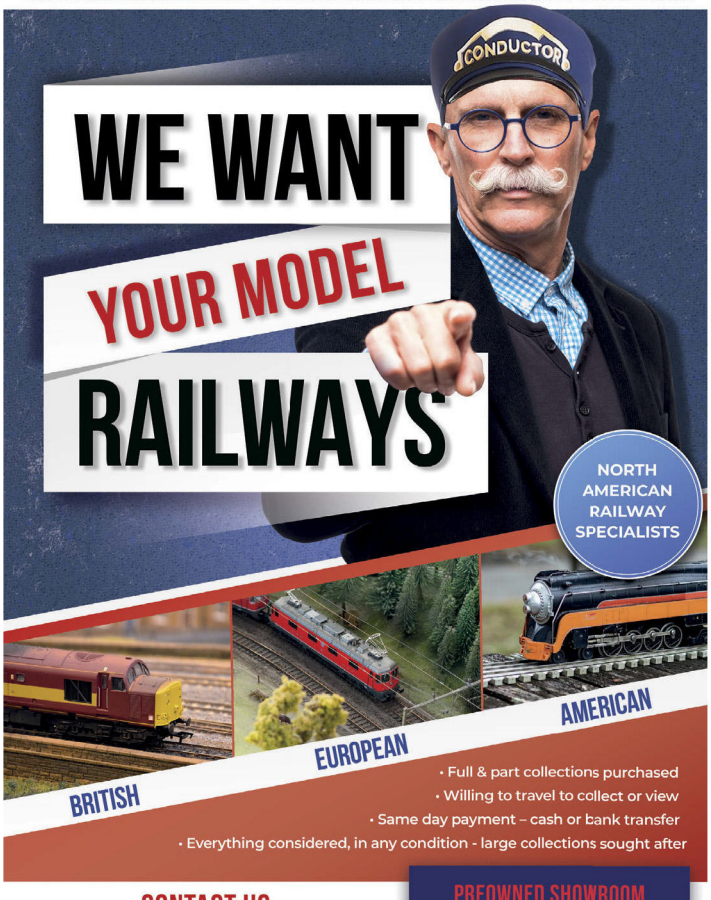


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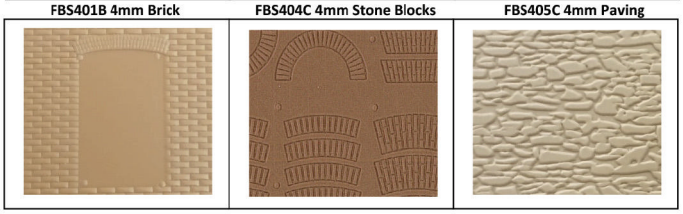
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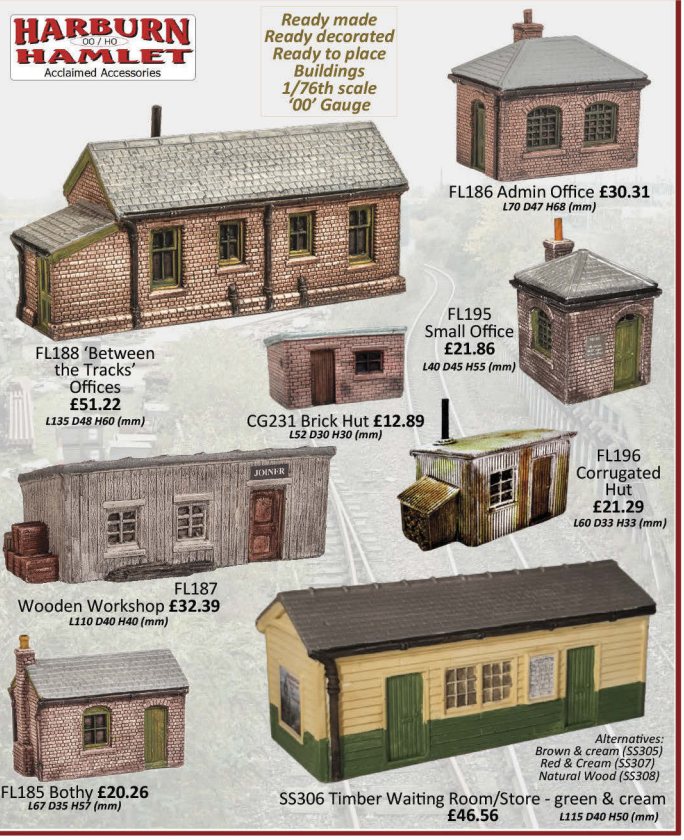
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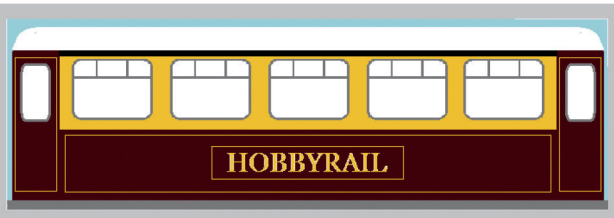
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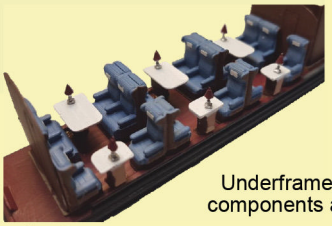


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April 28/29/30 - BRISTOL The Bristol Model Railway Exhibition, The Thornbury Leisure Centre, Alveston Hill, Thornbury, Near Bristol, **BS35 3JB.** Fri 1pm-7pm, Sat 10-6.30, Sun 10-5.
May 13 - LLANGOLLEN Llangollen Railway Festival, Llangollen Pavilion, Abbey Rd, Llangollen, Denbighshire, **LL20 8SW.** Sat 10-4.30.
May 20 - KEMPTON PARK Gauge O Guild Southern Show, Kempton Park Racecourse, Staines Road, Sunbury on Thames, **TW16 5AQ**. Sat 10 - 4. **FREE Parking with Railway Station on Site**
May 20/21 - JARROW Model Railway Club Annual Exhibition, Primrose C.A, Lambton Terrace, Jarrow, **NE32 5QY.** Sat 10 - 5 Sun - 10 - 4.
June 3 - BARNSLEY Gauge 'O' Guild Summer Show, Barnsley Metrodome, Queens Ground, Queens Rd, Barnsley, **S71 1AN.** Sat 10-4.00. **NEW VENUE**
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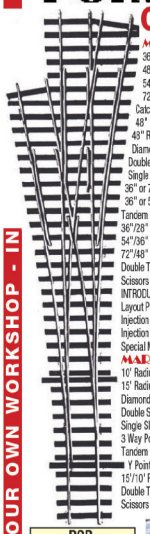
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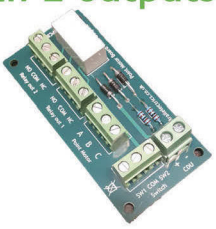
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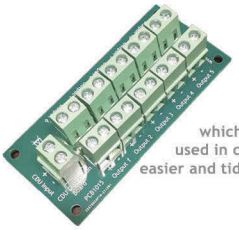
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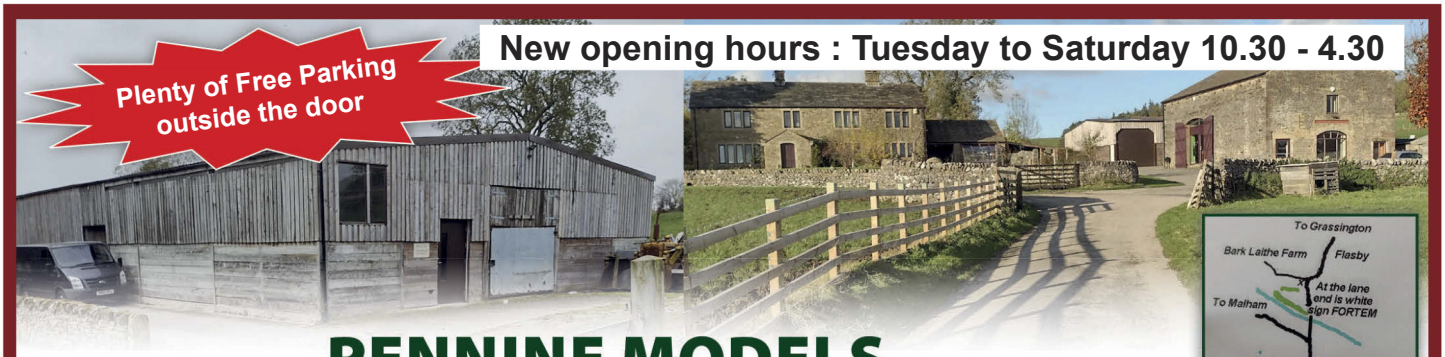


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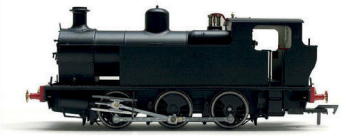
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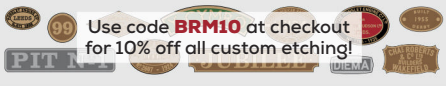
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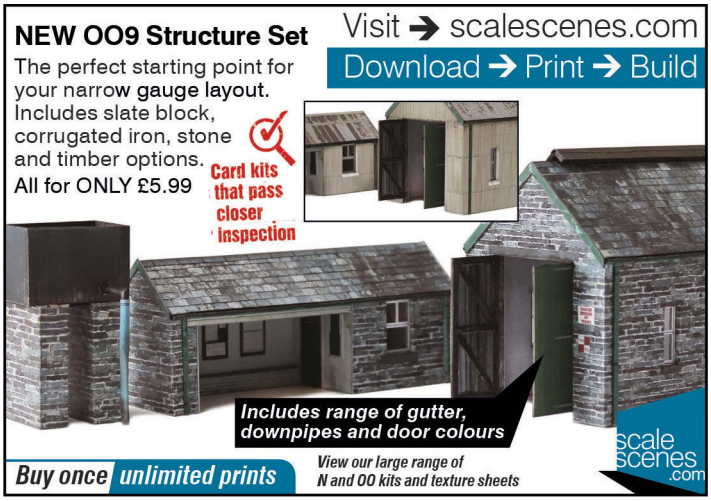
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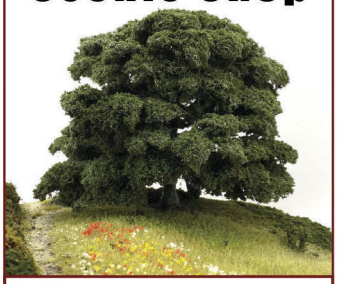
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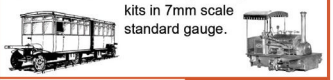
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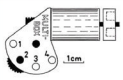
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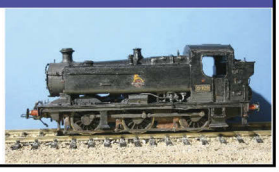
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COPPER WORT

This new layout from previously-featured Pete Goss takes centre stage

Also:

- Three more fantastic layouts
- An exclusive look at Jenny Kirk's new layout from series two of *Hornby: A Model World*
- Create realistic grass with grass mats
- Build a card kit: top tips
- Wire your layout for DCC
- Diorama completion – how to build beach huts
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- The latest new products on test, and much more!

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Buffer Stop

Does our hobby matter?

There's been a lot of chat on RMweb around losing 'modelling mojo'. With all the bad news at the moment, messing around with model railways can seem utterly unimportant, and so worrying about losing interest in the hobby doesn't seem like something we should complain about. However, one member made a valuable point:

> **"It is the things we choose to do, not the things we have to do, that define us."**

Pretty profound for a model railway forum! There is a lot of day-to-day stuff we have to do. Quite a lot of it isn't very interesting. Washing up, putting fuel in the car, taking out the rubbish – it must all be done, but doesn't really stir the soul. None of it will provide much to boast about to friends. Does anyone want to be remembered just for especially clean crockery?

However, a hobby takes you out of the mundane world. When building a layout, we make many choices. It's our little world, and we are in control. When showing a model off to people – and you should always be proud of your models – it's a reflection of ourselves.

Model railways might not be that important in the overall scheme of things, but provide a little piece of calm in a complicated world. Calm that helps our mental health and perhaps puts the rest of the news in perspective. At least, until we singe our fingers with a soldering iron!

You have £50 to donate to charity, who do you give it to?

Andy: The Trussell Trust, the UK foodbank charity.

Debbie: WWF, it needs all the support it can get.

Howard: Air ambulance – many a life saved!

Phil: RNLI. Massive respect for the people in orange boats plucking others out of the sea in all weathers.

Ruth: I'm with Andy, The Trussell Trust for me.

This month in pictures...



It's easy to see what Phil was most interested in when visiting the Severn Valley Railway recently.



Debbie shows how you should take railway photographs, at the Nene Valley Railway.



A surprise addition to Leamington Spa's High Street, Accucraft designer Steve Purves's, 'There and Back Light Railway'.



Howard took a day trip to Margate for the Hornby 2023 range announcements, and enjoyed a demonstration of the new Hammant and Morgan control system.

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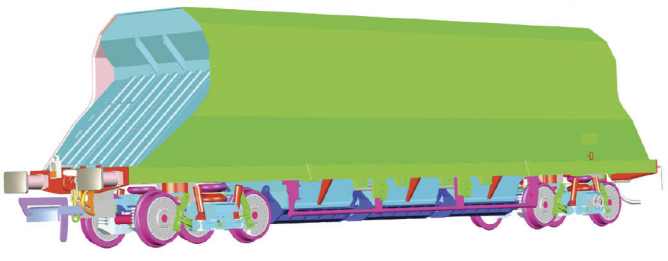


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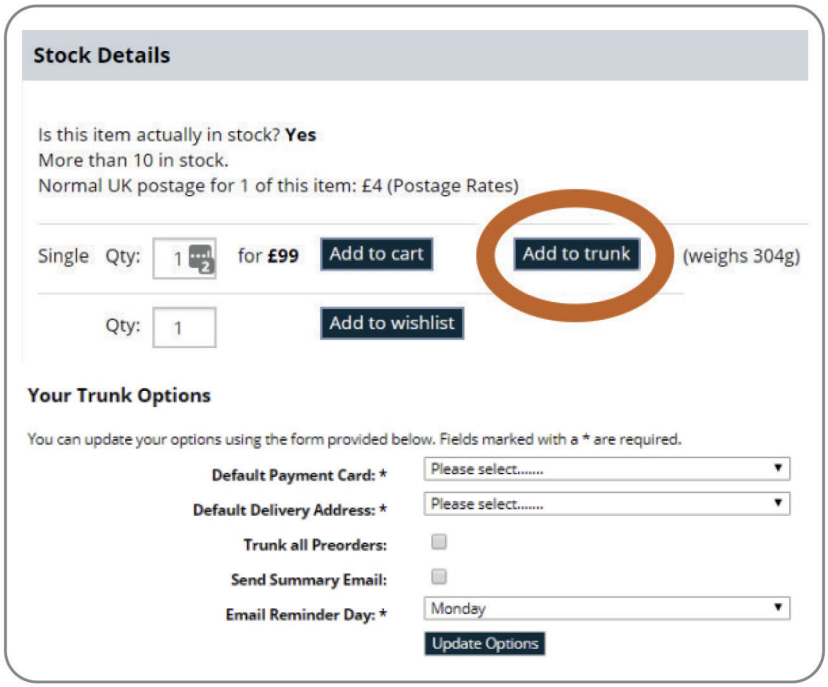
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