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# BRM

SEPTEMBER 2024




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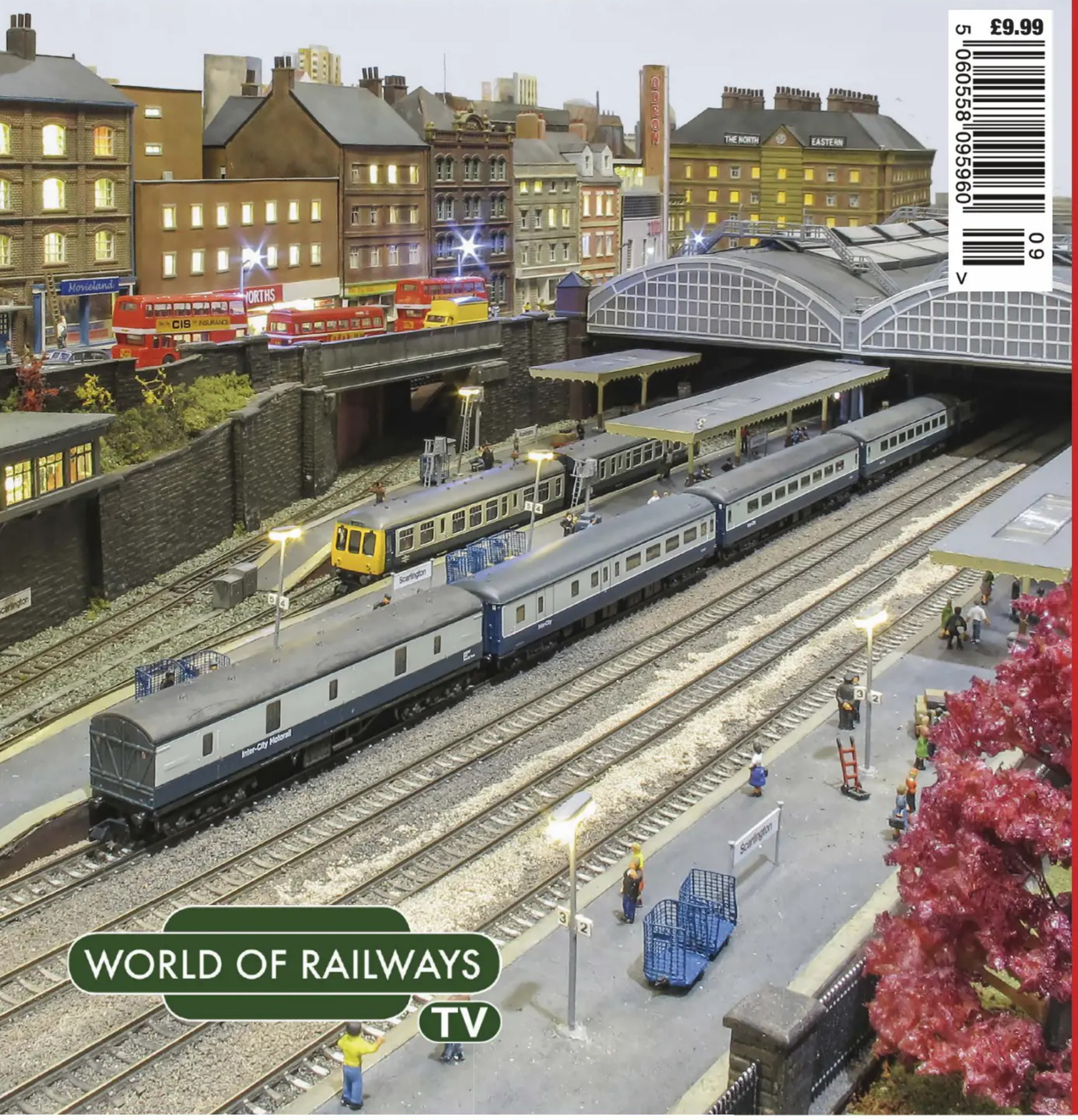



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## SCENIC DELIGHTS



A BOWLING GREEN SCENE THAT WILL IMPRESS

## COME ONBOARD!



TAKE A TRIP TO THE ECCLESBOURNE VALLEY

## ALL THE LATEST MODELS

NEW CLASS 31, *DUCHESS OF ATHOLL*, LARGE PRAIRIE, PLUS MANY MORE INSIDE!



WORLD OF RAILWAYS TV

# DIGITAL EDITION EXCLUSIVE

## World of Railways TV – September 2024

**We have three videos for you to enjoy this month, starting with a tour of our lead layout, the wonderful Ropley in OO gauge. Next, Phil Parker builds a Dapol hut in O gauge and shares some top tips on how to elevate this simple kit. The final part of our latest episode sees us pay a visit to the Crewe Heritage Centre, where we get the backstory on the APT in preservation, with a chance to see the train tilting!**

# WATCH THE VIDEO HERE

**(You must have a wifi connection to stream video content)**



HORNBY®

# Unleash the ‘TIGER’!

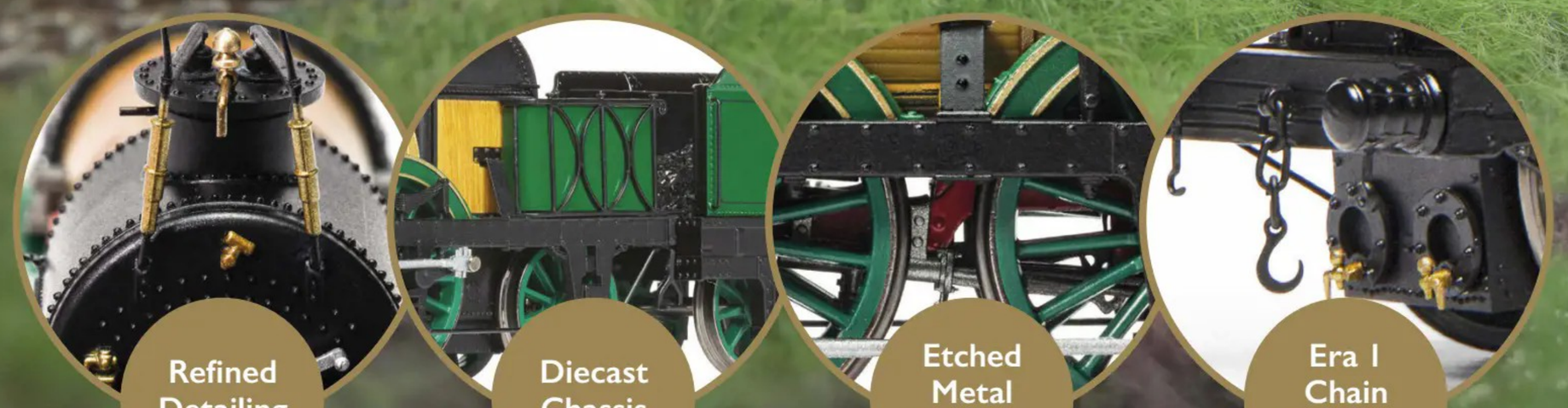
**R40436**
L&MR Royal Mail Coach
- Era 1

**R40439**
L&MR 3rd Class Coach
- Era 1

**R40445**
L&MR 1st Class Coach
‘Sovereign’ - Era 1

**R30348**
L&MR No. 58
‘Tiger’ - Era 1

DCC READY | NEXT18 PIN CONNECTION




Number 58 ‘Tiger’ was the sister engine to ‘Lion’, one of a plethora of locomotives named after animals as became the norm for the fledgling L&MR.

This locomotive is a remarkable model on its own or it can be completed with the additional L&MR coaches to complete a full rake.

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**NEW** **R60276** L&MR Flatbed Wagon - Era 1

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PS23 GWR/BR 13 ton open wagon..... £43.75
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# INSIDE SEPTEMBER BRM




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## INSPIRING LAYOUTS

**p20 Ropley (OO)** Modelling a preservation line comes with plenty of challenges, as the construction of this fantastic layout demonstrates

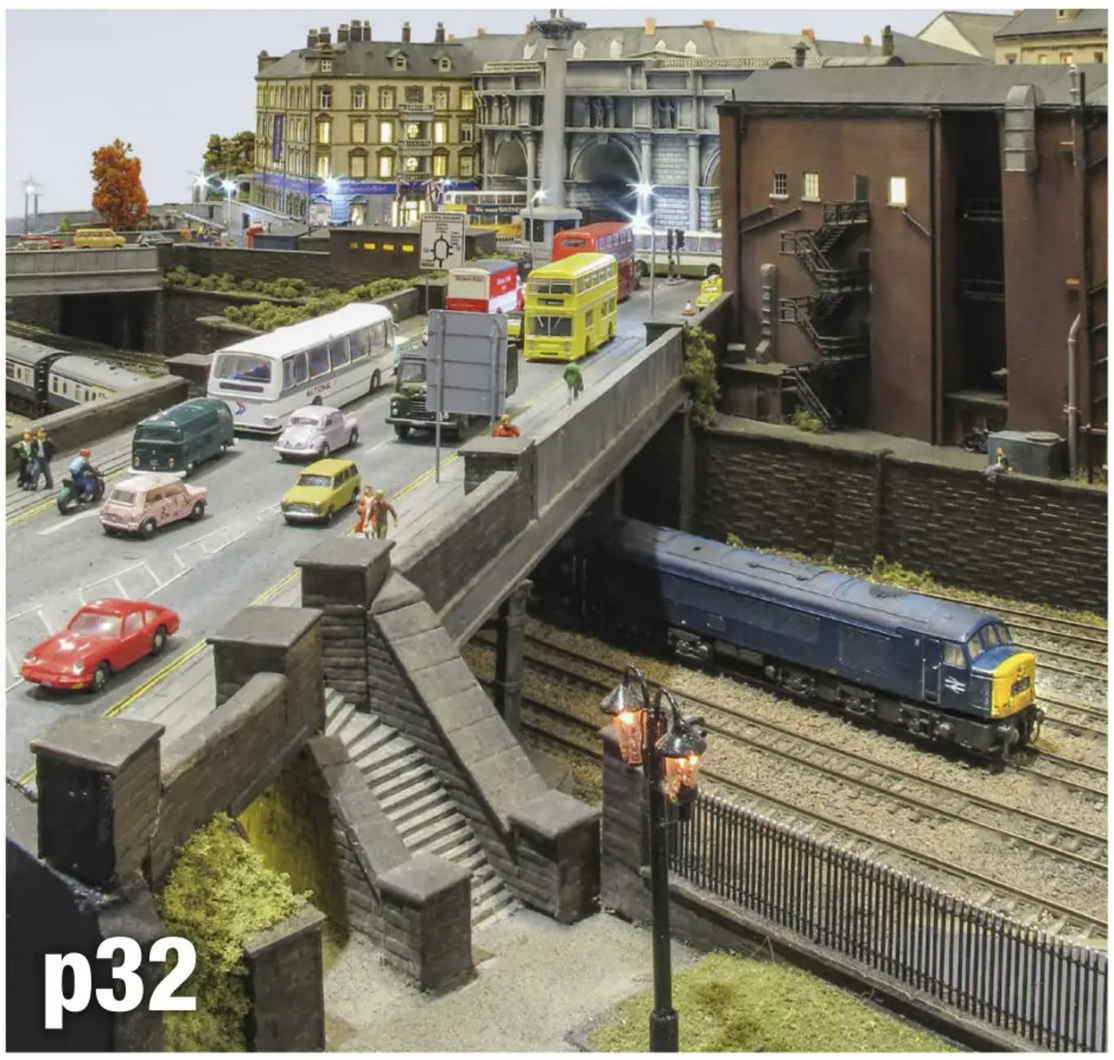
**p32 Scarlington (N)** A popular exhibition layout packed with scenic details

**p96 Dduallt (OO9)** A faithful recreation of a real place, which looks like something dreamed up in your imagination

**p112 South Wearing (O)** A fictitious line split into engaging cameo sections




p96



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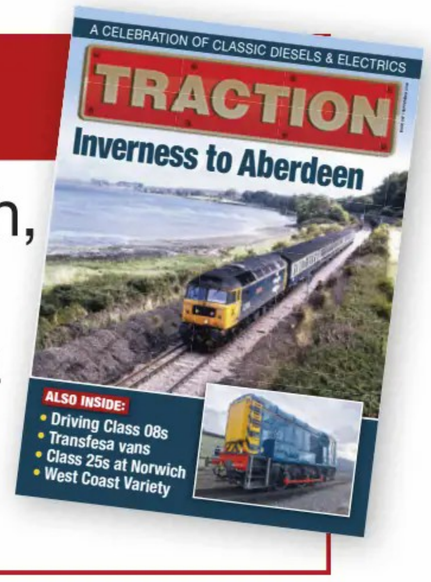
p112




## TRACTION

Class 25s at Norwich, from Inverness to Aberdeen, Transfesa two-axle vans, plus much more...




## GETTING PRACTICAL

**p42** Build a 00 Bus Stop

**p44** Construct a greenhouse in O

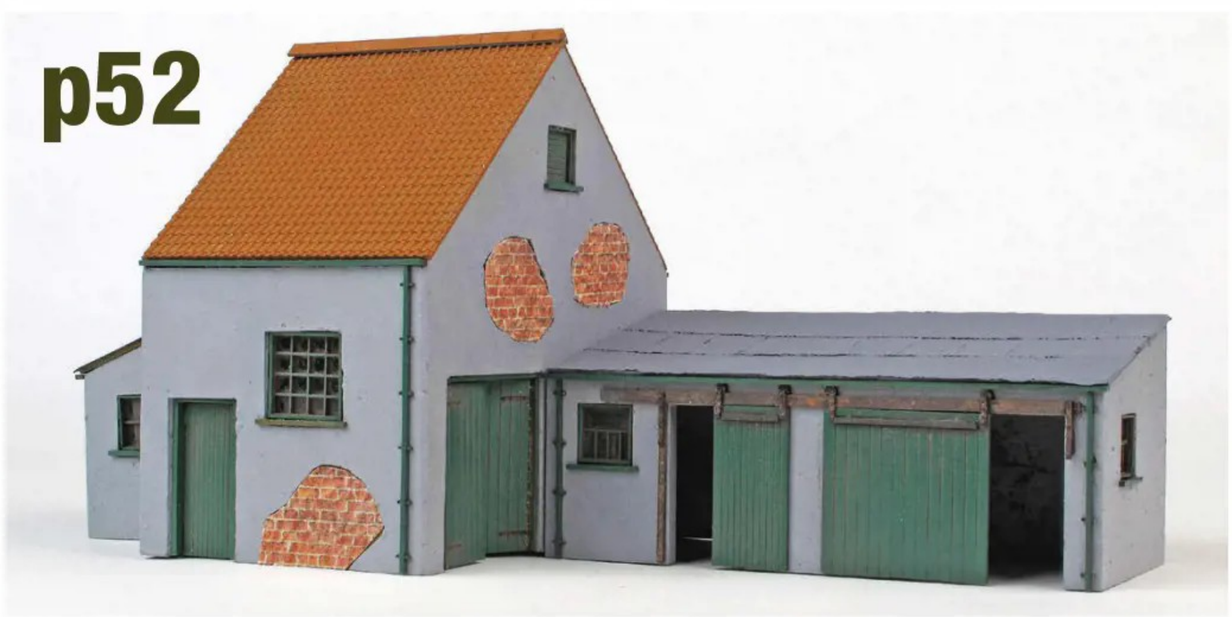
**p48** Fit a DCC decoder and detail a Class 37

**p52** How to build an eye-catching workshop building

**p56** Making authentic trees

**p60** Create a bowling green scene




## LATEST REVIEWS




**p130** Bachmann Class 31

**p132** Sonic Models GW 5101 Class Large Prairie

**p134** Hornby *Duchess of Atholl*

**p136** Dapol Hawthorn Leslie

**p138** Graham Farish 14T Tank wagon

**p139** IRM Bulleid 12T opens

**p140** Hornby 21T mineral wagon

**p141** Dapol 'Air Ministry' tanks




## MORE FROM BRM...

**p30** Reader modelling, events and opinions

**p104** The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway explored

**p126** Latest news headlines

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| R30317 | Railroad M&GNJR 0-4-0T | **£49.50** |
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| R30030 | Cl87 City of Glasgow | **£196.20** |
| R30120 | BR Green Class 31 | **£196.20** |
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| R30152 | GBRf Class 66 Sector | **£87.30** |
| R30180 | BR Class 37 Intercity | **£87.30** |
| R30013 | R&H 48DS Gower Princess | **£98.10** |
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| R3897 | BR Ruston & Hornsby 88DS | **£102.60** |
| R3895 | R&H 88DS Rowntree | **£102.59** |
| R3896 | R&H 88DS BR Green | **£102.59** |
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| R601 | Double Straight | **£3.15** |
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| 31-001 | Robinson BR Late Crest | **£94.99** |
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| 31-128 | BR ROD Weathered | **£105.45** |
| 31-136DC | D11/2 | **£115.90** |
| 31-931 | LMS Compound | **£112.90** |
| 31-932DC | BR Compound | **£127.75** |
| 31-461A | C Class SR Black | **£106.20** |
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| 31-481 | G2A BR Early | **£114.70** |
| 32-575A | LMS 4MT | **£114.70** |
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| 31-976B | BR 3mt green | **£140.20** |
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| 35-527 | Cl 121 Network Southeast | **£131.70** |
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| 35-126 | Harry Needle Cl20 | **£152.95** |
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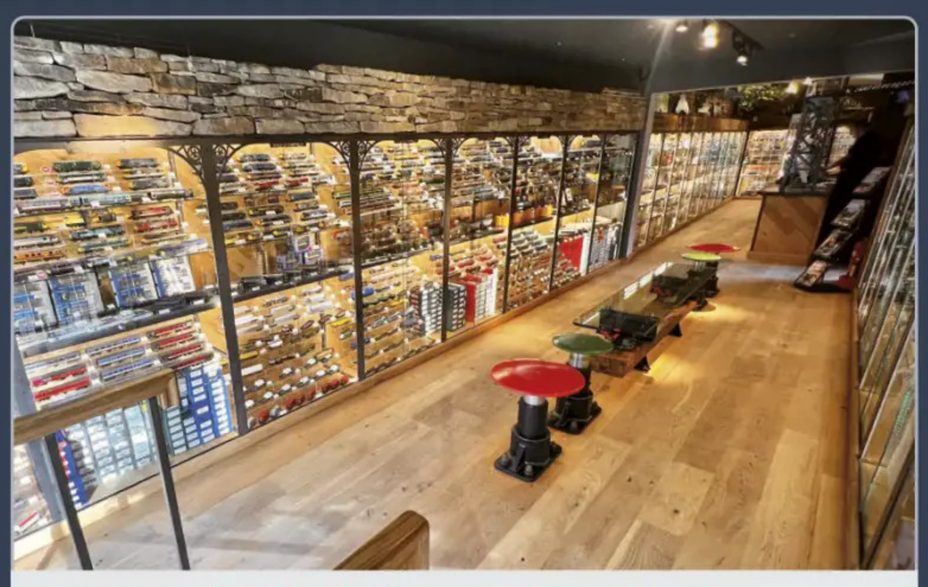

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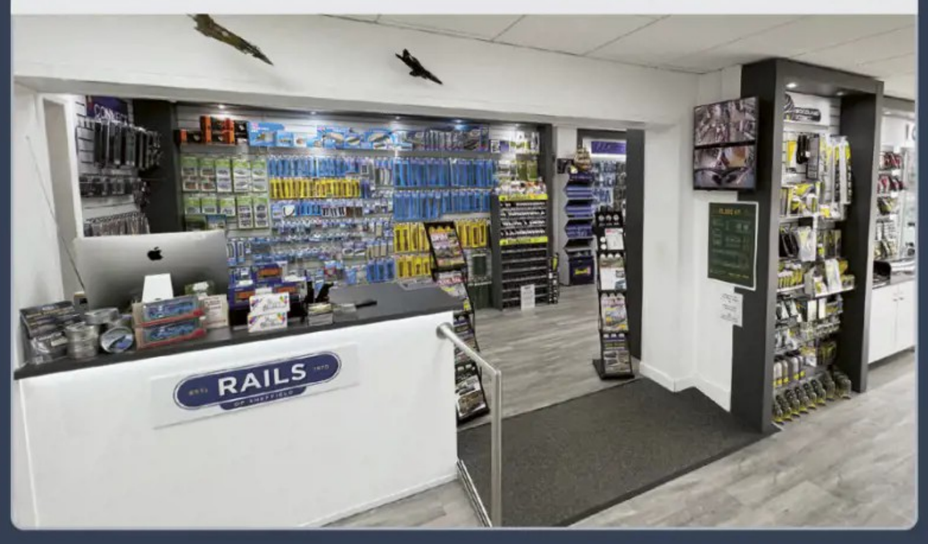





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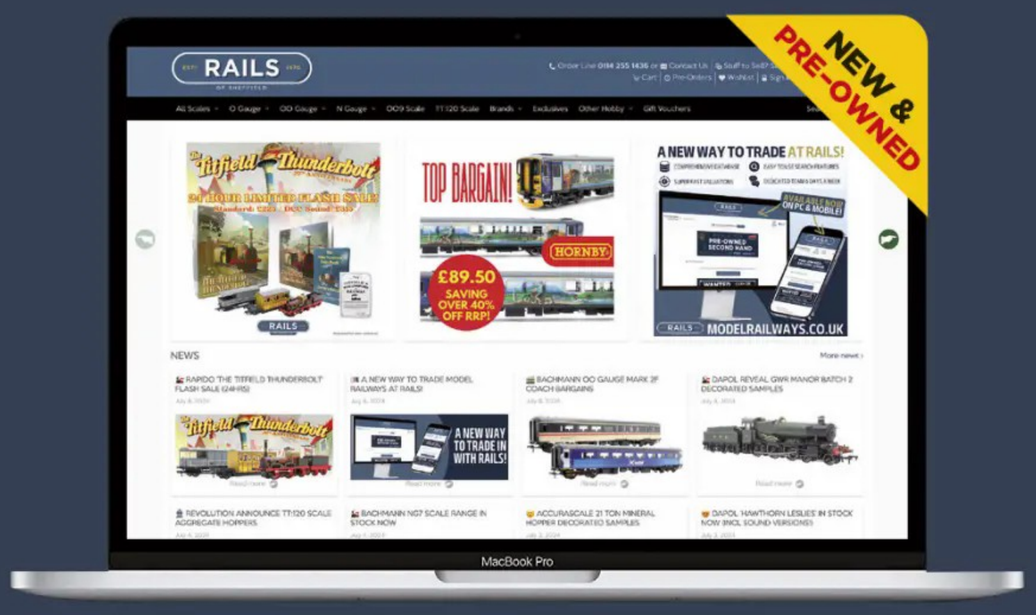


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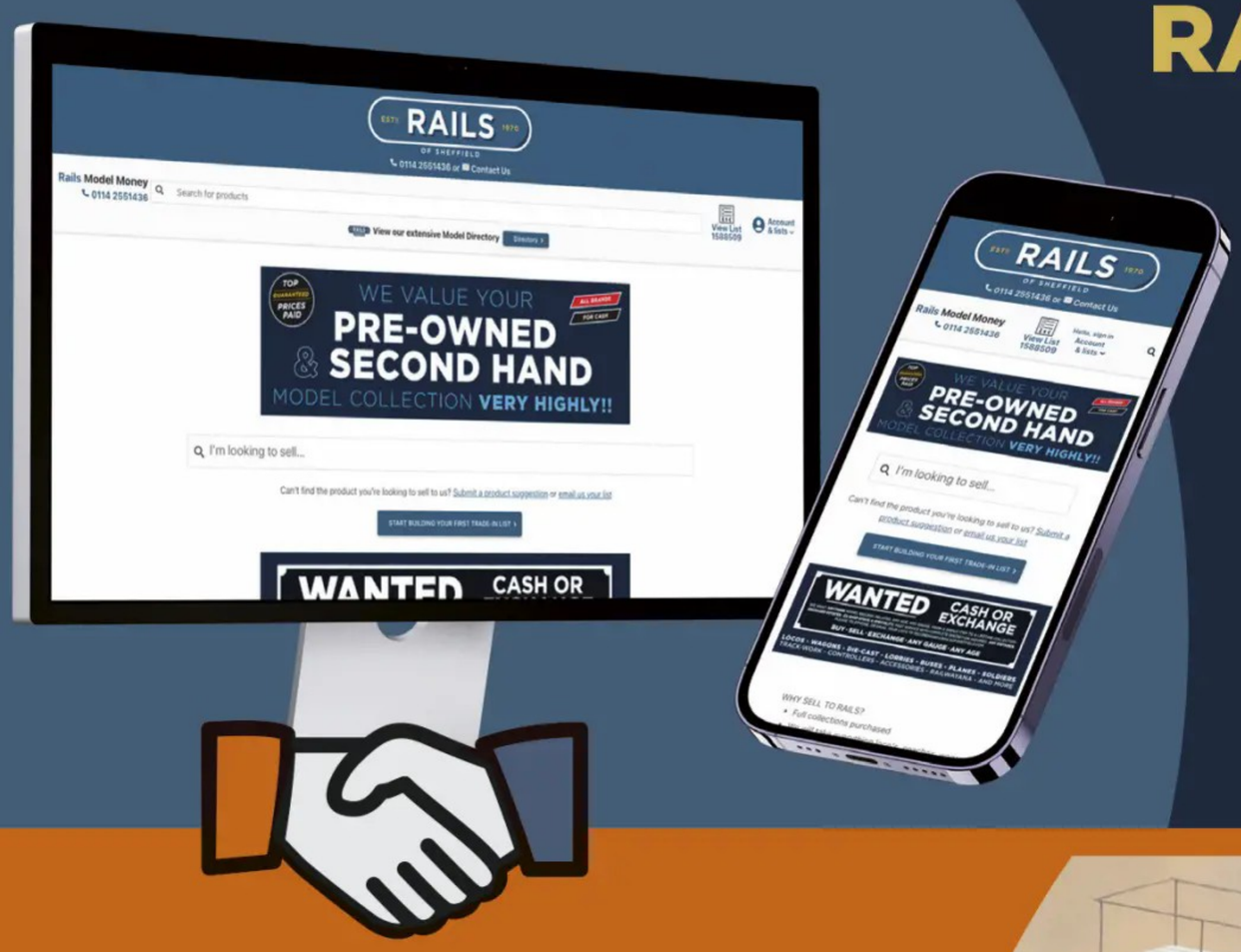


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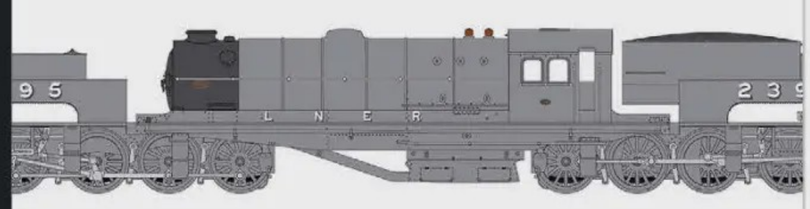

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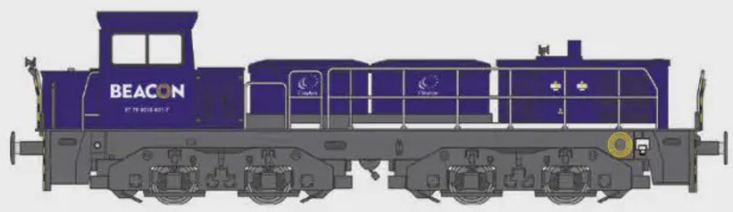

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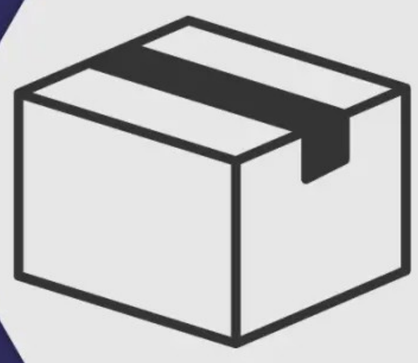

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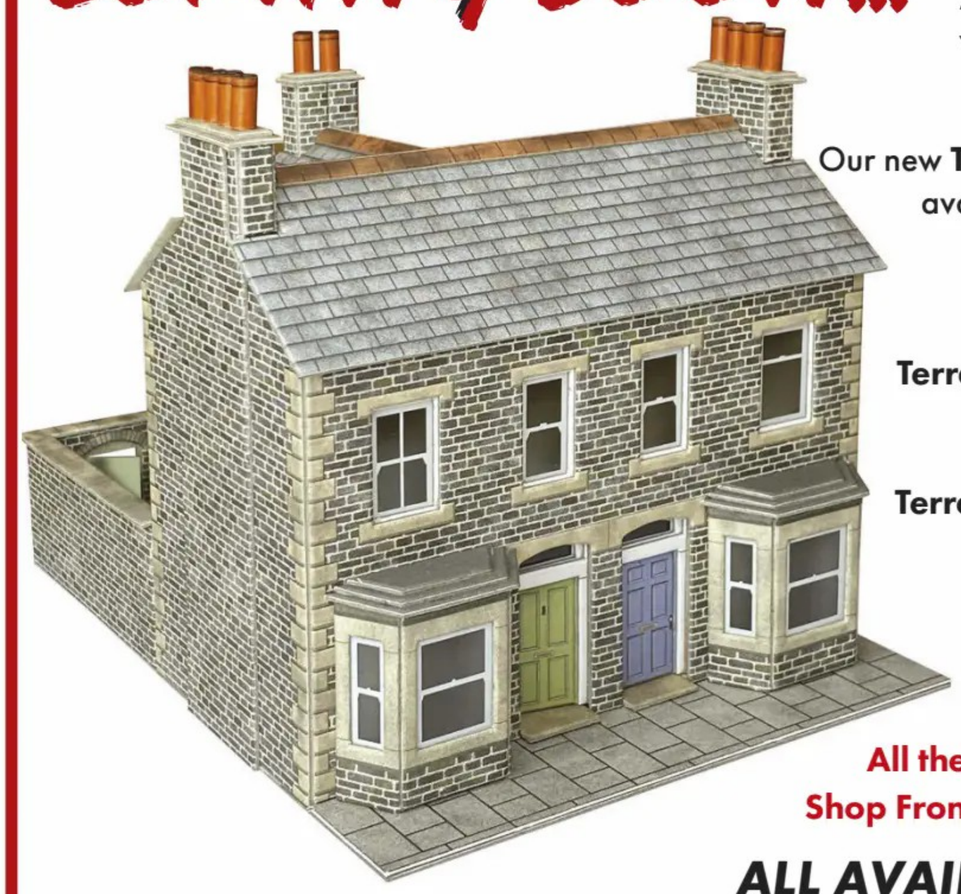

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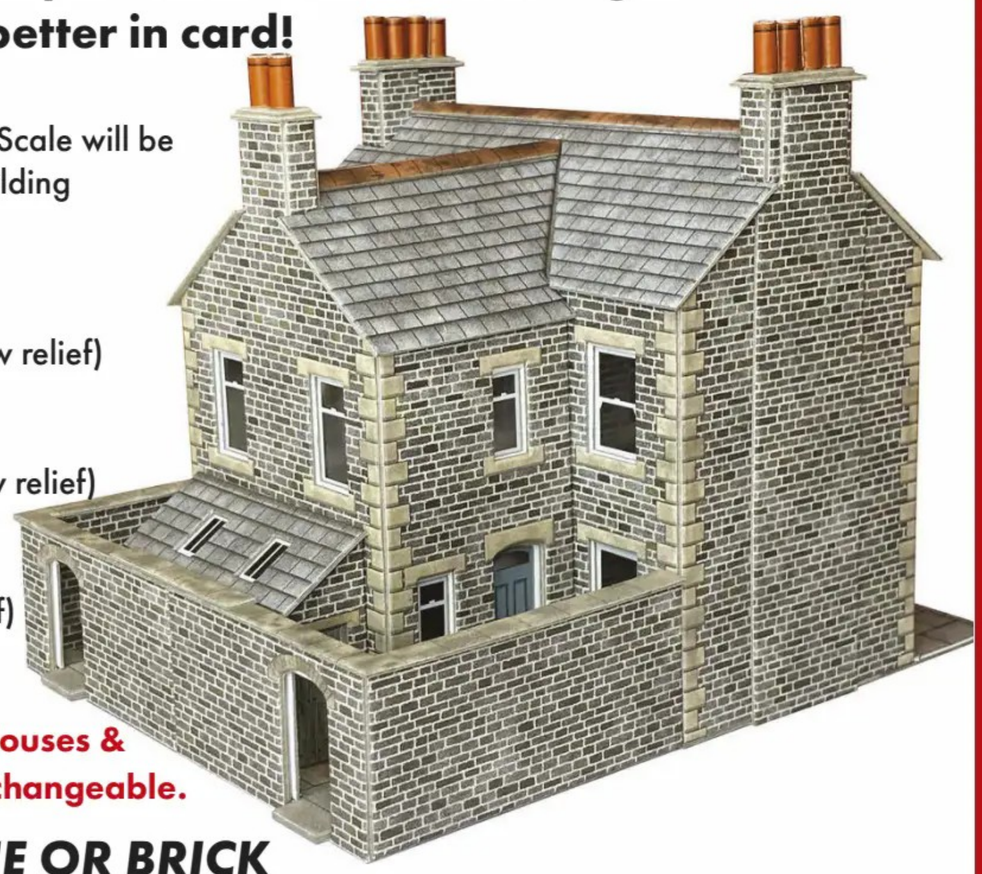

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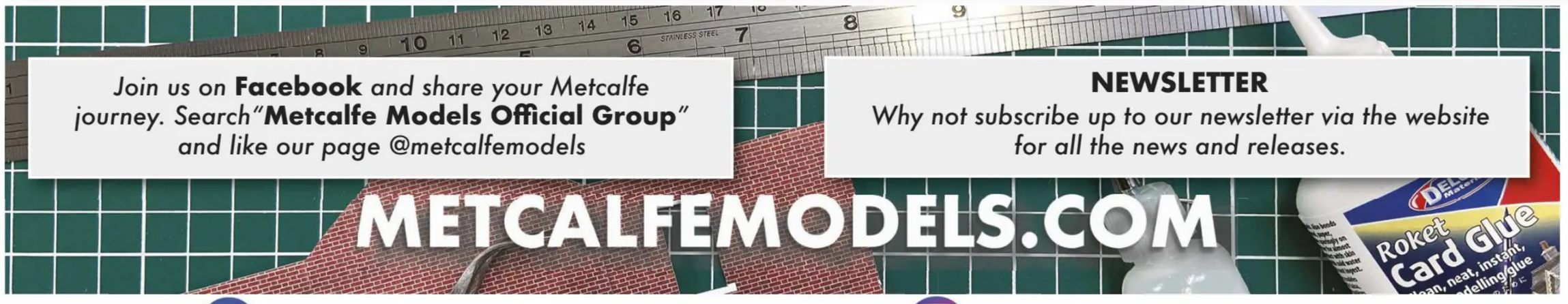


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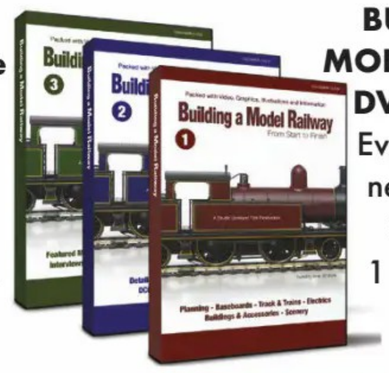


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# THE WATERCRESS LINE

Modelling a preservation line comes with plenty of challenges, as this builder discovered while constructing his first exhibition layout.

**Words:** Chris Cleveland **Photography:** Jamie Warne

Ropley is on the MHR, also known as The Watercress Line. The line ran from Alton to Winchester before being closed in 1973, and then re-opened by preservationists in 1977, with trains initially running between Alresford and Ropley. Today, the line now runs all the way to Alton, with another intermediate station at Medstead & Four Marks. The railway also has a main line connection at Alton Station, where modern trains meet preservation and allow trains from the main line onto the railway.

Choosing Ropley was a difficult choice. I knew from the word go this would be a layout I could only operate at shows, and it wouldn't be practical for just being able to do the little things like just playing trains. 'Ropley', however, was the layout I wanted to build due to it being somewhere my father used to take me many times at a younger age to walk around, attend events, and somewhere I could easily go to for research purposes. It is also where the railway stores all of its locomotive fleet and has all of its workshops for all stock and really offers a good scene to replicate what goes on in preservation behind the scenes with its main loco sheds, carriage sheds and boiler shop. It's also where all locomotives in and out of use are stored.

Ropley is also a single line working like most preservation railways, with a two-platform station to allow passings of service trains. Ropley station is quite recognisable in simple ways, like its iconic topiary trees along the station platform.

**MAIN IMAGE:** With today's service trains now off shed, the resident shunter, 12049, is started up and gets to work by moving Black 5 loco 45379 out from the yard and onto the pit for its boiler wash. Ivatt tank 41312 and USA dock tank 30075 await their turns in the overhaul queue with 30075 coming out of service within the time frame the layout is modelled in.

## FACTFILE

**NAME:** Ropley
**SCALE/GAUGE:** 4mm:1ft/16.5mm/OO
**SIZE:** 32ft x 10ft
**ERA/REGION:** Southern (Preservation)
**LAYOUT TYPE:** End to End

## The layout

'Ropley' consists of six scenic boards and is constructed from MDF with 1.5in x 1.5in frames. Originally, the layout only consisted of four boards and only reached a total scenic size of 16ft, with the scenic boards being slightly different sizes, with x2 of the boards being 5ft long and x2 being 3ft, enabling us to get 16ft of layout into a car. However, as time went on, the size of the layout increased with the addition of the head shunt at the Alton end of the line, as it is an iconic part of the layout at 'Ropley'. The layout eventually reached its current size of 24ft of scenic, with the overall dimensions of 32ft x 10ft, with another extension added at the Alresford end to include the point past the station to return the station to a single line working before leaving the scene.

The challenge of building a real location is the limitations of model kits or ready-made products that match the scene you're trying to replicate. The structures on the layout mean that all the buildings are scratch-built and tackled with various techniques and materials to get the closest overall look I wanted to achieve. Modelling a real location was always going to be a challenge from the word go, and I never knew just how much research would have to go into each structure to get it as close as possible to the real thing. On top of the challenges of how much research had to go into the buildings on the line, I also had never

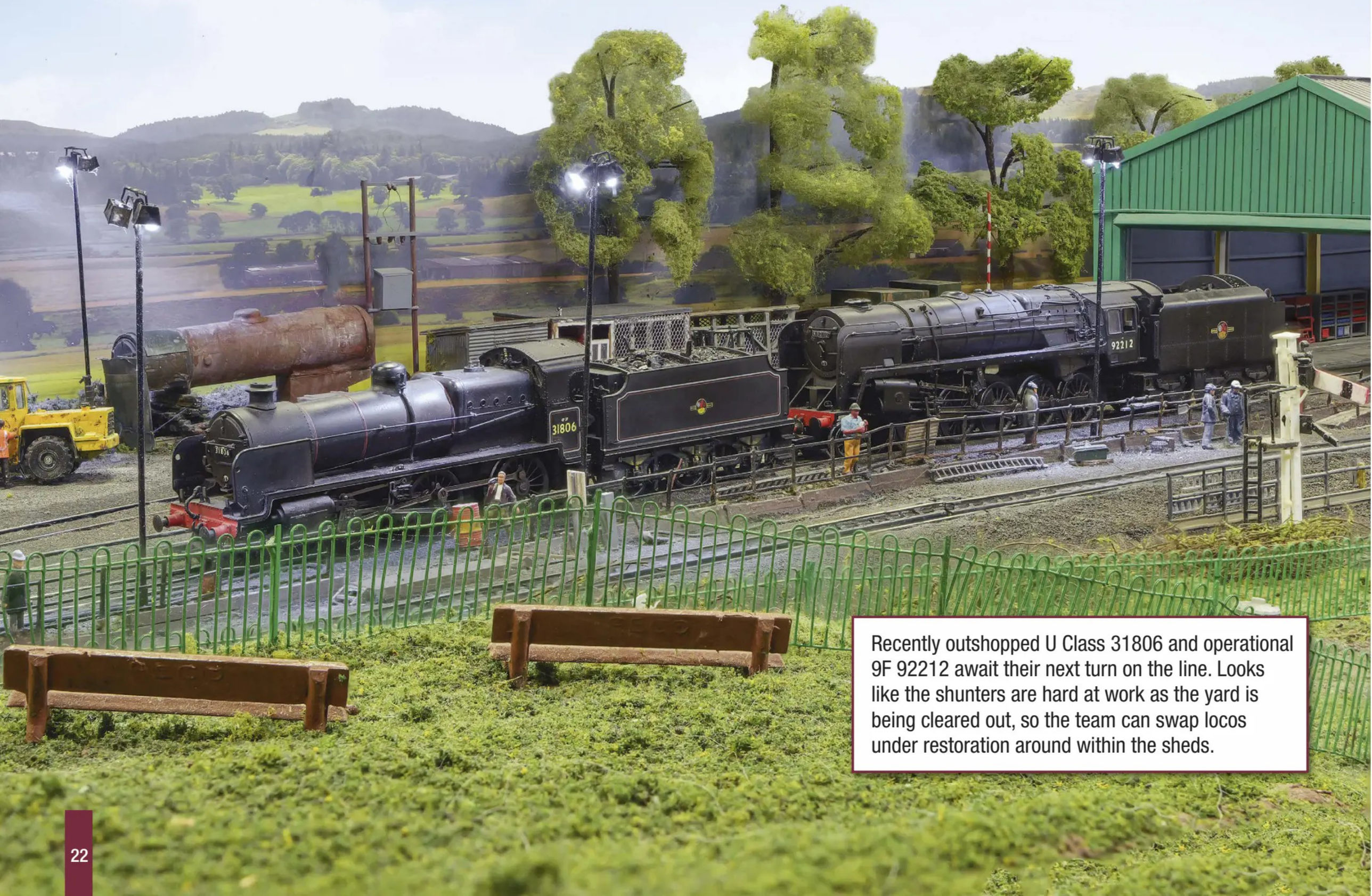




**TOP LEFT:** A morning wander along the woodland walk, having parked at the top car park at Ropley and looking through the trees, we can see shunter D3358 coupled up to GWR tank 5224, which would also come out of boiler ticket in this time frame too.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** Beyond the station and just past Bighton Hill Road bridge, we can see a few locos patiently awaiting their turn for overhaul. These being West Country 34105 *Swanage*, Class 27 27007 and Urie S15 30506. 27007 tarpaulins we made using masking tape painted and weathered to suit, then fishing wire was used to make the straps holding it down.

> "The challenge of building a real location is the limitations of model kits or ready-made products that match the scene you're trying to replicate."




Recently outshopped U Class 31806 and operational 9F 92212 await their next turn on the line. Looks like the shunters are hard at work as the yard is being cleared out, so the team can swap locos under restoration around within the sheds.



## The trains of 'Ropley'

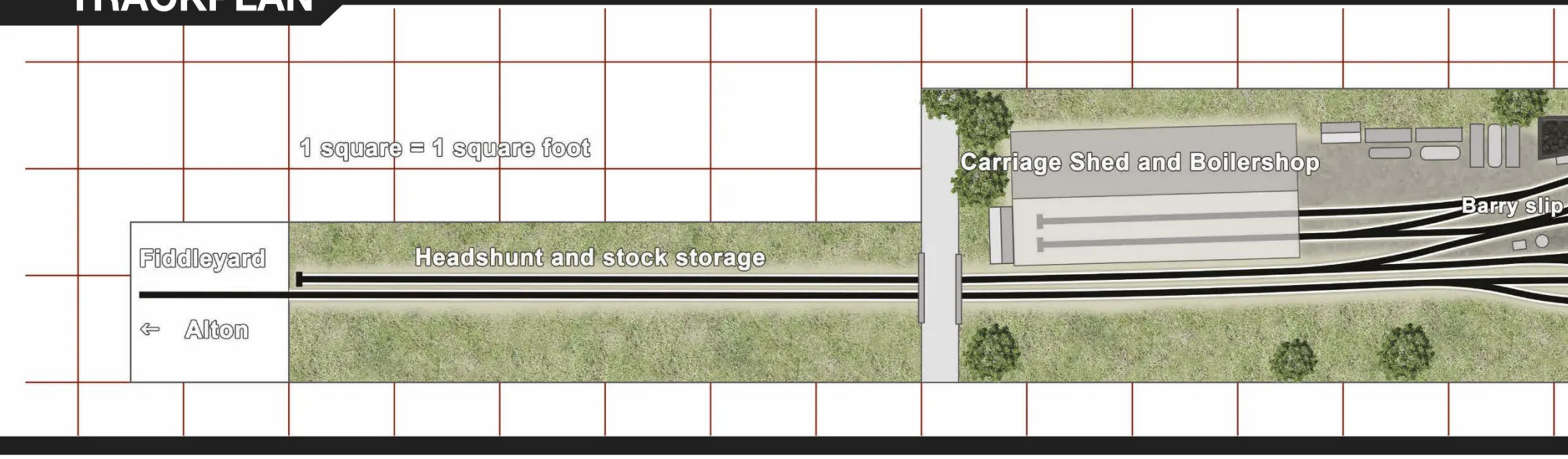
Rolling stock on Ropley massively varies as it's a widespread mix of out-of-the-box models from Hornby, Bachmann and Heljan, which have then been customised to suit the layout, with various amendments done, such as complete resprays, renumbering, relining, or some additional alterations to bring it closer to looking like the locomotives did within the time frame. Some of the out-of-use locos are from the same manufacturers, or other companies like DJH modules, Southern Eastern Finecast, and even the Dapol plastic kits with the brass chassis kits built for the locos to make them movable on the layout.

Locomotives like *Thomas* and *Douglas* have been made from an actual J94, just like the real thing, and had the bodies scratch-built and altered to get the locos as close as possible to the real thing. Some of the other stock, like two of the breakdown cranes, have been kit-bashed with a mix of scratch-built items and using parts from the Dapol plastic breakdown crane kit. More recently, I've even gone as far as renumbering all the coaches to match those on the railway, which may seem a little over the top but has helped massively to work out how many coaches I should have on the railway. It's not just been locomotives custom-made to suit the railway; coaches like the dining train have been made from other Mk.1 coaches, and cars like the Bulleid vehicles under overhaul from Bachmann coaches, then adapted to get the overall look I desired.

Just like the layout, creating a real place and trying to keep everything true to the real location meant stock had to be massively amended to match the stock on the line, and the whole project has been a big learning curve from the word go. When first taking on the build of the layout, I had only ever thought of locomotives needing (in the worst cases) a re-number/rename; for example, at the time, Hornby had produced West Countries, but *Bodmin* and *Wadebridge* were not on the list. When the headhunt was committed to, detailing the internals of the sheds meant I had to commit to taking my modelling skills to the next level of replicating locos in various stages of overhaul. This, by far has been the hardest part of the layout, as every build is completely different from the next. I knew that committing to this level of detail would really replicate what Ropley was truly like in this timeframe to the extreme that locomotives on the layout are modelled twice to capture different stages of restoration. I think the headshunt line-up really captures this and was the right choice to include on the layout.

A busy moment at Ropley as Class 33 D6593 trundles past with the railway's Atlas crane, heading for Alresford station to help the PW gang carry out some trackwork repairs. The 08 can be seen in the background shunting one of the railways Bulleid coaches out of the shed as it undergoes a heavy overhaul.

## TRACKPLAN







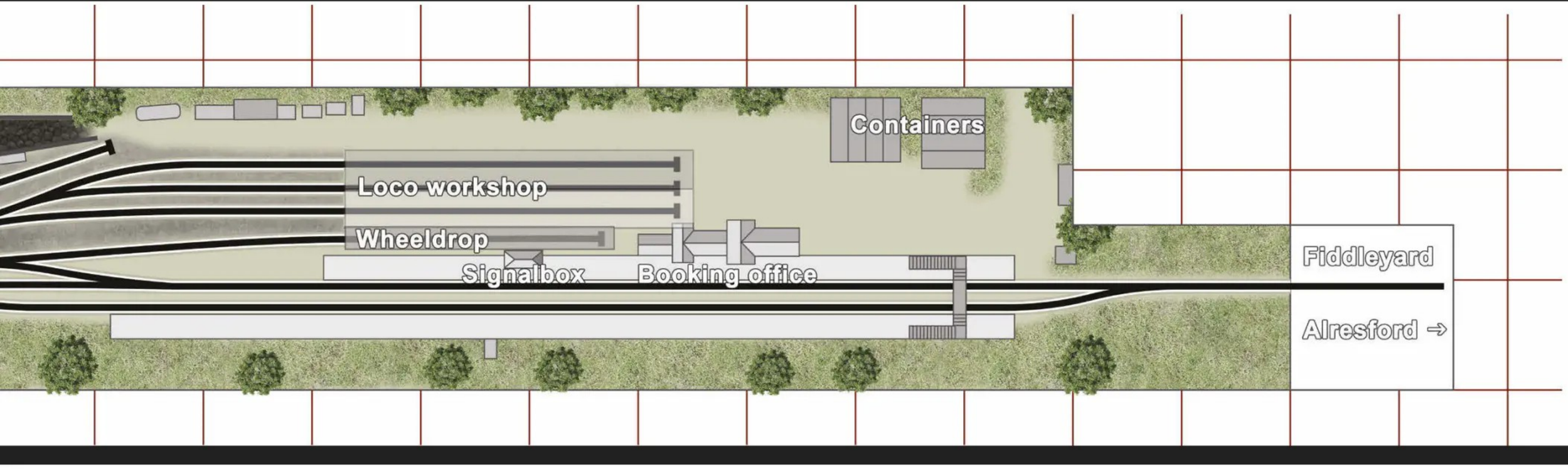
tried scratch-building before 'Ropley', which added its own complexities, but after multiple attempts, I finally got them to a stage I'm happy with. No building on the layout is the original, and probably revision two onwards as I've grown my skills over the years.

Being an exhibition layout, I always believed the more you fix down, the easier setup and take down becomes. However, not every building could do this as the carriage and boiler shop bridges a board joint, along with the station building. This created more challenges because, as the carriage and boiler shop was so long, it wasn't feasible for it to become removable due to the size. There was also no way to store it safely when transporting, so was cut to line up when the boards are assembled, which was a challenge as it's all at an angle. Also, for the station building, this was decided to be removable along with part of the platform top. Another big challenge was all the sheds. As they take up so much space on the layout, I wanted to do something completely different and make them a key interest in the whole scene and something unique. Thus, I decided to fully detail them all internally with the roofs made with a cut-in so people could peer in and see what projects were in the workshops. The hardest part I found to achieve this was building the steel girder frames to get the interior look I desired, but this was challenging as the roof trussed had to be made removable for me to access the sheds for maintenance.

'Ropley', when it's not at shows, is stored within a cradle. The cradle consists of three layers holding the fiddle yards at the bottom, then 8ft of scenic section, followed by the other 8ft of scenics on top. The head shunt is also stored alongside the cradle but does utilise the limited space well and it is easy to change boards over when needed.

**TOP LEFT:** Overlooking a very busy yard looking towards the restoration sheds. Looks like all locomotives are on shed, some are being prepared for the day, hauling trains between Alton and Alresford.

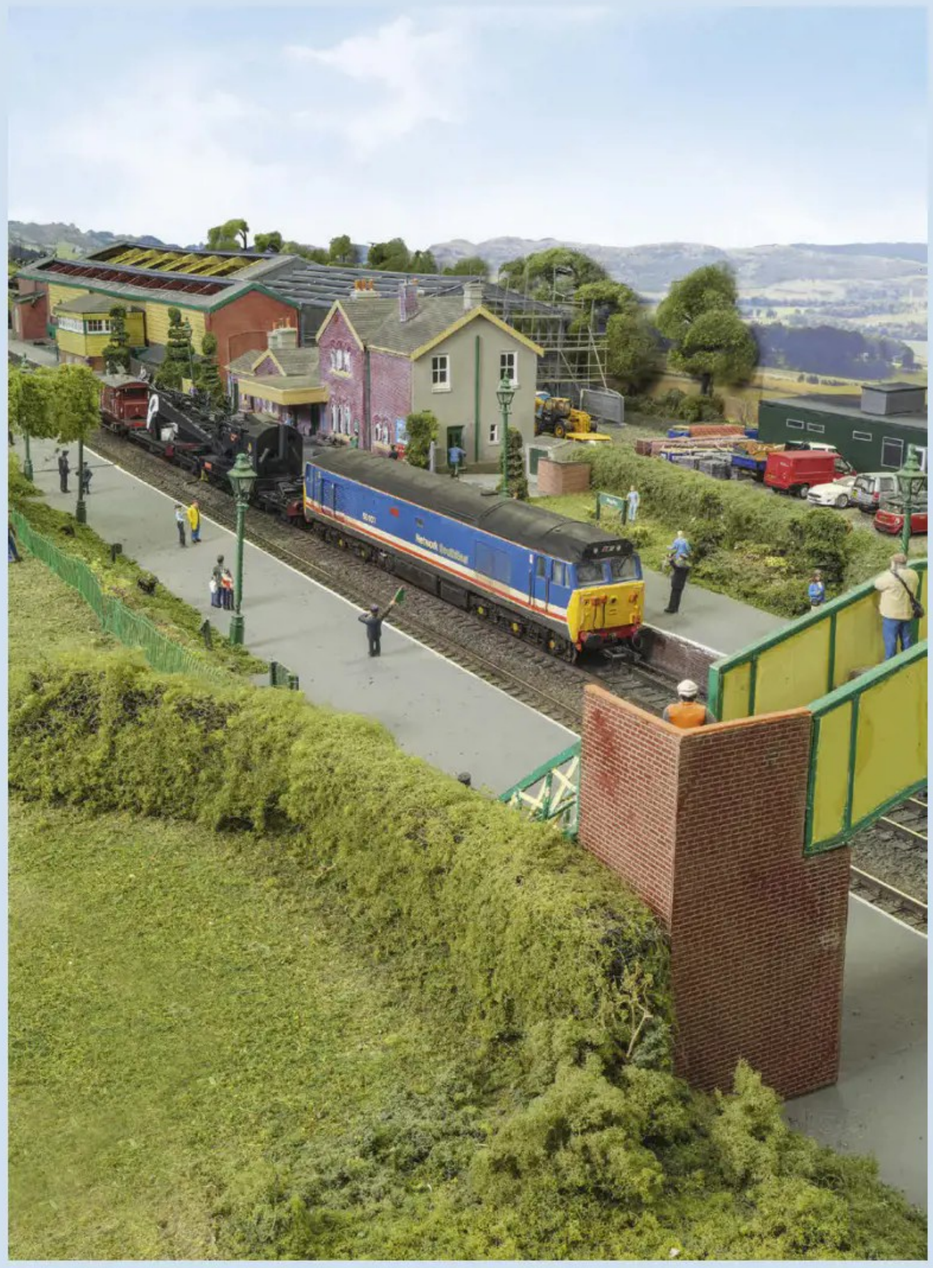
**TOP RIGHT:** Looking down towards the station, we can see the diesel fleet at the stop of the head shunt queue being 37905, 33053 and D3358, which were all in use at this time. The building to the left is where the boiler shop and carriage workshop are located.



Scenery is always the fun part for me in model railways as it rapidly transforms a layout. The embankments on 'Ropley' have been made from polystyrene, covered with Modroc and then painted in various browns and then covered in various scatters from Woodland Scenics.

The yard was filled with Polyfilla and given a black coat of paint as the ground around the yard is always a dark colour. It was then topped off with various scatter materials from Woodland Scenics and Peco to give the floor more texture rather than plain concrete, which wouldn't be a true reflection. The shed floors are smoothed-over Polyfilla and painted to their correct colours. One is also made of a plastic sheet to give a much smoother finish to the floor. If I ever updated this area, I would do the yard floor in Das clay and the sheds in plastic sheeting, but the layout has always been a learning curve.

The trees on the layout have all been scratch-built using florist's wire and tap, with the trunks being made from Das clay, painted with various colours and then covered with Woodland Scenics foliage flock, teased apart and added to the various branches to give the tree the best appearance, then topped off with some more Woodland Scenics scatter to improve the overall look.



**LEFT:** Class 50 50027 *Lion* arrives with one of the three breakdown cranes based at the railway. The crane has been adapted from the Bachmann Ransomes and Rapier 45T steam crane. *Lion* awaits to be uncoupled and shunt the crane into the yard.

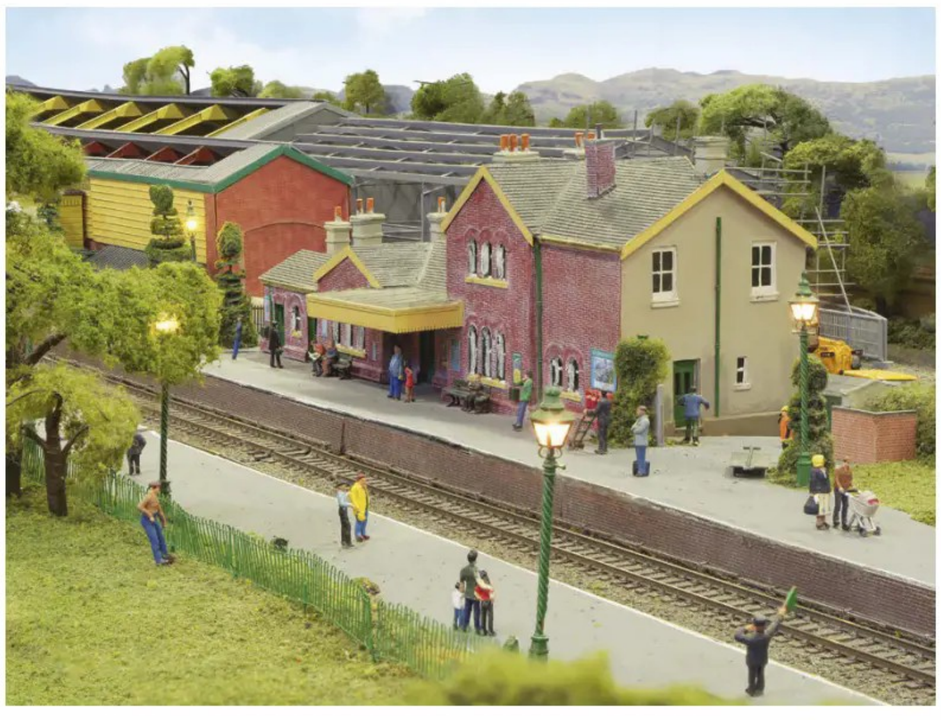
**BELOW:** Recently overhauled 30925 *Cheltenham* sits on shed as GWR tank 5224 arrives with a down train from Alton with the railway's Dining train, which is a mixture of Mk. 1 and Pullman coaches that have been customised to match the fleet.

> "Just like the layout, creating a real place and trying to keep everything true to the real location meant stock has had to be massively amended to match stock on the line and has been a big learning curve from the word go."



Arriving from Alresford, the 117 DMU trundles into the up platform. It's made from the Bachmann NSE 117 DMU. Behind the station building, it looks like the builders are progressing well with the extension to the locomotive workshops. Another unique feature at Ropley is the Topiary trees, which have been hand-made and offer something different from the platforms.

**RIGHT:** A look down from the picnic site towards the station building, it looks like the next passenger train must be due soon. The station building is completely scratch-built from brick sheets and consisted of brick counting and many photos, and has had posters and boards added to it that are reflective of what was on display at the time.



**RIGHT:** Looking down the path towards the signal box, it looks like the signal man is inside getting the route ready to allow the next train into section. The signal box, along with all the other buildings on the layout, have all been scratch-built and required multiple trips to get the right overall result. Looks like the building department has removed the Ropley sign on the box for some TLC.



## On show

The electrical side is where the layout has remained a father-son build. My father, Kevin, is an electrician and has helped to wire the layout to be suitable for analogue control. The layout has four Gaugemaster hand-held controllers for the fiddle yards as these do not meet and have a traverser at each end for the locos to run onto them and then run round their trains. The main line on the scenic board has another controller and the yard its own, too. This can allow three trains to move on the scenic boards all at once if we wanted to, with two trains leaving at once to Alton and Alresford respectively, and a loco could be shunting in the loco yard.

The layout is also controlled using a variety of toggle switches for the override controls and switches for the isolators and on/off switches to isolate track sections. The override switches can allow operators from the fiddle yards to drive into or take trains out from the station, and creates a smoother operation on the layout. There is also an override into the yard from the down platform, too, which avoids having to match speeds on different controllers.

The lights on the layout are all working on their own wiring circuit and can also be controlled, so we can replicate different times in the day, with the sheds having their own internal lights, mainly of LED strip lights, and another circuit for the externals. The platform and yard lights are also on their own loop so can be switched on or

Looking towards the station building, the 117 arrives into the station and awaits the arrival of the train from Alton. On the railway, the train up from Alresford is normally the first to arrive.

off to replicate different times in the day. The platform lights are SR "Barleytwist" lamps, mainly consisting of lights from Kytes Lights, as for the yard lights, they are scratch-built from metal tubing and LEDs. The station building and signal box also have their own lighting circuit switches. Other lighting features include the flashing beacons on the construction vehicles, the burning barrel and the arc welder in the boiler shop.

Operating the layout varies as we are still trying many new ways to running it. I like to make it different for the operators to enjoy replicating true line workings. Normally, we would replicate a timetable service, mainly a three-train working. We have also started to trial a three-train working into a single line only at 'Ropley', as we carry out what's known as a mega shunt, which is where locos are pulled out from the yard or head shunt into the down line to allow stock to be moved in and out of the sheds, or from the head shunt into the yard. We will also replicate other events like a diesel gala, or a steam gala, matching one of the galas in 2011, using the locos that would have visited the line for them, too. We will also do lots of shunts within the yard, which is also unusual as were shunting locos out of use around the yard to get other projects into the sheds or locomotives ready to go onto the main line, or unusual moves like the crane into the yard to do a lift as two of the three cranes can be setup to look as if they are doing a lift of some sort.



**LEFT:** Behind the station, the car park looks very busy as the builders get to work on the extension to the main shed. The scaffolders have been and gone and the team starts laying the first bricks down. Once this building was built, the railway demolished the old Ropley manor building, which can just be seen on the right.



**LEFT:** Running bunker first GWR tank 5224 arrives into the station with a down train from Alton. From this angle, you can see the shed roofs have holes in them. I wanted to create a way for people to see into the sheds but also make it look complete, so I thought adding a window was the best option.

## About the modeller

**Name:** Chris Cleveland
**Age:** 30, started planning 'Ropley' at 16
**Number of years modelling:** 9
**Name of your first layout:** 'Ropley'
**Favourite era/region:** Southern Steam, or '90s Diesel
**Favourite locomotive:** Rebuilt West Country

My main learning from 'Ropley' is to never underestimate just how much research has to go into modelling a real place and just how many photos you will need to capture everything. It's also important to pick a time frame and run with it. When I started to model 'Ropley', I wasn't expecting just how much change would be around the corner in such a short time frame. I did most of my photos for a few years within its planning window, but little did I know that the old boiler shop would be removed and replaced with the carriage and boiler shop, the yard track layout reconfigured to accommodate this, the Kings Cross footbridge added and additional signals added to the station, and locos coming and going. This meant I had to commit to a time frame, so I chose 2010 to 2012. I also didn't think about just how important the stock would also be to help capture the true look of the line. Being a preserved railway does give you some flexibility to run stock of your choice as you can run locos as visitors and locos from other regions, which wouldn't have been seen alongside each other in earlier days.

I have learnt lots from fellow modellers over the years by asking layout owners and demo stands questions at model railway shows. I've also learnt lots from trips to my local model shop, Alton Model Centre, over the years. At a younger age, when 'Ropley' was in planning, the EM gauge layout 'Addiston South', and OO gauge layouts 'SE28' and 'Horstead Keynes' were all very inspiring layouts to me. I was also helping a few other layouts at the time, too, such as the OO gauge 'Beggarwood Lane', N gauge 'The Royal Albert Bridge', OO Gauge 'Lulworth', and shortly after starting the build of 'Ropley', the building of the OO gauge layout 'Tidworth' was great to follow, and it introduced me to a great group of modellers where we keep each other updated on projects we are working on and how we went about building things.

## Reflections

For me, the part I'm most pleased with is how people know it's Ropley. Modelling a real place and making it recognisable is tough, but there's a sigh of relief when people stand at the layout and say it's 'Ropley'. Capturing the atmosphere of the layout is also tough, as there are so many small elements required to really bring the whole picture together. It's also been challenging constructing scratch-built buildings and building points like the barry slip that sits in the yard. I think it has also been challenging to really capture what happens behind the scenes in preservation and to keep these locos going, something I really wanted to do to make 'Ropley' unique, as I haven't seen this done before to this level of detail and wanted to make it different from other layouts on the exhibition circuit.

If I were to rebuild 'Ropley' again, there are many things I would do differently. I think the biggest one for me is the baseboard construction, as building from MDF and 1.5 x 1.5 frames has made it very heavy. If I built it again, it would be a ply-built construction frame to reduce weight and make it structurally stronger. The layout legs would also be built much finer and become foldable to keep them attached to the layout. I also would have rescaled some of the buildings as some are slightly bigger than they should be. I also should have built the layout for DCC, not DC control. The other one, and most noticeable to me, is I would have built the curve into the platform better as the station slowly curves towards the viewing side, but to do this now would be a complete relaying of the whole layout's trackwork due to how close to the front it would end up. ■




Yeoman 08 08032 is parked up in front of the carriage and boiler shop workshops and awaits its turn in the queue for overhaul. To the right of the 08, Urie Group's second S15 30499 sits on a concrete pad and is undergoing overhaul for the first time to get it back to running order for the first time in preservation.

# COMMUNITY

## EDITOR'S COMMENT

This great hobby has to be one of the most skilful, with plenty of subjects covered when building a model railway. The modeller can be an historian, artist, engineer, woodworker, and lots more roles, one of the many reasons it makes such a great pastime.

Those skills are also transferrable in everyday life and can be passed down to others. We often hear great things about what clubs and individuals are doing to entice the younger generation to the hobby, especially family members, an example of which is the excellent 'Ropley', featured this month, whose builder, Chris Cleveland, learnt lots from fellow modellers while constructing his first layout. And then there is the excellent 'Dduallt', which was a father-and-son project.

Modelling within families is a common theme with this issue, as it also includes a wonderful tree article by Robin Pinnock, whose layout, 'Stratford St Mary', is a joint project between brothers.

Inspiring the next generation is crucial to the longevity of this hobby, and it is encouraging to see so many things going on in local communities. A great example for our own community would be the Market Deeping Model Railway Club, which has been working on a Peterborough East Station Project, now on display at Peterborough Museum until September, introducing lots of people to the world of railway modelling - we will be paying a visit to the museum in the next couple of weeks, so look out for a video on World of Railways soon!

BRM also has a responsibility to attract new modellers, through the pages of this magazine and the various shows we run throughout the year. Our NEC show this November has more family-friendly exhibits than ever, including competitions, a ride-on train, a train simulator, a cinema, plus many others – if you haven't booked your ticket yet, make sure you check out more about the event at NFRM.co.uk.

***Happy Modelling***
***Debbie Wood***

## WEEKEND PLANS...

**Cambridge Model Railway Show**
The annual model railway show will be expanded to include a third hall, which will have a finescale theme in 2024. Held at Comberton Village College, Comberton, between 10am and 4pm, a range of modal railway layouts in N, OO and O will be on display, plus finescale layouts in 2mm, 3mmm, S and P4.
**DATE:** September 14-15th, 2024

**Faversham Model Railway Club Exhibition**
At this local show, you can see 23 layouts across a variety of scales and gauges, plus 14 traders and societies in attendance. Held at The Abbey School, London Road, Faversham, Kent, doors open each day at 10am and include on-site free car parking, with tickets costing £6 for adults.
**DATE:** September 14-15th, 2024

**The International N Gauge Show**
TINGS, the show dedicated to all things N gauge, returns for its 20th year. Held at the Warwickshire Event Centre, the show will feature 40 specialist suppliers and over 25 layouts across modern image, steam, American and continental layouts, along with society displays and demonstrations.
**DATE:** September 14-15th, 2024

**Worthing Model Railway Club Exhibition**
Worthing MRC brings together a collection of model railways, traders and society stands at its annual exhibition in September 2024, with its biggest-ever show to date. Held at Durrington High School, Worthing, BN13 1LA, the show will feature 19 layouts, 12 traders and society stands.
**DATE:** September 28-29th, 2024

**Stafford Railway Circle Model Railway Exhibition**
The largest established independent Model Railway Show in the country returns in 2024 and will be held at Bingley Hall, Staffordshire County Showground. Visitors can expect over 50 layouts, numerous traders and plenty of demonstrations and family-friendly exhibits.
**DATE:** September 28-29th, 2024

## A GREAT LOSS



We are sorry to report that Trevor Nunn, the Honorary President of the S Scale Model Railway Society, died on Friday, June 28th, peacefully, following a stroke and a long and dignified stand against cancer.

As a quiet and unassuming person, Trevor never sought the limelight and was perhaps not as well-known within the hobby as he might have been. He was a quietly determined modeller, and once he wanted to do something, he simply got on with it, learning new skills and techniques along the way. He was always happy to talk to anyone who was interested in learning and very generous when it came to sharing his experiences and techniques. Many modellers gained much from his straightforward approach to model making, based on the simple idea that "one does not need many parts to build a model railway."

When, in 1973, he first saw S scale, he knew it was right for him. This led to the creation of his layout 'Wicken', which was a regular layout on the exhibition circuit for almost 20 years; a classic example of a compact layout that did not require too much stock. It served as an introduction and an encouragement to many modellers to try S scale. An opportunity to work part-time as a consultant mechanical engineer within the medical instrument industry provided time for a new and larger layout, 'East Lynn', which was first shown to the public in 1995. This was later extended with a quay at one end and Nunstanton Junction at the other. As well as these layouts, he also built more than a dozen locomotives, including some for others in the society.

Trevor really enjoyed exhibiting - he rarely set up his layouts at home - and liked going out on the road. These were social occasions for all involved and many SSMRS members would turn up at a show to be given a controller and a shunting pole. Although he didn't build models with the intention of getting awards, the quality of his modelling meant that he garnered many cups for "Best Layout", both from the visiting public vote and also, more rewardingly, from other exhibitors.

The hobby has lost one of its greatest all-rounders and our condolences go out to his widow Judith and children Richard and Victoria, and his many friends within the hobby.

**S Scale Model Railway Society**

# MATT'S MENTOR – CHANGING PLACES 30 YEARS ON...



"As a youngster, he used to come in with his dad to events at the National Railway Museum (NRM) and stand at the front of the Great Western engine and take over... he would play to the audience and tell them all about it."

Dave Mosley, former head of education at the NRM, said with amusement about the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways', now Operations Director, Matt Ellis.

Adding: "I was happy to let him get on with it as it was obvious he was destined for a job in steam!"

Matt said: "Our paths crossed again when I started working at the NRM. Dave had taken early retirement from his role by then but still did the odd bit of work driving the demonstration rides in the yard, particularly with *Rocket*.

"Dave could talk to anyone of any age at any technical level about the locos and generally entertain the visitors. When I ended up being Rail Ops Coordinator, Dave was one of my team until I left the NRM in 2014."

Matt added; "*Rocket* has a very primitive valve gear, requiring manual operation of the valve events to change direction. I was on it with Dave one day, and having stopped I was attempting to start back in the opposite direction. *Rocket* could be a pain, and this day it was a straight refusal to move. Dave stood up in the tender, leant on the water barrel and started chatting to the passengers. Simultaneously explaining to them how the loco worked and taking the mickey out of my attempt, much to their amusement!"

Matt did a Mechanical Engineering apprenticeship at the NRM, moving to the Rail Operations side on completion of his apprenticeship, before later moving to Beamish Museum as Keeper of Transport.

Following his time at Beamish Museum, Matt became the Operations Manager of the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways and since moving over to North Wales, the pair have kept in touch.

It was therefore fitting that Matt recently had the chance to reminisce with Dave, who was visiting North Wales, and share the footplate of *James Spooner*, the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland's newest loco, 30 years on from a family photo of Matt on his first loco moving in steam, which was driven by Dave at the NRM.

**Laura Raymond**

# LETTER OF THE MONTH

## LATEST WORK

My granddaughter and I met Phil Parker at the final Warley Exhibition at the NEC in November last year and he said to email photos of my own modelling attempts. I have attached a couple. The first is my current Micro layout, 'Weeke End', for which my weathering skills need improvement, the last is of a previous layout 'My interpretation of Bailey Gate' on the S&DJR while I was experimenting with focus-stacking.

**Clive Richardson**





# NEW PREMISES FOR GWSMRC

A Scottish model railway club is moving to new premises in the north of Glasgow. The Glasgow & West of Scotland Model Railway Club is believed to be the oldest in Scotland, having been formed in 1935. New members are always welcome, whether experienced modellers or novices. The club currently has two layouts, "Phoenix Lane" is a OO gauge layout, and "Connel Ferry", under construction, is N gauge. In addition to these, several members' layouts are set up at the club premises.

The Glasgow and West of Scotland Model Railway Club meets on Tuesday and Thursday evenings between 6pm and 9pm, and on Sunday afternoons between 1pm and 5.30pm at our new accessible clubrooms in Parkhouse Business Park, Glasgow, and will shortly commence work on our first EM gauge layout. Members of any experience are very welcome. For details of membership, please visit our website at www.gwsmrc.co.uk.

**Alan Norris**

# SMALL O GAUGE LOCOS

Regarding the article in the August 24 issue of the magazine about the Class 01/06 shunter (Buffer Stop). I model O Gauge, and there is a massive gap in small diesel shunting engines available compared to the larger main line locomotives from Class 17 upwards, virtually every class has been modelled. But what of the smaller classes of locomotives? Class 02/03/05/08 are available in RTR, but that's about it. The majority of people who model in O Gauge, myself included, haven't got large layouts, and are reliant on the smaller classes of locomotives. How many O gauge industrial diesel models are there available in RTR? There are so many different prototypes available, but none are available unless you have the skill in building a model in brass. You even have a small selection of them in the magazine, just from one manufacturer. Small radius points are another issue too. It would be nice to see the smaller classes of locomotives being available in O Gauge, ex-British Rail and Industrial types. Great magazine again…

**Alan Wilson**

# SCARLINGTON

This popular exhibition layout, inspired by the North East and constructed by a group of friends, comes packed with scenic details and entertaining cameos.

**Words:** Geoff Britton **Photography:** Phil Parker

'Scarlington' (aka North of England Line 2 or NoEL2) is the successor to 'Scarworth Junction' (NoEL1). Both were built as club layouts, and both were subsequently bought by our group of friends who built both layouts (The NoEL Group), to secure them from an uncertain future. The NoEL Group is an independent group with no links to any model railway club.

Some of the group were steam fans and the others preferred the BR Blue and sectorisation diesel era. Therefore, a deal was struck to build the steam-era layout (NoEL 1) first, on the understanding that the blue diesel layout (NoEL 2) would follow. Prior to commencing the new layout, we drew up a list of things we wanted to include. We decided we would like a four-track main line, a branch line and a goods line. We decided all four tracks would operate separately, so if there was a fault on one line, the other three would still be able to entertain the viewing public. We also wanted a river scene. In addition, the streets and buildings should be lit. There should also be a siding to use for a steam special.

'Scarlington' was designed using a CAD software package, and after a few minor tweaks, construction of the new baseboards started in November 2011. NoEL 1 & 2 both share the same legs, fiddle yard and lighting rig, so this saved time and money. It was finally completed in time for its first appearance as a visiting layout at the Falkirk Show in November 2019.

**MAIN PICTURE:** Panoramic view of Scarlington Station and High St. The signal box, based loosely on Edinburgh Waverley, overlooks the station approach.

## FACTFILE

**NAME:** Scarlington

**SCALE/GAUGE:** 2mm:1ft scale/9mm gauge/N

**SIZE:** 18ft 3in x 3ft

**ERA/REGION:** 1970/80's BR Blue - North Eastern Region

**LAYOUT TYPE:** Continuous run

## Setting the scene

The buildings are mainly scratch-built or kit-bashed models, although there are a few off-the-shelf items that have been suitably weathered. The two girder road bridges are scratch-built using a plywood base with Plastikard sides. The large four-track rail bridge is scratch-built from foam board covered in plastic sheet. The hand rail supports were all individually cut and drilled by hand and then thin wire, often used for tree making, threaded through the holes. This makes a surprisingly rigid structure. The red girder bridge and the green road bridge are laser-cut MDF and we acquired these from Hippo Toys. The owner is very helpful and friendly and we can thoroughly recommend his products. As MDF is flat, we glued various Evergreen plastic strips on the surface to add texture and relief. Also, the red and white rose castings on the green road bridge are simply sequins with a track pin pushed through the centre and painted.

All road surfaces are made using the very fine "powder", supplied by Polak and Langley manhole and drain covers were glued in place and painted before the road surface was added. The road markings were individually cut from sheets of white and yellow paper and glued in place with PVA glue. The station roof is constructed in one piece and is removable for transport, as it crosses a baseboard joint, and to enable track cleaning.






**TOP LEFT:** A Class 108 DMU prepares to leave the bay platform, ignored by the train spotters sitting on the BRUTE trolleys.

**MIDDLE LEFT:** A view down the river towards the estuary as a fishing vessel returns to port, passing the passenger ferry. Both vessels are kits from Atritec.

**BELOW:** A Class 47 with the Doncaster Test Train passes a pair of Class 37s hauling the Corby Steel coils over a bridge loosely based on the King Edward VII bridge in Newcastle.

"Bizarrely, the two scenic items that receive the most comments at exhibitions are at the opposite ends of the construction spectrum! The first is a 3D-printed bouncy castle and the other is the cliff lift."



There are approximately 500 figures and animals on the layout, the majority of which are hand-painted by us. To make the town look even busier, we think the layout could do with at least another 200 figures, but at the moment, no one has the appetite to produce another batch. Maybe one day?

One of the NoEL team's trademarks is our attention to detail. Therefore, we designed accurate road signs for the road layout and appropriate street name signs, which feature the names of those involved in building it. Sankey Scenics did a marvelous job of producing our bespoke designs. Other street furniture was sourced from various suppliers, including PD Marsh, Faller and Langley Models.

## Scenery highlights

As we wanted to set the layout in the autumn, we added trees and bushes in appropriate colours. We found that some products seemed too garish, so we bought some cheap trees on eBay and toned them down with various shades of yellow, orange and maroon spray cans of paint. We found the best way to apply the paint was to put the tree trunk in the chuck of an old hand drill. One person turns the drill, while a second person applies the paint. This method allows the shades to be varied and each tree made to look individual. Once the colouring is done, the trunks are then repainted.



**ABOVE:** The bustling High Street looms over the station as a Class 50 approaches. The Woolworths store is based on the shop in Scarborough.

**LEFT:** A Class 158 sits in the Excursion Platform. The station building has a distinctive north-eastern flavour, reflecting Darlington.

The scenic baseboards are solid-topped 9mm plywood and the contours are formed from polystyrene blocks, shaped and then covered with plaster bandage or Polyfilla. Two methods were employed to produce the rockfaces. Some were hand-carved into the filler and some were cast in a Woodlands Scenics mould and glued in place. They were then painted in suitable colours and blended in with the surrounding scenery. The areas that are grassed were painted brown first and then covered with a layer of Woodlands Scenics Burnt Grass Fine Turf. Depending on the type of area we were representing, various layers/shades of static grass, course turf and bushes were added to reach the desired effect.

'Scarlington' is not based on any particular place. We wanted it to give a flavour of the North East of England. So, you will see a station similar to Darlington, the red arched river bridge is similar to the Tyne Bridge and the green river bridge is based on the Edward VII Bridge, also in Newcastle. The Odeon Cinema and the Woolworths shop are based on buildings in Scarborough. We have an operational cliff lift as found on the north-east coast at Scarborough and Saltburn. The prototypes are 2-car "water driven" versions, but ours is a single-car electric version. We were reassured our type did exist, by a local expert. Judging by the reaction we receive from the public at exhibitions, it seems we have achieved our aim. Bizarrely, the two scenic items that receive the most comments at exhibitions are at the opposite ends of the construction spectrum! The first is a 3D-printed bouncy castle, and the other is the cliff lift.

When we decided we wanted a cliff lift on the layout, we looked to see if any were available commercially in kit form. As you can imagine, there aren't very many on the market and the ones that were available, we felt were too expensive and not really what we wanted. So,

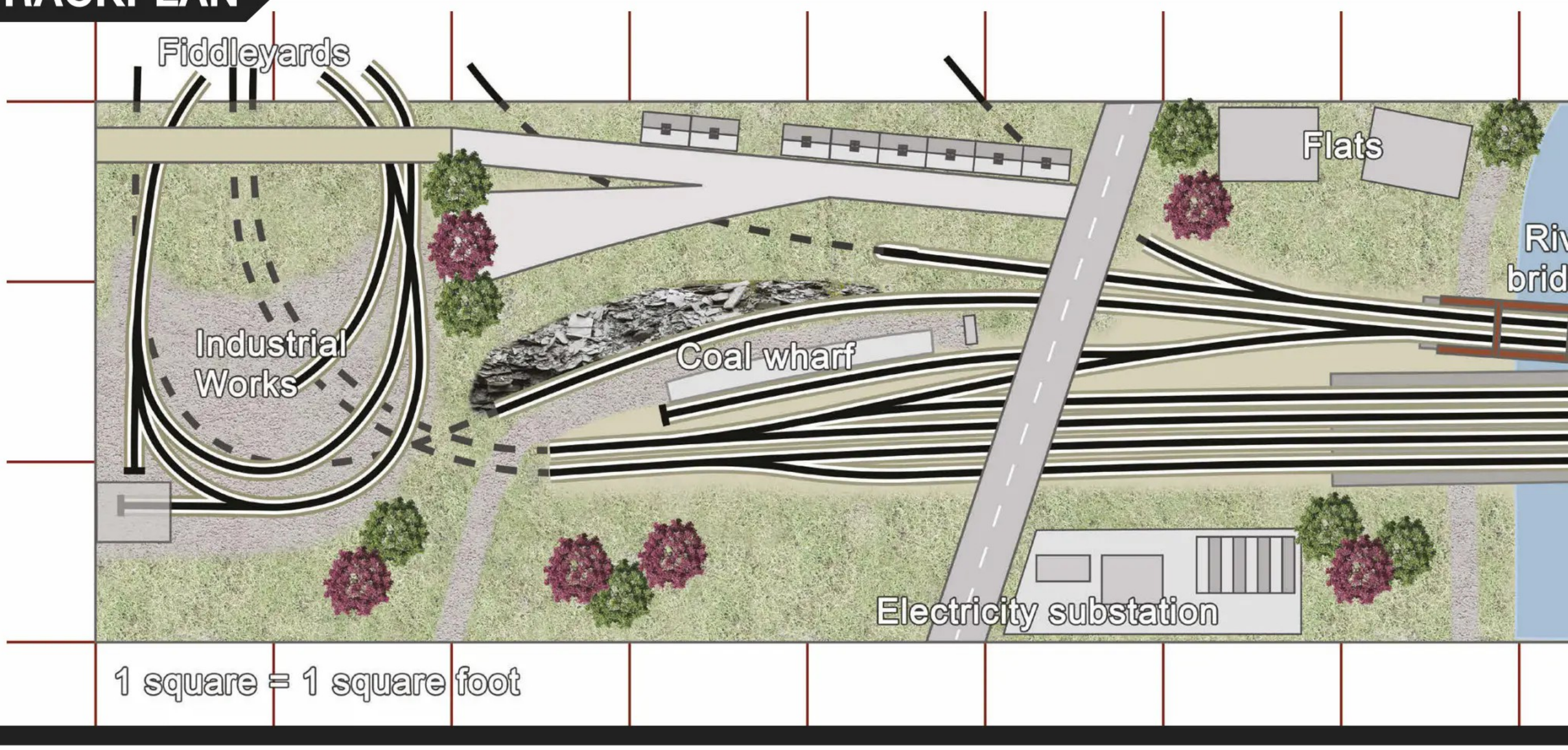


**ABOVE:** A Class 37 hauls a heavy steel train past a PD Marsh model of an electricity sub-station.



**ABOVE:** A Class 20 passes the scrapyard with a short trip freight.

## TRACKPLAN





**ABOVE:** General Farno, atop his column, surveys Empire Square. All the structures in this image are scratch-built.

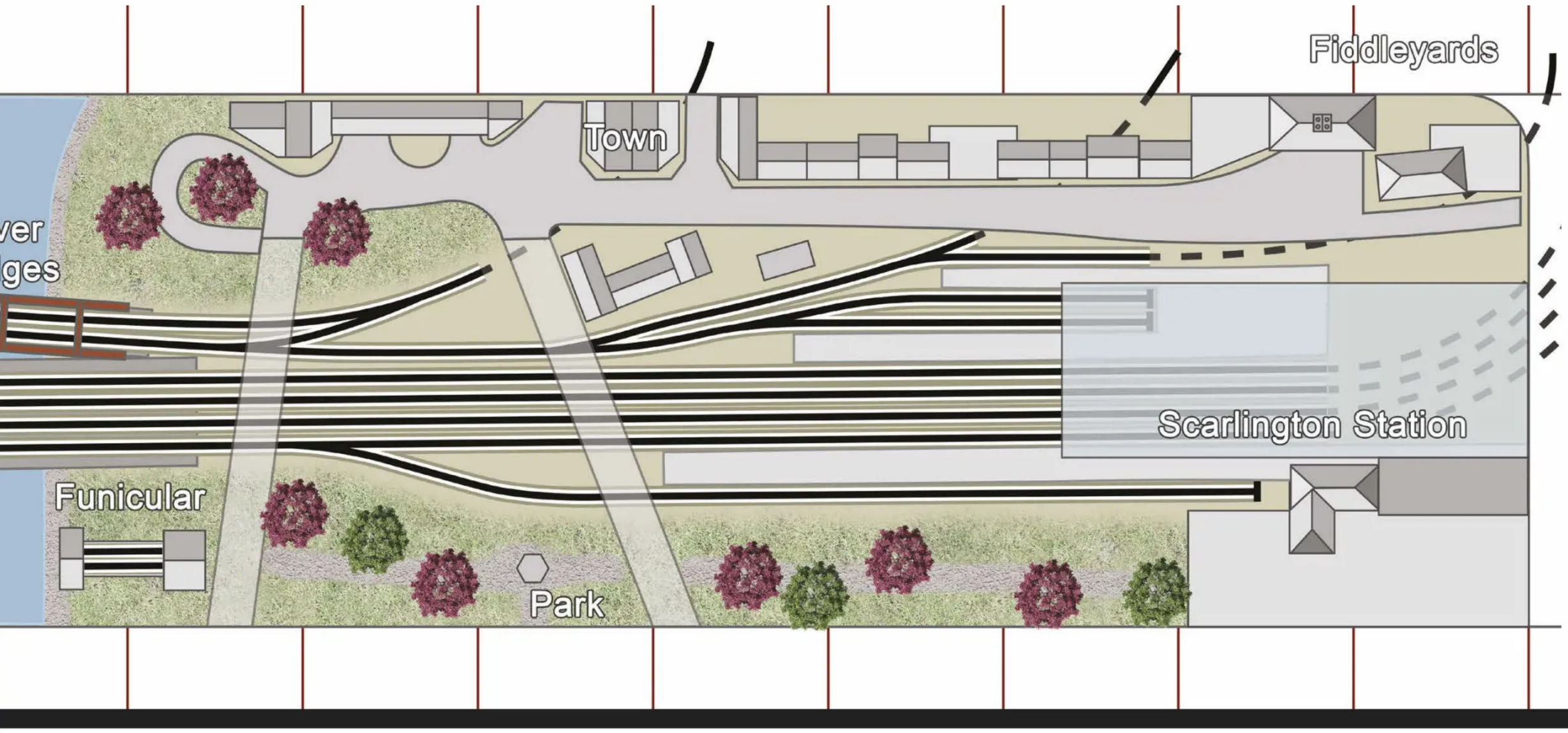


**ABOVE:** A Trainload Coal-liveried Class 58 shatters the peace of the park with a heavy MGR coal train.

it was decided that we would build our own! We started by working out the height and slope we would need and a plywood triangular box was made to fit the available space. A length of N gauge track was laid on the slope and then we set about working out how to power it and make it go up and down at a realistic speed. In the end, a small electric motor and a station auto shuttle unit were fitted. The next problem was how to make a pulley that the cotton thread wouldn't knot itself up on as it went up and down. One of our group had the ingenious idea of using two jam jar lids bolted back to back and attached onto the motor drive shaft. One full trip for the car from top to bottom was less than one full revolution of the lids. So, hey presto, the cotton can never get tangled up with itself. Switches were added to the lid edges to trigger the auto shuttle to change direction and the timer was set to give a realistic delay between trips. The car and top and bottom stations are all scratch-built and lit. The car lighting is powered by a small battery and holder that came from a kit used to add tail lamps to N gauge rolling stock. This fits neatly under the car, along with a switch to turn it on and off. It turned out better than expected, and we are very pleased with it.

## Out on the road

The layout is analogue and uses Gaugemaster controllers. There are two main lines on the scenic boards, one in each direction. These split into two, to give the impression of a fast and slow line both ways. Therefore, a train can be brought into view and held at a signal using a section switch, and then a second train can be driven past it. There is also a branch line that runs from a fiddle yard at the left-hand end of the layout into either of the two bay platforms in the station, or through the station and round a return loop, which allows it to return back to its starting



**ABOVE:** A Class 37 hauls a kit-built military train past a ballast train in the Engineers' siding as a Class 128 Parcels unit ascends the incline on the branch line.

**MIDDLE:** A steel train passes beneath a modified MDF laser-cut bridge.

**RIGHT:** A Hunslet-Barclay weedkilling train enters Scarlington on its annual tour of the rail network.





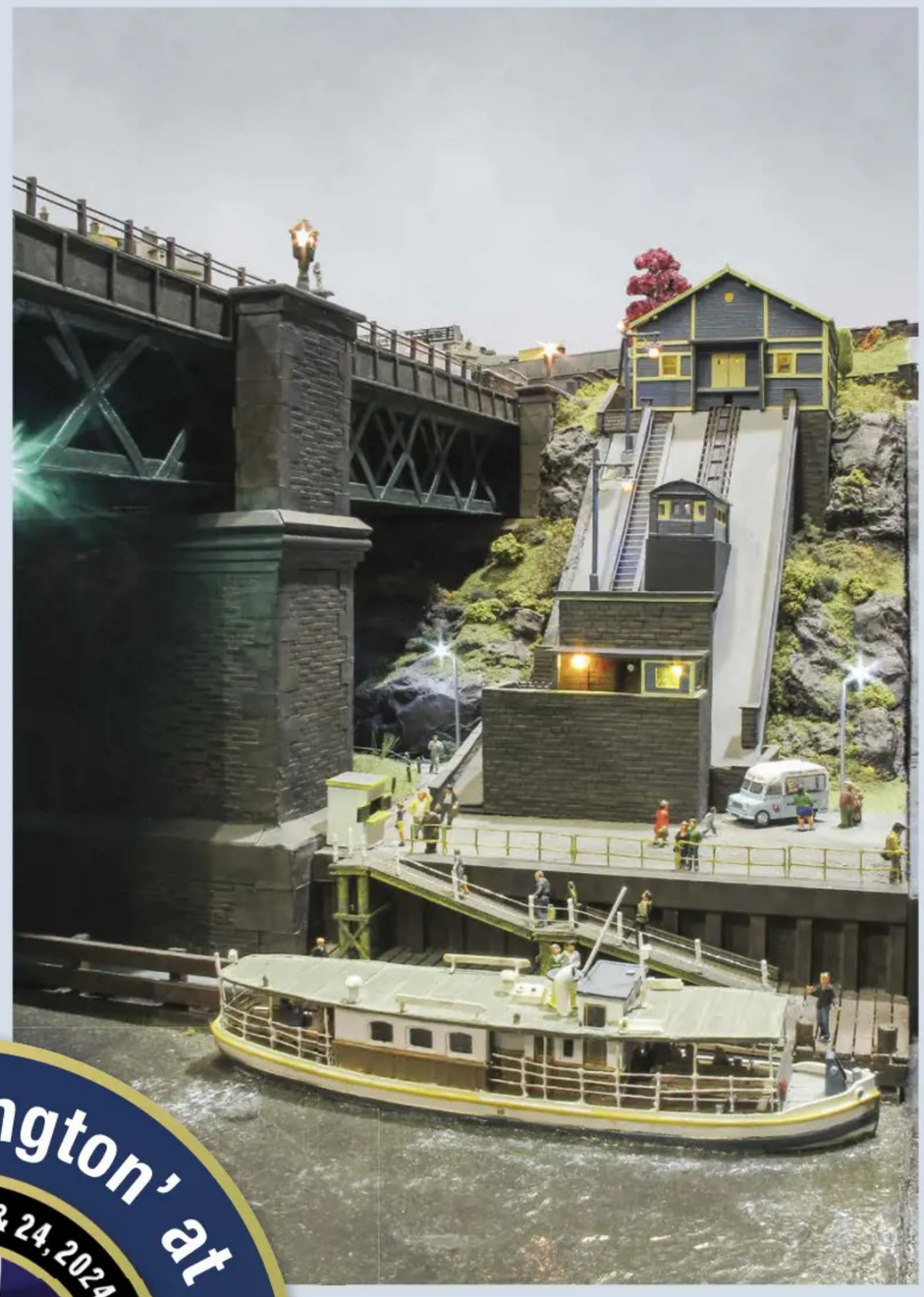

point. There is a similar fiddle yard at the right-hand end of the layout, which runs into a return loop under the "industrial section" at the opposite end of the scenic boards. This also allows the train to return to its starting point. Each fiddle yard has its own control box, as does the scenic section. Each box has L.E.D. indicators to help navigate a train's route and these are linked to the control switches. The points on the scenic section are powered by Cobalt point motors and the signals are linked to the point motors, so these change automatically from red to green and back, when the point is changed. As both branch lines are bi-directional, extra electronic wizardry ensures the signals are set to red when the train is running in the opposite direction. The layout is not signalled completely accurately, as we felt this would be too complicated, but the basics are in place.

The rolling stock used on the layout is mainly from the usual manufacturers: Graham Farish, Dapol and Revolution Trains. However, the Doncaster Test Train was created using vinyl overlays on some standard Farish coaches and the military train is kit-built. The wagons are from the N Gauge Society, and the vehicles are from Trains4U at Peterborough.

We do not operate to a strict timetable when operating at exhibitions. The only rule we try to adhere to is to have something moving at all times. After all, that's what the paying public seems to like.

**RIGHT:** The passenger ferry awaits more tourists as they descend on the scratch-built working model of a cliff-lift. The ice cream van also hopes for some more sales...

**BELOW:** A Class 37 emerges from the gloom of the North Edge Tunnel with a long steel train. The modified laser-cut MDF bridge dominates the scene. The relief detail on the bridge was added using Evergreen Plastic strip.



## Final thoughts

As the NoEL Group are just a group of friends, we do not have our own premises, therefore, the layout is kindly stored in one of our garages. The only time we get to "play trains" is when we are lucky enough to be invited to an exhibition. Each baseboard section is secured in its own "coffin", for want of a better word. This keeps it clean and also enables it to be stacked to reduce the floor space required. Our group consists of people who have been modelling for most of their lives. We are lucky to have a broad skill-set in our number - electrical, joinery, scratch-building and painting. Also, three of us have, or still do work on railways, of different sizes!

If we are totally honest, the layout took us far longer to complete than it should have done. We are proud of the way it turned out and we hope that it brings pleasure and provides inspiration to everyone who sees it.

To bring you up to date, we have nearly finished our new N gauge layout, 'Owdladd'. It is at the opposite end of the size scale to 'Scarlington'. It is a multi-level layout, approximately four feet square, and is built in memory of one of our late members, Keith Hutchinson, so watch this space… ■

See 'Scarlington' at
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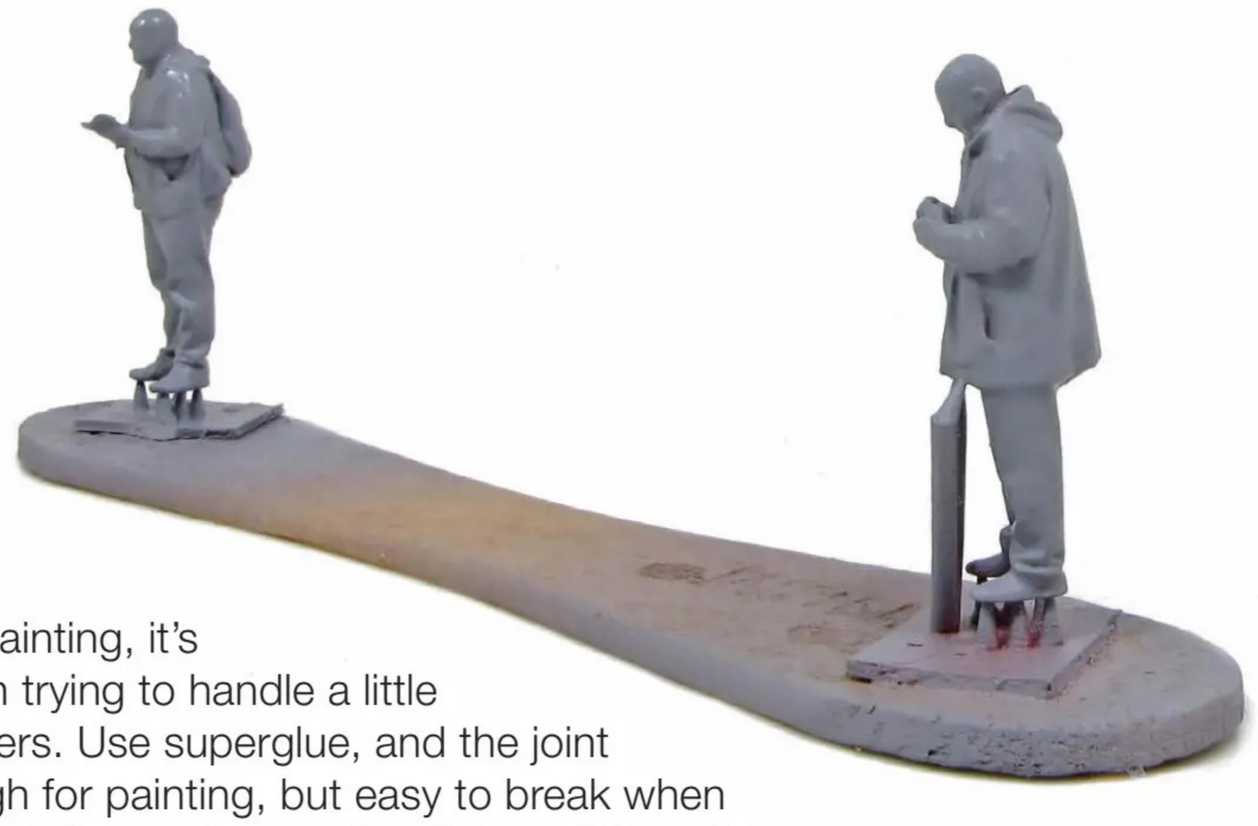
# Getting Practical with...

## TOOL of the MONTH

### Lolly stick



The sun is out, so time for modellers to gather a really useful tool – the lollipop stick! I like to glue people or small details to the end of them while painting, it's so much easier than trying to handle a little figure with your fingers. Use superglue, and the joint will be strong enough for painting, but easy to break when you are finished. The leftover glue can be picked off the stick, or you can just go and get another one. Yum!



## Ask Phil

### What is my track made from, and does it matter?

If you have found some old track, and are wondering if it is any use, hold a magnet against the rails. If it sticks, the rails are steel, otherwise, almost certainly nickel-silver. Steel track will rust, stopping electrical pick-up for your locos, and be pretty near impossible to solder wires to for track feeds, so best avoided. If it's really old, the chances are the rail section will be chunky and incompatible with newer track, too.

# New on the workbench

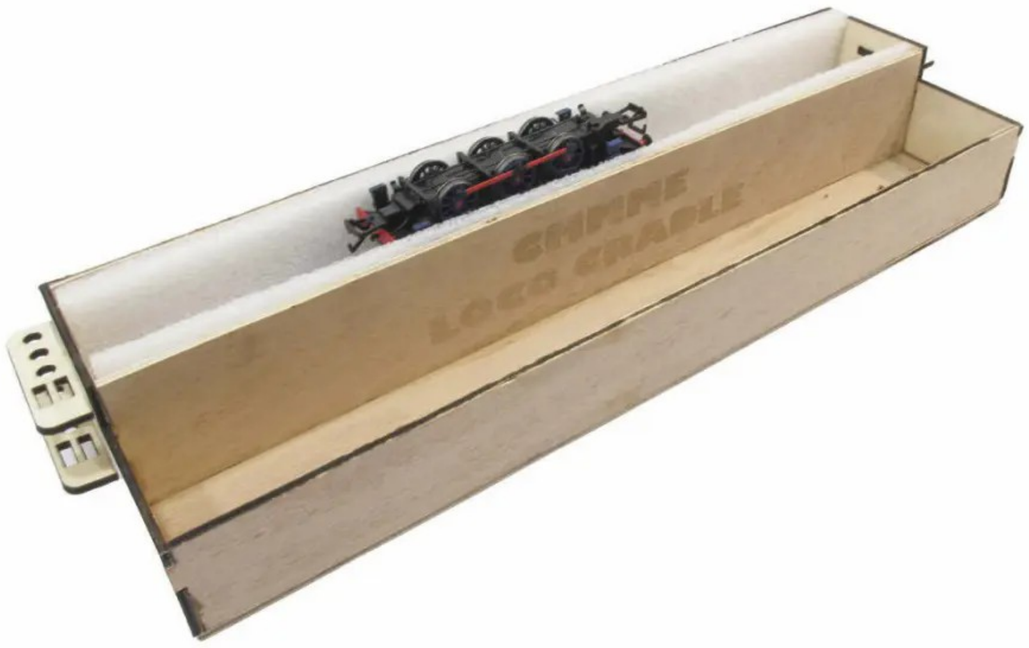
### CMME Loco Service Cradle

When wheel cleaning, or just poking around under a model locomotive, I've learned the hard way that it pays to support the model properly rather than having it rolling around the workbench. It's also a good idea to have somewhere to safely put anything you unscrew, as well as the screws themselves.

Chesterfield Model Making and Electronics loco servicing cradle does all of this really well. The model can be upside down, cocooned in foam strips, and there is a tray for all the bits that would otherwise get lost. This can also hold tools, although there are shelves with holes in for these at the ends, too.

Available as a kit, or ready-built in N, OO and O gauge.

See chesterfield-models.co.uk for details.




Phil Parker


Michael Russell


Chris Mead

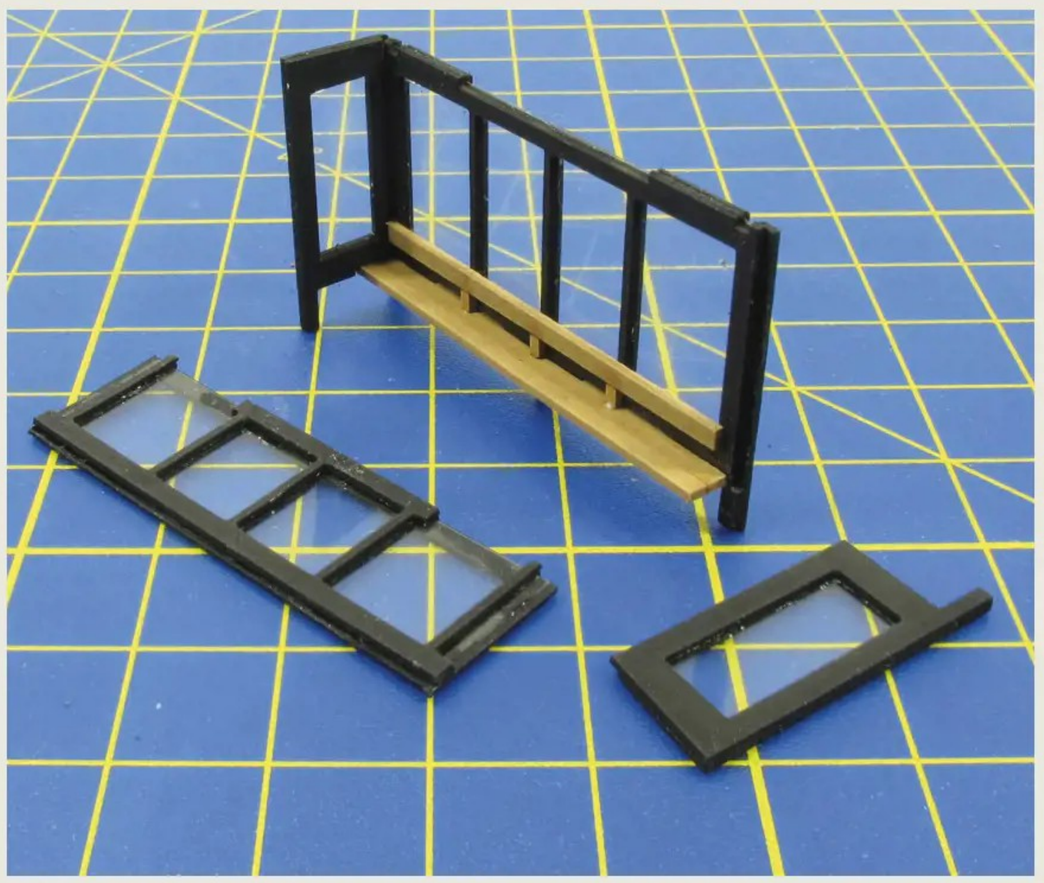

Robin Pinnock

# Build a OO bus stop

A modern-style place to shelter from the rain and catch the bus, made using the Metcalfe PO525 card kit.




1 The glazing is cut to size (there are templates in the instructions and plenty of spare sheet if you go wrong) and is trapped in the sides, ends and roof. I'm using Glue'n'Glaze for the whole build, as it dries clear.



2 With all the panels made up, they are glued together, interlocking at the corners. The seat is a different colour laserboard than the frame, so you don't need to paint the model.




3 Timetables, bus flags and adverts for the sides and end are included in the printed instruction sheet. There are far more than you will use, so save them for other projects.



4 As well as the shelter, a bus flag on a pole and litter bin are included. This is a neat little kit – an hour should see it taken from packet to roadside.



# A Greenhouse Scene in O Gauge



Chris Mead

I NORMALLY work in 4mm/ft scale, so taking on a project such as an O gauge scenic kit is something unusual for me. But, given the increasing popularity and availability of proprietary items in this scale, it was maybe time for me to have a go. I was intrigued to see how skills and techniques learnt in a smaller scale could be applied to a larger size, and for this purpose, the etched brass greenhouse kit from Severn Models seemed a good place to start.

Things to remember when starting this project is that it doesn't always follow that a project in a larger scale needs twice the space to achieve a satisfying result. Plus, it is often possible to use leftover material from previous projects. The flock powders, grass tufts and seafoam were all remaining from earlier models.

## WHAT YOU NEED

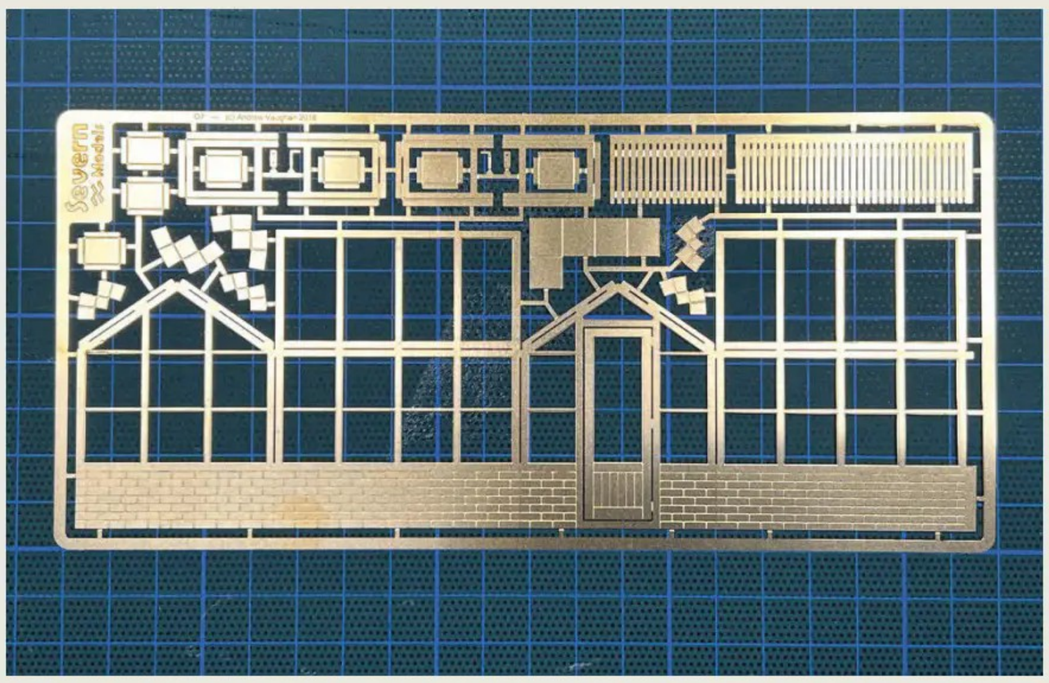
**Langley Models**
O gauge unpainted gardeners

**Noch**
HO sunflowers

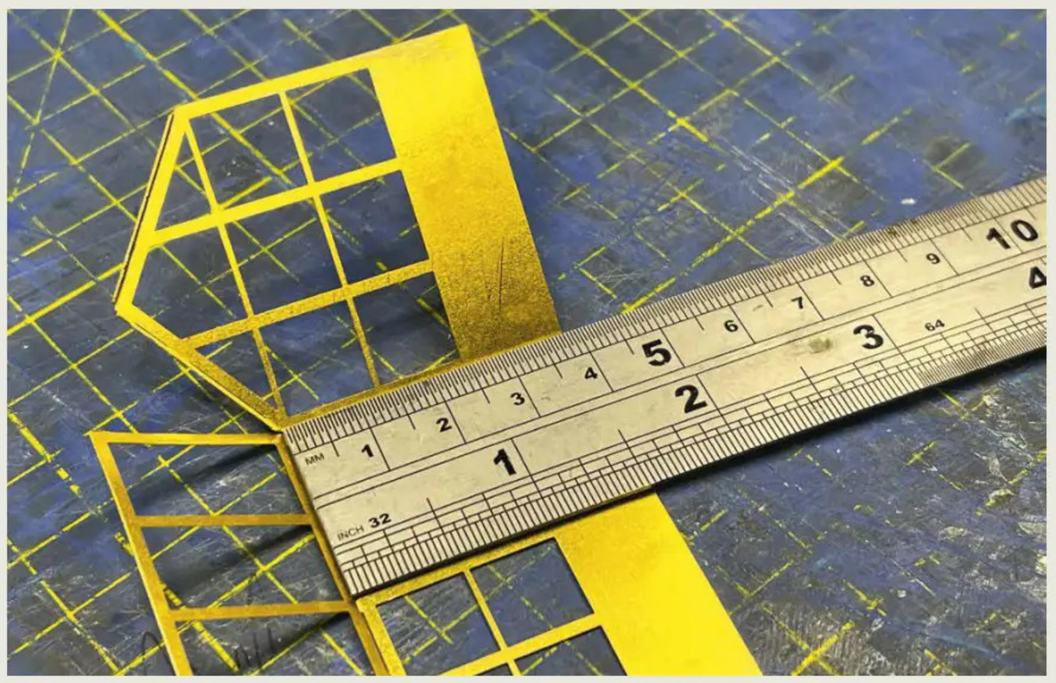
**Severn Models**
O Gauge Greenhouse and Coldframe Kits

**Slaters**
20 & 40 thou Plastikard sheet

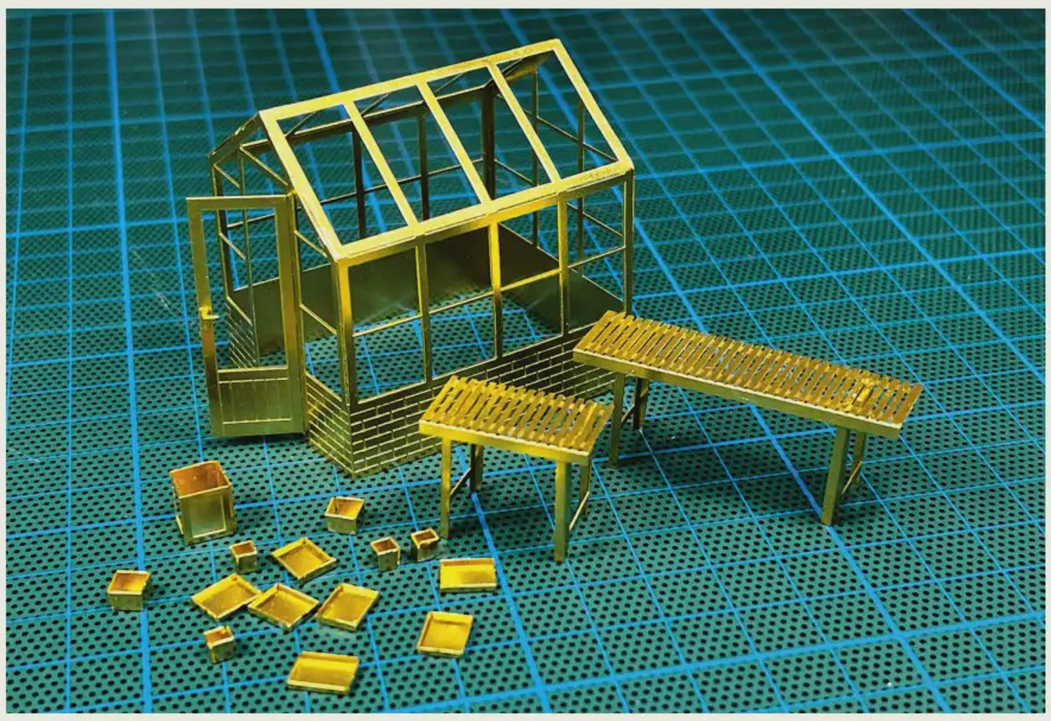
**Other**
Cutting mat, modelling knife, miniature hacksaw, steel rule, impact adhesive (UHU), cyanoacrylate superglue (medium viscosity), scenic spray glue or watered-down PVA, various small files, paint brushes & drills, various paint brushes & acrylic thinners, 1mm dia plastic rod, sprigs of seafoam, coloured flock powders, 00 grass tufts, dried used tea leaves.




1 Severn Models produces a wide range of etched brass building, structure and detailing kits in a variety of scales. The first job for my chosen sets was to remove the parts from the fret by cutting through the tabs with sharp wire cutters and cleaning up with a fine file.




2 The next job was to bend the frets to shape. For this, you need a good sharp edge. A steel rule works well for the larger parts, such as the greenhouse itself, and flat-nose pliers for the smaller items like the seed trays and pots.



3 The smaller pots and trays were just folded up. The greenhouse itself and the internal staging worktops and legs were glued together with cyanoacrylate superglue. Previously, I would have expected to solder together brass models, but this kit is designed with tabs to be glued together. Rubbing these with fine sandpaper helps the bond.



4 There were some gaps in the joints between the edges for the frets when folded up, and fine-grade filler was used to fill and smooth these over before being primed with white metal etch primer. After masking, Desert Yellow acrylic paint was applied to the brickwork for the mortar colour, over which various browns and greys were dry-brushed to highlight the brickwork.

5 Acetate sheet is included in the kit for glazing; this was cut to size for the windows and roof and fixed into place with UHU impact adhesive. The greenhouse door was treated differently, as I wanted to have it opening outwards, so to hide the glazing and add thickness to the door, the acetate was cut to the size of the door and sandwiched between this and an internal panel cut from 20 thou styrene sheet.



## ACRYLIC PAINTS

White Primer (basecoat and window frames)

Light Grey & Desert Sand (paving stones)

Textured Brown (soil & compost)

Desert Yellow, Brick Red, Dark Brown, Black (greenhouse masonry)

Mid-Green (greenhouse door)

# Getting Practical



6 I used one of the figures from the Langley gardeners pack. Although the pose was not what I wanted, it was easy to modify by using a miniature hacksaw to remove the right arm and gluing it in the desired position. The figure was also mounted on a piece of brass wire to make it easier to paint and locate securely in the greenhouse.



7 1/76 scale grass tufts fine flock powders were used to fill the seed trays. A small blob of superglue was put in them, and brown used for the raw compost, light green for seedlings, and a 50/50 mix with red plants in bud. The grass tuft was cut to size and trimmed to half its height to represent long-stemmed plants such as leeks.

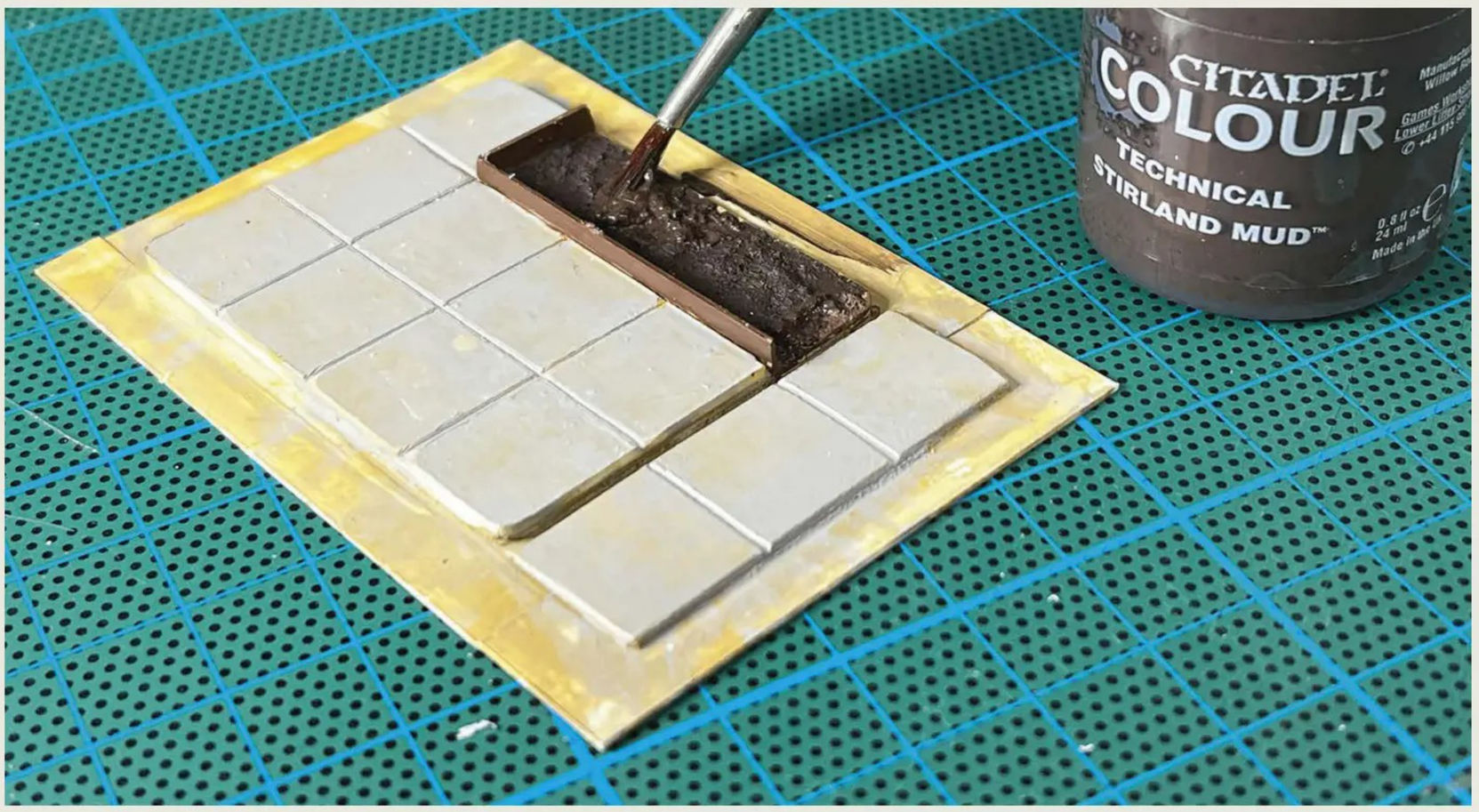


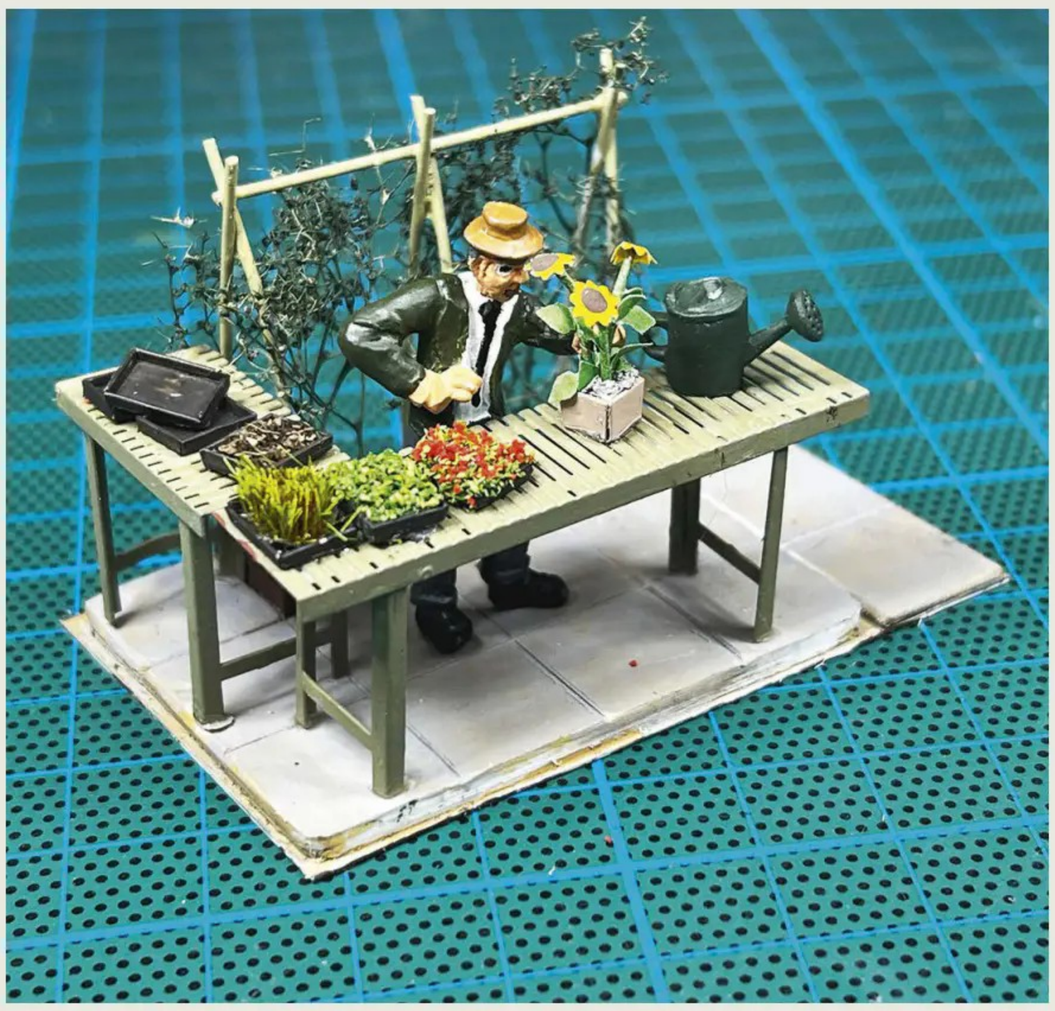
8 To make the large potted flower in the scene, a piece of model filler was first added to the tubs. For the blooms themselves, it fortunately turned out that Noch HO Sunflowers looked just right when I cut down to size and pushed them into position.




9 The outdoor plants were made in a similar way to the others. The grass tuft tips were carefully dipped in a blob of superglue, and then a pile of flock powder. The same technique was used for the outside potted shrub, using twisted seafoam. It is easier to handle the tufts with tweezers if you keep them on the backing paper.

10 40 thou Plastikard was cut to fit inside the greenhouse and scribed to represent paving stones in the greenhouse. Three slabs were removed down one side for a growing area surrounded by bargeboards of 20 thou Plastikard. These were stuck onto a base with the original for a small paved area outside the greenhouse. They were given washes of yellow and light grey, and textured brown paint applied to the growing area for the soil.





**11** The base was cut to size, and half a dozen holes drilled into the soil section. 1mm diameter rods were inserted with cross pieces glued in place to act as a growing frame for an indoor climber, such as a cucumber or melon. The frame was painted and coloured seafoam added. Finally, the seed trays were positioned on the staging along with the watering can from the Langley pack and the gardener tending the pot plant.

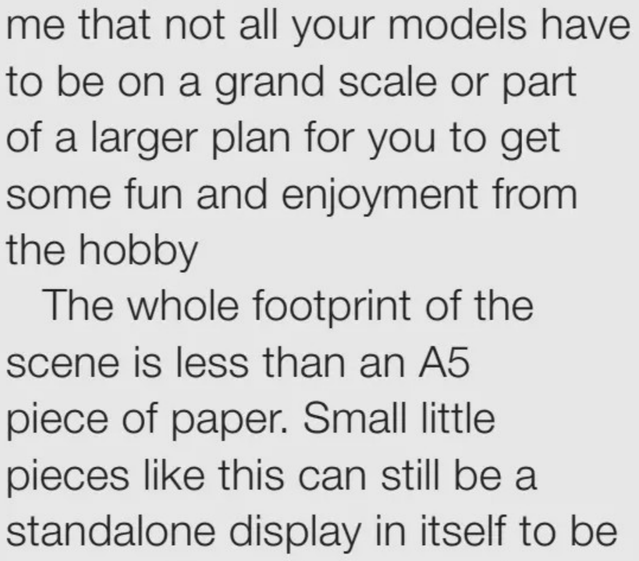


**12** More of the textured brown paint was spread over the base, and the greenhouse seated on it. The cold frame and flower clumps were placed down one side with the potted bush and a sack of potatoes (Langley again) on the outside slabs. More flock powder glued in position with watered-down PVA represented the lawn, and I used dried tea leaves for the surrounding path.

## CONCLUSION

Building this kit has reminded me that not all your models have to be on a grand scale or part of a larger plan for you to get some fun and enjoyment from the hobby

The whole footprint of the scene is less than an A5 piece of paper. Small little pieces like this can still be a standalone display in itself to be proud of, as well as providing an opportunity to practise techniques and ideas that can be applied to future projects.








# Fit a DCC decoder & detail a Class 37



Michael Russell

THE BACHMANN Class 37 is a very nice model straight out of the box, but there are a few improvements that can be made. I have also taken the opportunity to fit the detailing pack and install a DCC decoder.

When checking the lighting on DC, ensure that the switches on the underside of the fuel tanks/ battery boxes are in the 'on' position. Turned brass air horns are available if you don't fancy altering those on the model as I have done.

You must observe static precautions when handling circuit boards containing microchips. Wear a static wristband, such as those used for PC construction. At the very least, touch something connected to Earth, such as some water pipes, before starting work. If you have clothing that you know generates static, then don't wear it for modelling, or wear a cotton-based storeman's or laboratory coat over the top.

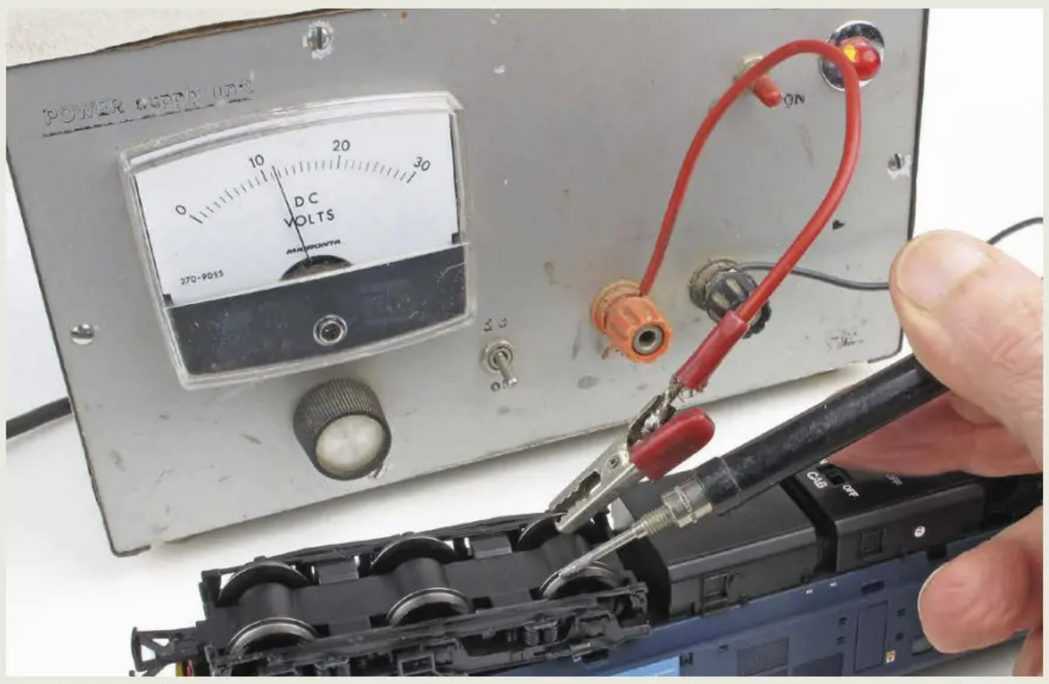
## WHAT YOU NEED

**Dapol**
Imperium7 21 pin 6 function decoder

**Kernow Model Rail Centre**
32-780U Class 37/0 37261 Direct Rail Services

**The Army Painter**
Strong Tone wash

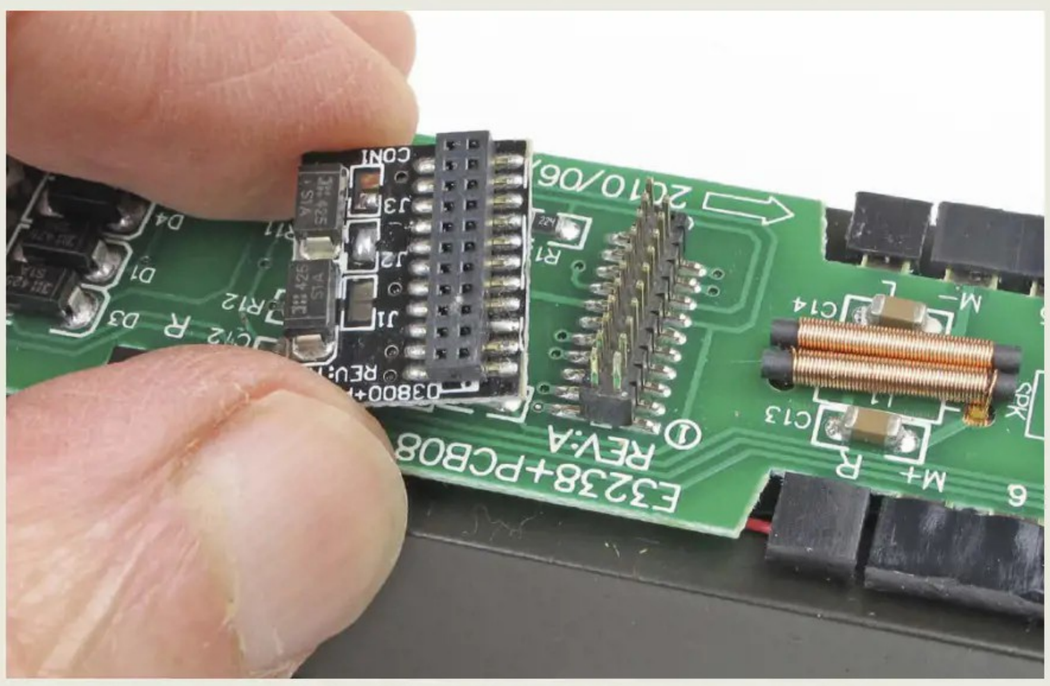
**Other**
Superglue (cyanoacrylate), orange (or red and yellow), black, dark grey, skin tone acrylic paint, 0.7 and 1.2mm drills, small pin vice, small crosspoint screwdriver, tweezers, two small flat-bladed screwdrivers, static wrist strap, small paint brushes, cocktail sticks



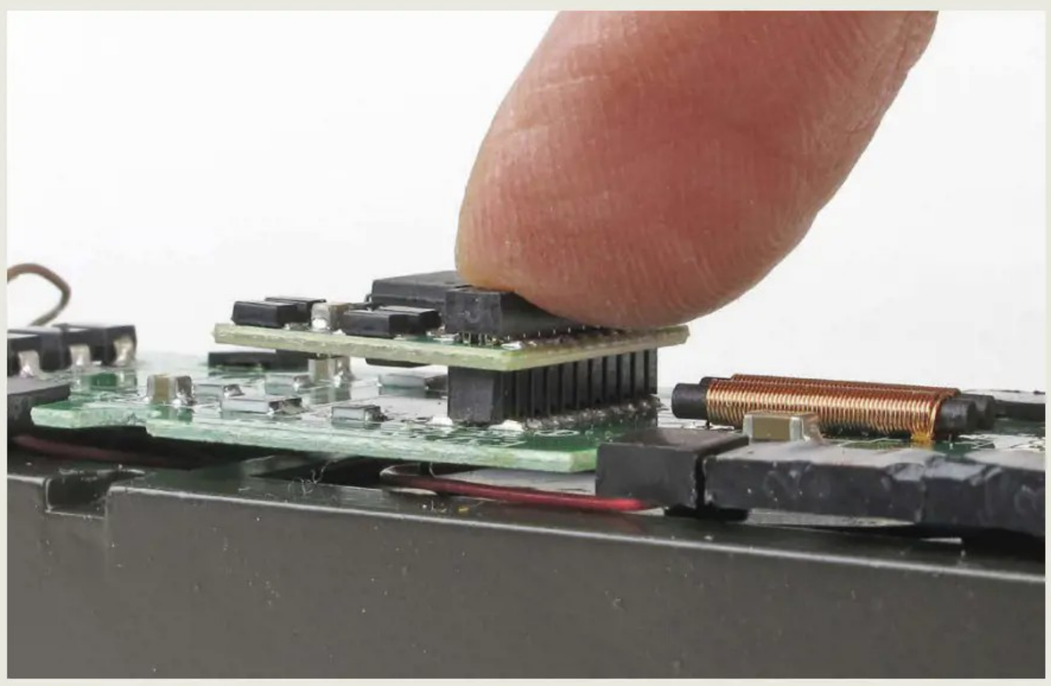

1 Check that the model works on DC current first. Set the voltage and apply to the wheels to see if they rotate and check the lights come on. Even better, run the locomotive forward and backwards at moderate speed for one hour in each direction of travel.



2 Six screws hold the body in place. The outer two screws foul the buffer ends if you remove them individually. Undo them together by a few turns alternately to overcome this problem. Lift the body off and note its orientation to the chassis.



3 Locate the blanking plate in the centre of the main circuit board and lift it straight up to remove it. If it is a tight fit, lever it very gently off by using two flat-bladed screwdrivers with even pressure from both sides.



4 Note the missing pin on the socket connections and insert the decoder with the corresponding orientation. Push straight down with even pressure and ensure that there is no gap between the decoder and the socket.



5 Replace the body and insert the screws back in their holes using tweezers and be careful not to drop them inside the body, otherwise you will have to dismantle again. Tighten the outer screws alternately a little at a time until seated.

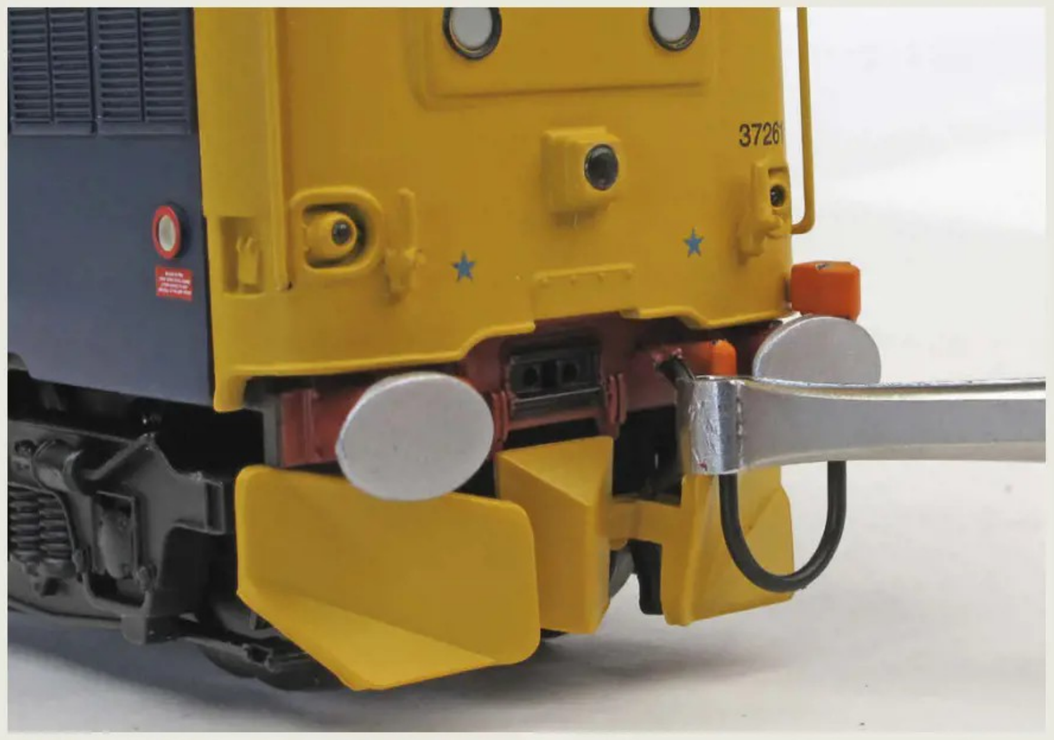



6 To test the decoder, place the loco on your programming track and read the decoder address back. A new decoder should return the value 3. It is best to reset a previously used decoder first before fitting to another locomotive, in which case the address should return to 3, too.

# Getting Practical




7 Remove the locomotive to the main track. Now test the cab lighting using function zero and then the directional lighting using F1. Then test the forward and backwards motion and other functionality. Correct any issues before commencing detailing.



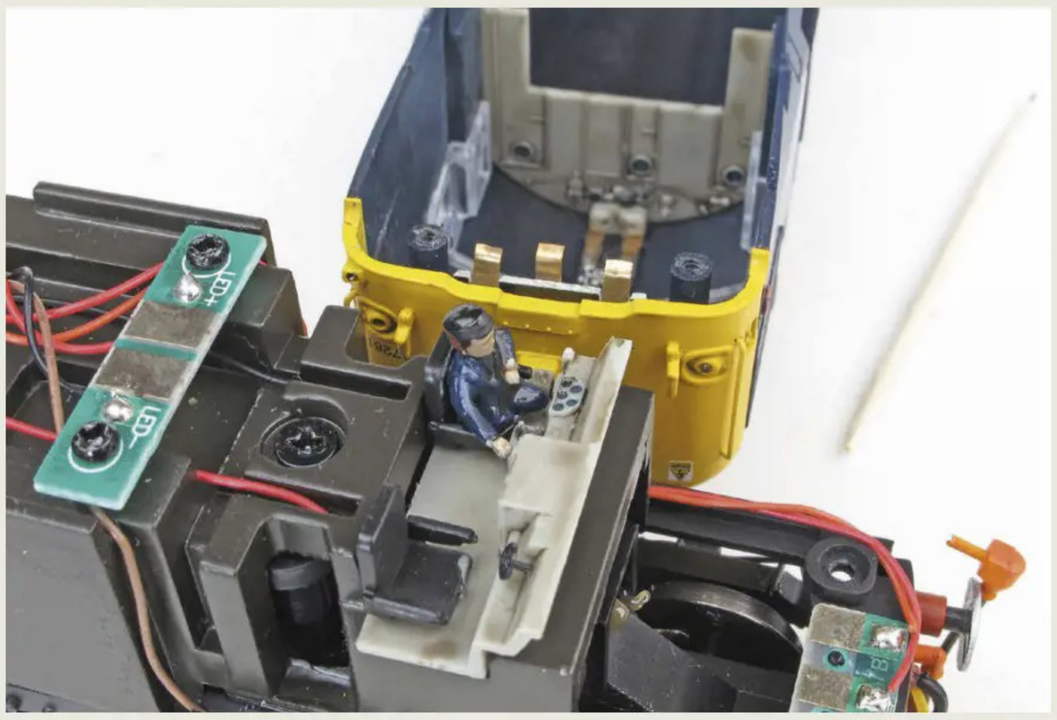

8 Hold the locomotive firmly while you pull the tension-lock couplings out - it will take a little force. Now, push the snowploughs into the vacant coupling pockets. Fit the hoses, but don't glue the MU hose where it fits into the body, or the latter won't be removable.



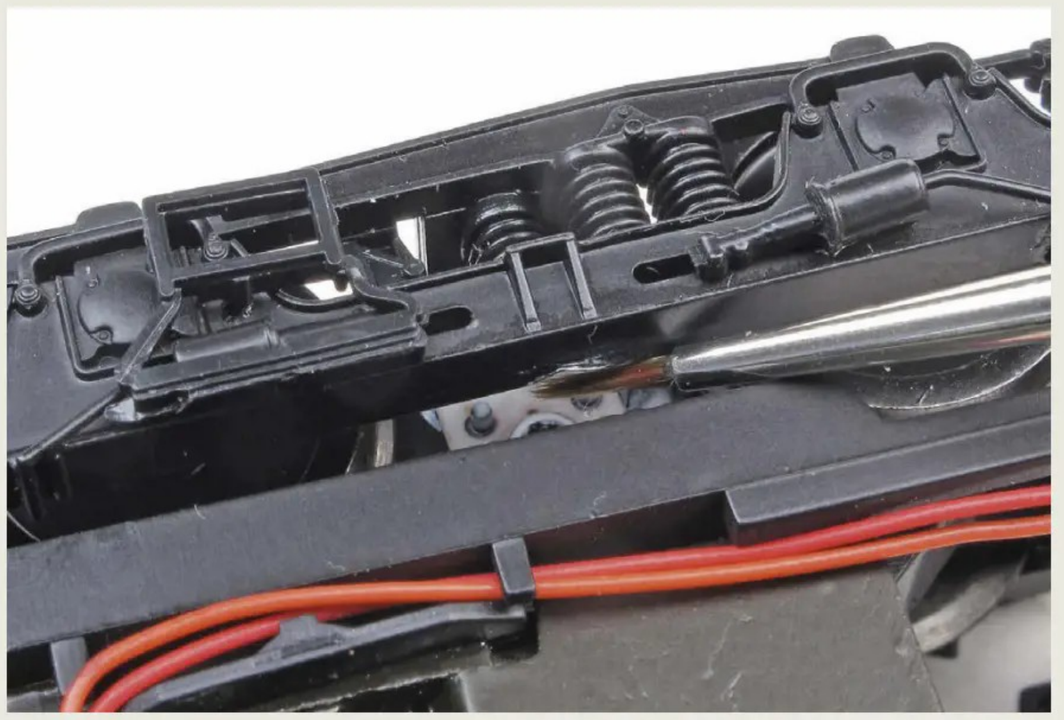

9 Drill out the air horns using first a 0.7mm and then a 1.2mm drill. Hold the horns from above using your thumb and go slowly to avoid damaging these delicate components. You don't have to drill far to get a recessed look.




10 Touch up missing paintwork, for example, on top of the detailing parts where they have been cut from the runners in the factory. Use orange acrylic for the MU pipe and, since you only need a little, mix it from yellow and red.



11 Use dark grey to pick out details on the engine room bulkhead and the dials on the dashboard. Apply with a cocktail stick for more control. Paint the driver, cab and bulkhead with Strong Tone wash.



12 The pick-ups are prominent between the frames of this loco and mar the appearance of what is otherwise a very realistic model. Use primer and then, when dry, matt black paint is applied with a small paint brush to fix this issue. Job complete!

# The "Black Five"

## Finescale "O" Gauge

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# Getting Practical





# Stoney's Workshops


Michael Russell

WHEN WE first start modelling, we may build kits exactly as per the instructions. Later though, it helps if we can branch out. Perhaps the basic kit needs adapting to move doorways around, or the exterior finish doesn't suit the area you are modelling. Don't be afraid to make changes as, with a bit of forethought, it may not be as difficult as you think.

The kits from ScaleModelScenery.com look great built straight from the box, but are highly adaptable due to the wooden framework and cladding method of construction. Here, I take a typical kit of this ilk, reverse the walls and alter the roof and cladding material to make the model my own and perhaps make it a bit more realistic.

## WHAT YOU NEED

**ScaleModelScenery**
KX094-OO Stoney's Workshops

**Slaters**
Roof tiles

**Other**
PVA glue, acrylic paint: white, black; matt white emulsion paint, etching primer, kitchen aluminium foil, OHP slide film, household filler, 1000 grit sandpaper, cereal packet cardboard, craft knife, craft files, steel rule, dust mask, vacuum cleaner, marker pen, sponge, ridged bottle top, scissors, cocktail sticks, weights



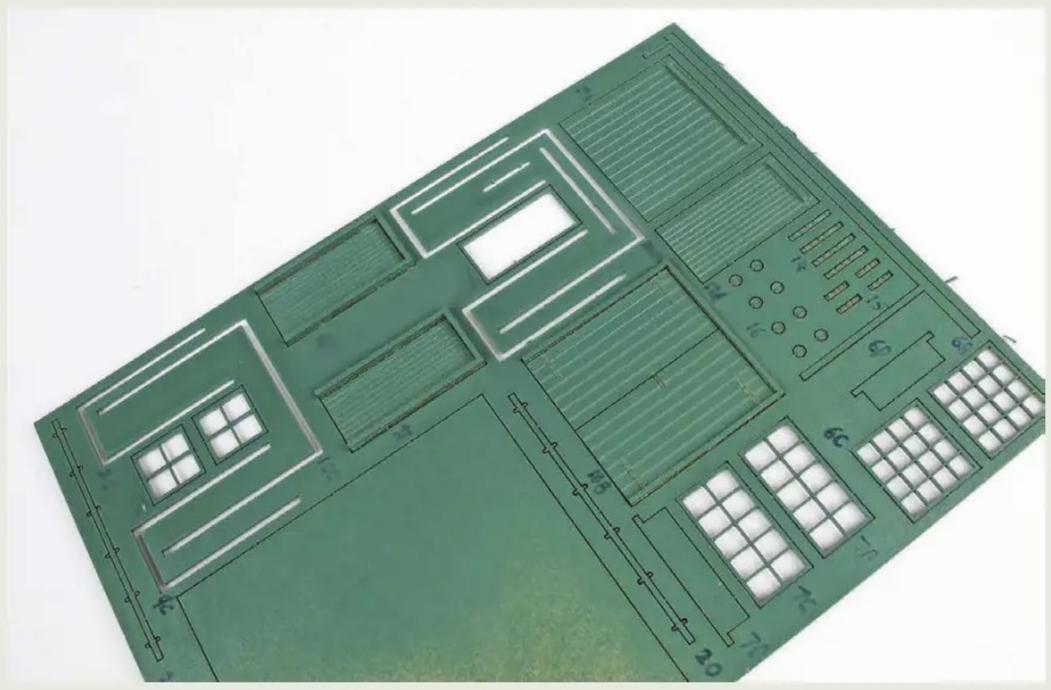

1 Glue the basic shell together with PVA glue, ensuring that everything is nice and square. I have moved the buildings around and this has necessitated reversing the walls. Note that the parts have been labelled to aid identification.



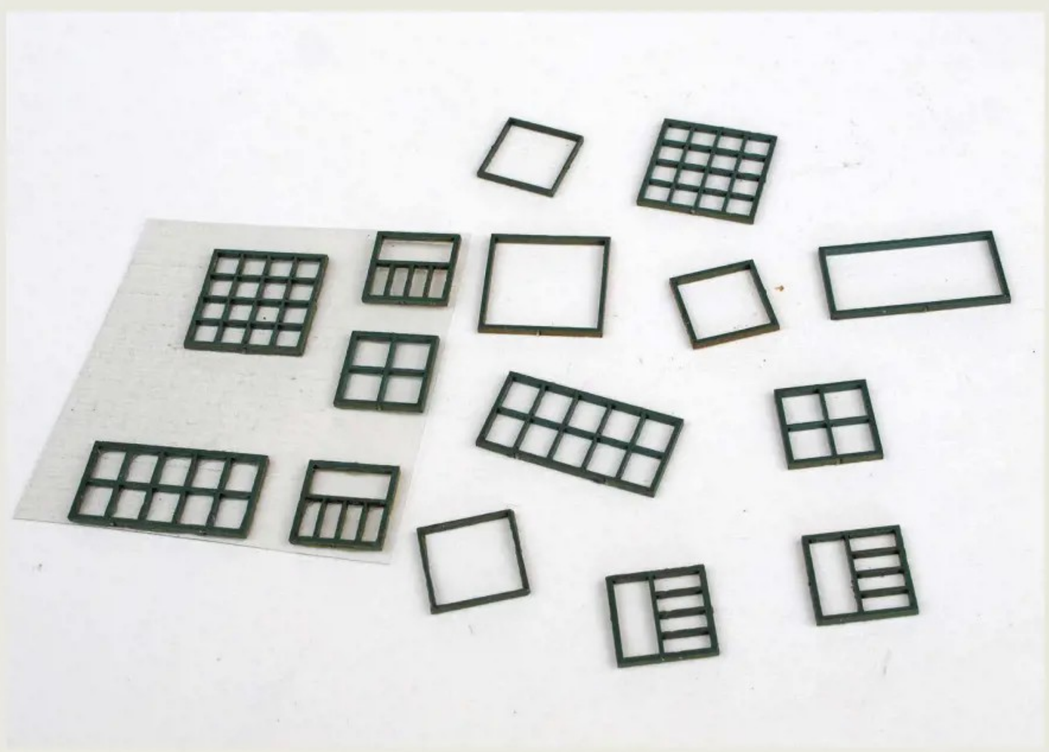

2 The top of the back wall should be adapted to match the slope of the side walls. Do this using a knife and a file, but be gentle as the material is easily damaged with rough treatment.



3 Some interior overlays no longer match, so first install existing ones that fit. Then cut up others to fit walls that are opposite windows and doors, as they are visible. For walls that can't be seen from the outside, I used matching acrylic paint.



4 Build door and vents on the runners using PVA glue. Now spray with an acrylic finish of your choice. An undercoat isn't required, but the topcoat does act as a good base for a second coat for any parts you wish to colour further.



5 Cut the window frames out and stick to clear film using PVA. I used redundant OHP slide film that has one side matt and the other gloss. The matt side takes weathering powder well.



6 Cover the corner tabs using household filler. When dry, sand smooth. Put the sandpaper on a flat surface and rub each building side on it in turn to get an even finish. Wear a mask and have the vacuum cleaner ready.

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7 To represent the render, I cut overlays from cereal packet cardboard. Draw around the outside of each side and then cut out the shape using a rule and knife, cutting just inside the marker lines.



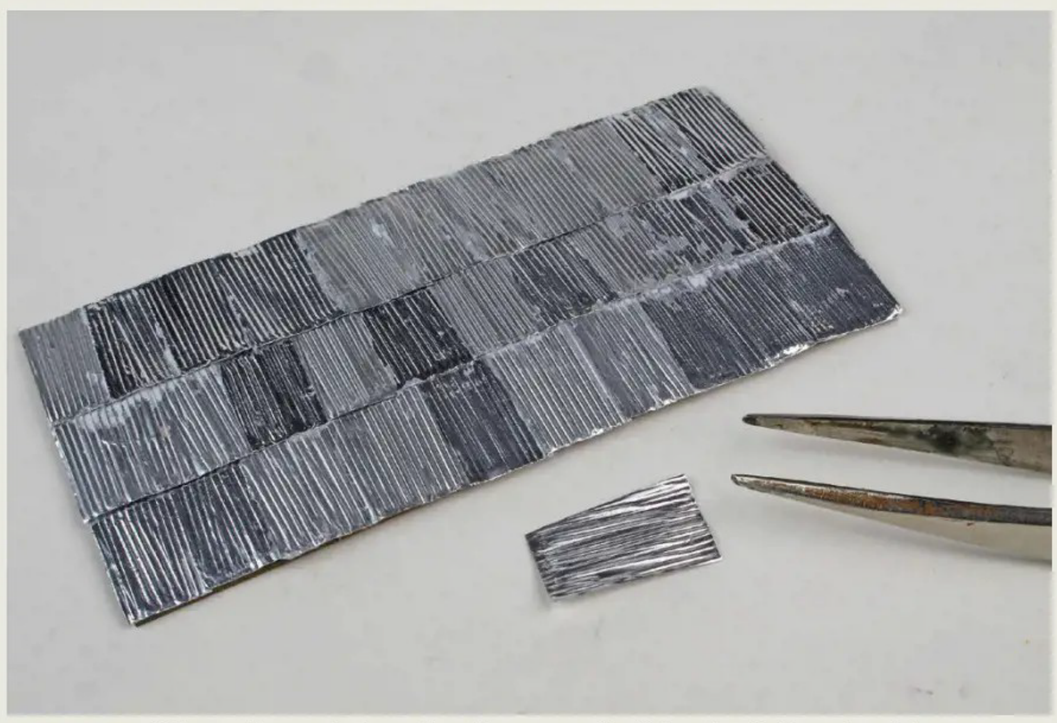
8 While holding brick paper over the overlays, use a knife to cut through both layers. Hold the two layers up to the light first so you can draw the outline of the overlay on the brick paper to mark the cutting area.



9 Stick the overlays in place with PVA glue and then paint. I used white emulsion with a little black acrylic added to produce grey. Before it is dry, lightly dab with a sponge to remove the brush marks and add texture.



10 Cut strips of aluminium baking foil and hold them against a bottle top, such as that found on Hornby products. Use your fingernail to form grooves in the foil. Then cut the strips up into 1cm lengths.



11 Glue the strips to the roof. Start at the bottom and overlap each sheet a little using PVA glue applied with a cocktail stick. Then add upper rows ensuring that these overlap the lower. Trim with scissors if necessary and then sandwich under a weight until dry.



12 Glue all the parts onto the structure according to the kit instructions. Be sure to set the sliding door runner low enough down so that the rollers (16) will fit above it otherwise the latter will require trimming. The other roofs were covered with Slater's roof tiles and fine sandpaper. Door handles made from staples would make a nice addition.

**NEXT MONTH:** Michael demonstrates how to elevate the building further with weathering.

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# Getting Practical

**MAIN PIC:** The elegant English Elm Tree once dominated the British landscape.

**INSET:** The iconic Oak Tree enhances any layout.



# Making Trees



Robin Pinnock

WHEN ‘STRATFORD St. Mary’ featured in February 2023 BRM, the large oak tree that forms part of a scenic break attracted considerable attention, so I have recorded the construction of another, this time a small oak and a large English elm that might provide some useful tips for your own tree-making adventures.

I model my trees from life where possible; the elm grew near my childhood home and was the last living example I knew and the oak has been sketched and photographed by me for 40 years! ‘Textbook perfect’ trees are hard to find in the wild, but the quirks of nature provide infinite variety. The models are intended as ‘specials’ for prominent locations, blending into an overall scene, rather than accurate botanical examples, to the annoyance of leaf counters!

Construction uses the multi-strand inner wire from Bowden cable, which has a well-deserved reputation for piercing the skin of the unwary, but the risks can be reduced with some simple precautions and sensitive handling. Like any scratch-built model, trees take time and patience; I normally take several weeks to complete one.

## WHAT YOU NEED

**modelscenerysupplies.co.uk**
Footpath Turf and Foliage Cover.
Fine grade: Dark, Medium, Wild and Burnt Green.

**Other**
Bowden cable inner wire – 1.5mm and 2.0mm 7x7, exterior-grade PVA wood adhesive, medium-viscosity superglue, Gorilla Glue – original foaming type, paper masking tape, cheap artists’ acrylic paint, enamel or acrylic paint for spraying, PlastiKote Matt Chocolate enamel spray to bind the steel wool ‘net’, Grey primer spray, filler (Tetrion), fine grade steel wool, 150mm or 180mm side cutters, 120mm flat-nosed smooth pliers, scissors, sharp knife, kitchen sieve, tweezers, various small clamps, wooden clothes pegs, Badger 250 airbrush



1 Working from a prototype is as important as with any other model, although it is not necessary to copy every branch, as long as the character of the original is captured. Photos, sketches, and videos from as many sides as possible will help to orientate the main branches. The oak was photographed in 1984, with several dead branches, which I wanted to include in the model. The elm is seen in 1977, already in decline.

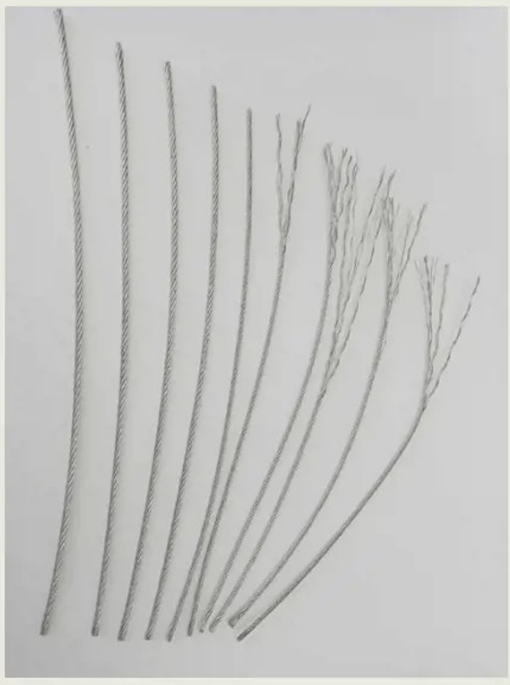


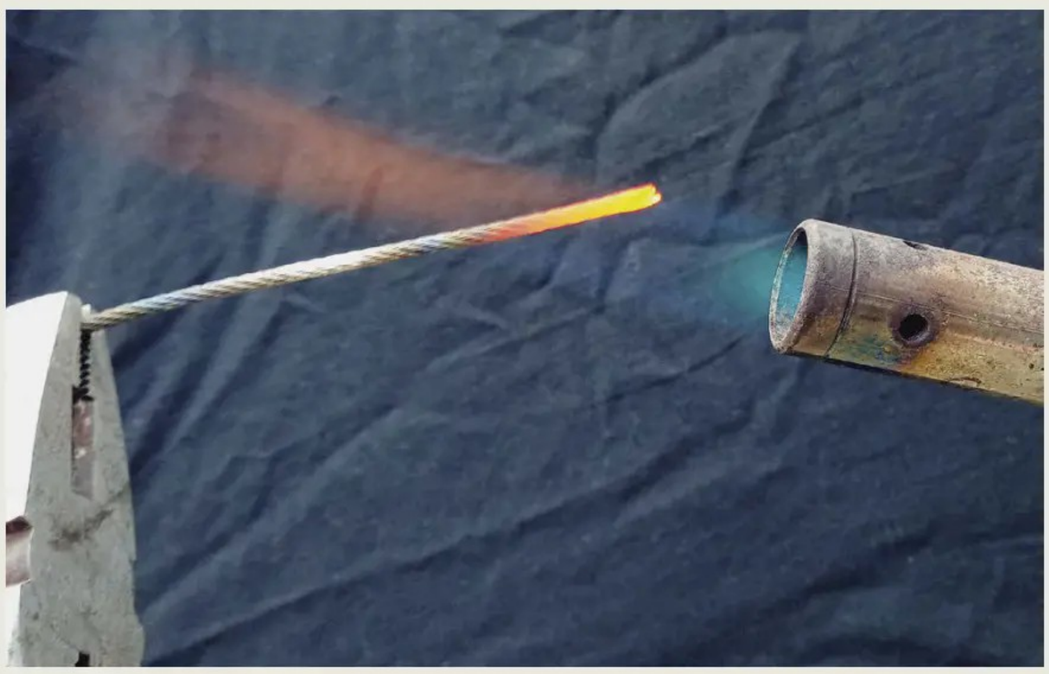

2 Seen in three dimensions, this ‘orientation tree’ is invaluable in establishing which direction the branches are pointing, and which ones are hidden from view. Made from soft wire, bound by masking tape, it can be positioned using your multi-view photos using an easily recognisable reference point such as the branch that I labelled L2. The central wire indicates possible scale heights in feet.

3 The raw material; 1.5mm and 2mm 7x7 wire. It is tough material and needs quality cutters to make a single clean cut through 2mm cable. Do not chew at it with pliers or small cutters, leaving a ragged end to the wire that will draw blood at every opportunity. I previously used good quality 150mm side cutters, which would barely cope with 2mm wire, but now use Knipex 180mm cutters, making the job easier and neater.

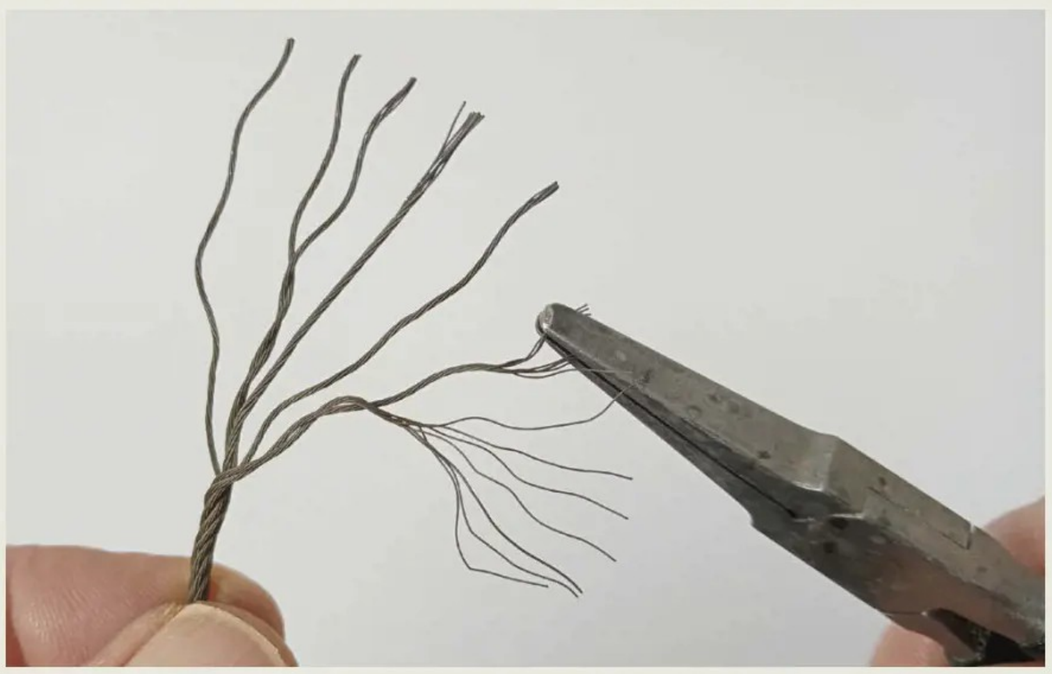


4 Four lengths of 2mm and six of 1.5mm wire, cut to the same length, as estimated by using the ‘orientation tree’. Most of the thinner wires have spontaneously unwound at one end as they were cut – they can be gently re-wound by twisting the wire with your fingers, or if it suits the plan, just leave them to save more work later. Make sure the ‘root’ ends of the wires are neatly twisted.



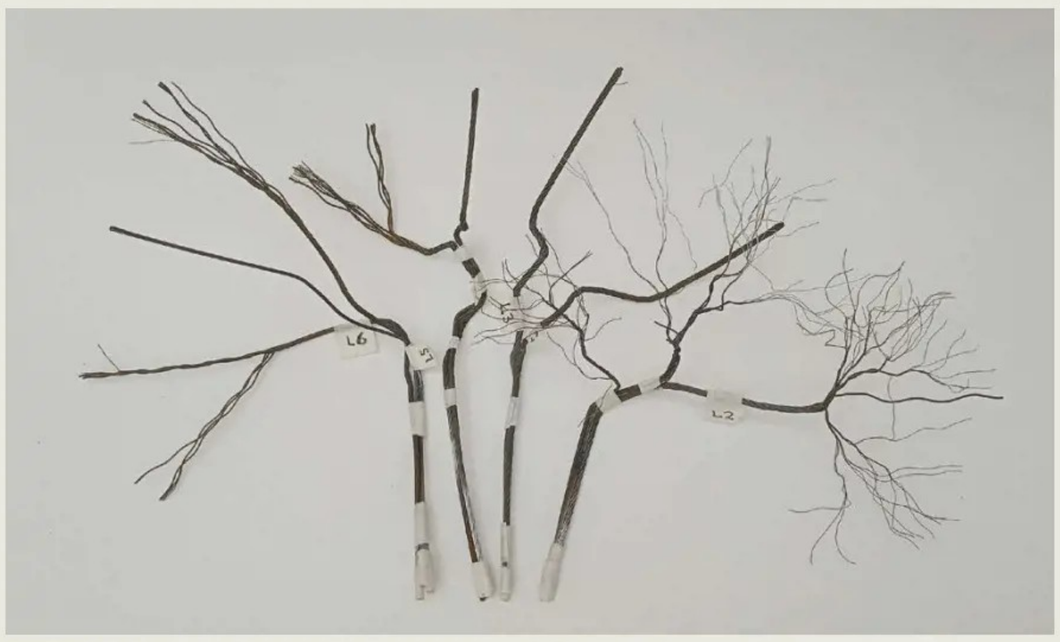


5 The wire is hard and can only be bent with pliers. Heating will permanently soften it, giving some control over the difficulty of working with it. I selectively heat areas that need sharp bends or delicate twigs. A dull red heat, then allowing it to cool naturally, is enough to soften it – the extreme treatment shown, bringing it to orange heat, will make it too soft.



6 Small, flat-nose smooth pliers tackle most of the unwinding and bending needed. Several main strands can be unwound together to divide a main branch, before dividing again. Any strands less than 50mm long are still strong enough to pierce the skin, so pliers are needed for handling.

# Getting Practical




7 It is much easier to assemble the branches in sections. Wires have been bent roughly to shape following the orientation model, and grouped where they share a common direction. Note the binding of masking tape at the 'root' ends to prevent unwinding and protect fingers. Masking tape holds the groups together while a spot of superglue is added to tack them together.




8 The groups are assembled and clamped together while superglue is run between the wires - do not hold it with your hand – having a tree stuck to it is not funny! Branch L2 is still my reference point, although it all looks a jumble at this stage. Note that a 2mm steel rod was incorporated at the base for locating the tree on the layout.



**TOP TIP**
It is a messy business, use lots of sheets of newspaper to protect work surfaces!

9 Some tidying up and a spray with grey primer to prepare for the next stage. It would be possible to brush the main branches in a coat of waterproof PVA wood glue, followed by a layer of coloured filler and PVA mix, but I often use the alternative method, as shown in the next step.



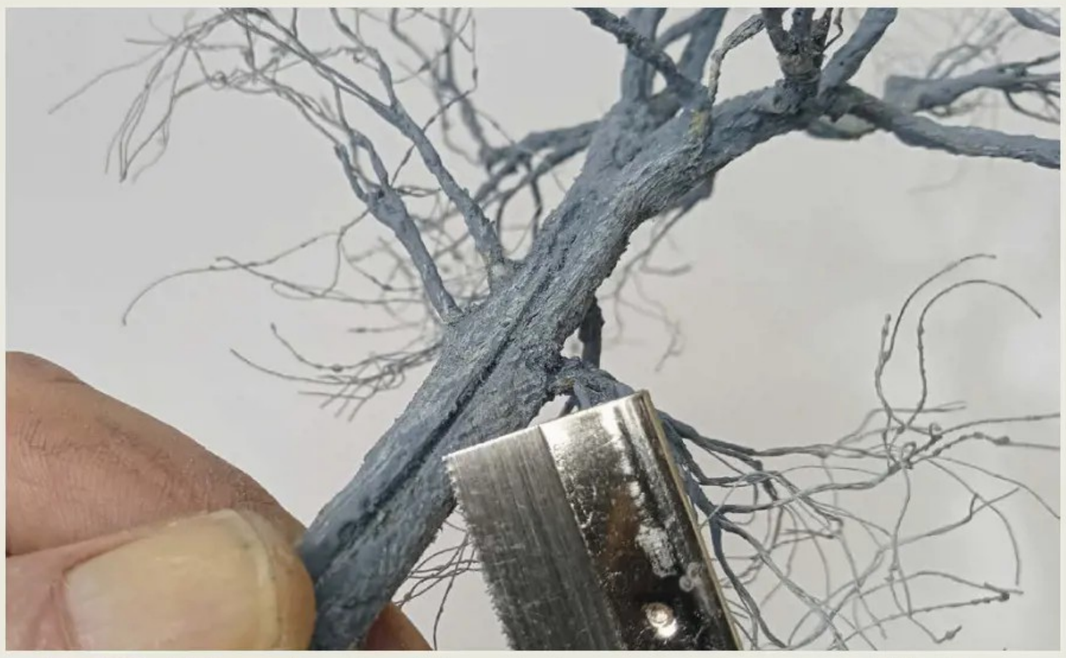
10 'Gorilla Glue'- the original foaming variety - is smeared thinly over the trunk and thickest branches. It has a syrup-like viscosity, and spreading it with a piece of scrap card helps to control it, it's never perfect. Use gloves, skin protection is essential and spray with water to activate the glue.



11 The result looks like something from sci-fi, but there is scope to use the random lumps and bubbles in a creative way. Usually, I just carve most of it off with a knife almost down to the wire. The remainder will bind the wires and fill the tell-tale twisted wire texture.



12 With the Gorilla Glue cut back, a layer of PVA Wood Glue, coloured with acrylic paint and mixed with filler, is applied generously. This will form the final texture layer, so bumps and ridges can be roughly formed at this stage.



**13** When dry, the filler mix is scraped, cut and filed to shape. Bark texture is scraped into the surface with a hacksaw or razor saw blade dragged sideways. My prototype has a large split running up its trunk, and this was cut into a gap that had been arranged between the wires at an earlier stage.




**14** Spray with the final overall colour, which is usually a grey – brown, with a hint of green weathering. If modelling a bare winter tree, more detailed painting might be needed, but not when it is hidden under foliage. Note that I added some fibres into the branches to represent some of the other twiggy growth.



**15** I make my own foliage mats. For the oak tree, I used 'Branch Bunches' fine texture, which can be teased out between the fingers to form a very thin layer resembling a net. A piece of thick card, 30 x 40cm has cling film stretched over it, secured at the back by tape, and the Branch Bunches 'net' is stretched over the top. The elm's 'net', illustrated, used fine-grade steel wool, teased out in the same way.



**16** Spray the net with grey-brown paint to give it some cohesion. To attach the foliage, I use waterproof PVA wood glue, diluted 1 part glue to 2-3 parts water with a spot of washing-up liquid, and sprayed with a very simple Badger 250 airbrush working at 20 -30 psi. With enough glue to 'bead' on the net, sieve fine texture foliage over it - work quickly, so have everything to hand!



**17** After a day's drying, the foliage can be cut with scissors into small pieces, peeling from the cling film as required. Some additional teasing out of the cut edges might be needed. Adding foliage from the base up, securing with waterproof PVA to individual wires, although larger pieces can be fixed to adjacent wires and separated with small scissors later.



**TOP TIP**
A light waft of cheap hairspray will hold any extra foliage cover to bald patches on the mat.

**18** Try to keep plenty of air in the foliage clumps and between them – remember, birds have to fly through it! Sometimes it is necessary to tear pieces out that are too dense or snip away at them with scissors. Adding foliage requires time and patience; the oak needed three days, the elm took a week. Once happy, its ready for planting.



# Build a bowling green



Phil Parker

INSPIRATION COMES in many forms. This time it arrived in a small box from Osborns Models, containing four figures taking part in a lawn bowls game. My grandad was a keen bowler, travelling up and down the country to take part in the sport, so constructing a suitable scene for these models should be in my blood. What I hadn't reckoned on, was it being one of the most challenging projects.

Making a model should start with a bit of prototype research. I spent some time on www.bowls.co.uk reading up on the rules of the game, and then visited a couple of bowling greens nearby. The first thing I learned was they are big. The green should form a square with sides between 30 and 40 metres long. That's almost 50cm long in 4mm scale!

Time for some selective compression – in other words, make the green smaller, but still looking right. After all, no one wants to give up that much valuable layout space. I've opted for 20cm square, which, in my opinion, looks better than a perfectly scale version.

Next, the grass. Well, on all the greens I looked at, this is short. Very short. About 5mm at a rough guess. Even the shortest electrostatic grass is too long, so my model uses green cardboard with a slight texture. This then needs to be 'mown' to produce stripes; I explain how this is achieved on page 62.

With a bit of work, this is a nice, and very British scene. Perfect as a space filler, bowling greens are very common in the UK. If bowls isn't your thing, the same methods would produce a cricket pitch, or with some lines and a net, a tennis court.

## WHAT YOU NEED

**Osborns Models**
OSBF114 – OO Lawn Bowls Players

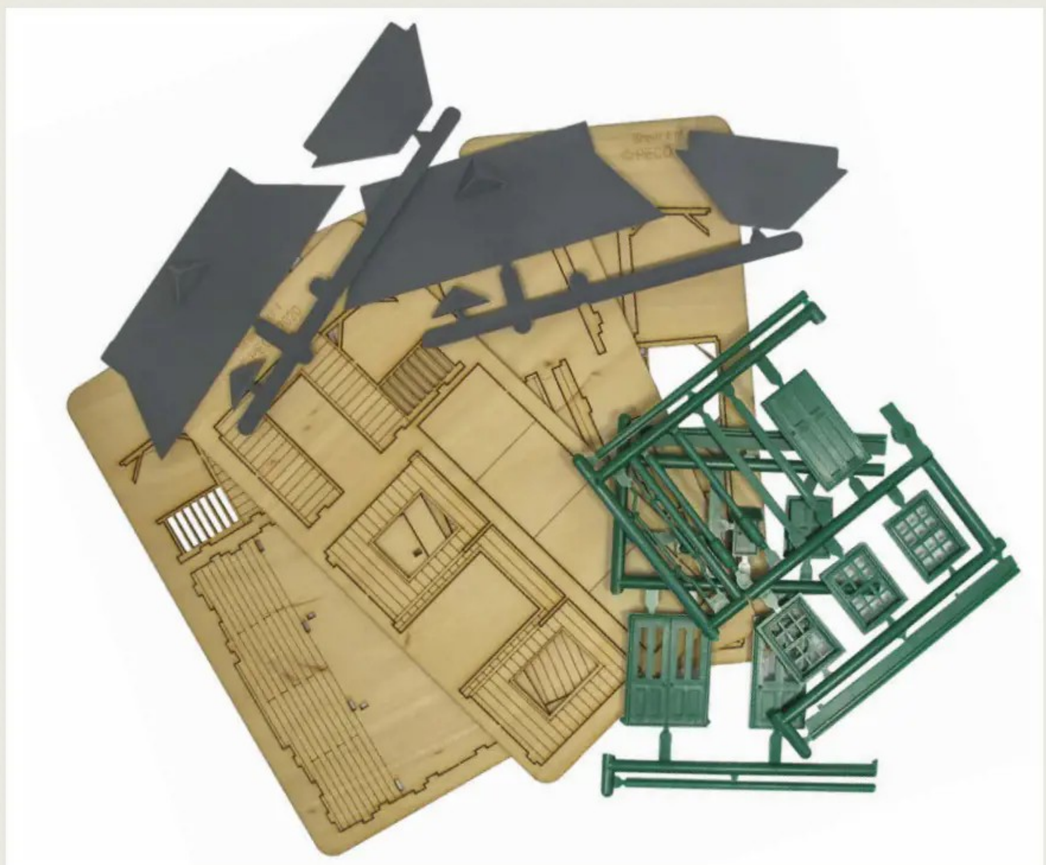
**Peco**
Modelscene OO/HO Cricket Pavilion

**Wills**
SS58 Garden Sheds

**Metcalfe Models**
PO503 Park Benches

**Others**
Green Canson Mi-Teintes card, foamboard, blended turf, pale green and bright coloured scatter, chinchilla sand, Slater's seated people, PVA glue, hair lacquer craft knife, matt varnish, steel rule, glue spreaders.

# ALL SKILL LEVELS



1 I don't know of a bowling pavilion kit, but Peco's Cricket Pavilion will do the job. The kit is mostly laser-cut wood, with plastic windows (shared with the Brick Country Station Building Manyways kit) and roof.




2 It's important to assemble the parts in numerical order, or you may find some bits won't fit. You can guess how I found that out! Deluxe Materials card glue is perfect for this job, even though the kit is mainly made from wood.



3 Windows and doors are supplied moulded in dark green plastic. Covering this with white paint isn't easy, so before fitting them to the model, I spray the green with a couple of coats of white car primer, then install them using superglue.



4 Once the wooden parts are assembled, I give them several light coats of white primer, letting the colour of the wood show through slightly. Once dry, the windows are finished with Deluxe Materials Glue'n'Glaze.



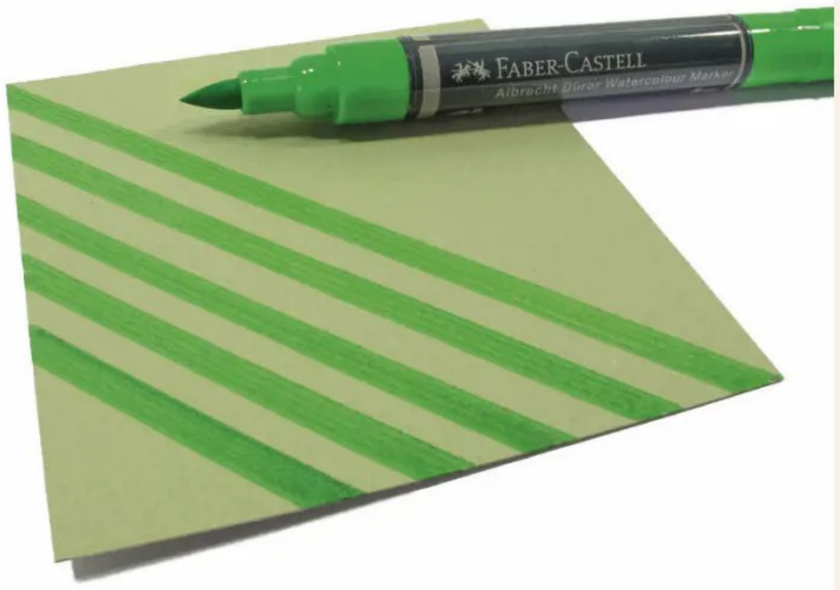
5 I hate making pagoda roofs! The trick is to glue the ridge, let it dry a little so it's still flexible and then add the sides. A little filler is still required on the corners, but not too much.



6 As the ground around the green should be higher than it, I make this using some foamboard with a suitable square cut out of it. My model is 33 by 26cm overall, with a 20cm square green.

## MODELLING GRASS STRIPES

From domestic gardens to cricket pitches, people who really care about a lawn will use a motor mower with a roller to produce neat stripes in the grass. Modelling these was the toughest part of this project, and I didn't get it right first time. The alternative methods might be useful for someone though. My base is a sheet of Canson Mi-Teintes card from a local art shop. It has a very slight texture, which I think is a reasonable representation of the short-mown grass on a bowling green.




A Faber-Castell watercolour marker produces nice stripes but are far too intense and neat to be realistic.



Stabilo pastel pencils are nice, especially if you smudge the marks made with your finger. While not ideal for this, I can see them having other uses for weathering jobs if I get some suitable colours.




Andy York should take credit for the method I used – mask the card and then spray it with a couple of light coats of clear matt varnish. This changes the colour of the card very slightly, which looks about right. With the masking removed, wear on the grass can be represented with a more general spray.



7 Many greens use artificial grass around the edges, and this extends down the vertical sides of the surrounding area. Sticking the scatter on to the sides of the foamboard is a lot easier if it's carried out before sticking the board down.



8 The scatter is fixed with neat PVA, and where the building sits, I scrape it away with a stiff, plastic spreader. You can reuse the scatter after this, as long as it's not contaminated with other scenic materials.



9 Our club will need some storage space, and a Wills shed plastic kit is perfect for this. The members will want to sit down too, and for this, I use a pack of Metcalfe cardboard bench kits.

**NEXT MONTH**
Phil kick-starts a new layout project and shares top tips on what to consider when you first start planning



**10** Bowlers have to keep one foot on a mat when they bowl, and the official size is 24” x 14”. A piece of paper coloured with a black marker, and then cut to 8 by 4mm, is perfect for this.



**11** Osborns bowlers are each holding a bowl, so there must be two more at the end of the rink, which I make by painting the plastic heads of dressmaking pins. A smaller pinhead is painted white for the jack.

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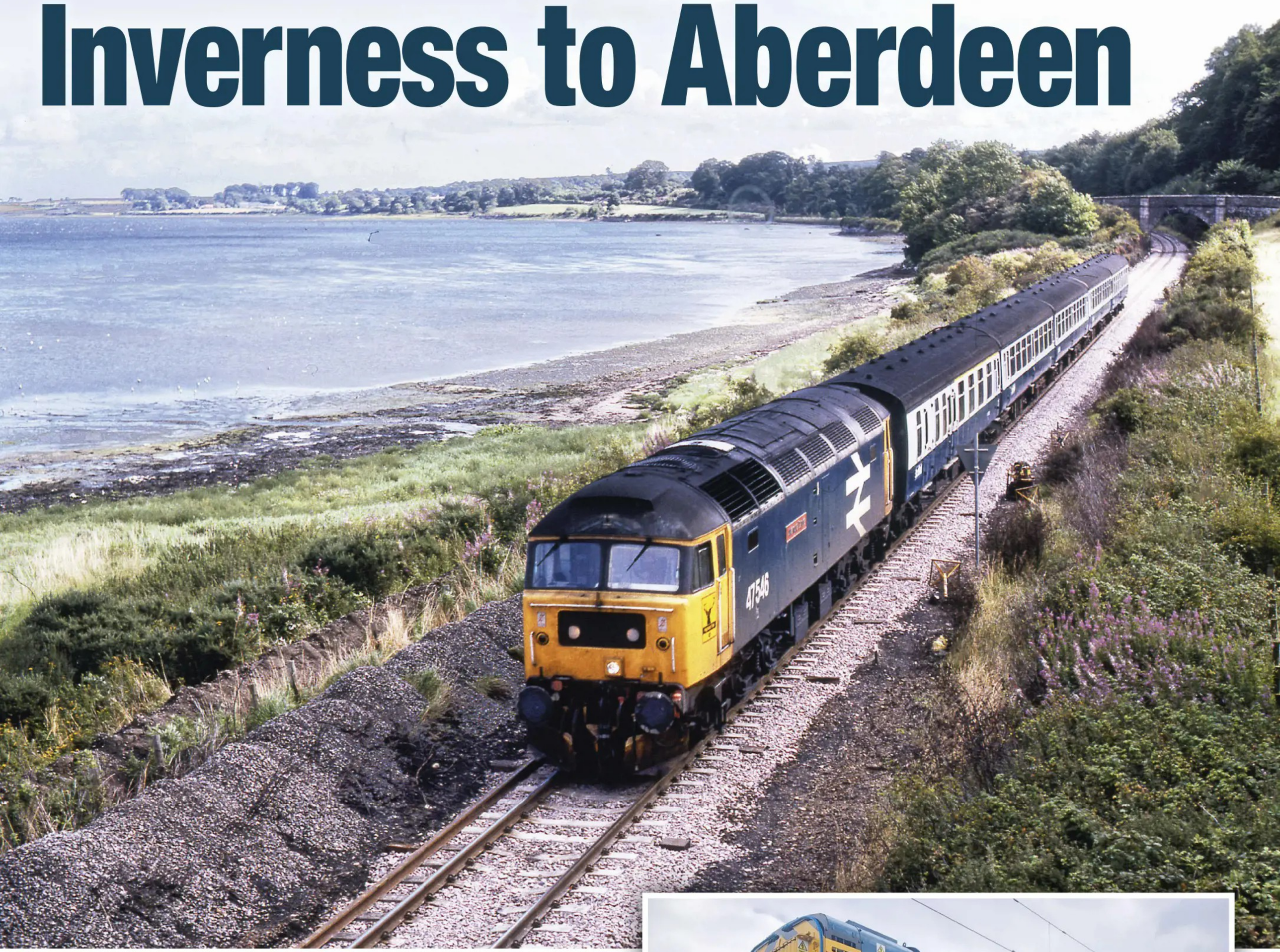
# TRACTION

ISSUE 287 | SEPTEMBER 2024

# Inverness to Aberdeen






## ALSO INSIDE:

- Driving Class 08s
- Transfesa vans
- Class 25s at Norwich
- West Coast Variety



**Don't forget, if you have an idea for an article, why not get in touch and perhaps you could feature in TRACTION.**

# Editor's Welcome



We start this issue with an article about the unglamorous, but essential, task of driving Class 08 diesel shunters in North London.

We head north for our photo feature about the Inverness to Aberdeen single-track main line. Those marvellous, but now long past, summer Saturdays are recalled when we visit Norwich to see Class 25s on trains to Great Yarmouth.

For wagon enthusiasts, our feature about the Transfesa two-axle vans will bring back memories of when these ' exotic' wagons appeared in locations across the country.

The West Coast Main Line may have been dominated in the 1980s by electrically hauled trains, but there was much else to see on the route as our article 'West Coast Variety' shows.

Stephen

**Stephen Rabone**
steverabone@hotmail.com

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**Cover photo: On August 27th, 1988, 47546 approaches Inverness with the 09:05 from Aberdeen. GAVIN MORRISON**

# Up the Carriage: Down the Brent: Shunting South West

**By Mick Humphrys**

Without a doubt, among the least glamorous workings of my railway career were the many hours I spent, especially during my early years as a junior driver, on the Class 08 shunting locomotive, known to locomen by the nicknames of 'Jocko', 'Jinty', 'Dobbin' or simply '350' (my nickname of choice) in reference to their horsepower.

Nearly a thousand of these small single-cab diesel electric 0-6-0 shunting locomotives where built during a 10-year period between 1952 and 1962, with their design being based on the LMS 12033 series locomotive. An English Electric vertical inline 6-cylinder 6KT developing 350hp directly drives a main generator, which provided the high voltage required for the two traction motors mounted on the leading and trailing axles. The two powered axles and the central trailing axle are coupled together via conventional coupling rods to improve adhesion. The main generator also doubles up as a motor to start the engine with power supplied from the battery.

The single engine crankshaft drives a main generator and, via a belt drive, an auxiliary generator and traction motor blower (this cools the two traction motors) at the cab end of the engine. The crankshaft also drives, via a belt drive, a radiator fan at the radiator end of the engine situated behind the large water-filled radiator. On some locomotives, the auxiliary generator is fitted directly onto the main generator, this provides an electrical supply for the traction motor blower.

**Ex-works 08969 is standing at Wembley on March 8th, 2020, waiting for, at this time, an infrequent shunt on the equally quiet stable shunt neck.**



The coupling rods connected to the cranks on the end of the axle. Beware of shifting.

The auxiliary generator provides, via a voltage regulator, 90v or 110v for the following:

1. Control equipment
2. Main generator field windings
3. Compressors and exhausters
4. Battery charging
5. Lighting and cooker circuits.
6. Traction motor blower (if not belt driven)

The driver of the locomotive controls the power by use of the controls fitted on both sides of the locomotive, in practice, the usual driving position was on the left. The simple 4-notch power controller operates electrical contacts and mechanically operates the fuel racks as follows.

When the power controller is opened the following takes place:-

(1) The reversers will throw to the position set by the master switch
(2) The motor contactors will close when notch one is selected
(3) Fuel to the engine can then be increased via the power handle until notch four is reached
(4) When notch 4 is selected, the field winding of the main generator is increased, enabling the output of the generator to increase the output to the traction motors.

## Fuel System

The fuel system on a Class 08 is supplied by one 600-gallon main tank, which feeds a secondary 80-gallon header tank. Fuel transfer from the main to header tank is by either a manual transfer pump or an electric pump. With most locos fitted with a manual pump, a significant part of the driver's shift was spent pumping the handle fitted on the left-hand side of the cab. It was good driver practice to maintain the fuel level at around the 60-gallon mark. A large red-painted instruction sternly stated that the fuel level must NEVER be allowed to fall below the 20-gallon red mark.

During my time as a driver's assistant or secondman at Stonebridge Park from 1979 to 1982, my work on '350s' was mainly ferrying the locos from their various locations in the Willesden area back and forth to Willesden TMD (see TRACTION 231) for refuelling and maintenance. Willesden was the assigned depot for the '350s' based in the Willesden and Euston area. A clever trick upon refuelling was to fill the main tank right up and over 600 gallons, the excess fuel would then overflow into the header tank and could be filled right up to its maximum of 85 gallons, thus preventing some arm ache manually pumping.

During my Stonebridge days, the allocation of the '350s' in the Willesden area was as follows:

3 at Willesden Carriage Sidings – all cabs facing south
1 at Willesden Wagon Shops – cab facing south
2 at Brent North End – cabs facing north
1 at Brent South – cab facing south
1 at Sudbury Hump – cab facing north
1 at South West Sidings – cab facing south
2 at the TMD – 1 cab facing south and 1 cab facing north

The cab face direction was very important to enable a safer and easier method of shunting. This need could often require the locomotive to be turned, which I did on many occasions,

via Mitre Bridge, the North London and City Lines. I can testify that shunting with the cab the wrong way was literally a pain in the neck! These shunting jobs themselves were all single-manned, with just a driver moving from one side of the cab to the other to control shunting movements; these drivers were often 'green carders'. This commonly used slang term referred to medically restricted drivers, and was derived from the green label attached to a wagon requiring repairs!

An exception to this single manning, which was unequivocally not a favourite, was on a Saturday night ballast. An uncomfortable night could be had on the loco in between jobs, although in my early days as a secondman, there were still quite a lot of un-motorised cranes in use and the movement of them could result in a very busy night!

Regular readers of my articles in TRACTION will know that in June 1982, I transferred to Euston 'in the grade' to experience more express locomotive mainline work. However, my '350' duties did not finish. The two local trip and shunting jobs at Euston, referred to as targets 1 and 2, both required a secondman. With three shifts of 8hrs 45 mins in length, 6 secondmen were employed daily. During the early 1980s, my favourite diesel locomotive, the small Sulzer Class 25, was allocated to target 1 (see TRACTION 235 'Who's on the big engine'). With the more powerful Class 25 being utilised on the many empty coaching stock (ECS) workings, usually



**Series and parallel switch in the cab of the '350'. The author never used it or indeed ever heard of it being used.**


**The cab electrical cupboard.**

in the form of parcel and newspaper vehicles between Euston and Camden, the Class 08 took care of any ad hoc shunting movements, including removing crippled or defective coaching stock.

With the closure of Kensington Olympia in 1981, the Motorail services moved to Euston, so additional shunting duties increased the workload. The turns could indeed be very busy working right up to time and being relieved on the footplate by the next shift! 08454 was a London area engine for many years during this period. Graffiti 'Tic Tac Toe' had been written inside the cab of the loco on an electrical cupboard, which earned the loco another nickname. 08454 is still working as one of the two resident shunting engines at the Alstom depot at Ditton; this facility carries out refurbishment of various new modern traction, including the Class 390 'Pendolino' fleet.

A last job for the morning target shift was the 'Boxmoors'. This was formed of 4 to 6 parcel vehicles and arriving at Euston at 13:00. The consist, after unloading in platform 1, was then required to be moved to Camden. With a load of up to 180 tons, this was usually one of the Sulzer's tasks, though I can recall on more than one occasion the '350' being challenged with the task. Although only just over one mile from Euston, the route involved climbing the 1 in 50 gradient departure line just north of the terminus, which certainly pushed the small engine to its limit.

If more tractive effort was required for the trip, an option that was available was to operate the series/parallel switch. This switch was a large double knife-type switch located in a small cabinet in the cab. In normal use, the '350s' two traction motors were operated in a parallel arrangement (each traction motor receiving a separate equal supply from the main generator). Operation of the switch linked the motors together in series and produced a greater tractive effort for heavy train working and steep gradients. Use of the switch was strictly controlled with a painted instruction on the cabinet that permission must be obtained before operation. During my career, I never saw it used or indeed used it myself. I always imagined a manager somewhere sitting in an office beside a dust covered telephone waiting for a call seeking permission to operate the switch!

Another not infrequent job for the unlucky Euston ferry crew (with numerous locomotive changes at Euston), there were a total of 11 ferry turns a day booking on at 06:00 (two crews), 07:00, 10:00, 11:00, 14:00, 14:30, 15:00, 16:00, 22:00 and 23:00. That was a total of 22 drivers and their secondmen! It was a 12-mile round trip with a '350' to Willesden TMD for refuelling or changing over locomotives. This was a noisy uncomfortable journey at the maximum speed of 15mph. Occasionally, the Willesden trip also involved mainline Class 81-87 locomotives being conveyed. This, in the early part of my railway career, could involve the larger locomotive being utilised to haul the '350'.

Unfortunately, on one such occasion with the Euston secondman riding on the '350', the Euston driver, who shall remain nameless here, 'forgot' about his small



Driver stool-type chairs arranged in the sleeping position.

load and quickly accelerated on the main down slow line, up to around 40mph line speed departing Euston. Fortunately, the '350' stayed upright and the driver came to a sense of realisation at the top of Camden Bank, after travelling just over a mile. The understandably shaken up, though fortunately uninjured, secondman had applied the hand brake and must have breathed a huge sigh of relief when his extremely rough ride ended. The '350' suffered extensive damage with bent coupling rods that had to be cut off on-site by the breakdown crew. The resulting closure of the two lines out of Euston caused huge delays to services for the remainder of the day. As often happens as the result of an incident, a new rule was brought into railway operation forbidding the hauling of a Class 08 locomotive with any locomotive other than another Class 08.

By 1985, and as a newly qualified junior driver with a position back at Stonebridge Park, I was very soon put on a '350' training course. Commencing November 1985, the generous time allowance of 5 day's training was carried out at the carriage sidings under the supervision of Norman Martin, one of the 'green card' drivers, who carried out most of the instructing duties. I must be honest that my attitude was slightly affected by having recently passed out as a driver on the mainline driving Class 1 100mph trains and enduring an intense rules and traction exam, I thought this was beneath me and my obvious talents.

I was soon brought down to earth with Norman taking us round the '08' in great detail, even running the engine onto sidings without any overhead wires, then opening all the cabinets and having us climb up onto the sole bar. Thankfully, at the end of the week, the traction inspector Peter Crawley, passing me for driving the '08', did not ask too many questions, and after observing a shunt move, I qualified as a '08' driver. My regular shunting work began in earnest with jobs shunting at the locations in the Willesden area.

## Up the Carriage

With its own allocated 'green card' drivers, Willesden carriage sidings worked a three shift system with no less than nine drivers booking on at 06:00, 06:30, 07:00 14:00, 14:30, 15:00, 21:00, 21:30 and 23:00 with the 3 '350s' busy marshalling passengers trains for the service out of Euston. During the day, this mainly involved making up the extensive sleeper services that ran at the time and, during the even busier night shifts, the day trains. While this was in the hands of the allocated drivers, cover was provided by drivers at Stonebridge, and I often found myself 'up the carriage' covering for sickness and leave.

A useful deal often occurred when only two drivers were on a shift, with the willingness by the two drivers covering the work of three, rewarded with 4hrs overtime paid to each! The work involved drawing the ECS, which had been backed in the north end by an electric loco, out of the south end of shed roads 1-4. The shed roads were at this time not wired so, after the driver backing the train had stopped, the ECS was attached to an 800v ETS shore supply. The drivers were very careful during this move as they were very aware of the pantograph's proximity to the end of the wire, especially when cab 2 was the south end cab.

Once any maintenance work on day coaches was completed, or sleeper vehicles made up with fresh linen, etc., a '350' at the south end of the shed would draw the consist out towards London. Once clear of all the point work and the signals from the south box cleared, the stock was propelled back north towards the roads 5-15 of the marshalling sidings or roads 1-7 in the stable sidings.

Such propelling movements were controlled by a shunter in the rearmost vehicle operating the brake valve (nicknamed 'the jigger') if such vehicle was a brake van. On Mark 1 and Mark 2 stock, there was an indicator (the 'butterfly') fitted just above the door, giving an indication as to whether a passenger communication device had been operated. This could be operated from an open window and, when turned, vented the brake pipe and applied the brake. Mark 3 stock had a brake valve at each end, also just accessible from the rear door window.

Once in one of these roads, the main shunting activity took place, with vehicles requiring repair, being replaced, or formations altered. The most appreciated move from shed to yard was termed 'a straight pull'. This was when a formation was shunted from shed to yard and then required no further shunting. Even better was then to be routed back to one of the remaining shed roads where the stock was not quite ready to be pulled. Especially on a night shift, some more sleep time could be gained. Sleeping on a '350' took some effort, I found that by putting both cab seats around the controls and using plenty of newspapers to cushion the desk top, sleep could be achieved!



A driver's view from the left and side of the cab.




Speedometer and amperage meter. The header tank fuel gauge had the stern warning, 'Must keep above 20 gallons', painted over!

A straight pull was quite rare, as more often than not, extensive re marshalling of consists was required. This could involve what seemed like numerous backwards and forward movements 'knocking out' failed vehicles, which required more intensive maintenance and replacing with recently repaired or spare vehicles. On the loco, as much as you tried to figure out what was going on, it seemed pointless, with no progress being made. Even worse was if one was directed over into the stable roads 1-7.

Once in the stable, it was akin to a Hotel California moment: you can never leave! Hours were spent moving numerous vehicles endlessly from one road to another. Once finished, after the purgatory of endless shunting up and down the long shunt neck road, everything looked to me the same as when you started. Some relief could be experienced 'up the carriage' with some stock required at the new sidings, or some brought back to the carriage. Situated about a mile south of the carriage, the New 'E' was an overspill stabling siding for the southern west coast services and was where the little-used Royal Mail depot stands today. A couple of hours could easily pass taking a trip back and forth.

Another break from the norm could be a trip to the wagon shops, situated next to the DC lines just to the north of Stonebridge Park station. Here, some heavy-duty repairs could be carried out, including wheel tyre turning, etc. The large shed, still standing today, has evidence of camouflage paint applied during WWII, although one has to look up as ignorant pathetic graffiti vandals have ruined this historic feature somewhat.

## Down the Brent

The busiest job, as I recall, was the marshalling yard at Brent sidings, especially the night turn. Booking on at 22:00 for the night duty at Brent sidings, you climbed aboard the loco at 22:20 and shunted the numerous mixed freight services that were arriving in steady procession from the Eastern, Southern, Western and Northern regions. In railway terms, Willesden really was the centre of the universe. Your experience and workload could in some ways be dependent on the skill of the shunters orchestrating the movements, with some very adept at the role utilising (not totally legal) fly or loose coupled shunting.

This shunting technique involved pushing a vehicle/s not coupled up to the engine then, once sufficient speed was obtained, the loco would stop and the vehicle could continue to its required siding in the yard. Skilful use of a shunting pole (used to remove the coupling between wagons) and point operation could enable more than one vehicle to be shunted to different sidings! The condition of the track in the Brent during the 1980s left much to be desired and derailments were quite a common occurrence, providing regular work for the breakdown team based at Willesden TMD.

One such derailment could have been interesting as it involved a wagon conveying dangerous goods, which decided to create an earth fault and depart the rails as I was pulling it along with a raft of other wagon northwards out of the Brent. The derailment was at a very slow speed and the wagon thankfully just dropped down to one side. The Area Yard Manager (AYM) was very soon in attendance, and I recall as he reported it to the emergency services on the phone ,he was slightly bemused at the distinct lack of interest from the other end of the line, no doubt today it would be a full-scale emergency!

Another incident during that never-ending night shift that I recall was my engine, 08905, becoming derailed on a set of points but, with some very clever arrangement using some off cuts of sleepers laying nearby and other assorted pieces of timber, it was very skilfully re-railed by the AYM. While at the Brent, I do recall the cardinal sin while working a '350', which was 'shifting of the crank'.

The cranks on each wheel are mounted on the end of an axle, with the other end attached to the connecting rod. These cranks, when one selected the opposite direction to travel and then applied power, could shift on the axle. If lucky, the small engine would very abruptly stop without any damage, however, worst case scenario would be the keyway on the crank shearing, resulting in crank moving out of line and the side rods bending. This would result in a major repair with the side rods removed




View of the cab.

or even cut off and the wheel set having to be sent away for repairs. The locomotive could be stood down for months! Any further movement of the loco could lead to a derailment and would resemble a bucking bronco. I seem to recall that a newly qualified driver shunting the Brent one night might well have been guilty of such an error. I will say no more here!

## Shunting South West!

The best shunt job, if working on a '350' could ever be described as best, during my five years as a driver at Stonebridge was shunting South West sidings. Situated opposite Willesden Junction station, with the line to the south heading towards Mitre Bridge and the Southern Region, and the line westwards towards the North London Line with a spur leading down to the Western Region, South West sidings itself was mainly used for the storage of various vehicles. The resident '350' and the shunting staff based there were also gainfully employed, especially during the night shift, shunting the large Willesden Freightliner terminal just to the north. Booking on at the sidings at 23:00 (travelling time there, paid as an allowance), the reason why I preferred this job was, as Freightliner sets are formed of permanently coupled together 4 or 5 vehicles, the shunts would be fairly straightforward. Indeed, once on the small loco, instructions would be, off with 10, back leave 5, back onto reception, leave 5 off with 15, back leave 10, etc.

In between the arrival of Class 4s from all points of the compass, an armchair in the small mess room next to the foreman's office, the designated driver's chair enabled some shut-eye on the night turn. I remember vividly the phone ringing in the foreman's office, announcing the arrival of another liner that required shunting, rudely awaking all from their slumber. Periods of rest, however, between jobs, could be around an hour, so long enough for various cramps to set in as you tried all sorts of positions to get comfortable. In the week commencing December 7th, 1986, I booked on as spare (no allocated job) at 19:00 on the Tuesday. The train crew supervisor (TCS), Robin Brown, asked if I would like some overtime and cover the 23:00 book on for the South West shunt job. Always happy to make a bit and help out whenever I could, I agreed and was then asked if I would do the same for the next three nights till Thursday. I pointed out that I was losing out on the travelling time as I couldn't book off




**Simple driver controls.**

later than 07:00, equating to the maximum of 12 hours shift. This was resolved by the TCS agreeing to make up the additional hours on my shift on Friday. Friday came, and I remember being slightly put out that Robin did not round my shift up to 12 hours, indeed only making it 11!

## Buckeye Back at Euston

My time at Stonebridge Park, as readers of previous TRACTION will know, came to an end when I finally got my promotional move back to Euston in March 1990. My '350' working now continued as a junior driver although, with the loss of parcels and postal movements, the target jobs soon became just one engine per shift. As a driver in the early 1990s, with Euston downside shed and Camden yard still requiring a shunt loco for coaching stock movements, I had the pleasure of working these jobs. I must make mention here of the common method of working at the Downside shed.

Once situated where the HS2 lines are allegedly being built, this mid-Victorian building was used for light carriage maintenance and cleaning of predominantly Mark 1 or Mark 2 coaching stock. With movements on a tight 'S' bend once you departed northwards, three shunters and one chargeman were allocated per shift to control the movements. This was to conform to the rulebook instruction that a shunter should be seen at all times and, should sight be lost, the movement should stop. In practice, you shunted by telepathy with the shunter, often with the shunter sending you forward, disappearing out of view, but you kept going until the shunter 'took the brake' (opening a brake cock at the end of the consist), stopping you dead. The 'instruction' then was to go in the opposite direction once the brake was given back. This extremely lax method of working would absolutely not be allowed today, but it worked: I can't recall any serious mishaps as worked by experienced railwaymen who knew what they were doing. The very busy early shift was nicknamed 'buckeye' as this often involved the tedious movement of uncoupling an entire rake of coaching to check each and every buckeye.

My '350' working continued and, with sectorisation beginning in earnest, meant that Euston became a fully Intercity depot, working shunting jobs at Wembley and at Willesden TMD. With privatisation and Virgin being awarded the West Coast, these workings continued into the 2000s and from 1997 onwards, I, along with my colleague Pat Baxter, updated the '350' teaching plan and undertook training of the new 'Millenium' drivers that had started in the late 1990s after a 15-year hiatus with no new driver training at Euston on the lowly '350', the '350' training came as quite a shock to some of the new breed of driver having only worked Class 1 passenger trains previously.

It seems strange now that I had to wait nearly six years to achieve my goal of becoming a Euston driver with the present systems of people achieving such in little over a year. Still, my generation had the very best training and became the very best railwaymen in the TRACTION era. Virtually all of us from the period wanted, from the very start, to be train drivers and, if you stuck it out, became keen railway enthusiasts. It gets in the blood.

These workings continued under the privatisation era until all the work was lost to fitting and other maintenance staff when they were allowed to carry out shunting movements within the depot confines: a loss indeed to the footplate grade!

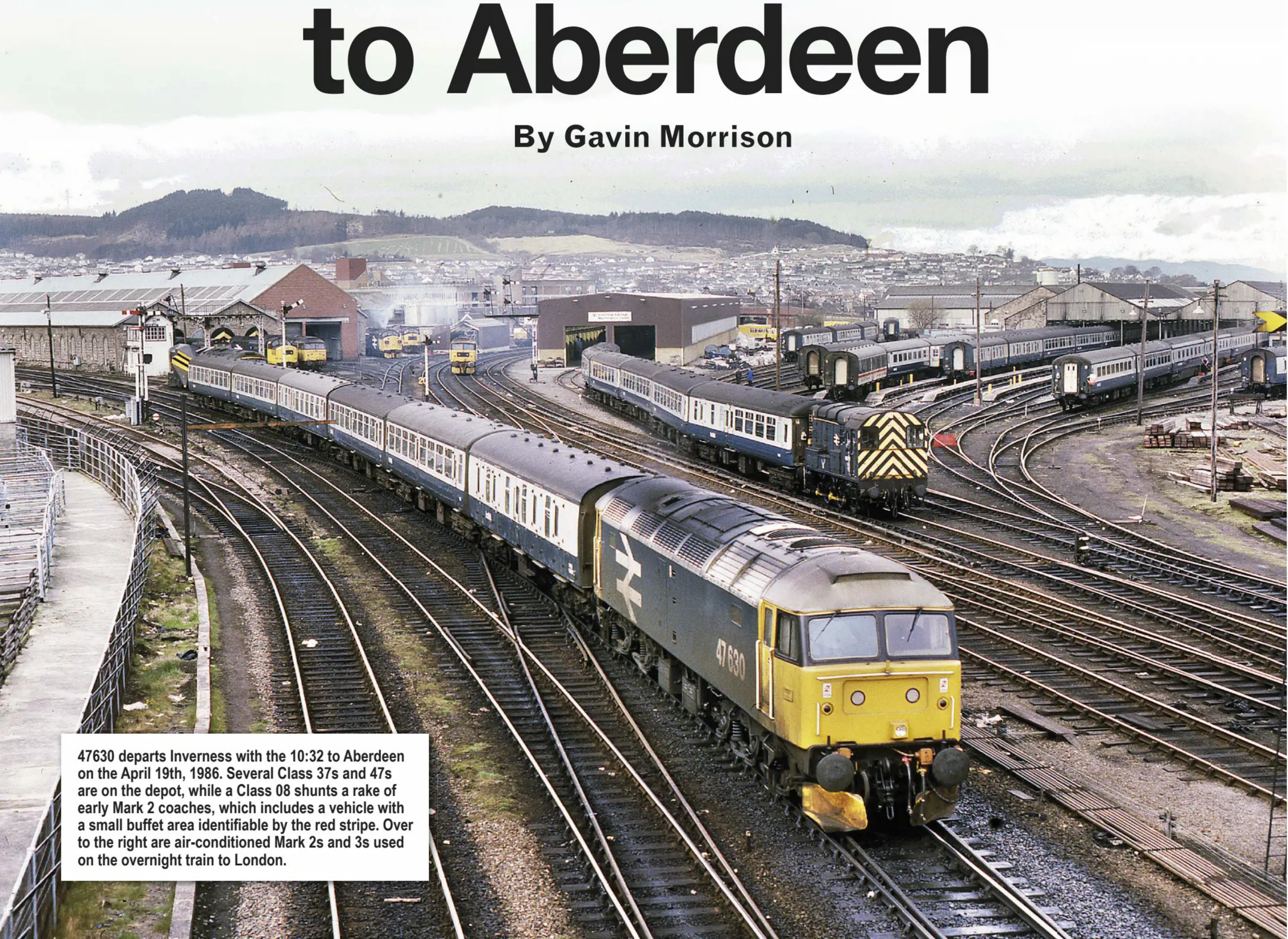
So, by 2006, I once more stepped off a form of TRACTION, the humble Class 08 '350', not realising then that I would move one as a driver again! Or not until....




47209 is providing steam heating for the 17:32 to Aberdeen on April 18th, 1986. The stock for the overnight train to London Euston is in the background.

# From Inverness to Aberdeen

**By Gavin Morrison**




47630 departs Inverness with the 10:32 to Aberdeen on the April 19th, 1986. Several Class 37s and 47s are on the depot, while a Class 08 shunts a rake of early Mark 2 coaches, which includes a vehicle with a small buffet area identifiable by the red stripe. Over to the right are air-conditioned Mark 2s and 3s used on the overnight train to London.

On August 27th, 1988, 47546 approaches Inverness with the 09:05 from Aberdeen. The photograph was taken from the A9 bridge and the Moray Firth is to the left. The formation of the train includes a Mark 1 brake first coach as well as four Mark 2 open seconds.

An unusual feature of operations at Nairn was that there were two signal boxes staffed by just one signalman. In this view taken on March 27th, 1992, we see the signalman cycling along the platform between the two signal boxes.

On Sunday, September 25th, 1988, HST power car 43041 heads the 19:20 Inverness to London King's Cross out of Elgin. The train was diverted via Aberdeen because of engineering work on its normal route through Aviemore.

A loaded log train arrives at Elgin from the Aberdeen direction on March 23rd, 1992. Both 37242 and 37009 are in Railfreight Distribution livery.





On August 9th, 1990, 37154 brings the 11:26 Inverness to Aberdeen past the 'whisky sheds' on the approach to Keith. The sheds are used for storing barley for the production of whisky in one of Keith's distilleries.



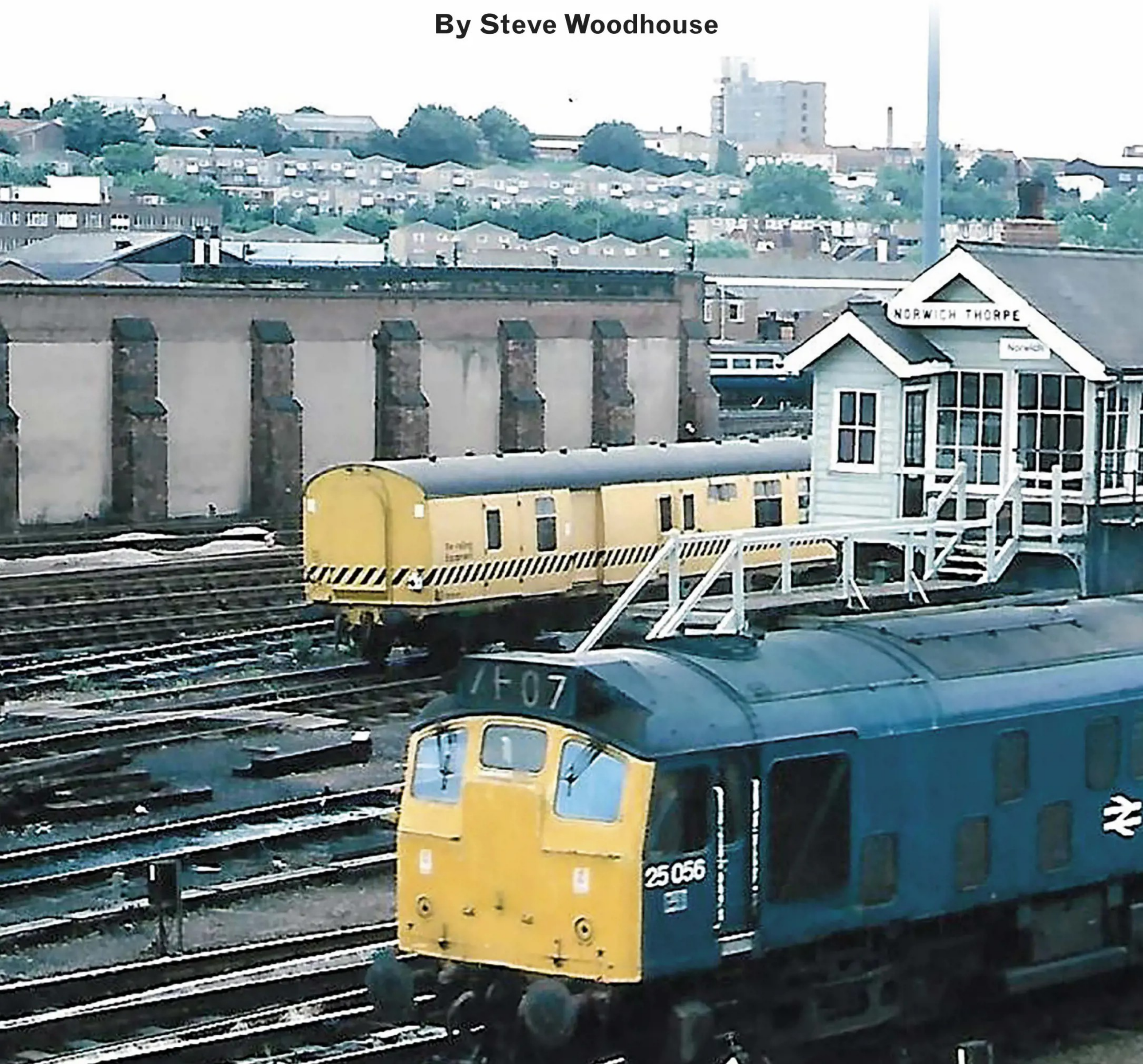

47717 pulls into Insch station with the 12:07 Inverness to Aberdeen on August 10th, 1990. In the background is the Hill of Dunnideer with the ruins of the 13th-century Dunnideer Castle on the top.



On a rather damp and miserable September 1st, 1988, 47460 pulls into Inverurie with the 12:00 Inverness to Aberdeen and passes another Class 47 with the 13:25 Aberdeen to Inverness.

# Saturdays Only Class 25s at Norwich

**By Steve Woodhouse**



During the 1970s and into the early 1980s, summer Saturdays at Norwich were eagerly awaited due to the volume of trains to and from Yarmouth. Trains would arrive at Norwich for reversal from places not normally served at any other time of the year. At the time, during the day when Norwich Thorpe station was full of loco-hauled sets, three trains would go round the Wensum avoiding line, these being from Leeds, Sheffield and Chesterfield. We didn't bother much with those as they were always Tinsley Class 31s, which were often seen in Norwich during the 1970s.

## Depot codes

BS - Bescot
CD - Crewe Diesel
CW - Cricklewood
HA - Haymarket
KD - Carlisle Kingmoor
SP – Springs Branch
TO - Toton



**25056 KD and 25270 TO leave Norwich past Thorpe box with 1M37 14:20 Yarmouth to Derby. 25270 has the recess in the cab side, which once housed the tablet-catching apparatus. 25056 still has a head code panel not even set to 0O00 as late as 1981. August 1st, 1981.**



25124 TO and 25129 TO at Norwich platform 2 after working 1M37 14:15 Yarmouth to Derby. The 16T mineral wagon behind the signal box has coal for keeping the signalmen warm and full of hot tea. The signal in front of the signal box is the starting signal for platform 1, when the train was too long to sit behind the right-hand signal on the bracket, such as the Newcastle, which was always load 13, being the biggest train of the day. It was full of Tyneside shipyard workers and their families. July 29th, 1978.



25129 TO and 25124 TO arrive at Norwich with 1E83 08:32 Derby to Yarmouth. The Class 31 in the head shunt will take the train on to its destination. Three forms of basic traction at Norwich can be seen on shed - a Class 37 and 47 outside and a 'Skinhead' Class 31 inside. Charringtons' oil depot is to the left. July 29th, 1978.



25124 TO and 25129 TO leave Norwich with 1M66 14:30 Yarmouth to Walsall. The signal is off for trains going towards Trowse Junction and the line to London and the Midlands and the North. The left-hand signal is for trains going to Sheringham, Yarmouth and Lowestoft. July 29th, 1978.



25178 CW and 24245 BS leave Norwich during a summer downpour with 1M37 14:15 Yarmouth to Derby. July 29th, 1978.



25131 TO and 25130 TO are at Norwich platform 4 after arriving with 1E83 08:32 Derby to Yarmouth. A Class 31 took the train to its destination. September 2nd, 1978.



25038 BS and 25153 CD arrive at Norwich with 1E91 08:00 Walsall to Yarmouth. 25038 is complete with snowploughs. July 14th, 1979.



25153 CD and 25038 BS are at Norwich awaiting the arrival of the Yarmouth to Derby, which on this day was worked by 20077 and 20189 as far as Norwich. July 14th, 1979.

The trains we waited for with anticipation and much excitement were from Derby and Walsall, both booked to be worked by pairs of Class 25s, barring any failures, which were extremely rare. The timetables from the period show the trains as follows:

1E83 08:12 Derby to Yarmouth
1M37 14:15 Yarmouth to Derby
1E91 08:00 Walsall to Yarmouth
1M66 14:30 Yarmouth to Walsall

The head codes remained the same over the years, the times changing only slightly.

The Derby would arrive first and the train taken to Yarmouth by a class 31. This was normally load nine. The '25s' would then wait for the arrival of the Walsall, also normally load nine, and take this to Yarmouth. This gave those at the seaside something to get excited about. The second pair of locos would then go on shed and wait their return working.

What made the trains particularly interesting was that the locos swapped over. The pair that came in from Derby went back to Walsall and the pair that came in from Walsall went back to Derby.

1980 was the last year that the Walsall ran. 1981 did produce Class 25s on the Derby but occasionally a Class 47 would turn up, but it was the end of the 25s going through to Yarmouth, so an era had come to an end. It was downhill all the way then to where we are now with nothing. A summer Saturday is just like any other day of the week.

What also made the locos interesting was, on closer inspection, quite often no two would be the same. Running numbers were in different places, be it cab sides or body sides. Data panels were also in different locations. Several, former Scottish Region locos still had the recess under the driver's cab window where the tablet-catching apparatus once was. Head code panels were all different as well, some showing 0O00, others having a rogue head code and others the two white dots on a black background.




25203 CW and 25032 BS pass Norwich Thorpe Junction signal box with 1E83 08:32 Derby to Yarmouth. Wensum yard is in the background, which later became the site for Crown Point depot. In 1975, several Clayton Class 17s were dumped here and later tripped to King's scrapyard at Trowse Upper junction to be cut up. The two buildings in the background are the old and new (at the time) power stations. The distant signal in front of the box is for Swing Bridge Junction, which is just out of sight round the bend to the rear of the train. July 21st, 1979.



25 132 TO and 25124 TO going on shed at Norwich after arriving with the Walsall to Yarmouth. To get from the station to the shed involved several reversals. The driver did not change ends, the secondman remaining in the non-driving cab. The building in the background with the large windows is the drivers' signing on point and mess room, built in the 1950s. July 21st, 1979.



25132 TO and 25124 TO are running light engine at Thorpe Junction having come off number 2 reception road. On number 1 reception road is a Class 37, which had worked empty coaching stock from Lowestoft after having formed a Saturdays only Liverpool Street to Lowestoft train via the East Suffolk Line. July 21st, 1979.



25032 BS and 25203 CW leave Norwich, passing Thorpe Junction box with 1M66 14:30 Yarmouth to Walsall. The roads in the foreground are the goods road, down main and up main. To the right of the small brick building is where a steam crane used to stand, always in light steam; long gone by then, though. July 21st, 1979.



25110 SP and 25141 TO wait on the fuel road for the arrival of 1M66 14:30 Yarmouth to Walsall. The fuel pad was fed by tanks at the top of the bank, but when a B&B was built up there, it was closed. 25110 still has 0O00 up in the head code panel long after these had been dispensed with on January 1st, 1976. July 28th, 1979.

There were some outrageous pairings like 25001 (HA) and 25136 (TO), 25 271 (HA) with 25 280 (CW), 25 270 (TO) and 25 056 (KD). We were all in a bewildered trance after seeing and copping 25 001; just a Class 24 with an uprated engine.

Those were the days!

The camera I had up until 1978 was a SLR Zenit E a Soviet-built job with a German lens. It wasn't a bad camera but I just wore it out by 1978. I used a hand-held exposure meter at the time until I got a SLR Fujica AX5. That worked well for the next 20-plus years.

# Classic Wagons - Transfesa two-axle vans

**By David Ratcliffe**

Unlike today's railfreight scene, which is dominated by container services and block company trains running between dedicated terminals, some 40 years ago, the picture was very different with wagonload workings, serving numerous destinations and conveying a myriad of different commodities, being commonplace across much of the rail network.

Such trains also included a wide range of different wagon types, including the distinctive Spanish-owned 6.7-metre wheelbase 27-tonne capacity two-axle Transfesa vans, which were used primarily to convey fresh fruit and vegetables from growers in France, Italy, Spain and Portugal to customers around Britain, reaching these shores via the Dunkerque to Dover train ferry.

Until 1983, the Transfesa fleet comprised over a thousand all wooden-bodied vans, the majority of which having been built in Germany during the 1950s. In order to facilitate the carriage of perishables traffic at all times of the year, they were fitted with up to eight sliding ventilator panels each side. A batch of 488 vans, allocated to ferry diagram E.011, were equipped with cupboard doors at one end in addition to the standard sliding side doors, while the 90 Transfesa vans to diagram E.215 had a short open brake platform at one end, which increased their length over headstocks from 11.22 to 11.72 metres.

In 1983/84, Transfesa increased its fleets with the introduction of 405 new all-steel sliding-wall two-axle vans, 305 of which were built and registered in Spain while the rest were built and registered in Germany. This new design allowed full access to the entire floor area from both sides and enabled loading and unloading by forklift truck from ground level. Measuring 13.9 metres over headstocks, and with a 9-metre wheelbase, the Transfesa all-steel vans were only fitted with four ventilators in each side, although in common with the wooden-bodied vans, they had both air and vacuum brakes, being coded ITX on TOPS.

**While the yard staff and crew of Class 09 No. 09013 discuss their next shunting move, four loaded Transfesa vans, two all-steel and two wooden-bodied, one with a brake platform at one end, wait to leave Dover Town Yard for Paddock Wood on March 4th, 1984.**
**TREVOR MANN COLLECTION**




ITX 24 71 2396 020-2, one of the 305 all-steel Transfesa vans built by Tafesa of Madrid in 1984, was loaded with lemons when photographed at Ardwick West in February 1985. DAVID RATCLIFFE

Like the earlier vans, they were also fitted with interchangeable wheelsets to enable them to run on both the standard gauge or the 5ft 6in broad gauge found on the Iberian peninsula, with exchange facilities being located on the Franco-Spanish border at Cerbere (Port Bou) and Hendaye.

Although Transfesa had its own distributions depots at Paddock Wood in Kent and at Wavertree in Liverpool, its vans could be found the length and breadth of the rail network, not only delivering imported fruit and vegetables to freight depots situated in the major conurbations but also to numerous goods yards and freight siding in more rural areas of the country.

Once unloaded, not all Transfesa vans were returned empty to the continent, as backloads carried by the vans included bagged china clay from Devon and Cornwall, bagged magnesium oxide from Hartlepool, glass bulbs from Harworth, seed potatoes from north east Scotland, tinplate from south Wales and rod coil from Scunthorpe.

Unfortunately, after the demise of BR's air-braked Speedlink wagonload network in July 1991, Transfesa vans became less frequent visitors to Britain, although the all-steel vans would continue to deliver mineral water and other imported bottled drinks products to the railheads at Avonmouth and Daventry until around 2005.



All-steel ITX 24 71 2396 186-1 and end-door ITX 24 71 2147 302-6, both seen arriving earlier that day at Ashburys, are pictured at the nearby at Ardwick West FD on July 8, 1985. At this period, Ardwick received up to eight Transfesa vans a week loaded variously with lemons, oranges and onions, with the traffic increasing during the weeks prior to Christmas. DAVID RATCLIFFE

End-door fitted Transfesa van 24 71 2147 302-6, built Westwaggon in 1954, is seen just after arriving at Ashburys in the daily Speedlink from Warrington Arpley on July 8th, 1985. Also in the train was one of the Transfesa all-steel vans and both vans, loaded with Spanish onions, which would be tripped later that morning to the nearby Ardwick West freight depot. DAVID RATCLIFFE







Bagged china clay was a regular backload to the continent for the Transfesa vans, and ITX 24 71 2396 170-5, sporting a revised company logo, was spotted at Burngullow on June 6th, 2001, when en route from the Imerys clay dries at Parkandillack to Italy. DAVID RATCLIFFE

# West Coast Variety

**By Andrew K Overton**

In a previous article, I showcased the most prevalent electric traction on the West Coast Main Line (WCML) by the 1980s, Classes 86 and 87. Being a major Anglo-Scottish main line link to industry, traffic could be intense, and required a wide range of traction types to handle it, including some diesel haulage under the wires, although under BR, loco swaps meant that non-electric mileage was kept to a minimum.

By the 1984/5 period of my photos, the 'Roarers' were very much in decline, with Class 84 eliminated and Classes 82 and 83 reduced to single examples used for empty coaching stock movements between Euston and Willesden. Classes 81 and 85, however, were still very much in evidence on both passenger and freight. The result of all this was a fair amount of traction variety interspersing



85012 passes Cowroast footbridge on the Up Fast line with 1A32 10:00 Liverpool Lime Street to London Euston at 12:19 on February 19th, 1985.

85030, unofficially named *Fell Runner,* leaves the Down Slow single bore tunnel at Northchurch with a train of loaded Cartic-4s, probably from Dagenham, at 14:54 on February 19th, 1985.




A classic study in Corporate Blue – 85005 at speed north of Northchurch Tunnels with 1P62 14:40 London Euston to Blackpool North at 14:55 on February 19th, 1985.

the somewhat relentless procession of second-generation AC electrics. Received wisdom tells us today that Classes 86 and 87 displaced the 'Roarers' onto secondary duties, but that doesn't really accord with things as I observed them. Certainly, Class 85 could still be found in the mid-'80s reasonably regularly on top express passenger turns. It wasn't until Class 90s came in on the WCML that the displacement really began.

## Tring area

A day in February 1985 spent between Tring and Northchurch Tunnels produced a good variety of traction, with Class 85 on passenger turns to Liverpool Lime Street and Blackpool North (replaced by diesel at Preston), plus freight. But you never knew just what might turn up, and this day was no exception, with two pretty

outrageous scenes in quick succession. First, an APT set – which I had hitherto only ever seen stationary dumped out of use here and there – slipped by on the Up Fast so unexpectedly that I only managed a going-away shot. By this date, it had been withdrawn from revenue-earning service after a disastrous introductory period, the bones of which we need not pick over here, and was now regarded as a development train. The five-car set I saw that day may very well have been one of the last runs ever made as most of the stock was now languishing at Derby and all running ceased at the end of May. Less than five minutes later, a distinctive whistling was heard getting nearer and I was most surprised to see 20092 and 20103 come into view on the Down Slow line with a long rake of 45 ton TTA oil wagons. Diesels on the WCML this far south were uncommon and Class 20s exceedingly rare and, at the time, I was at a loss as to what their train was, but I now wonder whether it was 6M43 04:05 Ripple Lane to Charrington's Hawkesbury Lane tanks, presumably running late. At one time, this was hauled by AC traction between Willesden and Coventry, as was the return 7E53. The usual motive power for the train at this date was a Class 25 throughout, and the lateness might have been caused by failure of the usual traction.




Production APT set 370005 on a southbound test run at Newground Road bridge, Tring, at 11:06 on February 19th, 1985.




Old Oak Common-allocated 31135 trundles a mixed train of revenue-earning and permanent way wagons along the Up Goods line at Rugby Station and past a Class 08 in the Midland yard at 14:13 on July 31st, 1984. The former BTH/ AEI/GEC factory is in the background.

## Rugby

There was still a small amount of traditional wagonload traffic about in the mid-1980s, although it was on its last legs, with marshalling yards abandoning hump sorting in favour of flat shunting what




A most unusual sight on this stretch of the WCML as 20092 and 20103 head a train of oil tanks north at Newground Road bridge, Tring, at 11:10 on February 19th, 1985.




20166 stabled between duties on Down Siding No.3 at Nuneaton Station on the afternoon of October 22nd, 1984, with the former LNWR goods warehouse just visible on the left.



31123 and 31247 power north away from Nuneaton after depositing a train of permanent way wagons in the Down yard at 11:07 on October 22nd, 1984.

remained. Rugby station could always be guaranteed to turn up some diesel action sooner or later on this kind of service, and there was still a Class 08 pilot to be found, usually on the Up side in the Midland Yard, which was used for permanent way traffic. This kind of slow freight rarely had an easy time on the WCML by this date and could be seen skulking along the goods lines, which skirted each side of the station layout, usually waiting for some time while an onward path could be found. These trains invariably took the Northampton route to and from the south to keep away from express passenger traffic for as long as possible, with Classes 25 and 31 being the usual power, slipped in behind the all stops electric multiple units or sufficiently far in front to keep ahead. Not that there was anything very express about progress through Rugby's archaic layout on any line, with bullhead jointed track still holding sway on all but the fast lines, which were themselves still hampered by slow speed turnouts. Within a few more years, this kind of freight traffic would be history.

## Nuneaton

Diesels were common at Nuneaton due to the non-electrified lines connecting into the WCML there. As well as Class 31s on Birmingham to Norwich passenger turns, the area was busy with freight, but most avoided the station. When re-signalled and electrified in the early 1960s, as at Rugby, much traditional wagonload traffic needed to be catered for and the Beeching cuts



20166 brings a short train of Seacows, running unfitted, in the Down direction along Up Goods No.1 line at Nuneaton station at 09:27 on October 22nd, 1984. The line on the extreme right is the Ashby Bay line, a name retained in the 1963 re-signalling even though the passenger service had ceased 32 years earlier, which was used for loco stabling. The warehouse stands on the site of the Up marshalling yard. The train will be shunted across to the Down sidings via the north end of the station.

had not decimated surrounding lines. Mechanical boxes had been retained in the area, and on both sides of the station within sight of the power box as Up Sidings and Down Sidings shunt frames. The large hump yard on the Up side had gone by the 1980s and the land sold off by BR, along with the shunt frames on both sides, but extensive non-electrified sidings on the Down side remained in use for engineering traffic. Single Class 20s could often be found working here and stabled on sidings 1-3 at the back of the north end of platform 1 near the old LNWR goods warehouse between duties. This warehouse was demolished shortly after the time of my visit. Other locos would bring trains in from engineering jobs, or trains loaded up for future work, and leave light engine during the day. Trains would generally depart in the evening to travel to worksites and were seldom photographed as a result.

## Carlisle

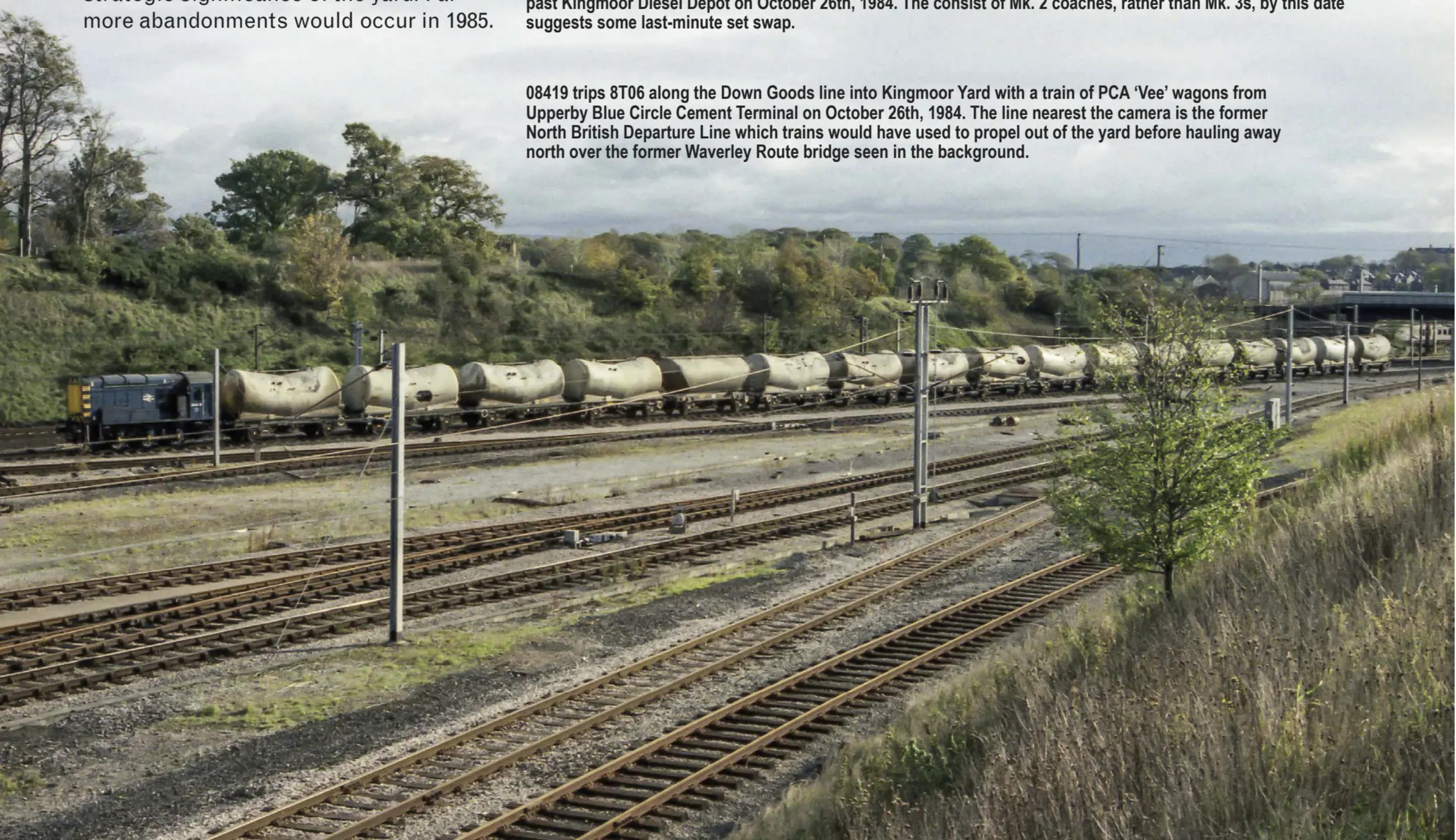
Electrification, modernisation and re-signalling didn't reach Carlisle until the early 1970s, so the kind of steam age layout found on the southern portion of the WCML re-signalled a decade earlier had not been retained. Kingmoor Marshalling Yard had, however, predated this and was incorporated into the later Carlisle re-signalling. By the mid-'80s, traffic handled by the yard was much reduced with the loss of traditional wagon loads and hump shunting had been abandoned, with rationalisations to track. The closure of the Waverley Route in 1969 had also affected the strategic significance of the yard. Far more abandonments would occur in 1985.



**08911 hauls a train of TEA wagons on 8T04 trip from Petteril Bridge Esso Terminal to Kingmoor Yard through Carlisle Citadel platform 4 on October 26th, 1984.**



**Quite rare traction for this late date on *The Royal Scot* as 85038 takes 1S57 09:45 London Euston to Glasgow Central past Kingmoor Diesel Depot on October 26th, 1984. The consist of Mk. 2 coaches, rather than Mk. 3s, by this date suggests some last-minute set swap.**



**08419 trips 8T06 along the Down Goods line into Kingmoor Yard with a train of PCA 'Vee' wagons from Upperby Blue Circle Cement Terminal on October 26th, 1984. The line nearest the camera is the former North British Departure Line which trains would have used to propel out of the yard before hauling away north over the former Waverley Route bridge seen in the background.**

Goods traffic avoided Carlisle Citadel station as the goods lines separated from the main lines north of the station at Caldew Junction and went via Rome Street to a series of junctions south of the station linking all four diverging routes. However, by the time of my visit, these lines were closed following the runaway and derailment of a freightliner train on May 1st, 1984, and all WCML goods traffic had to pass through the station. In many respects, it was ill-equipped to handle this traffic, especially slow-moving Class 08s hauling trip freights to and from Kingmoor.

There were four of these Class 08 trip duties in the Carlisle area to cover the various facilities in the locality. T04 trip served London Road Goods/Coal Depot/Metal Box factory/Cowans, Petteril Bridge Esso Terminal, and Ministry of Defence Longtown; T05 trip served Carlisle station, Ministry of Defence Longtown, Upperby Carriage Depot and Kingmoor Diesel Depot; T06 trip served Carlisle station and the Blue Circle Cement Terminal at Upperby; and T07 trip served Kingmoor Diesel Depot and Currock Carriage & Wagon shops. All of these trips ran as required during the daytime only, and it was a matter of potluck capturing one of them on camera.

As part of an authorised visit to Carlisle Power Signal Box in November 1984, I was taken by the local area inspector to have a look at Kingmoor and was permitted to take some photos from lineside vantage points. At this date, the former Waverley Route bridge over the WCML held just a single track to Brunthill, which hadn't been used for some time, so I was able to use the overbridge safely for photography. The yard was still reasonably busy and traffic to and from the yard from the south end used the goods lines to the west of the main lines, the latter by this date having no connections to the yard. The extensive sidings to the south of Kingmoor on the Up side, near the old steam motive power depot, were largely overgrown and disused, with a few used for the storage of condemned rolling stock. Kingmoor Diesel Depot was opposite these sidings on the Down side adjacent to the goods lines.

The main line traffic past Kingmoor was, as you would expect, mostly in the hands of second-generation AC electrics, but even so, variety could be found. The Anglo-Scottish express services to and from the Glasgow & South Western route via Dumfries were, of course, diesel hauled. By 1984, the Carlisle to Glasgow Central services could drop anything from Classes 25, 26, 27, 37, or if you were really unlucky, a Class 47. Not that I disliked '47s', but when you went a long way for something you couldn't have at home to find an ETH 47 bolted onto a train, it was a bit of a bowl out.

But the variety was coming to an end and would not last many more years. The 'Roarers' would be gone by the early 1990s, and freight traffic was still deserting the railway, heavy industries closing down as government policy de-industrialised Britain and BR increasingly seemed to want rid of inconvenient small freight flows. Hopefully, this snapshot in time has shown what was there out of the ordinary in the most unlikely of locations at this period.



**Green-liveried 40122 leaves Kingmoor Yard along the Up Goods line on October 26th, 1984, with a mixed consist including new rails from British Steel Corporation Workington, probably bound for Castleton continuous welded rail depot.**



**47445 passes Kingmoor with 1M30 11:05 Fridays Only Glasgow Central to Euston on October 26th, 1984. The train of all Mk. 1 stock has travelled via the Glasgow & South Western line and will be re-engined with an electric loco at Carlisle.**

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# UP THE MOUNTAIN

This fascinating and intricate layout is a faithful recreation in miniature of a real place, which looks like something dreamed up in your imagination.

**Words:** Rob Waller **Photography:** Phil Parker

## FACTFILE

**NAME:** Dduallt
**SCALE/GAUGE:** 4mm:1ft scale/9mm gauge/009
**SIZE:** 9ft 2in x 8ft 9in
**ERA/REGION:** 1988 to present day/Ffestiniog Railway
**LAYOUT TYPE:** End to End

Once upon a time, 009 layouts had a reputation for being 'rabbit warrens', with trackplans that almost tied themselves into knots, but this one actually exists.

In the mid-1960s, volunteers on the Ffestiniog Railway began constructing the first spiral formation in the UK, at the start of the 'Deviation' line to circumvent the lower reservoir of a post-war hydro-electric scheme, which flooded the track bed in the Ystradau Valley. Building a new line, which looped around a full 360 degrees, was the only practical way of reaching the hillside above the new lake without a prohibitively steep incline on a railway that was famously built with a continuous ruling grade of 1:80 and worked by horse power and gravity before the coming of narrow-gauge steam locomotives.



**MAIN IMAGE:** A period piece at Dduallt. A passing loop, semaphore signals and Hunslet 2-4-0 *Linda* in midnight blue livery setting off on a trip around the spiral. The spoil of the still new-looking formation was dug and tipped by hand by an army of volunteer 'Deviationists'.

## Mountain wilderness

Dduallt is tucked away in the foothills of the Moelwyn mountain range, miles from the nearest road, and the buildings there are few, but distinctive. In the centre of the layout is Rhoslyn Cottage, with its white and black frontage. For more than 40 years now, this very attractive building has been derelict and home only to sheep that have managed to break in. At the rear of the scene is the long stone barn, which overlooks the slender concrete bridge and lends its name to the tight rock cutting as the new railway line turns north to run along a shelf through the woods. What could easily pass for a large garden shed is, in fact, the signal box, built in the vee where the new 'Deviation' departs from the original track bed, with a small spur remaining in place squeezed between the dry stone walls that have defined the FR's loading gauge since the 1860s. Hidden in the trees on the platform is a very rudimentary toilet block.

On a layout set halfway up a Welsh mountain, the defining scenic features were always going to be grass and rock! To represent the unkempt length and the bleached tones of upland vegetation, we used hairy carpet underlay, which was soaked in a browny-green cold water dye and teased out before being glued down and generously doused in hairspray (well, it was the early '90s!). The rock is just that; rock. Chunks of shale were pressed into wet plaster to form the walls of the frighteningly tight cutting beneath the bridge, and the





**LEFT:** 1979-built Double Fairlie *Earl of Merioneth* approaches the bridge where the new spiral line loops over the original formation. This model was kit-bashed in brass using a Backwoods Miniatures kit as its base.

**MIDDLE LEFT:** 1990's era Fairlie *David Lloyd George* emerges out of Barn Cutting, at the rear of the layout, with a train descending the spiral from the Blaenau Ffestiniog direction.

**BELOW:** Single Fairlie *Taliesin* crosses Rhoslyn Bridge with a vintage train heading up while a down train waits to leave the platform loop. Beneath the bridge, a rambler follows the footpath, which has brought them three miles from Tan y Bwlch station. Perhaps they will catch a train back there?

> "It sounds obvious, but everything about this layout depends upon the hill and the capabilities of trains to ascend it."



exposed rock face, which was blasted to make room for the platform loop line. The small stones that form the virgin embankments (still relatively new and yet to be reclaimed by nature) are made using road surface dressing stones, which were found loose at the side of a Merionethshire lane.

## Rolling stock

Since the layout was built in the early 1990s, we have built a (possibly unique) collection of rolling stock, which represents every major locomotive and carriage on the contemporary Ffestiniog Railway. Until the recent move by ready-to-run manufacturers into 009, this meant all the locomotives were built from kits – initially in white metal and then increasingly in brass – while all the modern corridor carriages that form the backbone of the FR passenger fleet have been scratch-built from styrene sheet and strip. Many of these vehicles are now available in 4mm scale as brass body etches or 3D prints, but as we started building the fleet ourselves more than 30 years ago, we've stubbornly decided to continue building from scratch to ensure they all match.

The layout represents a very definite historical period, although the rolling stock we run spans a period of four decades. Dduallt station is shown as it was in 1988, in its final year, with the passing loop and the signalling still in use. Since then, the station has been downgraded to intermediate request





**ABOVE:** Having completed a full 360 around the spiral, *David Lloyd George* and its train has gained precious altitude to bypass the power station reservoir which flooded the old line. *Princess* stands on the siding spur, which is all that remains of the original route.

**TOP LEFT:** S&T staff carry out checks at one of the most remote stations anywhere in Britain. The utilitarian signal cabin was demolished at the start of the 1990s, and Lynton and Barnstaple replica *Lyd*, in spoof BR livery, is very out-of-era in this scene.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** The derelict cottage 'Rhoslyn' draws the eye to the centre of the layout as the other of the 'Hunslet Ladies' *Blanche* waits with a down train in the platform loop.

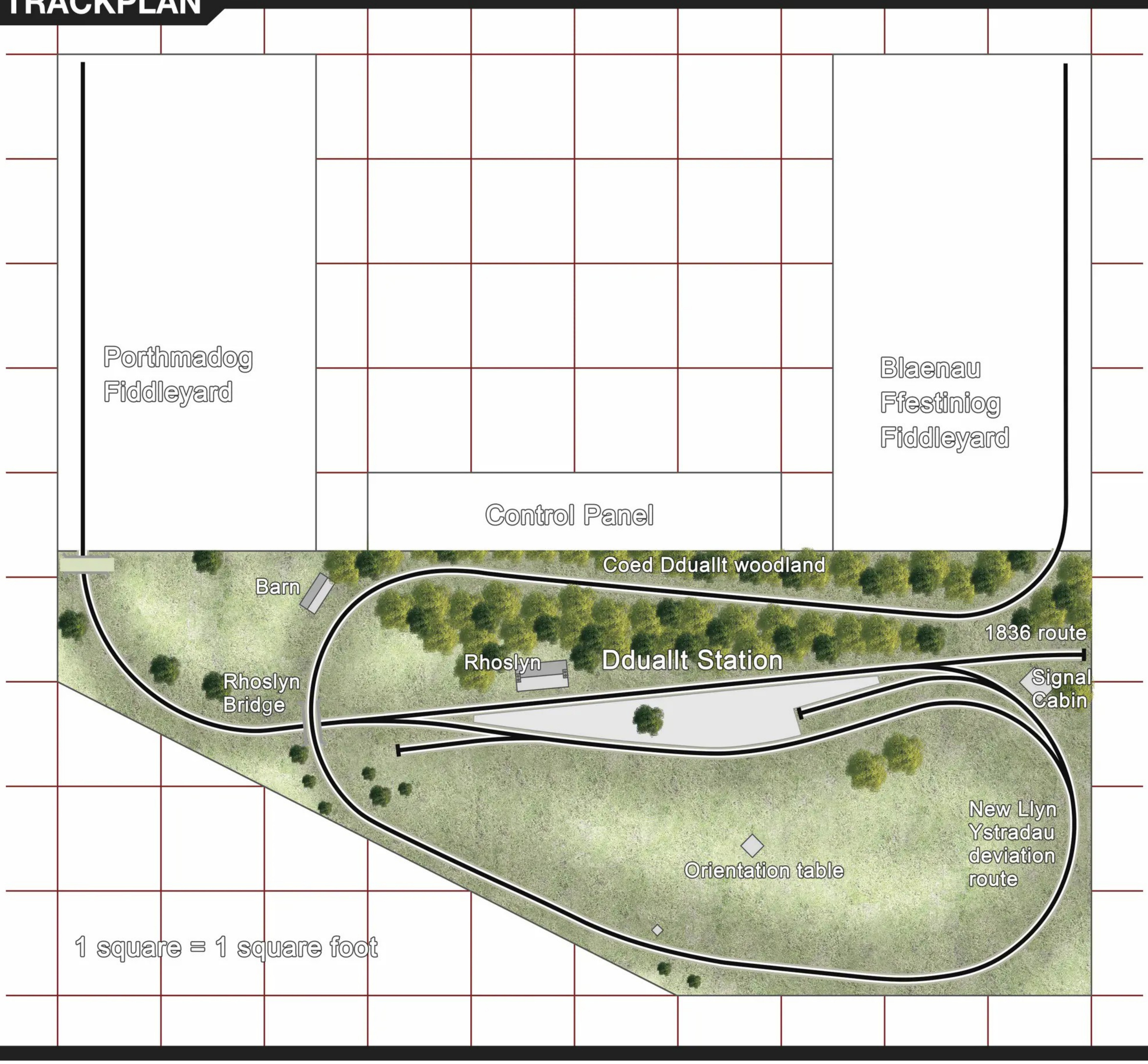


**ABOVE:** Another shot of Single Fairlie *Taliesin* crossing Rhoslyn Bridge.




**ABOVE:** *Earl of Merioneth* takes a top-up from the emergency water tank.

## TRACKPLAN






**ABOVE:** Quarry Hunslet *Britomart* has arrived with a demonstration freight. These days, Dduallt is the usual upper starting point for runs with the FR's unique gravity slate train.



**ABOVE:** *Taliesin* is seen where trains leave the Porthmadog-end fiddle yard, with an old footbridge as the scenic break. We employed some modeller's licence here, transplanting a bridge that used to cross the old line just north of Dduallt.



**ABOVE:** This is what delights everyone who watches the layout at exhibitions when the operators manage to time the movements so a train crosses Rhoslyn Bridge as one passes beneath. *David Lloyd George* is climbing the spiral as *Merddin Emrys* heads down the line.



**ABOVE:** A glimpse of the rock cutting beneath Roslyn Bridge with its modern-looking concrete support columns. We made this an authentically tight squeeze so the widest carriages can only just pass through.

stop status because of the challenges of staffing such a remote location and the maintenance burden of the curved points at the Blaenau Ffestiniog end (which we had to have scratch-built for the layout). Today, the sinuous passing loop is reduced to a long siding, with an intermediate token machine, which allows works trains or passenger specials to be locked in. The late 1980s was also the period when FR began to move away from a monolithic corporate colour scheme of green locomotives and dark red carriages, and the rolling stock began to appear in all colours of the rainbow.

It sounds obvious, but everything about this layout depends upon the hill and the capabilities of trains to ascend it. The first stage of the design process was to establish the maximum gradient our locomotives would be able to haul a reasonable sized train up, and we worked backwards from there. Armed with that figure, and also knowing what height difference we required between the lower and upper tracks at the bridge, we calculated how long the run between those points needed to be, and thus the size of spiral and the whole layout.

Looking at the layout, you don't immediately notice that the cutting under the bridge is in a dip, and that the line begins to descend again as it runs through the woods, whereas in reality, it continues to climb. This is because, at one point, we had a vague idea about connecting the fiddle yards with a 'ski ramp' to give us the option of using it as a continuous run before settling on separate lower and upper fiddle yards.

## 'Dduallt' in action

At exhibitions, the layout is generally operated by two people and is effectively divided in half in a manner that matches the signalling block sections and tokens. One operator controls the lower half of the layout, running trains in and out of the station from the direction of Porthmadog and Tan y Bwlch. Their colleague takes charge of the upper half, where the line climbs around the hill and over the bridge and onwards towards Blaenau Ffestiniog. The layout has two DC controllers, which can run any of the four main sections connected to three-position 'cab control' switches on the panel.



## About the modeller

**Name:** Rob Waller (layout was a joint project with my father, David)
**Age:** 50 (78 for David)
**Years modelling:** 40+
**Name of first layout:** 'Wickford'
**Favourite era/region:** Preservation-era Welsh narrow gauge
**Favourite locomotive:** A scratch-built model of the FR's KMX self-propelled tamper

My father and I have known the top left-hand corner of Wales, and the Ffestiniog Railway, all our lives, which in his case dates back to before construction of the Deviation began in the 1960s. There were model railways in the family home for as long as I can remember, beginning with an extensive 00 layout in a loft, and then moving onto our first exhibition layout. This was a freelance terminus on a preserved railway, loosely inspired by the Severn Valley Railway, which included a wonderful scratch-built iron-arched bridge over a river based on Victoria Bridge, the one feature of the layout that was saved when it was broken up.

My interest in 009 modelling was sparked by reading a magazine feature about one of David Gander's layouts, and then discovering in the small ads that it was possible to buy white metal kits of FR locomotives to run on adapted N gauge chassis.

Ddualllt was suggested to us as a good location for a layout because it would be more interesting to watch than a simple passing station such as Tan y Bwlch, and that advice has proved to be spot-on. The layout has been a guaranteed crowd-pleaser wherever it's been shown. Now in its 31st year, it has attended more than one hundred exhibitions and collected a string of prizes. Its secret is that it works on so many levels. Narrow gauge afficionados adore the accuracy, the attention to detail and the comprehensive collection of rolling stock. Many other exhibition-goers recognise it from holidays in Wales, while those who know nothing about the FR are enchanted by the under-and-over moments when trains meet at Rhoslyn Bridge. The layout's 'party piece' – a gravity slate train, which appears to descend without any obvious form of motive power – is hugely popular.

The layout was built when our family home was in Oxfordshire and appeared extensively at exhibitions in southern England for around a decade, including two appearances at the Warley show at the NEC. In 2016, my father, David, moved to the west coast of Scotland, close to where I have lived for the last 25 years, and the layout has enjoyed a second lease of life at exhibitions north of the border representing the Greenock and District Model Railway Club where we are both members.

Each operator takes responsibility for managing their respective fiddle yards, which have a fan of dead-end sidings. These yards were built with a powered, loco-sized traverser at the far end as a means of releasing an engine and running back to the other end of the train. However, we soon realised this was time-consuming to use and, in most circumstances, we drive a fresh engine onto the other end of the train, and the loco that brought the train in is released when it departs again. It is necessary to think a few moves ahead to make sure you don't find yourself 'snookered' with no trains ready to depart, and in those moments, you may hear the whine of the motor moving the traverser as the operator admits defeat.

It's been really gratifying over the years to meet a large number of 'Deviationists' who volunteered on the project, some of whom have never been back to the railway. It's delightful when they point out a section of the layout and say; "I helped build that bit!", and they have also pointed out tiny details we missed out, like one man who told us the story of how he broke a drill, which remained forever embedded in a rock, like Excalibur. By the next time the layout appeared at a show, we'd modelled that, too!



**ABOVE:** Our model of the KMX tamper was painstakingly scratch-built in styrene and was motorised with a Kato 'Shorty' chassis, which had to be spliced in two, with motor hidden within the engine compartment nearest the camera.



**ABOVE:** Another view down the truncated remains of the original formation The rock spoil of the new line, on the right, is made of real stone, in this case some road surface dressing material.

## Conclusions

With the benefit of 30 years' hindsight, if we were starting over again, I think we would make the layout larger. At the time we planned it, we were at the start of our 009 journey and the only rolling stock we had to do our gradient load tests with were some ridiculously heavy carriages made from antique white metal kits. I had yet to experiment with scratch-building lightweight styrene carriages, so we scaled the layout assuming a maximum train length of four or five carriages, whereas a typical high-season FR train will load up to nine or ten carriages. We may have been able to get closer to a prototypical formation with plastic carriages and a bigger layout with a shallower gradient.

It was perhaps this realisation that we should have made 'Ddualllt' a little bigger, that led us to build a super-sized successor, a 40-foot-long and 15-foot-deep layout called 'Bron Hebog' depicting the restored Welsh Highland Railway at Beddgelert, with giant NG/G16 Garratts hauling 10 carriage trains around S-bends that snake up the gradient.

Currently, we are going to the opposite extreme with our latest project, under construction, which mixes 00 standard gauge with 009 narrow gauge where the FR and the Cambrian Coast Line intersect at Minffordd. This layout will be a mere five foot by six foot, designed to fit easily in the boot of a family car instead of a jumbo-sized van. ■





**TOP LEFT:** The Backwoods Miniatures Double Fairlies are the mainstay of our locomotive fleet on Ddualllt. Built in brass, they are heavy and powerful enough to haul any train up the spiral. If they had been around when we planned the layout, we might have made it bigger!

**MIDDLE LEFT:** 'Funkey' diesel *Vale of Ffestiniog* demonstrates just how tight Rhoslyn Cutting really is! The National Power livery, which evoked the Class 59/2 on the main line, honoured the company's sponsorship of the clever rebuilding of the loco to fit the FR.

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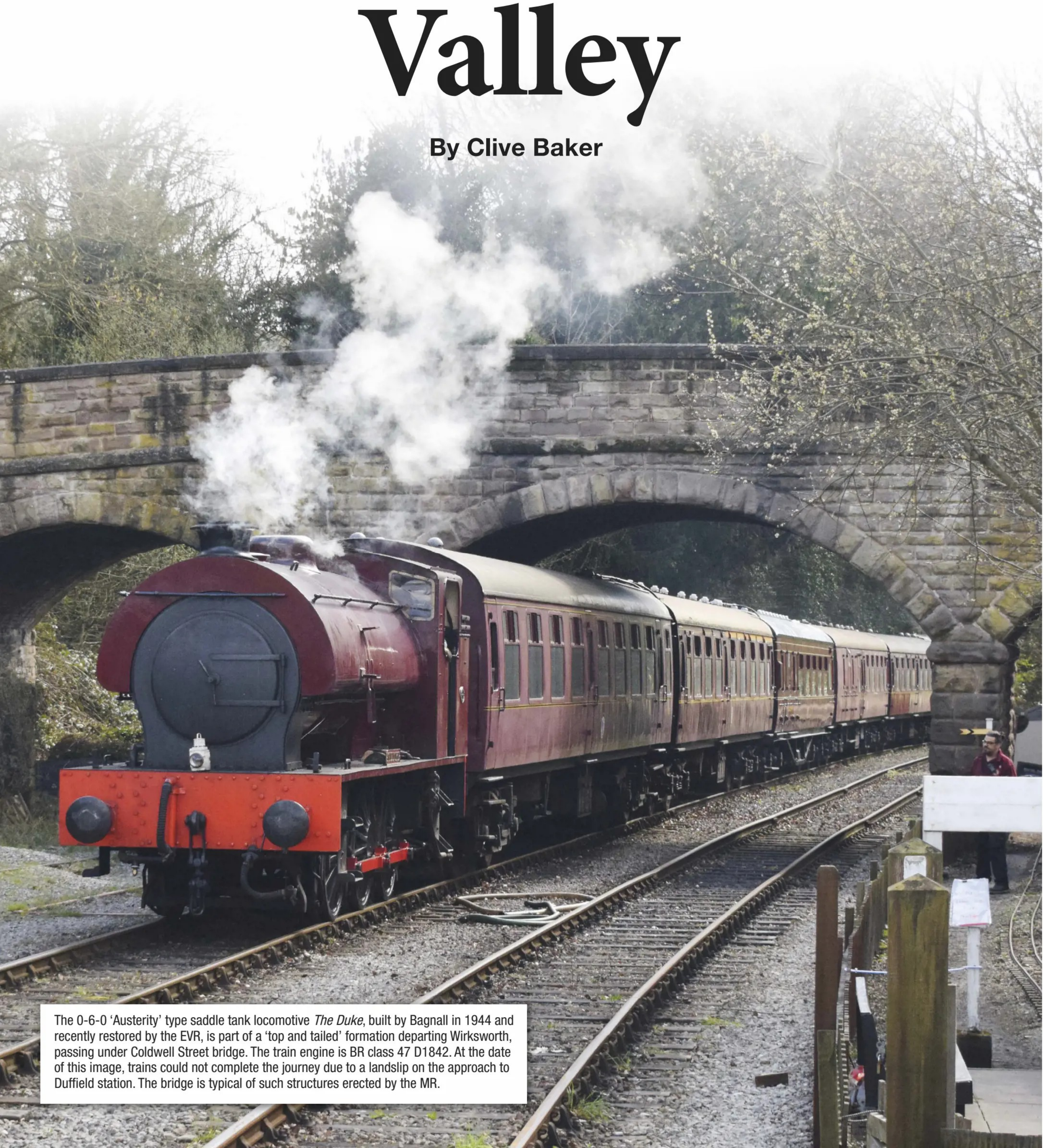
PROTOTYPE

# Wirksworth via the Ecclesbourne Valley

By Clive Baker



The 0-6-0 'Austerity' type saddle tank locomotive *The Duke*, built by Bagnall in 1944 and recently restored by the EVR, is part of a 'top and tailed' formation departing Wirksworth, passing under Coldwell Street bridge. The train engine is BR class 47 D1842. At the date of this image, trains could not complete the journey due to a landslip on the approach to Duffield station. The bridge is typical of such structures erected by the MR.

The term 'celestial city of Wirksworth' applies to the town that, in earlier times, became recognised as the lead mining capital of Derbyshire; due to its being at the head of the valley and surrounded by steep hills on three sides, a friend who introduced me to the mineral tramways in that area, coined the term when referring to Wirksworth.

Now a heritage line, offering the longest such route in Derbyshire, the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway does not quite follow the original intentions of the group that in 1992 set out plans to re-vitalise the line for passenger use and boost tourism in the area.

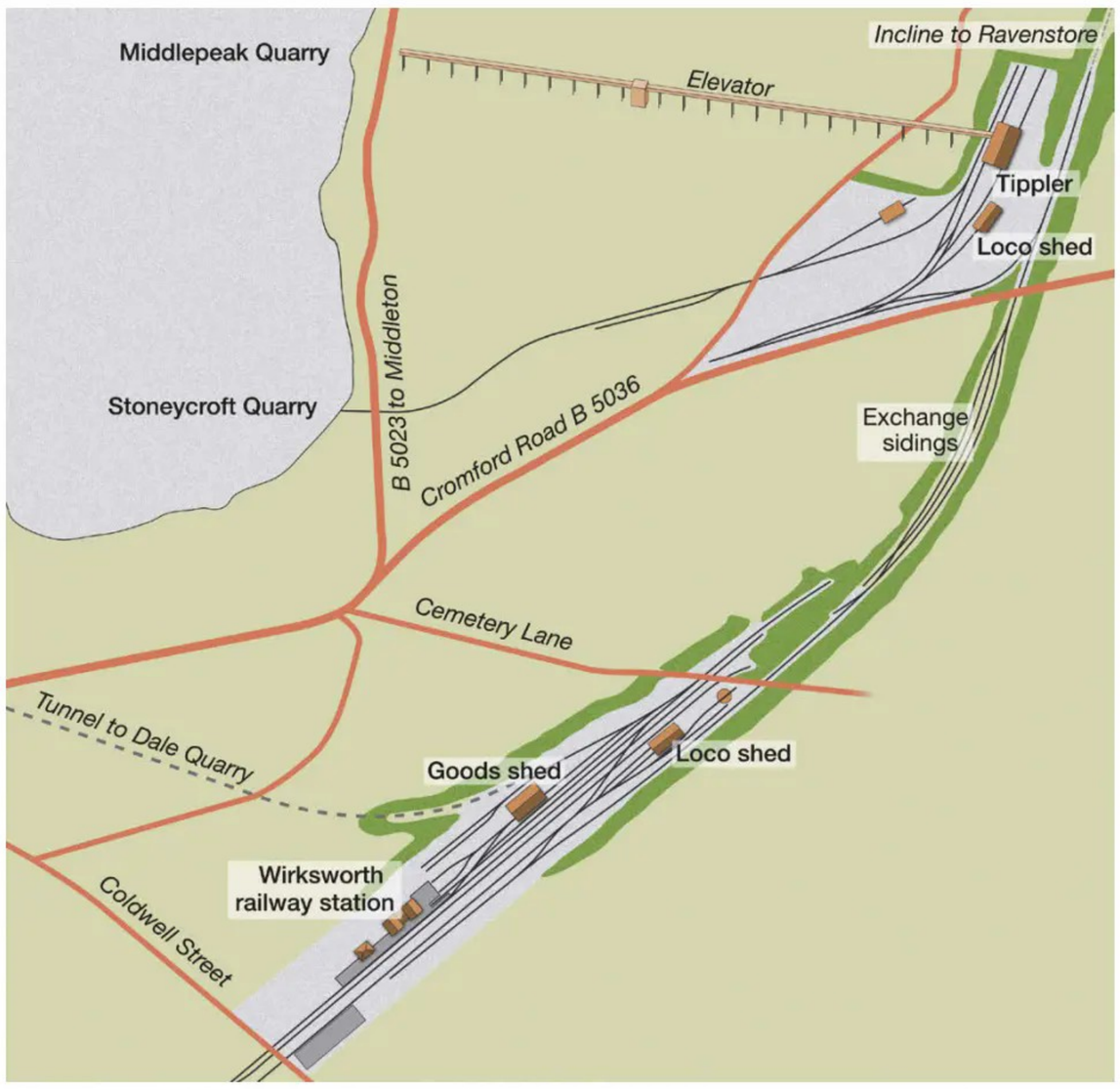
## A brief history of the 'Wirksworth Branch'

During the C19, due to the decline of lead mining, the quarrying of limestone became the main industry in the Wirksworth area. With the Cromford Canal, opened in 1793, to be linked with the Cromford and High Peak Railway (CHPR) in 1830, a short distance to the north of the town and together with turnpike roads, the communication network serving Wirksworth was considered adequate.

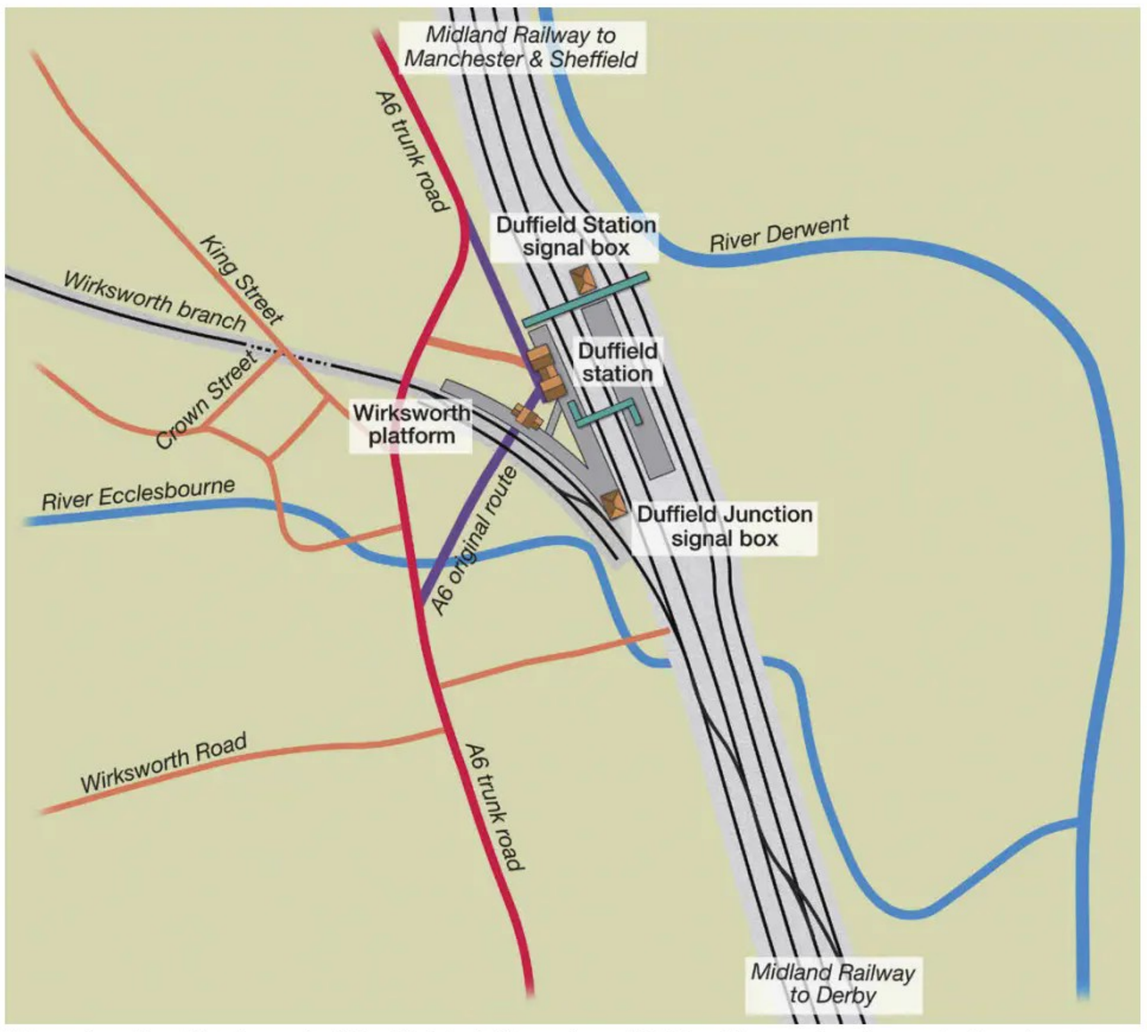
The year 1849 witnessed the opening of a railway between Ambergate and Rowsley by the Manchester, Buxton, Matlock & Midlands Junction Railway Company (MBM&MJR). Together with the North Midland Railway (NMR) linking Derby with Ambergate, what eventually became from 1871, the Midland Railway's (MR) line through the Derwent Valley, improved the rail network, but avoided Wirksworth.

Various schemes to link the town to the ever-growing main line system were mooted, some involving severe gradients linking with the CHPR, but eventually, in 1862, the MR began surveying a route along the Ecclesbourne Valley, to link Wirksworth with the Derwent Valley route at Duffield, a small town to the north of Derby.

At that time, the MR directors were still envisaging a route, independent of neighbouring companies, that would continue beyond Wirksworth, hence all infrastructure was designed to accommodate double track. Following the MR's acquisition of the two previously mentioned companies in 1871, the Ecclesbourne Valley route would remain a single-track branch line.




Map showing Wirksworth station and extension to the reception area for Middlepeak and Stoneycroft quarries, circa 1945, based on an Ordnance Survey map. Following the closure of the passenger service, the track formation was rationalised and revised to accommodate the stone workings.




Map showing the layout of Duffield station circa 1945 with quadruple main line track formation and run-round loop on the Wirksworth branch. The road indicated in purple represents the original route of the A6 trunk road, prior to the laying of the branch line.



A pair of class 20s continue their journey to Wirksworth, Middlepeak quarry with empty hopper wagons, circa 1982-5, following removal of the run-round loop, about to pass through the short tunnel beneath King Street and Crown Street.

The cutting of the first sod occurred in April 1865, and the line opened to passengers in August 1872. The branch served three intermediate stations at Hazelwood, Shottle and Idridgehay. Passing from MR ownership into the hands of the London Midland & Scottish Railway (LMS) in 1923, the line saw hardly two years of British Railways (BR) passenger traffic, before the service ceased in January 1949.

The withdrawal of goods services commenced with the closure of facilities at Hazelwood and Idridgehay in January 1953. The complete closure of Shottle did not occur until March 1964, followed by most goods facilities at Wirksworth in April 1968. Some sidings remained to handle the traffic created by extensive quarrying activity.

After 1949, the line played host to numerous excursion workings; many being steam-hauled enthusiasts' specials, one exception was a Sunday School outing from Derby. Among the motive power, two locomotives, well known to the author, based at Burton upon Trent shed (17B) to work the pull and push 'Tutbury Jinny' service, handled two separate workings – ex MR Johnson, 0-4-4 tank, 58077 in April 1953, shortly prior to her withdrawal and BR standard 2-6-2 tank, 84008 in April 1956. Others include tender locomotives ex MR 2P, 4-4-0, 40416 and an ex-LMS 4F 0-6-0 for the Sunday School outing, complete with headboard.



Taken recently from the A6 road bridge, as the branch passes through the short 52-yards-long tunnel below two Duffield streets. Note its width to accommodate the anticipated double track. The run-round loop was re-instated by the Ecclesbourne Railway.



Once restored, this typical MR signal cabin will be manned at Shottle, when two trains are running, to control the passing loop. Originally a crossing keeper's hut located at Oddingley, the structure dates to 1906; decommissioned in 2016, the EVR acquired it at that time.




Shottle station building epitomises classic MR architecture as applied to all others on the branch. The twin gables, linked by a centre section with canopy, feature decorative bargeboards.




Loaded hopper wagons leave the conveyor by gravity towards the Wirksworth exchange sidings, in the charge of a shunter with pole.

In 1961, the branch became a feature for the, famed amongst rail enthusiasts, television programme 'Railway Roundabout'. Three locomotives stored at Derby – MR 2-4-0, no. 158A, London, Tilbury and Southend Railway (LT&SR) 4-4-2, no. 80 *Thundersley* and MR Johnson 4-2-2 'Spinner', no. 118 were towed to Wirksworth for filming by the preserved MR Compound, 4-4-0 no. 1000. What had been planned as a hush-hush operation somehow attracted many visitors with cameras, putting the line into the limelight.

Other uses for the branch during its later BR days included the testing of newly built 'Derby Lightweight', 1st generation diesel multiple units and also as a location for publicity photographs.

The station at Duffield became an unstaffed halt in January 1968, its classic MR style buildings being replaced by the ubiquitous 'bus shelter'.

During the 1970s, stone traffic fluctuated between just one (conditional) daily working and three. The 1980s saw a general decrease to as little as two trains per week, caused to some extent by the closure of Corby steelworks. The final revenue-earning stone working occurred on December 4th, 1989. Although pairs of Class 20s had become quite common hauling the stone, Class 47, 47373 took charge on the final run.

Following the mothballing of Middlepeak Quarry in 1992, putting an end to the prospect of any further stone traffic, local businessmen, together with some BR managers, established 'Wyvern Rail Ltd'; the object being to re-commence a passenger service to decrease the growing amount of road traffic, the 8 1/2 mile route was acquired and a light railway order procured in 1996. The new company intended to operate a seven-day service using diesel multiple units and steam traction at weekends.

The scheme did not go to plan as Network Rail severed connections to the main network at Duffield in 2003. However, having re-opened Duffield station in 2002, Wyvern Rail purchased the railway and adopted the station site in 2005.

## Memories

Occupying an office in Duffield during the early 1980s enabled me to explore the remains of the main line junction station and the curving Wirksworth branch platform; reached via a pathway, it crossed a triangle of land adjacent to the main down line platform. Once a busy main line junction station built in 1867, a rather spartan facility presented itself, the only surviving structure from its opening was the lattice footbridge supported by brick stairways. See BRM, issue October 2022, p70.

To witness a stone working, one needed to be frequently close at hand; even visiting the station every lunchtime, I only succeeded in capturing a handful of images. Class 20 types handled much of the traffic, but Classes 25, 31, 37, 45 and 47 also appeared on the branch.

While working at the Duffield office, I became involved with the creation of an artist's impressions to show how the proposed 2nd generation BR diesel multiple units would appear. During the spring bank holiday of 1985, a time when the curtailment of Tarmac Roadstone Ltd.'s traffic loomed, a passenger service returned to the branch. Conveying visitors from Derby to the well-dressings (an ancient Derbyshire tradition) at Wirksworth, a service known as the 'Wirksworth Phoenix' operated jointly by British Rail and other societies, involved newly-built Class 150s 001-2.

At the reception area for limestone from Middlepeak Quarry, Black, Hawthorn locomotive 'Holwell No. 3' of 1873 prepares to shunt empty hopper wagons under the conveyor for loading.



The mountainous terrain surrounding Wirksworth forms a backdrop to 'Holwell No. 3' as she draws a fresh train of empty hopper wagons from the exchange sidings before passing under Cromford Road for loading.

Not wishing to miss an historic photo opportunity on my doorstep, I forsook my drawing board on the Saturday morning and trudged through torrential rain to a location to the north-west of the tunnel, not just to record the occasion but to test the accuracy the artist's impression. The venture proved to be a huge success, repeated the following year.

## Associated buildings

The buildings of all five stations followed typical MR architectural features as designed by the MR's architect John Holloway Sanders – twin gabled structures with joining centre section and canopy, all built from local stone and, in the case of Wirksworth, delivered from nearby Dale Quarry via a standard gauge tunnel beneath the town linking the quarry with the station yard. The terminal station buildings were demolished in 1968 to make space for freight facilities. Duffield's buildings were demolished in 1969.

The buildings of the three intermediate stations survive, Hazelwood and Shottle as business premises and Idridgehay as a private dwelling. At the two level crossings on the branch, the keepers' cottages of Gorsey Bank and Idridgehay are also privately owned.

Typical MR hipped-roofed signal cabins graced the line. 'Duffield Junction' by 1904 had become a 3-bay structure with a 36-lever frame. A smaller box at Idridgehay, adjacent to the level crossing, appears on a photograph circa 1923, but in later years, a ground frame with small shelter replaced the box. At Gorsey Bank, movements at the level crossing were controlled from a single bay signal cabin, which has now been transferred to Peak Rail. A ground level cabin now stands at the site. Photographic evidence of the cabin at Wirksworth is scarce, but one image shows a small platform-mounted structure.




BR Class 2, 2-6-0 78019, the first main line steam visitor, in 2011, climbs through the Duffield cutting, having passed through the tunnel. Coaching stock included a BR Mk.1 second corridor, LMS open third and LMS district engineer's saloon.

Overbridges follow the classic MR style; usually consisting of three segmental arches, in most cases, the single line passes through the central arch. One unusual version could be found at Hazelwood; known as 'Travis's Folly', this nineteen-arch structure spanning the branch line connected two farms. Little used and deteriorating by 1933, the LMS commissioned the military to dispose of the viaduct.

## Steam days

I have no personal record of steam workings to Wirksworth. Publications show ex MR Johnson 0-4-4 tank locomotives and Class 2P 4-4-0 tender locomotives handling the passenger trains. In 1947, a newly-built Ivatt class 2-6-2 in LMS livery was recorded on the service.

Photographs from MR days are rare. One image, captured in 1874, features a Kirtley standard goods, 0-6-0 tender locomotive posed with various personnel in front of Wirksworth goods shed. Two other photographs show locomotives at the Wirksworth platform; a Johnson 0-6-0 tender locomotive shares the line with a Morecambe & Heysham-style steam motor train, a type that saw service on the branch. The other image shows a Midland & Great Northern Railway (MGNR), 4-4-0 tank locomotive, no. 10, on loan to the MR, coupled to an American style-MR ex-Pullman car.

Ex-MR motive power in the form of Class 3F and 4F, 0-6-0 tender engines remained prominent during the LMS period. Stanier Class 8F, 2-8-0s, witnessed in all areas of the Derbyshire Peak District, hauling mineral trains, also worked the branch.

## Private industrial connections

If one followed the line beyond Wirksworth station by the route that linked the branch with the Cromford and High Peak Railway, at the point where it plunged under the Cromford Road (B5036), the reception area for limestone cut at Stoneycroft and Middlepeak quarries occupied a site on the north side of the road.

It is this area that drew my attention in the late 1960s. Two steam locomotives took turns in the shunting of wagons between the overhead conveyor and the reception area with BR. Of the saddle tank engines of 0-4-0 wheel arrangement, *Holwell no. 3* had the greatest appeal; a product of Black, Hawthorn & Co. of Gateshead in 1873, she had a very meagre cab with a rather primitive extension added to one side in 1948. Her consort, *Uppingham*, built by Peckett in 1912, was considered the regular engine.

The year 1966 witnessed the arrival of a diesel locomotive; a second-hand purchase from the Ind Coope and Allsopp brewery of Burton upon Trent, the plan involved the replacement of *Holwell No. 3*. Built by E. E. Baguley, the diesel mechanical 0-4-0, due to clearance issues, could not pass through the Middleton Road bridge when working the line to Stoneycroft quarry, so the Black, Hawthorn remained to celebrate her centenary in 1973.

## The heritage line

The 'Ecclesbourne Valley Railway' (EVR) is based at Wirksworth where much of the original track formation survives, as storage for rolling stock. Passengers are still able to transfer to and from main

line trains at Duffield. New buildings replace the originals that were demolished when the branch closed.

The restart of services began in 2004 when the first ½ mile from Wirksworth to Gorsey Bank opened with a diesel multiple unit shuttle. The following year witnessed the opening of a line taking the route of the branch to Middlepeak Quarry, terminating just short of the incline to the C&HPR line at a new station – 'Ravenstore'. A shuttle service is operated to connect with trains from Duffield.

Idridgehay station, 3 ½ miles from Wirksworth, became the terminus in 2008. Having been converted to barriers during the stone train era, the level crossing adjacent to the station reverted to manually-operated, conventional gates. Although the original station building at Shottle is a business premise, the platforms are maintained by the EVR and the passing loop will eventually be controlled from a MR-style signal cabin rescued from Oddingley, Worcestershire.

The entire route became fully operational in 2011 with the re-opening of Duffield station complete with run-round loop. Although a comprehensive fleet of DMUs is maintained, from 2011 the railway has played host to a variety of steam locomotives. To celebrate the re-opening of the branch, BR standard Class 2, 2-6-0 locomotive 78019 hauled trains during the first season. On special occasions, when two train formations run, Shottle station, re-opened in 2014, has passing facilities.

## Modelling the branch

A branch line terminus has remained a favourite modelling subject since before the 1950s when contemporary journals and exhibitions featured so many GWR prototypes. The branch line terminus with an industrial extension like Wirksworth is a prototype offering added scope and interest.

Any of the three intermediate stations, which had similar track layouts e.g. loop, two short bays and siding, would be ideal prototypes for a small model or diorama. Apart from the stone workings, the regular passenger, milk and general freight trains were relatively short and not requiring lengthy storage sidings.

Suitable main line rolling stock can be sourced from all the main manufacturers. The Hornby Peckett, 0-4-0 saddle tank locomotive would be a suitable representation for Bowne and Shaw's *Uppingham*, and the Baguley diesel could be easily replicated with a scratch-built body mounted on an off-the-peg chassis. *Holwell no. 3* would present a greater challenge.




Pulling away from Idridgehay station in 2016, ex Lancashire & Yorkshire, 0-6-0 locomotive BR no. 52322 of 1895 attracted many visitors to the railway. Above the roof of the leading carriage, solar panels installed to provide power to the signals in BR days are visible.



This modern timber structure with platform canopy stands on the original MR branch platform, which has been lengthened at the Wirksworth end to accommodate longer trains. The main line runs behind the building.



Following the meandering course of the River Ecclesbourne, ex-GWR Class 5600, 0-6-2T locomotive 5643 appeared in Derbyshire in May 2013.

To recreate the unmistakable architecture to be found all over MR territory, Dent station by Hornby, available in both 4mm scale and TT 120, would be ideal to replicate any of the five station buildings on the branch. Kits to produce an MR hipped roof signal cabin that always identifies a MR location are available in 4mm scale from Ratio and Dapol; the latter originally sold in a plastic bag by Airfix for 2 shillings (10p), has found its way onto so many layouts for the past 60+ years. I cannot recall how many such kits I have used as a basis for a variety of MR and LMS signal boxes.

## Conclusion

One could describe the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway as a late-comer to the heritage scene, with many of its associated buildings demolished, particularly at the two termini. A project is underway to emulate the original Wirksworth station building using modern materials. To date, one of the two gabled wings is complete and serves as an excellent museum and bookshop.

Heritage railways must cope with setbacks; the Ecclesbourne being no exception, services in the early part of the 2024 operating season were hampered by a landslip close to the Duffield Tunnel. The complete journey could not be made, but by topping and tailing, the traveller could experience the greater part of the route. Services are now back to normal on this scenic and historic branch line, laid out as a main line, but a hill got in the way. ■

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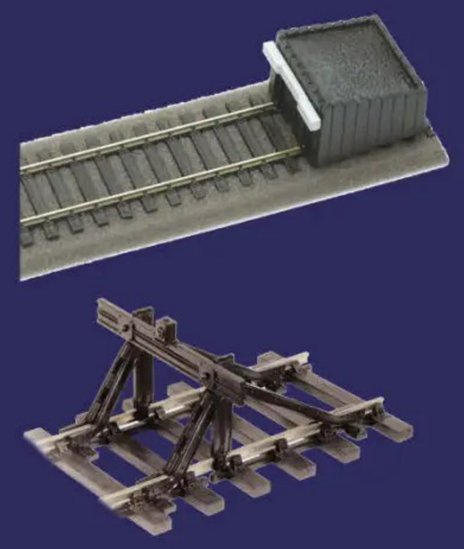

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# EDWARDIAN SUMMER

The pandemic provided the catalyst for this builder to create a fascinating fictitious line, split into engaging cameo sections.

**Words:** Dave Murdoch **Photography:** Phil Parker




## FACTFILE

**NAME:** South Wearing Light Railway
**SCALE/GAUGE:** 7mm:1ft/32.5mm/O
**SIZE:** 13ft x 17ft
**ERA/REGION:** Early 1900s/Ficticious
**LAYOUT TYPE:** Continuous Run




It's a late spring day in the small but perfectly formed Wessex county of Swearing. It heralds another glorious Edwardian summer, and the neighbouring counties of Devon and Dorset are preparing for the onslaught of tourists about to arrive in droves behind the fine locomotives of the GWR and LSWR, who both run trains through the Swearing peninsula. But on the peninsula, life carries on at a more leisurely and intimate pace, which would also be a fair description of the operating practices of the South Wearing Light Railway, on which we have the slightly dubious privilege of travelling today. Fortunately, we are in no hurry.

As we approach the small passing station of Cussing Minor on a down train, we pass a simple engine servicing complex, where the eccentric and sometimes whimsical locomotives are sustained by the brilliant, but equally eccentric locomotive department, under the watchful eye of CME D. Murdoch esq. Despite being a disciple of the great men of Swindon and Eastleigh, his work for the SWLR demonstrates a uniqueness, with an almost playful approach, which entertains and endears both visitors and Swearonians.

As the train slows from 25mph through the tree-lined approach to the station, the permanent way gang are making good damage because of one of the frequent tremors caused by the geological fault known as locally as 'The Doorway Flap'. The gang is well-versed in these repairs and our journey is only marginally delayed. A loop opens up as we enter the simple but attractive station of Cussing Minor, purchased at a bargain price from the GWR and rebuilt seemingly overnight to the delight of the locals who crowd the platform, proudly supporting their railway.



**ABOVE:** No. 34 enters Cussing Minor with the lunchtime passenger. Built by Dean for the Helston & St.Ives branches, it was rebuilt into its present form in 1895. Constructed from a Victorian Models limited edition kit, like the great majority of locos in my collection, it has my paintwork and Alan Brackenborough's lining and lettering.




**TOP LEFT:** An ex-M&GNR loco, built by Lawrence Scale Models in the late-'70s. Willed to me, I had Alan re-letter it NWLR for the layout along with a 4-4-0 tender locomotive. Sacrilege? Maybe.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** A re-lettered Minerva Manning Wardle pulls in with a late funeral train of 4-wheel stock.




**ABOVE:** A scene showing Michael's figure painting to good effect. Note the lettering on the ice cream tricycle. The trees here are in the backscene. I have left a gap between that and the layout scenery, which gives more perspective to the overall effect.




**ABOVE:** The NWLR 4-4-0T shunting in the loop. Alan's humour is apparent on the lettering of the container at the rear of the train. The two large trees were my first attempts, but I think they add the depth I was after behind the station.

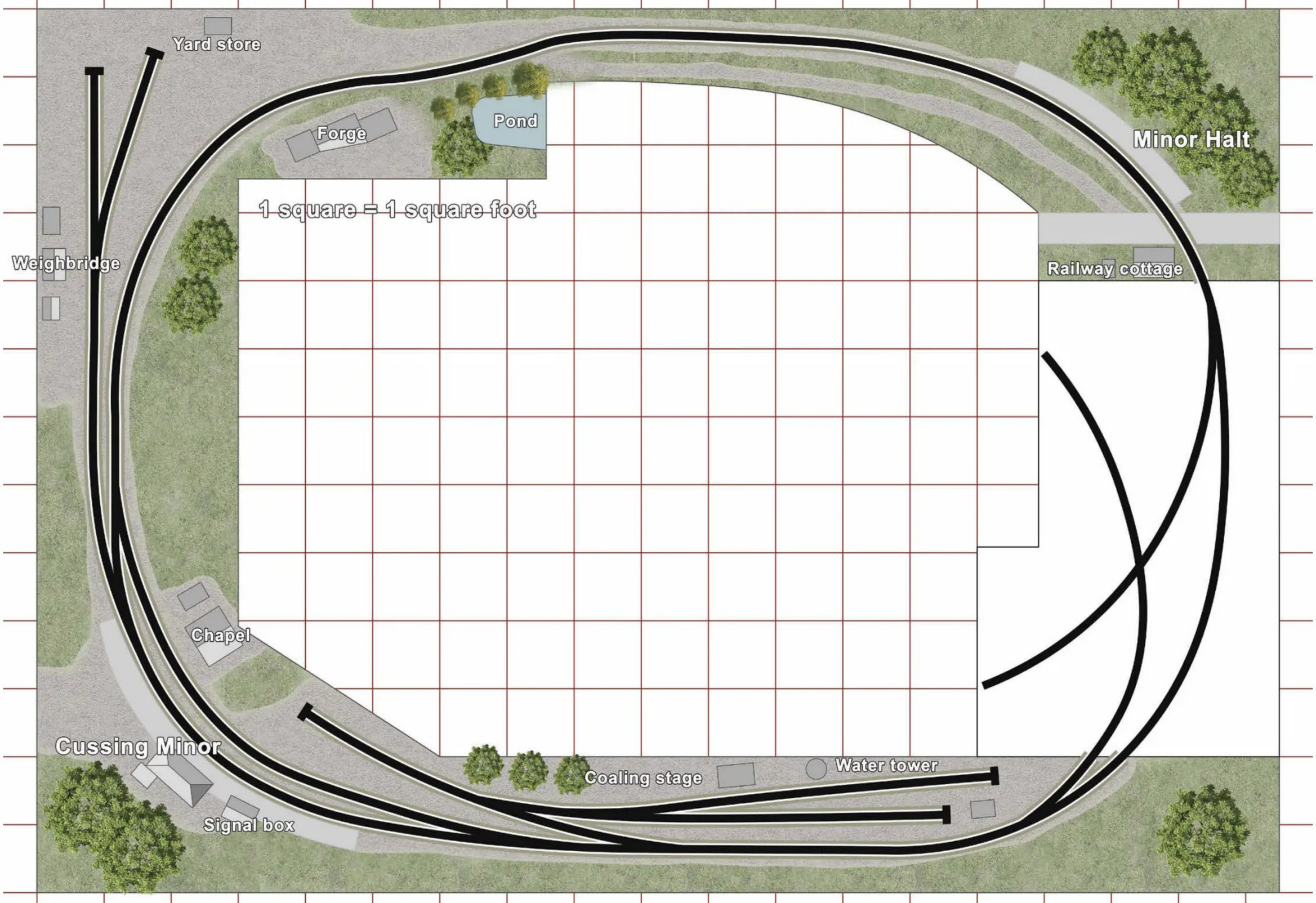
Viewed for the north, the backdrop to the station could almost be a photograph, but the station buggy waits on the lane that disappears into the distance, where only the eagle-eyed can spot on the horizon the early experiments at tree cloning by some mad fool with a camera.

Despite the general air of optimism, there is what could be interpreted as a sombre occasion underway opposite the station, where in the small corrugated chapel of Minor Saints, the funeral is underway of local landowner, Colonel Cussing's mother, obviously a popular lady held in high esteem by the large number of (mostly male) mourners present. Even several members of the local wildlife have seen fit to pay their respects!

Shortly after leaving the station on our left, we pass the small but busy goods yard, where many local businesses receive and despatch their wares. On the other side of the tracks, a farm labourer guides the horse-drawn plough, to the delight of the local seagulls, for reasons only they understand. We are now deep into Swearing countryside, which is uncluttered but attractive. Our locomotive protests shrilly as we travel through a switchback curve, passing a Smithy, then a bower with a pond, before climbing the short gradient to the summit of the great embankment, which, due to a quirk of the carpentry skills of the CME, is inclined from both sides, a feature only pointed out by early visitors to the railway.

Leaving the embankment, we gather speed as the line enters the short cutting, which is home to Minor Halt. While we do not stop, the halt occasionally sees special traffic for the local munitions depot that it serves. Finally, we pass the cottage of the stationmaster cum porter, with the

## TRACKPLAN




obligatory market garden before disappearing into the wider world, although some passengers swear that every two minutes or so, they repeat their journey again, and again, and again…

## Layout construction

13' x 17' is a reasonable size for a model railway, but 7mm is pretty voracious, so I have had to be both creative (such as using the bay window to increase the width available for the embankment), as well as disciplined in keeping the layout relatively simple and uncluttered, including just a passing loop, two sidings and a very simple engine complex. When I first started reading the modelling press, I was fascinated by the dioramas of Jack Nelson and promised myself that I would one day try and emulate him in some way, therefore, the layout is split into cameo sections, which I hope blend together.

Part of the purpose of the railway is to act as a test track and to allow me to run (most of) my loco stud. Loco building has always been my primary interest and though 4-6-0s are a bit of a squeeze, 2-6-0s and below trundle around happily. This hardly applies to the SWLR stud, but as my "proper" modelling is largely of the pre-grouping era, it is sufficient for the mainly small to medium wheelbases of the day.




**LEFT:** A bucolic scene with not a flower pot in sight. William and Benjamin (Bill and Ben) wait for their next duty on the weed train. They are a pair of slightly altered Agenoria kits. The majority of my locos are powered by ABC gearboxes and Maxon motors.

**FAR LEFT:** My first scratch-built loco(!) powered by an RG4 from my 4mm days over 40 years ago. Quite often, stock has been painted from oddments of cellulose paint I have lying around. It keeps for years and I find it easy to use. To interested parties, the backscene is south of Wooton-under-Edge in Gloucester.

Coaching stock is four- and six-wheeled except for two short wheelbase bogies, painted by Alan Brackenborough and Dave Studley, including some of his sublime teak work. The signals were gifted to me by a friend in his will and, although they could work, they do not do so at present. Those are the bare bones of my empire.

Although challenging and tragic for many, I was fortunate that Covid did not have a great effect on me personally. Living on my own and being restricted in my movements gave me a good opportunity to create my little bit of whimsy. I have tried to maintain the same standards that I would put into building a finescale loco.

There is no need to go into great detail, as the construction follows a very basic formula of the Peco track set on cork underlay and points operated manually by rods under the baseboards. There is one feed to the track, and isolation is performed by the Peco points.

## Final thoughts

I had help from a good friend, Jim Keylock, who helped me with baseboard construction. The aforementioned embankment is sadly not his work, as he was not in good health and died before he could see anything run. Brian Arman helped me greatly with the ballasting and advice, but being an expert on the broad gauge, he probably thought he was working in narrow gauge.

## About the modeller

**Name:** Dave Murdoch
**Age:** 81 years young
**Name of first layout:** 'Much Cussing and Swearing'
**Favourite era/region:** The GWR and L&SWR in the early 1900's
**Favourite loco:** Whichever one I am now building (a GWR Grange!)

After a childhood in Devon, for both family and geographical reasons, the sea and Newton Abbott station were important to me. I started by modelling boats over 70 years ago and then migrated to railways in the early-'70s. When I bought my house in Bristol (which I still live in), I added half a dozen Keyser and Wills kits to the mortgage and got stuck in, eventually moving from 4mm to 7mm, and have built rather more than a handful of locomotives. Never having married, I find the five bedrooms just large enough for me, my railway and workshop and collections of books and music. I have more than a feeling that my executor hopes he goes first…

As an office worker most of my life, I found modelling an expression of frustrated ambitions. For years, I have done what is now referred to as "loco building clinics" at shows. While I have in the past done the larger shows, such as the O Gauge Telford meeting, I now satisfy myself with the shows local to Bristol but am always happy to take on new invitations.

Future projects at my age depend on my health, but for the present, I will carry on as normal. I have a loco building programme that will take three/four years to fulfil, then we will look again to the future.

As I said earlier, I have plenty of reasons to get out of bed every day and enjoy life. Good friends always help.

"Starting in 1973, all six of my previous layouts have been based in God's own county of Swearing, reflecting my own regional interests..."




**ABOVE:** Figure painting at its best. The simple buildings are scratch-built, as are the majority on the layout.

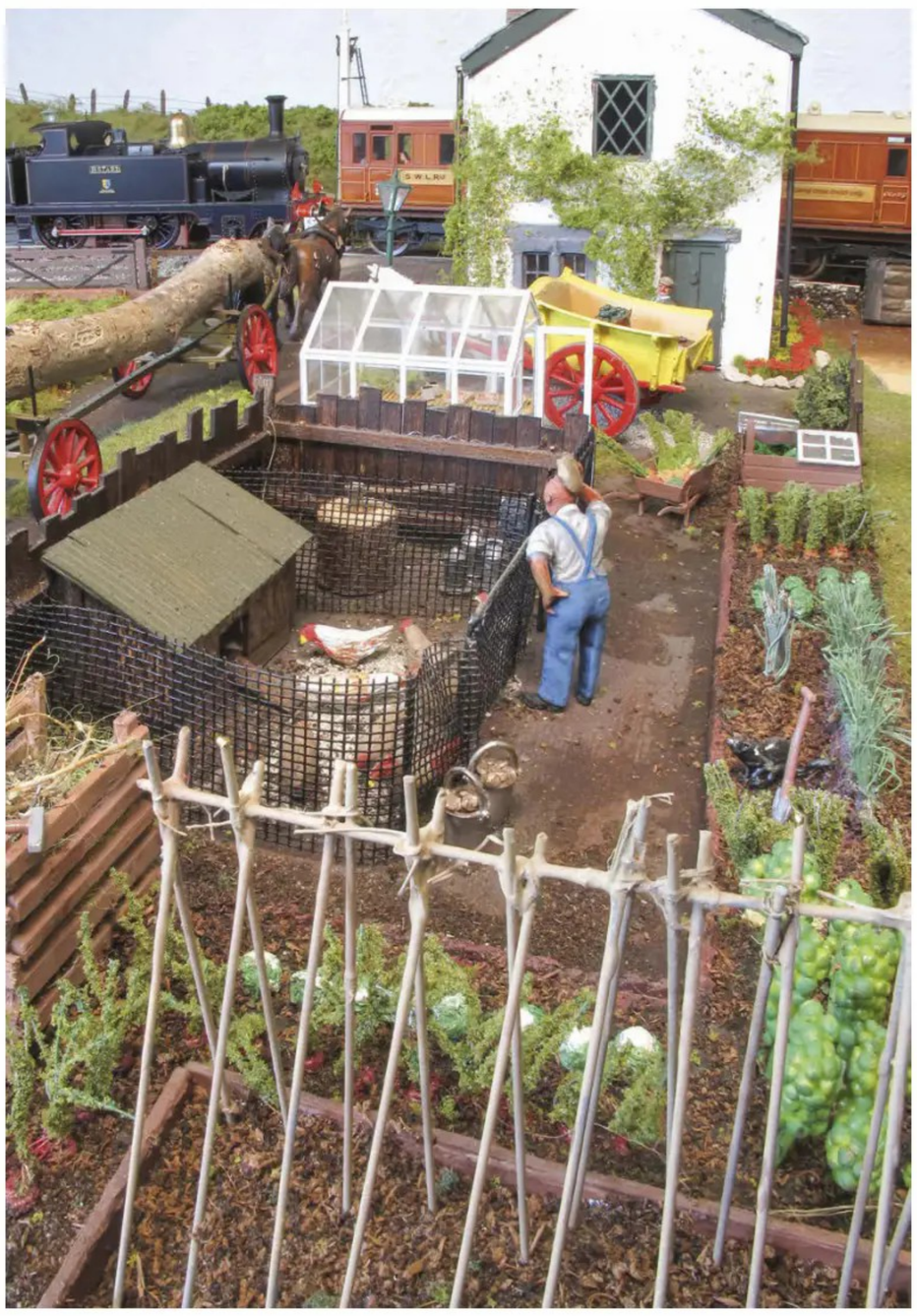





**ABOVE:** *Muriel*, named after my gran (many locos are named after late family), takes the directors to the funeral. An Alphagraphics Irish original, I had a lot of fun painting it. Note Alan's lettering on the pantechnicon in the background. Joe and Nelson plough the field, oblivious to the traffic on the railway and the seagulls.



**ABOVE:** The scratch-built ex-GWR station building and Peco signal box. The paper hoarding proclaiming 'Scotland win the World Cup' proves that the railway is pure fantasy.



**ABOVE:** My favourite "Jack Nelson" diorama. There are eight in all on the layout. The pond is a mixture of green and brown acrylics varnished over. The morning goods runs by hauled by a Scorpio 645 Class in Wolverhampton livery, painted some years ago by Alan.

**RIGHT:** Another chicken missing! The fox is out of picture behind the fence. The market garden was a kind 80th birthday present from my friend Neil Walker. In the background, a scratch-built Gateneal Brecon and Merthyr 2-4-0 T plies its trade.

Further, if sometimes contradictory, advice was gratefully accepted from Johnathan Edwards, John and Michael Hembury, Trevor Potts, Adrian Robbins and Harry Tyndall. I'd also (if I may?) make mention of, without favouritism, Vernon Garnham for his work on the backscenes. These were the first elements on the baseboards, and when mounted before building commenced, I realised that I would have to make an effort to ensure that his efforts were not in vain. Also, a salute to Michael Hembury for expertly painting over 100 figures, mainly "0 Men". Finally, a thank you to Alan Brackenborough for lettering a great deal of the stock and painting the signs and horse-drawn wagons.

Starting in 1973, all six of my previous layouts have been based in God's own county of Swearing, reflecting my own regional interests, and I have been lucky enough for them all to be published, with the last two in BRM. Seven is my lucky number, so perhaps I can now retire gracefully, or maybe that is just the editor's wish!

The great thing about our hobby is that no one way is the right way. Of the visitors who have seen it so far, a few have managed not to laugh. As I said to Gordon Gravett, "I read all your books, then I did it my way". You may like my Swearing or hate it, but at 81, it gives me a reason for getting out of bed in the mornings. ■

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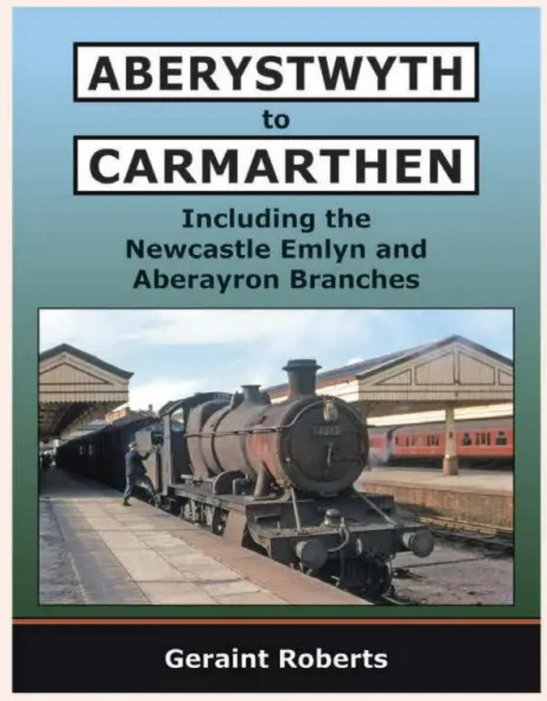


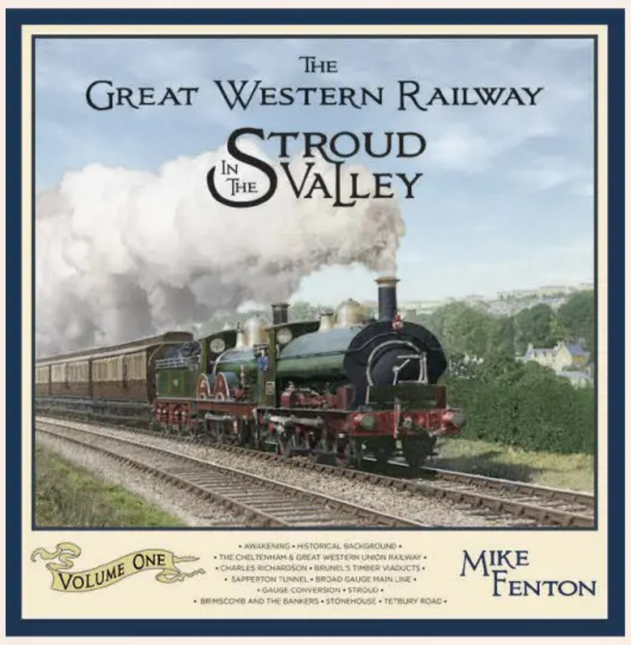


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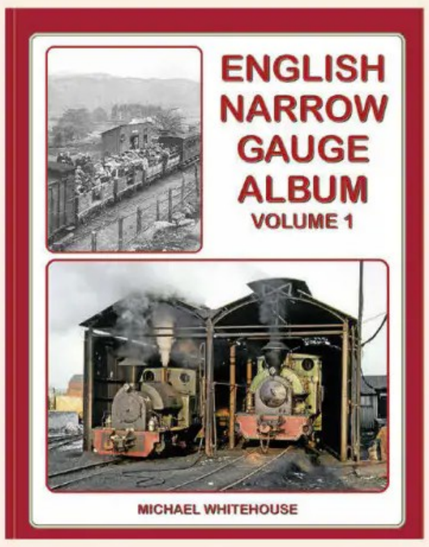


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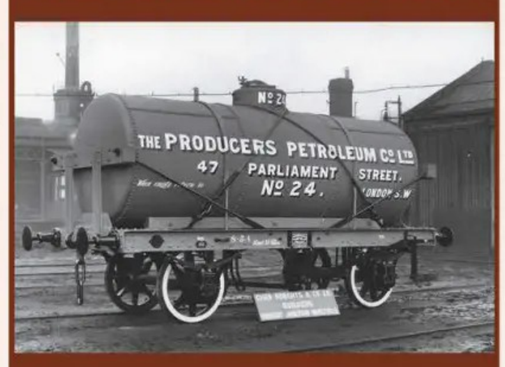


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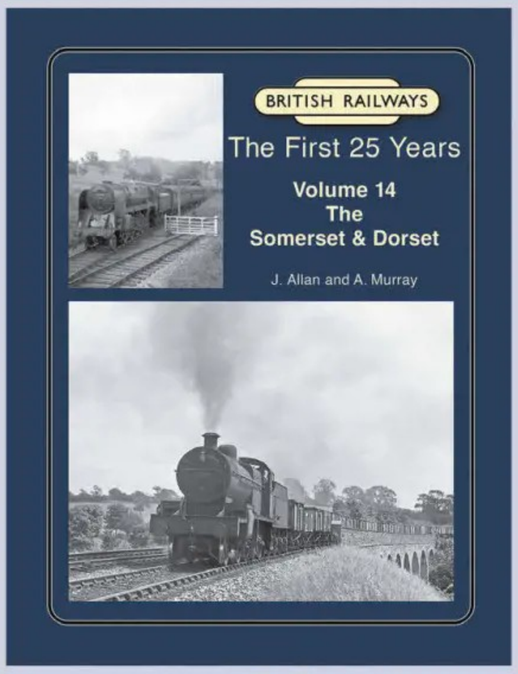


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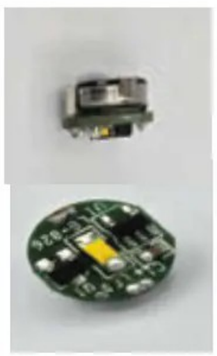

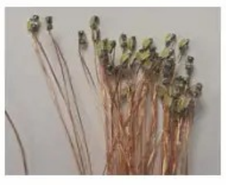

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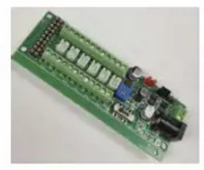



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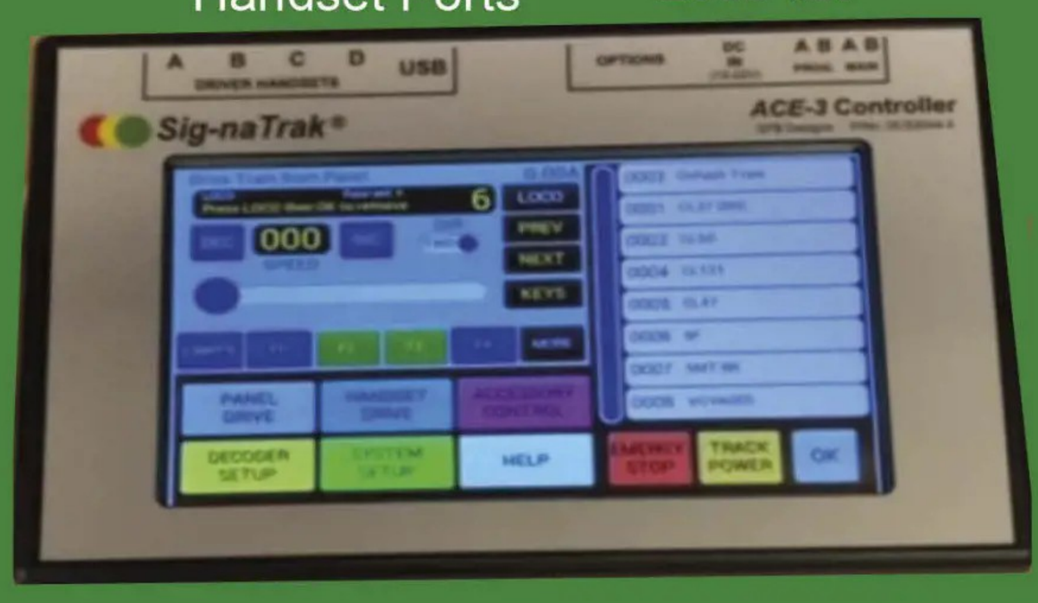


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# THE LATEST HEADLINES



## Graham Farish reveals new V2 in N

Bachmann Europe has revealed a brand-new model of the LNER V2 Class steam locomotive for its Graham Farish N scale range.

The V2 Class locomotive was one of the LNER's most successful designs, commonly referred to as 'the engines that won the war' due to their contribution to the war effort during the Second World War. The Class pioneer *Green Arrow* entered traffic in 1936 and was named after the 'Green Arrow' express goods services, for which the type was designed. In total, 184 V2s were built, with construction continuing during World War Two.

Employing the 2-6-2 'Prairie' wheel formation as opposed to the 4-6-0 arrangement more conventionally used for large mixed traffic locomotives in Britain, the V2s operated across most parts of the LNER network and were comfortable hauling both passenger and freight services.

N scale models of the V2 were previously produced by Graham Farish in 2004. However, given the significant advancements in British N scale models during the last two decades, that model no longer meets the requirements of the discerning N scale enthusiast.

The new Graham Farish model has been designed from the rails up and is constructed from a high-fidelity, injection-moulded bodyshell with separate smokebox and running plate. Additional detail parts include metal handrails, metal buffers and front lower lamp irons. The tender bodyshell is also injection-moulded, with three different versions depicted, each with separately-fitted water scoop, tank filler, metal handrails and metal buffers, and a cast metal coal load. The detailed cab interior will be fully decorated and features boiler backhead controls and gauges, driver's and fireman's seats, brake and water scoop standards, and a hinged tender fallplate constructed from metal.

Along with the three tender types, there are also tooling options for the original monobloc cylinder castings or later arrangement with three separate cylinders, LNER or BR smokebox doors, and two types of rocker arm guides fitted to the cylinders. Named locomotives can be portrayed with nameplates either mounted on the running board or, in the case of *Green Arrow*, fixed to the smokebox sides.

A Next18 DCC decoder socket and pre-fitted speaker can be found in the tender, which is connected to the locomotive with a discreet fixed drawbar with integral electrical connections. Each model will also be available with optional SOUND FITTED, employing a Zimo MS590N18 DCC sound decoder.

With production of the first models nearing completion, the livery samples for these will be revealed in the Autumn 2024 British Railway Announcements, during which details, including pricing and availability, will be confirmed.












# Hornby RailRoad 'ZDA' 45 Ton Open 'Squid' wagon arrives with retailers

New to Hornby's OO Railroad range is the 45T 'ZDA' Open 'Squid' wagon in a red/grey Railfreight livery, and it is available to order now.

Priced at just £19.99, the new wagon features a painted finish, fixed tension-lock couplings and separate plastic buffers and is ideal for those modelling the BR post-TOPS era.

The Railroad brand is pitched as an entry-point for the hobby in Hornby's range and plays an important part in encouraging new modellers to get involved, that being said, this new model definitely punches above its price point, with a nice finish and livery application and overall quality is very good too.

**About the prototype**

The OAA wagon could be seen as a logical progression of the open wagons of yore, they had no explicit purpose in mind upon introduction but to haul a large amount of cargo wherever was required. Introduced in 1971 with a carrying capacity of 31 tonnes, the OAA wagons had drop-side doors on each side for the easy loading and unloading of cargo.

The OAA wagons saw conversions and rebuilds within a few years of introduction as the railways undertook a move towards specific rolling stock for specific uses, and the need for general wagons became reduced. Many wagons would go on to enter departmental service. A small handful of the wagons are still in service, although these tend to be used as barrier vehicles in the modern era.

# Production samples of new GWR 7800 Manor arrive

Dapol has shared images of the latest production samples of the GWR 7800 'Manor' locomotive.

Building on the developments from the Dapol Mogul, including Dapol's slide-in PCB in the boiler for tool-free DCC fitting and sugar cube speaker enclosure (for sound models) and conductive drawbar providing tender wheel pick-up and connections for high bass speaker, the new locomotive will feature a diecast chassis, firebox glow, a detailed cab and a sprung front pony truck.




**Proposed models**

- 4S-001-009 *Granville Manor* 7818 GW Green Shirt Button
- 4S-001-010 *Cockington Manor* 7806 GW Green GWR
- 4S-001-011 *Ditcheat Manor* 7821 BR Lined Black Early Crest
- 4S-001-012 *Foxcote Manor* 7822 BR Black Early Crest
- 4S-001-013 *Garsington Manor* 7817 BR Lined Green Late Crest
- 4S-001-014 *Bradley Manor* 7802 BR Lined Green Late Crest

Production samples have now been approved by the design team and the models will be shipping any day now, expected to arrive at the start of September 2024.

Priced at £178.99 DCC Ready, £212.33 DCC-Fitted and £330.43 Sound-Fitted, the new models are available to order directly from Dapol or its stockists.

# Minerva Model Railways reveals USA Tank

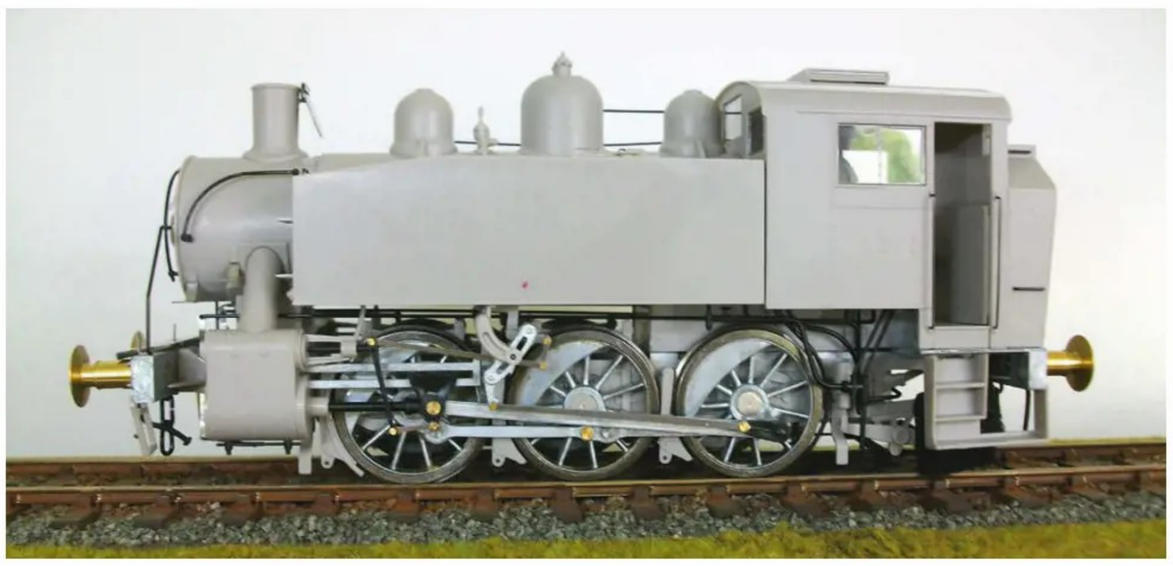
The first Engineering Prototype of the USA tank has arrived and Minerva Model Railways has released some first pictures.

A few points have arisen, all of which have been addressed and modifications to the tooling has now started.

Minerva Model Railways and Chrezo of Royan, France, announced the joint production of a finescale, injection-moulded O gauge model of the S100/030TU/USA tank in 7mm scale in October last year.

Built to the same general specification as Minerva's other locomotives, GWR 57XX/8750 0-6-0PT, Kerr Stuart *Victory* 0-6-0T, Manning Wardle K 0-6-0ST, Peckett 0-4-0ST locomotives and the Class 14 Diesel 0-6-0, the new model will be finished in five liveries; Black lettered Southern Green, Black with BR early Crest, Black with BR late Crest, Lined BR Green, Brown lettered 'Worth Valley'.

A delivery date is not yet confirmed, but retail prices, including UK VAT, are expected to be:
DC – £390
DCC fitted – £445
DCC and sound fitted – £525



**Specification**

- An injection-moulded body
- Over 250 individual components
- Die-cast metal chassis
- Finescale wheels
- Six-wheel electrical pick-up
- High-torque flywheel-equipped motor
- 40:1 precision gearbox for slow, smooth running
- Options include DC/DCC ready, DCC-fitted and DCC sound-fitted using the latest technology
- Detailed cab
- Sprung buffers and hook d raw-gear with cosmetic screw coupling

# New Accurascale ICI and ZDV Engineers 21 Ton Hopper Packs

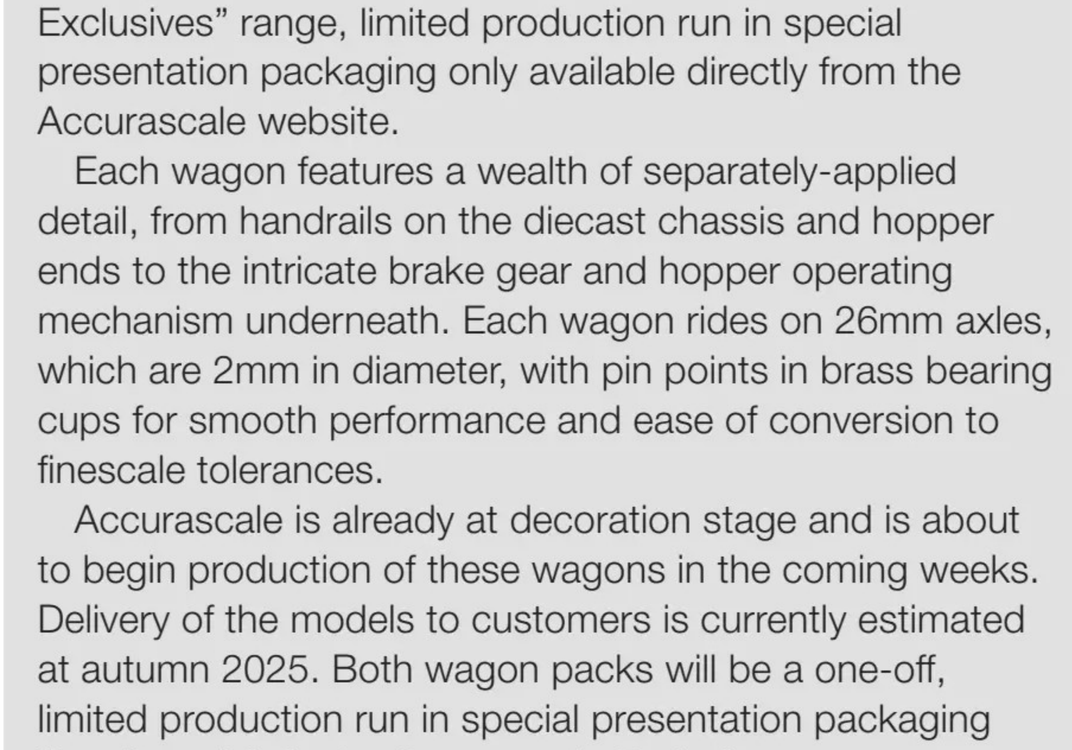
Accurascale has revealed two triple wagon packs featuring its newly-announced BR 21-ton Hopper Wagons in private owner industrial and BR engineering ZDV guises.

These wagons will form part of the "Accurascale Exclusives" range, limited production run in special presentation packaging only available directly from the Accurascale website.

Each wagon features a wealth of separately-applied detail, from handrails on the diecast chassis and hopper ends to the intricate brake gear and hopper operating mechanism underneath. Each wagon rides on 26mm axles, which are 2mm in diameter, with pin points in brass bearing cups for smooth performance and ease of conversion to finescale tolerances.

Accurascale is already at decoration stage and is about to begin production of these wagons in the coming weeks. Delivery of the models to customers is currently estimated at autumn 2025. Both wagon packs will be a one-off, limited production run in special presentation packaging like all models in the Accurascale Exclusives range.

Each pack is priced at £99.95 and Accurascale is operating its usual 10% off when you buy two packs or more, along with a new offer of 15% when you buy five or more packs direct from the website.










# Revolution Trains announces first TT:120 model

Revolution Trains is entering TT:120 with its popular MMA/JNA box wagon already produced in OO and N.

There are around 1200 of these box wagons in service and they are operated by numerous freight operators and Network rail. They form the ideal accompaniment for Hornby's upcoming TT:120 Class 66 locomotives in DB, GBRf and Colas liveries.

The Revolution model will conform to existing TT:120 standards and will initially be offered in DB red, GBRf steel blue, Ermewa grey, Mendip Rail silver and Wascosa/Network Rail yellow with prototypical variations in brake equipment, ribs and bodyside doors. The models will be supplied with moulded 'loads', which can be removed if the customer wishes to operate the wagons as empties, and each version will be available with five different running numbers.

CAD design is underway and will be unveiled shortly. The models will retail at £44.95 and will be available to pre-order from Revolution Trains direct or from your preferred retailer.

# New Train-O-Matic SPP Nano Stayalive

Train-O-Matic has produced a new stayalive in its factory in Romania: a tiny electronics board with the smallest supercaps.

If you are limited with space in your DCC-equipped locomotive and you experience loss of power when running it, then this could be the answer to this problem. As we see the desire for models with sound increase, a Stayalive or Powerpack is essential and the SPP Nano will give between 3-6 seconds of extra power, depending on the active features of the model.



# Exclusive wagons for Peckett No.1631 *Marcia*

To aid the ongoing operation and future overhauls of *Marcia* (built by Peckett in 1923), four wagons have been exclusively commissioned from Rapido Trains UK.

These wagons feature the fictional liveries of some of the UK's famous independent locomotive builders – Peckett & Sons, The Hunslet Engine Company, Manning Wardle & Co and Andrew Barclay Sons & Co Ltd.

Each wagon costs £30, including free UK postage, and are available to pre-order now. These wagons are available only from www.peckett1631.co.uk with all the proceeds going into the locomotive's restricted fund.






# Dapol 20T Toad Brake Van production samples arrive




Dapol has received and approved production samples of the eagerly awaited GWR 20T Toad Brake Van in O gauge.

Available to pre-order now and costing £101.52 each, samples have been approved and the models are about to be shipped. Dapol anticipates they will be in shops towards the end of August/beginning of September.

**Specification**

- Die-cast compensated chassis
- Finely profiled wheels and axles with brass bearing pockets
- Highly detailed injection moulded body
- Full interior detail· Many separately-added fine details
- Sprung metal buffers
- Sprung metal coupling hook and Instanter or screw-link couplings where appropriate
- Expertly applied liveries
- Vans are vacuum-fitted where applicable

**Proposed models**

- 7F-300-001 GWR Toad Brake Van GWR Grey 56683 Diagram AA15
- 7F-300-002 GWR Toad Brake Van GWR Grey 68684 Diagram AA15
- 7F-300-003 GWR Toad Brake Van BR Grey W17953 Diagram AA15
- 7F-300-004 GWR Toad Brake Van GWR Grey Unnumbered Diagram AA15
- 7F-300-005 GWR Toad Brake Van GWR Grey 114925 Diagram AA19
- 7F-300-006 GWR Toad Brake Van BR Grey W68673 Diagram AA20
- 7F-300-007 GWR Toad Brake Van GWR Grey 17410 Diagram AA21
- 7F-300-008 GWR Toad Brake Van Bauxite W17445 Diagram AA21
- 7F-300-009 GWR Toad Brake Van Bauxite W17390 Diagram AA21
- 7F-300-010 GWR Toad Brake Van Bauxite Unnumbered Diagram AA21

# TTC Diecast and Malcs Models join forces for exclusive TT:120 buildings

The two companies, along with the help of Bachmann, have announced a new range of TT:120 Modern image depot buildings.

Branded Scenecraft TT:120, the new buildings will be released in two batches and will feature the following (pictured below);

- 43-126 Single Road Servicing Shed - TT120 Scale Exclusive £69.95
- 43-040 Diesel Fueling Point - TT120 Scale Exclusive £ 26.95
- 43-016 Fuel Storage Tanks - TT120 Scale Exclusive £49.95

Due to be released in November/December 2024, both offer this first batch as a bundle offer of £139.95.

The second batch, which is due to arrive in early 2025, will feature;

- 43-002 Washing Plant - TT120 Scale Exclusive £46.95
- 43-0034 Depot Crew Room - TT120 Scale Exclusive £47.95
- 43-0053 Servicing Point - TT120 Scale Exclusive £54.95
- 43-0054 Depot Mess Room and Toilet - TT120 Scale Exclusive £47.95

Orders can be placed online at both TTC Diecast and Malcs Models websites.






# Trainsporters reveals extended boxes for new Hornby Class 800/802

Following consultations with various modellers, Trainsporters has extended the slots in its TSOO20 and TSOO21 boxes to 349mm, to accommodate the Hornby Class 800 and 802 stock.

Also known as Trainsporters Orange and Purple boxes, the move allows a complete nine-car rake of locos and coaches to be stored in a single box!

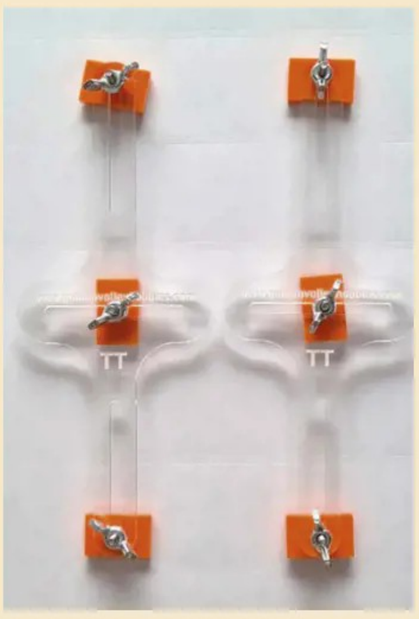
Priced at £40 (TS0020) and £42 (TS0021), the boxes are also available in 'White - Extra Strong'. Labels to help keep track of your stock are also included, as well as plastic tubing to give your stock added protection in transit and silica gel - ideal for long-term storage.

# Golden Valley Hobbies reveals new TT track tool

Golden Valley Hobbies has released a new TT gauge flexible track holding tool.

Available to order now, the Flexi Track tool solves the problem of keeping flexible track in curved shapes while you try and fit it down to a baseboard. Simply create your curve, then place the tool onto the track. Tighten the wing nuts to hold in place.

Each pack, priced at £17.50, comes with two Flexi track tools, allowing you to create long flowing curves or reverse curves in one go.



00 | 1957 - Preservation | £££ 199.95-359.95

# Bachmann Class 31



Andy York




The refurbished Class 31 body style sees the removal of the raised waistband around the body and the loss of the cowling beneath the bufferbeam, the 'top hat' surround to the roof fan grille and the added ETH equipment of the 31/4 part recessed into the bottom corner of the front.

Bachmann surprised the market in February by announcing its model of a Class 31, the first time the company has produced the model in 4mm scale, expanding the wide range of diesel subjects. The launch range covers the service life of the Class from the original green without warning panels as a Mirrlees engine Class 30 with parallel roof exhausts, through the corporate blue era with a Class 31/1, and a completely different body moulding without the waistband to produce refurbished versions in BR Blue, Railfreight red stripe and Petroleum sector liveries. Each of these models is available in two different running numbers with the range complete by a single privatisation-era Mainline Freight blue and silver model as seen in 1996/7, which is our review model. Within that range, there are a wealth of variations accommodated within the tooling suite, and it's obvious that there are more versions, permutations and livery choices, which should appear in the future.

Examination and comparison of the model against photographs show that Bachmann has done a superb job of capturing the features and look of the real thing; an excellent project while retaining Bachmann's traditional build quality and robustness. One feature that I particularly like is the two-part bodyside grille, which gives a nice depth with detail. The decoration of the model, aside from the slightest hint of fuzziness of the top of the yellow warning panel under magnification, is excellent, with a slight satin sheen and clearly defined silver printing with white front handrails and bogie conduits.

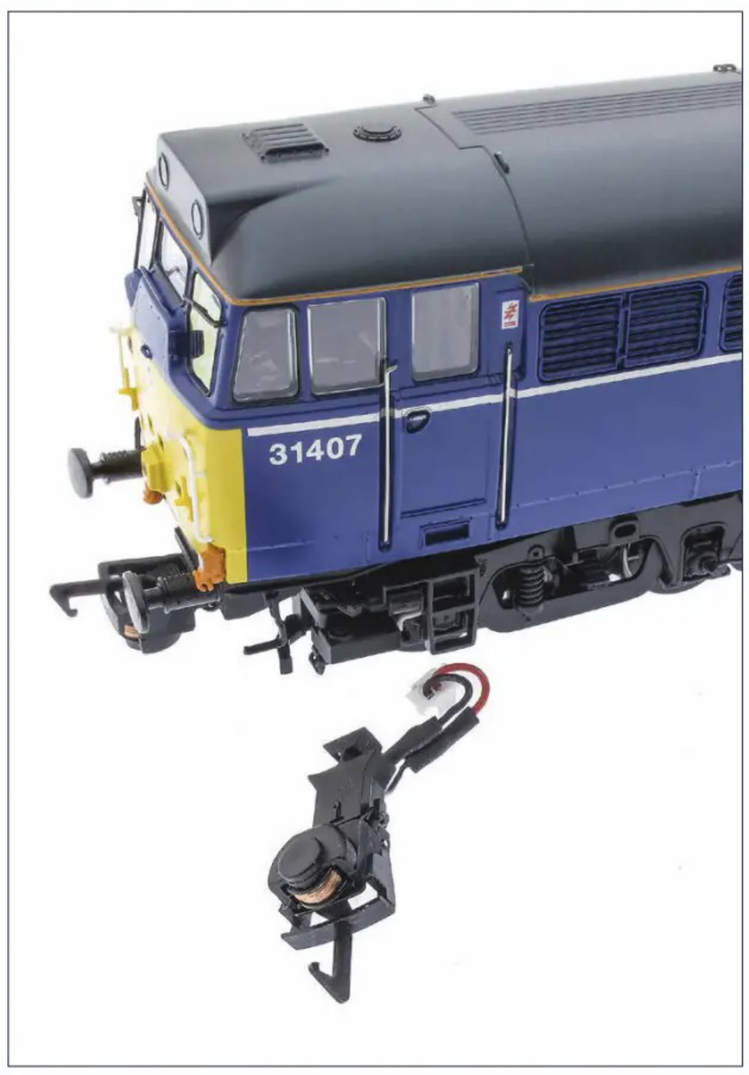
The analogue/DCC ready model has an RRP of £199.95, and each of the models in the range have the option of fitted sound for £309.95 with a Zimo sound decoder for the factory-fitted dual speakers enabling full control of the directional lighting, cab and engine room lights, too. On the subject of lights, I'm impressed with the subdued headcode box dominoes. The high-intensity front lamp has the ribbed lens first seen on the Class 47 model, although it doesn't look to be ribbed, checking photographs of the locomotive in service. As with other Bachmann models, the sound-fitted option will give running sounds on analogue control. The SFX deluxe version, topping the range at £359.95, gives the additional features of the speed-dependent rotating roof fan, iridescent tinted glazing to the driver and secondman's front windows, which are actually tinted purple at one end and yellow at the other to capture the variety of tones visible under different light directions on the prototype, and this model's party piece, the new auto-release coupling mechanism.

The auto-release mechanism is a standard tension-lock coupling with a deeper lower part to house a copper coil which, when activated by the digital command from the decoder and circuitry, raises a paddle within the coupling that lifts the locomotive's coupling and the hook of a connected item of stock. I have tested this with different makes of coupling and, as long as the two items can couple, it will work with any tension-locks – metal or plastic. A single digital command (F11 or F12 dependent on which end you wish to operate) gives a shunter's instruction to squeeze up, followed by a short movement back, lifting of the couplings and then drawing forward for a few feet before coming to a stop, all in one operation. It's simple, nicely executed and seems to be reliable. I can see the appeal for many modellers, especially those untroubled by the appearance of tension-lock couplings.

If you wish to fit the bufferbeam detailing and snowploughs (as shown in our lead image), it does mean that you would have



From above, the auto-uncoupler does give a bulkier appearance than a conventional tension-lock coupling.



The auto-uncoupler can be removed by unclipping it from the coupling mount and unplugging the connections from behind the bufferbeam.



If you choose to remove the auto-uncoupler the full end detailing can be fitted. Note the pink windscreen tint at this end compared to the yellow tint at the other.



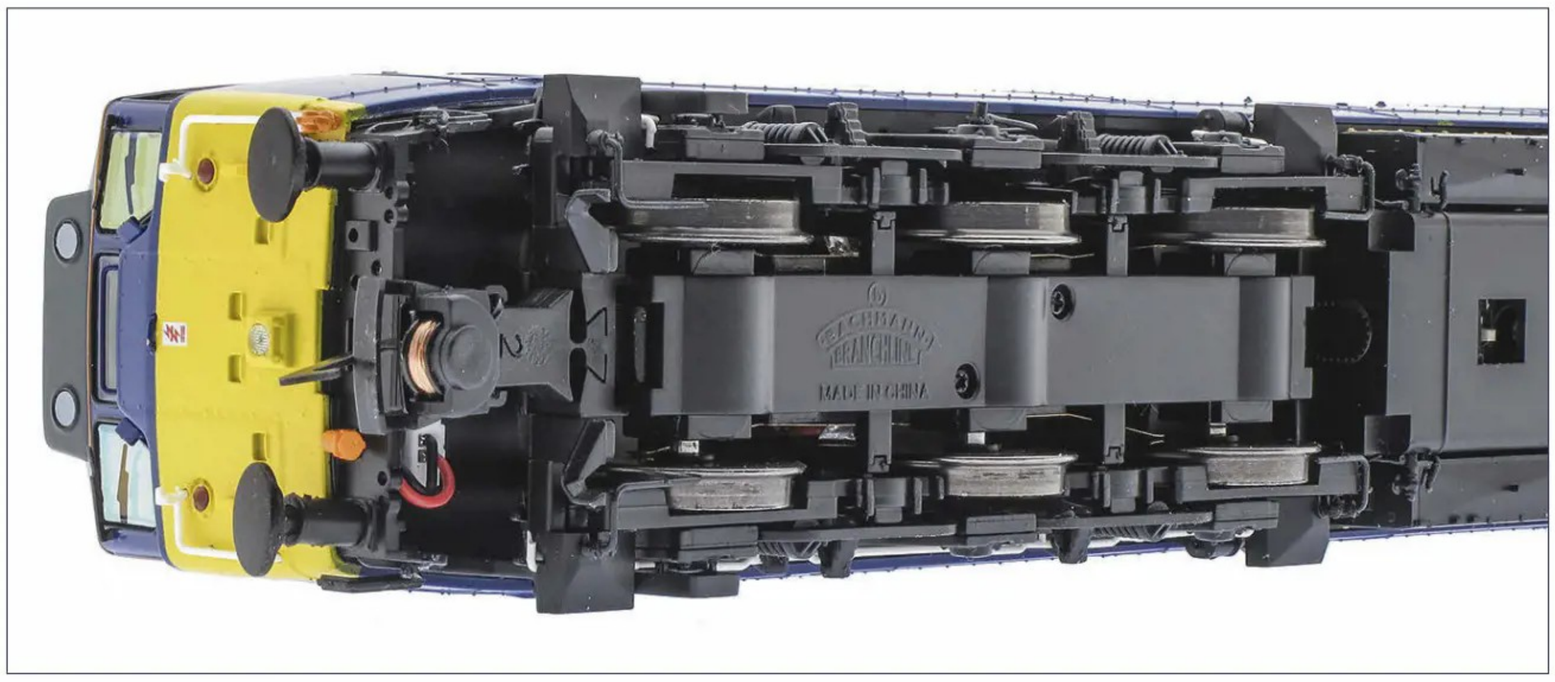
The speed-dependent rotating roof fan is driven by a dedicated motor and gearbox. The etched mesh replicates the woven style of the wiring.

## FACTFILE

**Models:**
35-801 Class 30 D5564 BR Green (Late Crest)
35-801A Class 30 D5617 BR Green (Late Crest)
35-805 Class 31/1 31123 BR Blue
35-805A Class 31/1 31293 BR Blue
35-821 Class 31/1 Refurbished 31180 BR Railfreight (Red Stripe)
35-821A Class 31/1 Refurbished 31149 BR Railfreight (Red Stripe)
35-823 Class 31/1 Refurbished 31319 BR Railfreight Petroleum Sector
35-823A Class 31/1 Refurbished 31304 BR Railfreight Petroleum Sector
35-825 Class 31/4 Refurbished 31435 BR Blue
35-830 Class 31/4 Refurbished 31407 Mainline Freight
**Era:** 1957 - preservation
**Construction:** Plastic body and diecast chassis
**Weight:** 535g
**Minimum curves:** Radius 2 (438mm)
**DCC socket:** Plux22
**Accessory pack:** Snowploughs, bufferbeam detailing, body lifting points

## WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Innovative auto-uncoupler
- ✓ Detail differences
- ✓ Performance



Despite the prototype being of A1A-A1A wheel configuration, all wheels are driven on Bachmann's model.

to remove the auto coupling, but this is an easy task to free it from the NEM mount and unplug from the two-wire socket behind the bufferbeam. That arrangement shows that, if the circuitry and chassis were modified, Bachmann could add this feature to future versions of existing models. This will be an excellent feature on the forthcoming Class 08/09.

Performance from the well-weighted model powered by a 5-pole motor and twin flywheels is very good, capably managing 16 Mk.1 coaches (more than the real thing could have ever hoped to move) with its all-wheel drive (although current collection is just from the outer axles on each bogie) and, particularly with sound, is a joy to operate.

An excellent model that demonstrates a commitment to innovate and add useful features.

N | 1929 - Preservation | £££ 129.95

# Sonic Models GW 5101 Class Large Prairie



Andy York




Exclusive to Rails of Sheffield, Sonic's 5101/61xx large prairie really nails the look of this elegant but hard-working class.

It's a sobering thought when you work out that it's 47 years since Graham Farish introduced its large Great Western Prairie Class; how we've gone for so long without a decent new model of a popular and useful class is a mystery, but Sonic Models has now remedied this aberration. Exclusively distributed through Rails of Sheffield, the range covers the life of the class from 1929 with pre-1934 GREAT WESTERN livery, 1942-47 GWR livery and BRITISH RAILWAYS, BR large logo and late crest liveries in lined Brunswick green, with BR black with early logo and late crest in unlined black. The main material difference between the pre- and post-nationalisation models is the different smokebox door for the BR front numberplate. Aficionados will see that there are some liveries not yet covered, but I'm sure we'll see those in the future.

The initial impression when taking the model from the box is a well-weighted quality feel with a lovely finish; slightly glossy with the appearance of a freshly-painted locomotive. The copper chimney cap and brass safety valve cover have an excellent finish, and the orange and black lining of our review sample is very tidy under normal viewing. The cabside numberplate fits into a recess to assist in assembly and, although this was well-fitted, it seems that the factory has printed some numbers at an angle, which can be seen in our photographs. The black plastic wheels are shod with nicely dulled tyres, which match the commendably fine connecting rods and valve gear. With a little further treatment from the modeller, it will look absolutely superb in service.

The quality of running is excellent, very quiet and smooth, with good electrical continuity over pointwork thanks to the all-wheel pick-up, which is achieved by an excellent design of easily-removed pony trucks incorporating electrical contacts; one of the best designs I have seen in this regard. The model, from the box, handled six Mk.1 coaches. However, several users have reported issues with hauling longer trains, particularly up gradients, which I replicated and this seems to be caused by the amount of downward pressure onto the sprung leading and trailing pony trucks; this was deemed necessary to minimise the risk of derailments, but if your track is to a reasonable standard there should be no problem in removing the spring. It's easy to do, just lightly pull the pony truck out, remove the spring and reconnect.

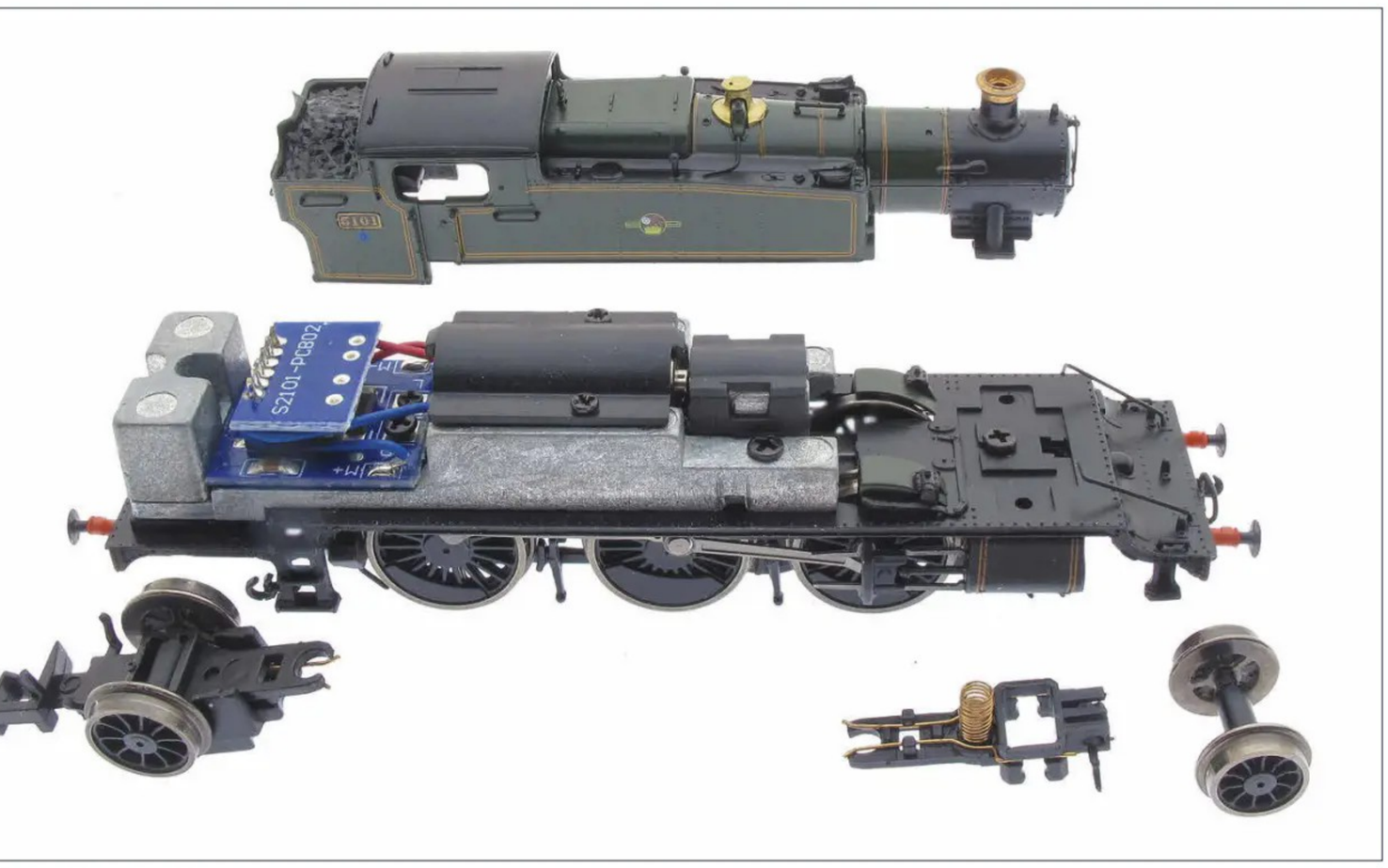
The rear pony truck should be removed to access the single body screw after splaying the boiler stays out from the bottom on the smokebox, with the body separating just above the running plate. You can see how








Sonic has captured all the details from running plate rivets through to the turned-metal chimney cap.



The dismantled model shows the coreless motor housing, weights, decoder socket within the cab and the sprung pony trucks.



Close-up viewing shows the blanking plug inside the cab, but this could be disguised with painting or adding a crew.



The printing on the numberplate is askew rather than the numberplate being incorrectly placed as it's held in a recess.

## FACTFILE

**Models:**
S2103-01 CLASS 5101 GWR Green NO.5164
S2103-02 CLASS 61XX GWR Green NO.6106
S2103-03 CLASS 5101 BR Green NO.4144
S2103-04 CLASS 5101 BR Black (Early Crest) NO.5199
S2103-05 CLASS 5101 BR Lined Green (Early Crest) NO.4167
S2103-06 CLASS 5101 BR Lined Green (late Crest) NO.4141
S2103-07 CLASS 5101 BR Lined Green (late Crest) NO.5101
S2103-08 CLASS 5101 BR Black (late Crest) NO.4156
**Era:** 1929 - preservation
**Construction:** Plastic body with diecast chassis
**DCC socket:** 6-Pin right-angle
**Weight:** 44g
**Minimum curves:** Radius 1 (228mm)
**Accessories:** Bufferbeam detailing, front steps, handbrake

## WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ A long-overdue improvement over previous Prairie models
- ✓ Running qualities
- ✓ Robust detail
- ✓ Livery variety and application

much weight has been built into the side tanks either side of the coreless motor and worm, plus the bunker, but this does have the knock-on effect of the 6-pin decoder socket sitting at the bottom of the cab. A right-angled 6-pin decoder is needed and further thought is necessary on where to house a speaker if you want to sound-fit the model. While inside the model, the aesthetics can be improved by covering the upper side of the blanking plug or decoders with matt black tape to reduce the likelihood of it being seen through the cab openings, or some imaginative use of half-bodied crew members?

This model is a huge step forward from the Farish one that I grew up with, and butchering or re-bodying with whitemetal kits to widen the stable. If they had run as well as this does, I wouldn't have given up on N gauge!

TT:120 | 1938-1940 | £££ 167.99

# Hornby LMS Princess Coronation *Duchess of Atholl* 4-6-2 No. 6231






**Tony Wright**

This latest manifestation from Hornby, representing 6231 *Duchess of Atholl,* is 76 years younger than the first model made by the original firm in the form of the Hornby Dublo die-cast 6231 in OO. Are there similarities? Only in the locos having the same name and number! There is a real similarity between this TT version and the OO one released by Hornby in 2017; a completely re-tooled version of the firm's un-streamlined 'Princess Coronation' (versions of which dated from 1977 and 2002). A similarity of excellence! As with the 2017 OO example, this TT one has a single chimney, representing the loco as first-built in 1938 (the Hornby Dublo 6231 has a double chimney). Later, the real thing received a double chimney, smoke deflectors, and was painted black during the war, blue in early BR days and finally BR Brunswick green. As built (as replicated on the model), it had a non-streamlined tender, but later in its life it received a rebuilt ex-streamlined tender (rebuilt by having any fairings removed), which had no rear steps.

Commonly known as 'Duchesses', Stanier's masterpiece represented the ultimate development of Pacific motive power in this country – they were bigger and more powerful than any other equivalent. They reigned on the West Coast Main Line and beyond into Scotland (even as far as Aberdeen) for over a quarter of a century and have been popular as models for those 76 years already mentioned. Has this latest (smaller) iteration continued the tradition of a 'worthy' model of this most-famous class? Of course it has!

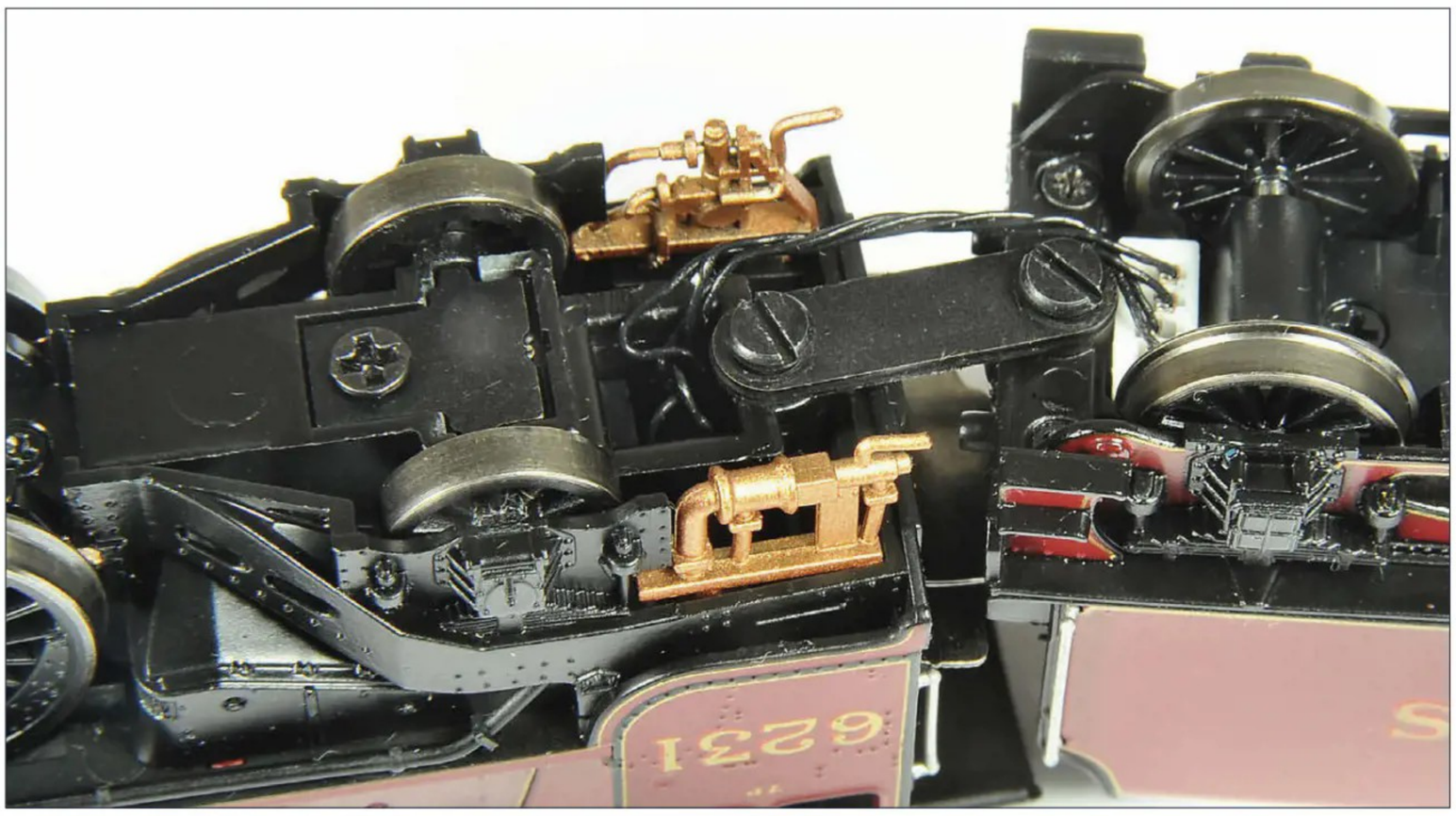
On checking against every reference at my disposal, this TT:120 version is absolutely spot-on. I can find no dimensional inaccuracies at all – even the scale/gauge relationship is accurate (remember OO models are effectively 'narrow gauge'). The attention to detail is incredible, with numerous separately-fitted items. The valve gear/motion is particularly fine, especially given its much smaller size compared with its bigger brethren. Clearly, a lot of the work/research/development on the 2017 OO version has been incorporated here – it's wonderful.

Livery-application is exquisite in every way; from the deep crimson lake through to the incredibly fine lining and numerals/letters application; all first class.

Only having a yard of TT track to test it on (and no TT stock), I could only conduct a slow, light engine assessment, but I can record that the running is super-sweet. Access for fitting a decoder is provided in the tender body, and the loco and tender are electrically-linked by a plug and socket arrangement similar to the type seen on Hornby's OO equivalents. The drawbar is non-adjustable, which is a pity because it results in an enormous gap between the loco and tender.

There's the usual bag of extras that the purchaser can fit – brake rodding, cylinder drain cocks, front steps, scale couplings, etc. There's also a replacement flanged set of pony wheels for those with generous curves.

I've heard it claimed that Hornby's range of TT:120 locos is too orientated towards the 'glamour' end. That might be true, but it's the glamorous motive power that sells, and this lovely new model should do just that. The recently-introduced Stanier 57' coaching stock will go perfectly behind it. I thoroughly recommend it.




The large gap between locomotive and tender is evident here. A set of flanged pony wheels is supplied for those with generous curves.

## FACTFILE

**Models:**
TT3010M LMS, Princess Coronation, 4-6-2, 6231, *Duchess of Atholl*
**Era:** 1938-1940
**Construction:** Plastic body and chassis
**Weight:** 200g
**Minimum curves:** Radius 2
**RRP:** £167.99

## WHAT WE LIKE

✓ Accuracy of detail
✓ Quality of finish




The lining and lettering are superb. In service, the injectors below the cab would not stay this bright for long.




A single chimney looks puny on top of a 'Princess Coronation's' smokebox, but it's correct for the period. Other recent releases (correctly) have double chimneys.




I couldn't find an original Hornby Dublo 6231 for comparative purposes, so my DJH 'Princess Coronation' will have to do (with painting by Geoff Haynes).

# Dapol Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0ST



Andy York

PDF MAGAZINES: WWW.XSAVA.XYZ




A superb-looking locomotive, the Hawthorn Leslie has many features to distinguish it from other small industrials.

Recent years have seen plenty of growth in the appeal of small industrial locomotive models, and Dapol's Hawthorn Leslie is a welcome addition to this and to its own range, being quite distinctive in style with the saddle tank finishing short of the cab front, with increased coal storage in the bunkers either side of the firebox and into each side of the cab interior. The locomotive is of a type built from 1899 to 1924 at Hawthorn Leslie's Newcastle-upon-Tyne works, produced in large numbers and continued in a variety of industrial uses (including iron works, collieries and power stations) here and overseas until the early to mid-1970s. Over 10 locomotives have made it into various states of preservation.

Dapol's model is a superb and capably-performing marriage of a small 5-pole can motor with a small flywheel driving the rear wheels. The front wheelset is compensated, which can rock about the central pip moulded into the chassis above the front axle space; important considering the very short (22mm) wheelbase. The model runs extremely steadily on the rolling road without any hint of wobble or rocking; certainly one of the best 0-4-0 ready-to-run chassis I have tested.

Quality shines through on the packaging front, with the model mounted on an acetate plinth inside the foam-lined box, ensuring no fine detail can be dislodged in any shipping shocks as there's plenty of space around those parts. Dapol's instruction booklets are informative and clear, with plenty of colour illustrations of the relevant points, including how to unpack the model, fit a decoder, maintain it and fit any accessories. Along with newer entrants into the market, this shows the firm values the product and wants to improve users' ownership; there are also useful guides to the functions of the sound-fitted models.

The initial range of nine models, plus an exclusive model for Footplate of Kidderminster with Marston, Thompson & Evershed Ltd. No.3, spans a variety of industrial users in black, green, maroon and blue liveries reaching as far as *Wallaby,* which was exported to Australia for use at an ironworks. Variations within the range is evidenced by four of the models featuring open-backed cabs, which show the detailed cab interior particularly well. The cab roof is detachable to make fitting a crew easy and clicks back into place easily with magnets. Some of the models should have conventional smokebox door dart handles rather than the handwheel, which is a little overscale, but it's understandable to withstand handling. The chassis frame extends a little further than the prototype but, again, this is a compromise to provide NEM coupling mounts. The bufferbeams have a cut-out for the coupling mount, but just one of the models, Newcastle Electricity Company No.13, with its wasp-stripe bufferbeams, has a fillet to fit; this was just an exceptional decision taken by the factory. The cylinder lubricator cups are fitted the wrong way up; the 'tap' should face upwards to allow oil to be poured in.



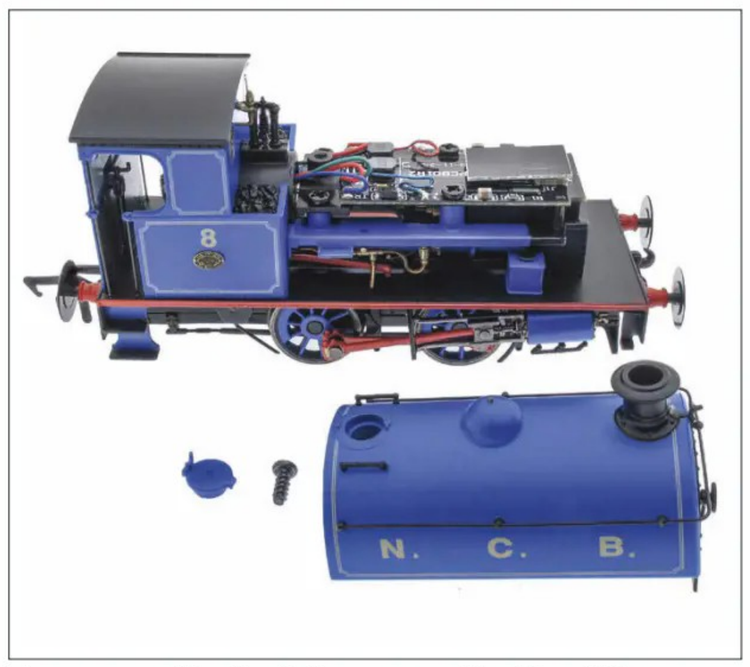

The model arrives well packaged, attached to an acrylic base, with good instructions.

## FACTFILE

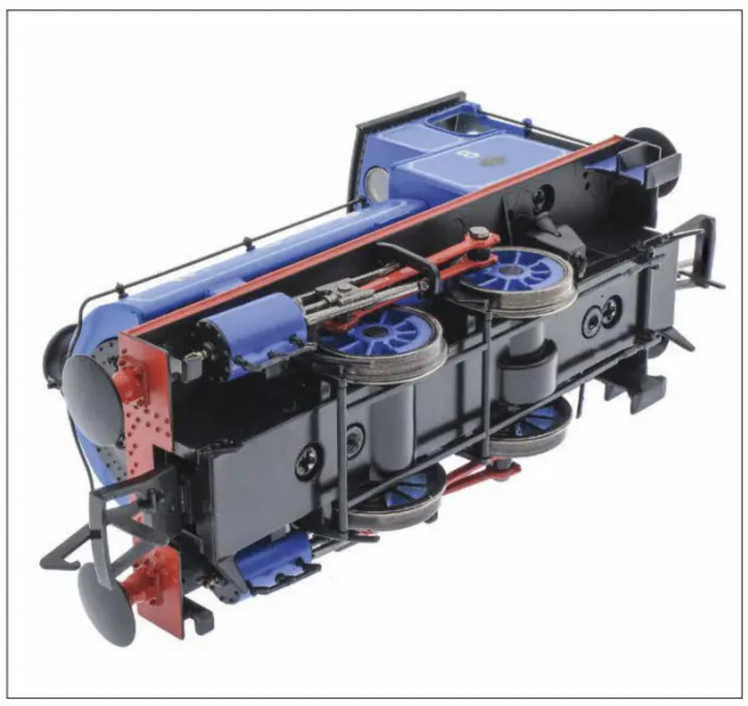
**Models:**
4s-024-001 Green Lined Yellow *Asbestos* 4 - Steam Tank Locomotive
4s-024-002 Black Lined Red *Henry*
4s-024-003 Maroon Lined Straw *Invincible*
4s-024-004 Blue Lined Yellow Port Of London Authority 56
4s-024-005 Blue Lined Straw Ncb
4s-024-006 Green *Faraday*
4s-024-007 Green *Spider* Black Park Colliery
4s-024-008 Yellow Chevrons Newcastle Electric Supply 13
4s-024-009 Lined Maroon *Wallaby* Australian Iron & Steel Co.
**Era:** 1899 - preservation
**Price:** £126.36 DCC Ready, £164.16 DCC-Fitted, £266.36 DCC Sound
**Construction:** Diecast chassis and tank, plastic body with etched detailing parts
**DCC socket:** Next18
**Weight:** 137g
**Minimum curves:** Radius 2 (438mm)



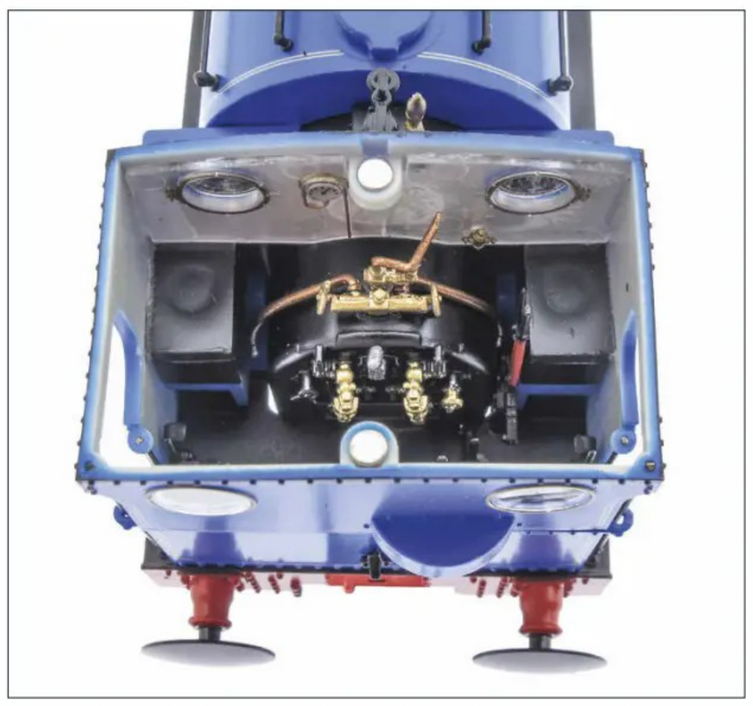

Unscrewing the circuit board shows the speaker surround and the small flywheel at the end of the 5-pole motor.




To remove the tank to access the Next18 decoder socket, remove the filler cap, unscrew and lift off the cast saddle tank.



The front axle is compensated by means of a rocker pip in the chassis frame above the axle.



The cab roof is removable for fitting a crew and to observe the detailed interior and re-attaches with magnets.

## WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Performance
- ✓ Running qualities
- ✓ Decoration quality
- ✓ Ease of decoder fitting
- ✓ Instructions

Although the quality of painting and decoration is very good, I do feel that the shade of blue of our review sample is much lighter than any National Coal Board blue locomotives I've ever studied. Etched builder's plates are provided for the cabsides of this model, while others include etched nameplates where appropriate.

Access to the interior of the model is well thought through and easy if you wish to fit a decoder and speaker. Removing the diecast saddle tank shows that weight has been engineered into the model, which helps with its good performance, capably handling six Mk.1 coaches as a standard benchmark. The smokebox front sits a little proud of the tanks, but I could see from inside this could be overcome by the modeller.

Although there may be detail differences among some models and their respective prototypes, the overall standard trumps that with a fine-quality model that runs beautifully.

N Gauge | 1918 - preservation | £££ 29.95

# Graham Farish 14T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon




Our review sample of this all-new wagon includes an offset catwalk with ladders, straight air vents, bottom outlet pipe and handwheel, the steam heating inlet valve on the end of the sides of the tank, and sits on 3-hole disc wheels.

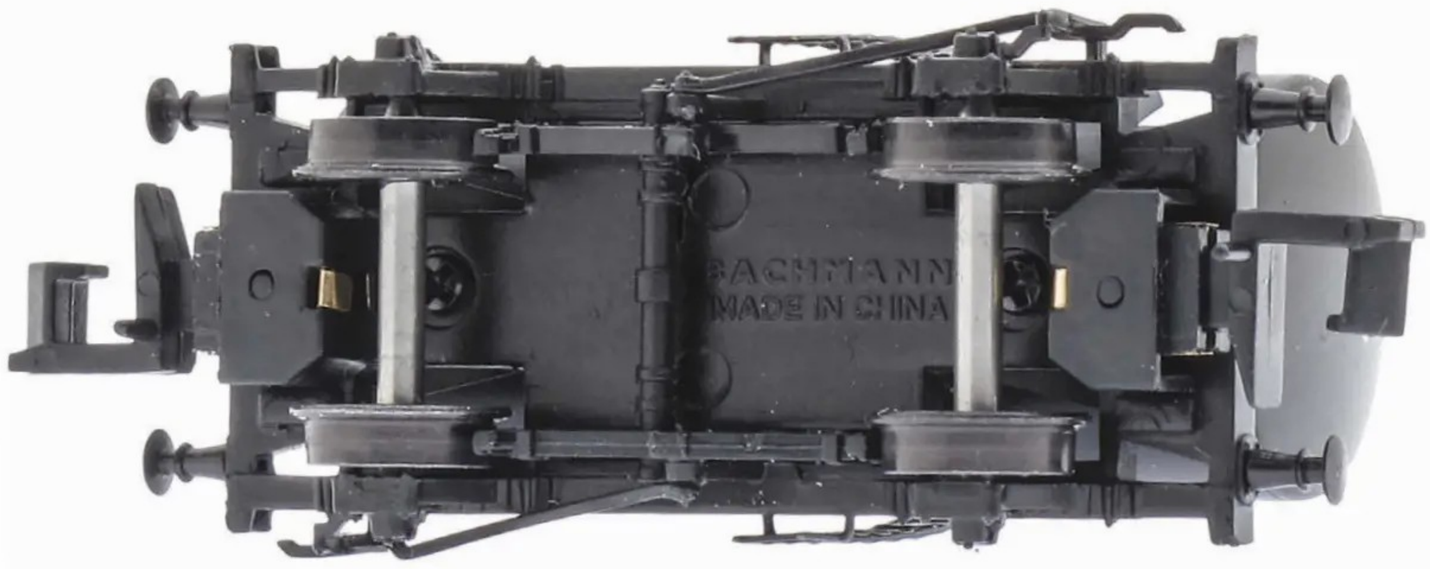


**Andy York**

Dating from the 1950s, with a simpler design than earlier wooden cradle-ended types with wire strapping, the anchor-mounted tank is a welcome addition to the Graham Farish range for post-nationalisation modellers, with production continuing through to 1963 and usage into the 1970s as the country's increasing fuel needs led to larger vacuum-braked wagons eventually taking over this traffic. The central 'anchor mount' steel cradle for the tank on the chassis was agreed among a number of private operators, Petroleum Board and the railway companies, which are reflected in Farish's choice of liveries in the first models.

These new Graham Farish models cover both the Class A and Class B tanks and are produced with several variations, including the bottom outlet pipe and associated handwheel mounted on top of the tank, the steam heating inlet valve, and a straight or cranked air vent. The top catwalks and filler can be depicted in their central position or offset, and, where fitted, the side ladders are constructed from fine metal etches. As standard, each model features separately-fitted brake gear and brake levers, along with the filler cap, which includes the distinctive securing clamps.

On the prototype, the underframe was constructed from metal section, and this is replicated on the model, affording an unobstructed view through the frames when observed from above. Standard N scale couplings are fitted via short NEM pockets designed to sit outside the axles, and metal wheelsets, with either spoked or 3-hole disc wheels, complete the model.




The bottom outlet pipe for gravity-fed unloading can be seen beneath the chassis.

## FACTFILE

**Models:**
378-001 14T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon 'Gulf' Blue
378-001A 14T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon 'Gulf' Blue
378-002 14T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon 'National Benzole' Silver
378-002A 14T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon 'National Benzole' Silver
378-003 14T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon 'Fina' Black
378-003A 14T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon 'Fina' Black
378-004 20T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon 'Shell/BP' Black
378-004A 20T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon 'Shell/BP' Black
378-005 20T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon 'Esso' Black
378-005A 20T Anchor-Mounted Tank Wagon 'Esso' Black
**Era:** 1918 - preservation
**Construction:** Plastic body with diecast chassis frame
**Weight:** 10g
**Minimum curves:** Radius 2 (263mm)

## WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Decoration
- ✓ Detail
- ✓ Another useful prototype for N

As ever, Farish's liveries are superbly executed ranging from the attractive silver National Benzole livery to the utilitarian black liveries as shown on our review sample in Fina, Esso and Shell/BP markings, in addition to the striking blue Gulf livery. The quality of the printing when looking at the finer print low down on the tank is superb. A nice addition to the range.

# Irish Railway Models Bulleid 12T corrugated opens



Andy York



Bulleid-designed pressed corrugated panels were probably one of Ireland's most distinctive goods wagons; humble, numerous and widespread.

From 1950 to 1969, some 2,500 of these wagons were built to Bulleid's design, replacing aged wooden wagons with an innovative corrugated design that gave strength to the body panels married to a robust welded triangulated chassis. The wagons were a common sight across the entire CIÉ network, from major yards in Dublin and Cork to the most rural of branch lines, carrying a wide variety of loads ranging from peat briquettes to gypsum, pre-ISO shipping containers and farm machinery. However, their most famous duty was the conveyance of sugar beet during the annual autumn/winter harvest season, when trainloads of the crop would be transferred from loading points across the country to processing plants. Even as more modern continuously-braked goods stock was introduced in the 1970s, rakes of these open wagons were retained for the beet season, persevering in traffic until replaced by vacuum-braked wagons in the 1980s.



The underside of the model features all of the welded chassis' framing, helping to understand the robust design of the real wagons.

There's some very interesting and innovative design and tooling to capture the body, with full internal corrugations as well as the obvious external ribs; this couldn't be achieved with a single piece. The diecast floor, to help with weight and stability, features planking detail inside and below the wagon, too. The underside of the wagon is to Bulleid's triangulated underframe, which was a standard unit that gave birth to a whole host of wagons to be reflected in further models from IRM on this platform. A wealth of separate plastic detail consisting of all the braking and underframe gear, door bangers, sprung turned brass buffers with two buffer types – spindle and heavy-duty, and brass bearing cups to allow the smoothest of running, complete these beautifully detailed wagons. The models allow for fitting of scale wheelsets through to 21mm gauge.

The metallic finish to the body is effective ,with a grey chassis for the 'flying snail' era and bauxite for later years. Our review samples include models where the bauxite spreads to the lower body, representing rust creeping up from lower levels from carrying wet beet. Three differently numbered and marked wagons are included in each pack, and there are three packs in early livery, later CIÉ Roundel and also sugar beet traffic (with large letter B on the side) with a single pack of three wagons in later permanent way department usage.

A lovely product; I'm left wondering if I could get away with some in industrial usage this side of the Irish Sea!

## FACTFILE

**Models:**
IRM1253 CIÉ Flying Snail - Pack 1
IRM1254 CIÉ Flying Snail - Pack 2
IRM1255 CIÉ Flying Snail - Pack 3
IRM1256 CIÉ Roundel - Pack 1
IRM1257 CIÉ Roundel - Pack 2
IRM1258 CIÉ Roundel - Pack 3
IRM1259 CIÉ Roundel - Beet Traffic - Pack 1
IRM1260 CIÉ Roundel - Beet Traffic - Pack 2
IRM1261 CIÉ Roundel - Beet Traffic - Pack 3
IRM1262 CIÉ Roundel - Permanent Way - Pack 1
**Construction:** Diecast chassis, plastic body with detailing parts
**Weight:** 37g per wagon
**Minimum curves:** Radius 1 (371mm)
**Accessory pack:** Instanter and 3-link couplings

## WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Corrugated body
- ✓ Underframe detail
- ✓ Finescale wheelset provision
- ✓ Decoration quality

TT:120 | 1950 - 1992 | £££ 20.99

# Hornby TT:120 21T mineral wagon



Andy York




The MDV model features the later-style top flaps on each side above the original doors.

## FACTFILE

**Models:**
TT6015 B311281 BR Bauxite
TT6016 P200781 BR Grey
**Era:** 1950 - 1992
**Construction:** Plastic body and chassis
**Weight:** 27g
**RRP:** £20.99
**Minimum curves:** Radius 1
**Accessory pack:** Bufferbeam, brake pipes

## WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Variation detail
- ✓ Clear markings
- ✓ Widespread prototype

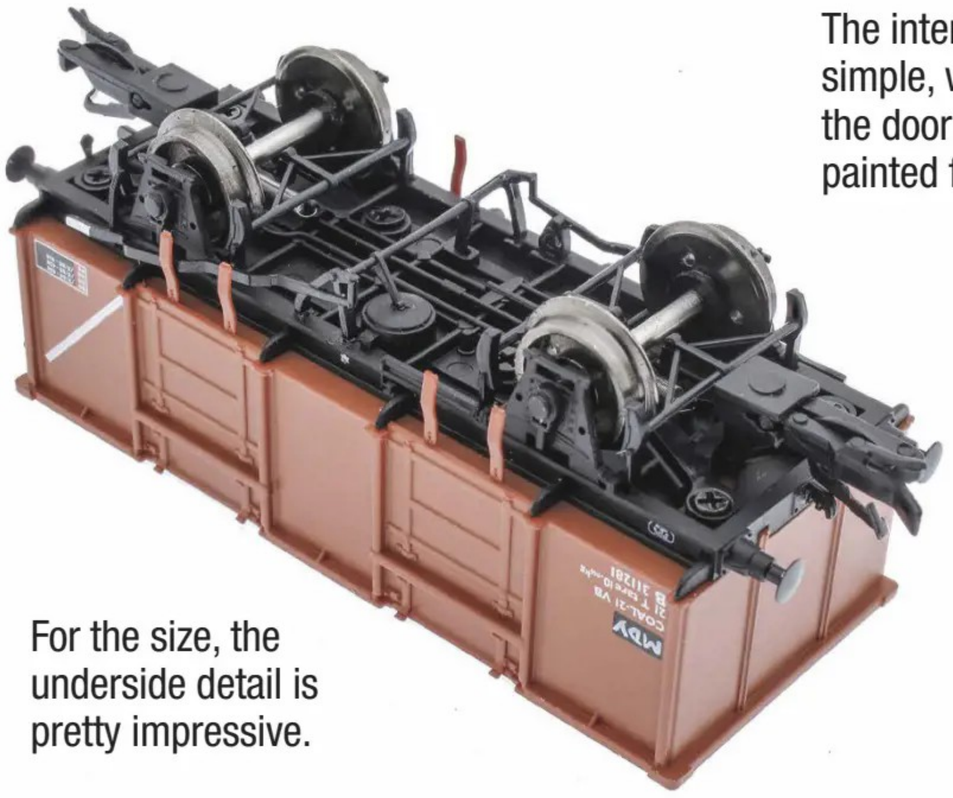
Hornby's new addition to the TT range is the long-lived and widespread 21T mineral wagon which saw use through most of the nationalised railway period in one form or another, with 21' 6" bodies mounted onto 12' wheelbase underframes of which some 14,000 were built. These were regularly seen in coal flows and often mixed with other mineral wagon types.

Our review sample is of the later vacuum-braked variety, which came into use from 1961 with top flaps added over the side doors, vacuum cylinder and braking gear on the underframe with roller-bearing axleboxes to diagram 1/120, of which 3,950 were built. The MDV TOPS code is hand-painted above the wagon number and was pictured in this form at Chester in 1979, leaving the pre-TOPS 'Coal 21 VB' description below. Only one example has been shown in the catalogue, so some further modelling is required to create variety within a train of these wagons.

Hornby's website also shows the more numerous 21T wagon in unfitted BR grey in MDO form to diagram 1/107, without the flaps above the side doors, oil axleboxes and manual braking detail, which means that different body styles and underframe detail have been modelled, although this model has not yet been released. This is given the TOPS code of MDO, dating the model from the early-1970s.

The numbering, lettering and builder's plates are neatly applied over the bauxite base, although I find the shade too light and too orange in tone. It will, of course, benefit from copious good weathering, as such pristine detail lasted as long as its first train.

Overall, this is a well-detailed and accurate model for the scale; I'm sure many TT:120 early adopters will acquire one or more of these to form mixed goods services, but more common complete trains of these still await suitable motive power in the emerging scale.



For the size, the underside detail is pretty impressive.

The internals are pretty simple, with lines marking the door interiors with a painted floor.



A useful and long-lived prototype joins the TT:120 range.



# Dapol 14T 'Air Ministry' tanks






**Andy York**

Certainly, the finest 00 ready-to-run tank wagon; Dapol has made a superb product.

## FACTFILE

**Models:**
4f-058-001 Class A Esso Silver 2985
4f-058-002 Class A Shell Bp Silver A7498
4f-058-003 Class A Regent (Red Letters) Silver 101
4f-058-004 Class A Shell Motor Spirit Silver 7522
4f-058-005 Class A Lobitos (Blue/ Red Shade) Stone 107
4f-059-001 Class B Shell/Bp Black 5172
4f-059-002 Class B Esso Black 1869
4f-059-003 Class B Shell/Bp Black 5133
4f-059-004 Class B Shell Esso Black 1914
4f-059-005 Class B Berry Wiggins Black 101
**Era:** 1899 - preservation
**Construction:** Plastic body and chassis with interior weights
**Weight:** 67g
**Minimum curves:** Radius 2 (438mm)
**Accessory pack:** Three-link couplings

## WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Independent springing
- ✓ Running qualities
- ✓ Decoration quality

Initially built for the Air Ministry for the transportation of aviation fuel in the Second World War, these wagons went on to a longer life under various private owners through to the early-1970s. Dapol has catered for a number of these operators in the 10 wagons in the launch range, five in Class A fuel form and five in black Class B heavy oil form, with our review sample wearing the Berry Wiggins Oil livery. Based at Kingsnorth refinery in Kent, Berry Wiggins tanks appeared around the country, but were most well known for bitumen traffic north of Coleford in the Forest of Dean, with daily traffic of six or seven wagons until 1967.

Taking the wagon from the box, there's an impression of quality undoubtedly aided by the weight, some 67gms. Striking, too, is the finesse of the handwheel, filler point and platforms on the top of the tank. A couple of the Class A wagons have different walkway platforms, with four of the Class A models lacking ladders, so there are certainly variations within the range. The end frames with horizontal and diagonal bracings all look good and the chassis framework is commendably open, with the wheelsets being chemically-blackened. The accessory pack includes three-link coupling chains to further improve the appearance.

The distinguishing feature of this model is that it's the first ready-to-run OO gauge model that features all-round springing with each axlebox having a sliding plastic mount behind each set of 'W'-irons, with the weight of the wagon settling it into the range of the springing; the model certainly runs very smoothly through pointwork.

The decoration of the model is excellent with very sharply defined text onto the curved tank body and legible detail on the solebar, which tells us this wagon was built by Hurst, Nelson & Co. of Motherwell. I'm told that this project was very much based on scaling down Dapol's existing excellent O gauge model, and it shows. It really is a lovely model.



Each one of the four axleboxes is independently sprung while the braking and underframe detail is very robust.




This angle shows chassis rivet detail and the quality of the decoration.




The tank-top detail is very fine and, from this angle, the open-framed chassis style is evident.

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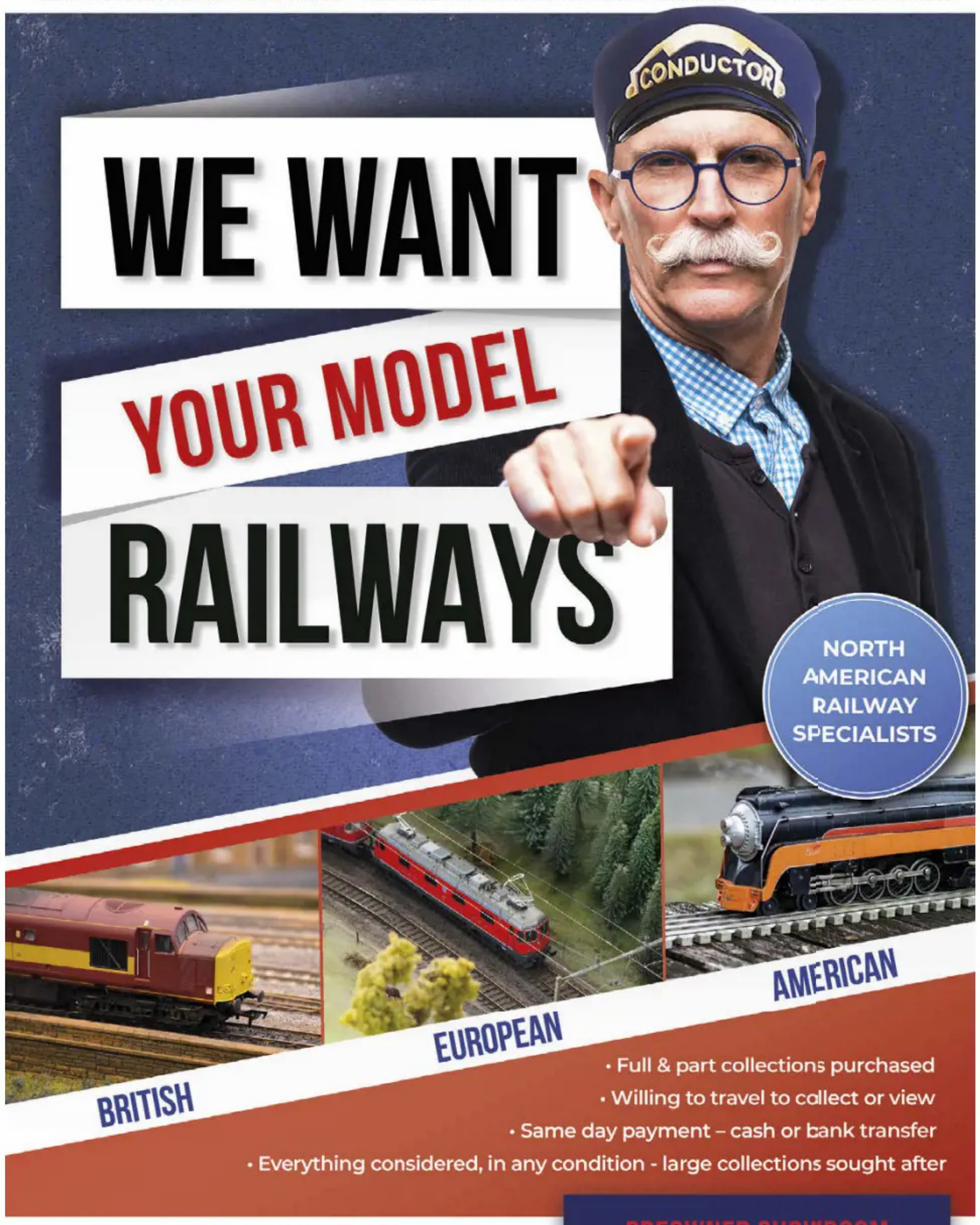


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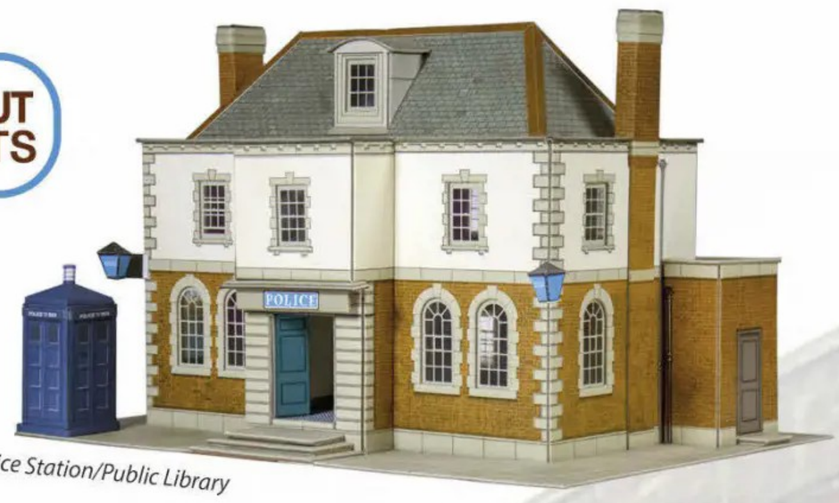

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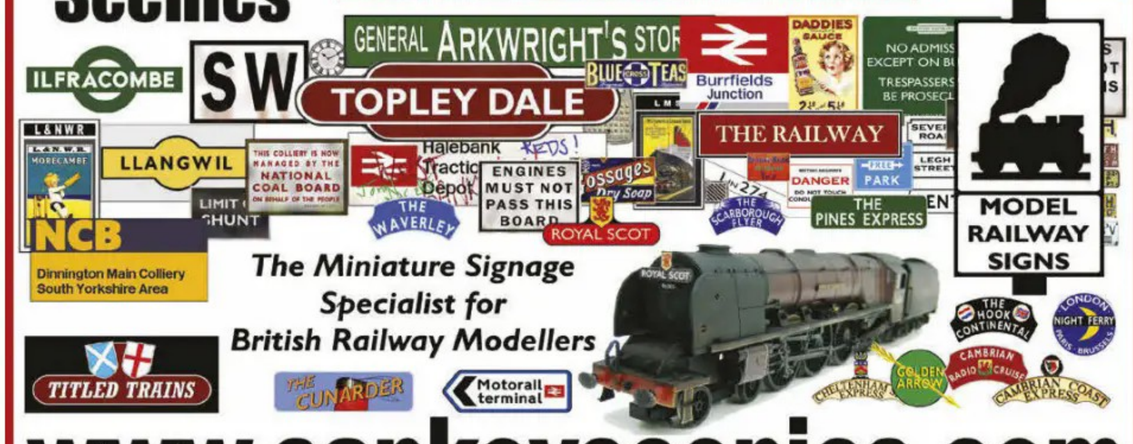


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**Sep 14/15 - SWANSEA** Model Railway Exhibition, Swansea Leisure Centre, Oystermouth Road, Swansea, **SA1 3ST.** Sat/Sun 10-4. www.srmg.org.uk/2023-show

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**Sept 28/29 WORTHING** Model Railway Exhibition, Durrington High School, The Boulevard, Worthing, West Sussex, **BN13 1LA.** Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4. www.worthingmrc.co.uk/exhibition

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**Oct 26/27 - LEEDS** Model Railway Exhibition, The Grammar School at Leeds, Harrogate Road, Leeds, **LS17 8GS.** Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4.30.

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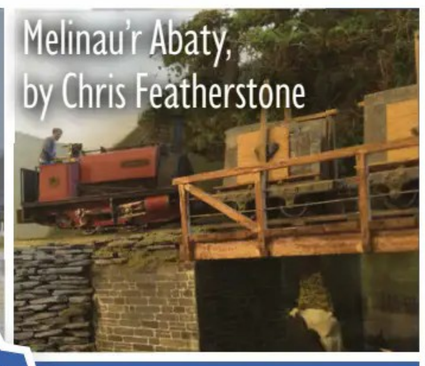


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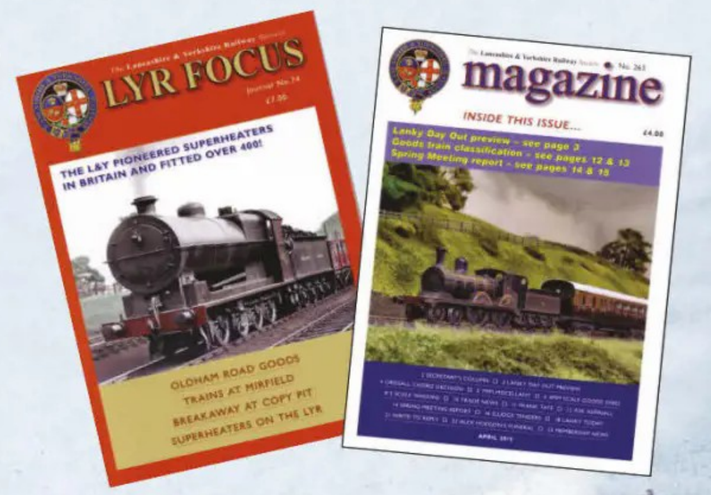


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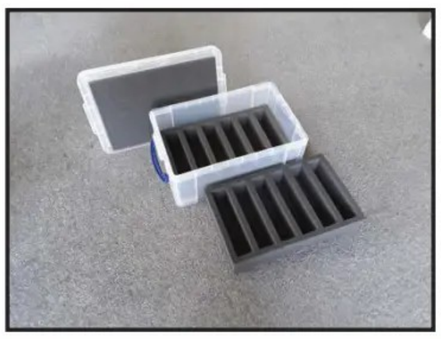

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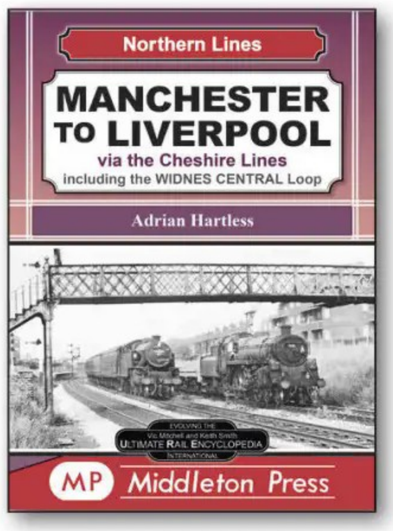


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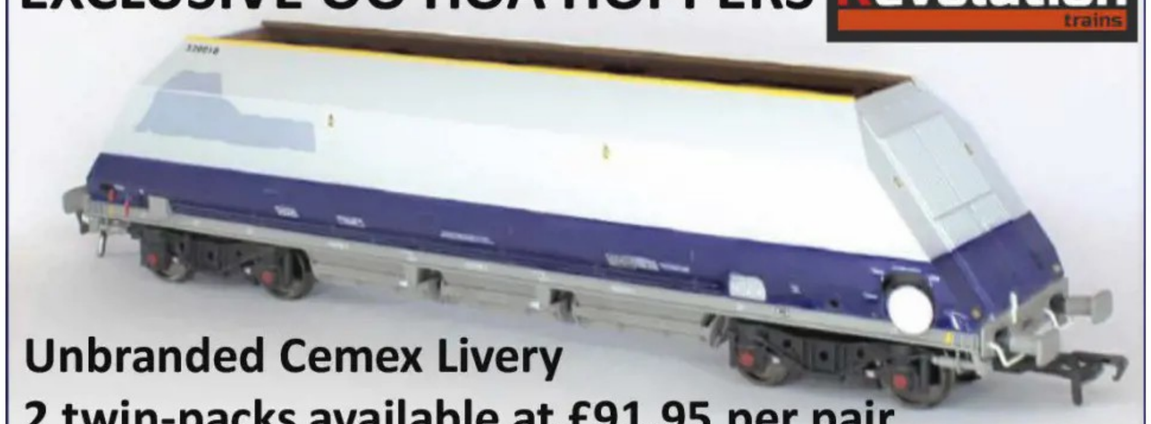

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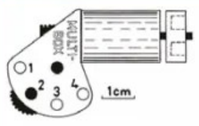


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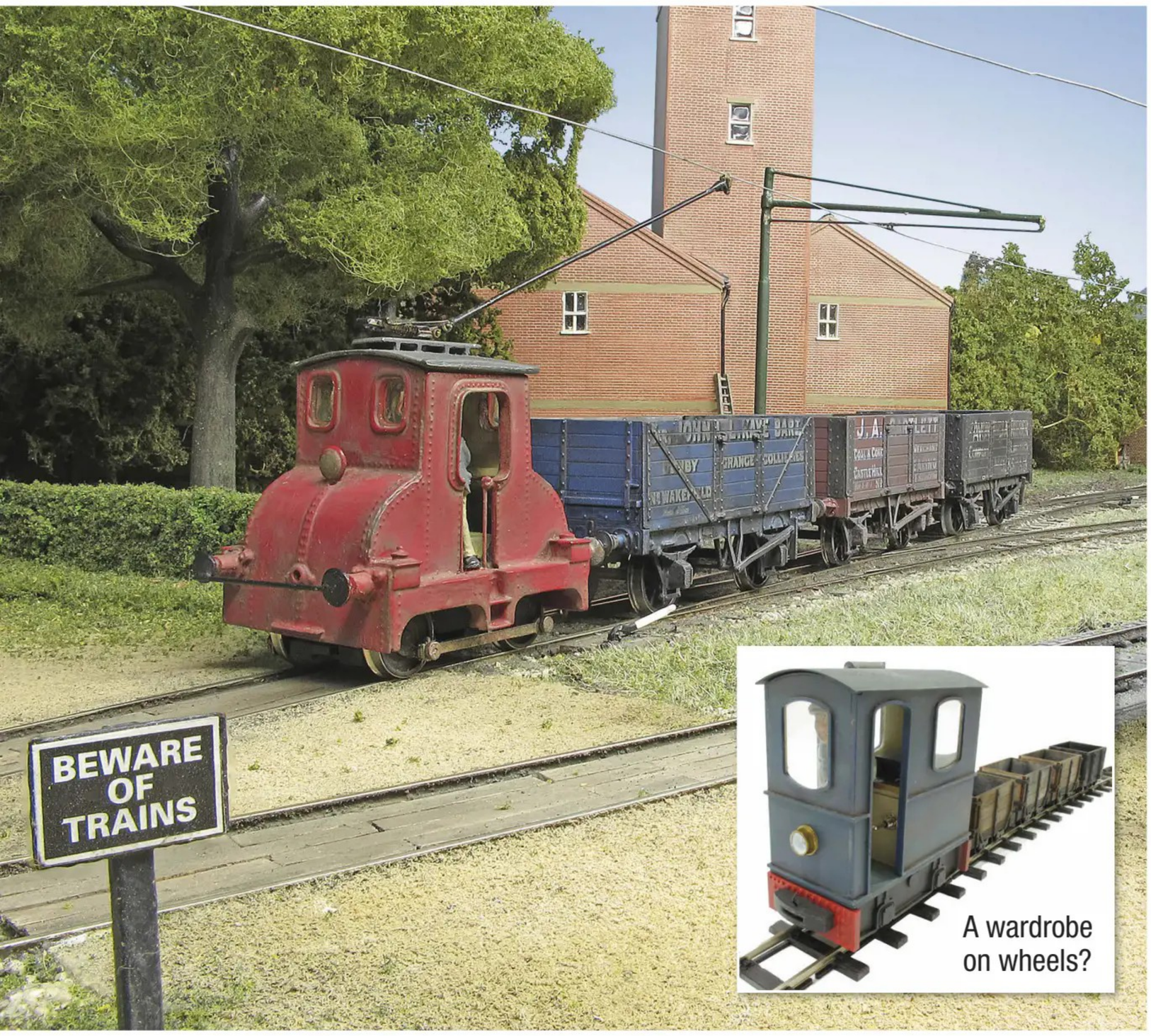


A wardrobe on wheels?

The unusual looking Hellingly locomotive.

Andy has been very rude about Phil's latest model. He described it as "a wardrobe on wheels". Cheek!

Fortunately, Phil doesn't care. He's a fan of prototypes that some people would describe as "ugly". This one (inset), a Wittenberg Schafer industrial loco that operated in a German brickworks, is right up his street. On spotting the Houstoun Gate Locomotive Works 16mm scale kit, he knew he'd want to build it, and you can read the full details in September's issue of *Garden Rail* magazine.

It's not like he hasn't got past form in this area, either. Back in June 2003, we featured his Hellingly Hospital Railway, the main focus of which is, you guessed it, an odd-looking electric locomotive!

Why do Phil, and many other modellers, seem to love unattractive prototypes?

A good example is the Fell diesel; those boxy lines aren't as pleasing as the curves of an A4 steam loco, but there are still plenty of takers out there for this unique machine. Mind you, the A4s were much more successful, so perhaps there is something in the idea that form follows function?

## This month in pictures...



Proper vintage model railways. This Gauge 1 locomotive from Märklin, is around 100 years old, and still works.



Talking of Märklin, at the Garden Railway Specialists open day, we feasted on their official sweets - little jelly steam engines.




A change from railway events, but still vintage transport, this time a visit to Busfest at the British Motor Museum.



*Percy* is eyeing up Phil's cake at a garden railway event. He's got no chance of scoffing it before our confectionery specialist!

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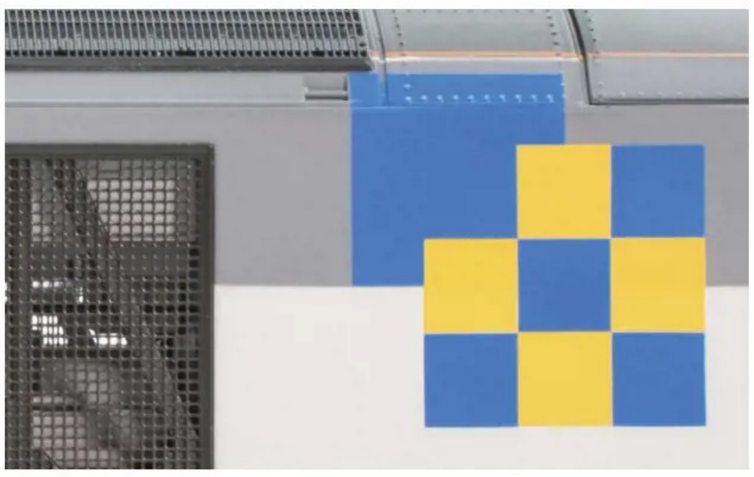




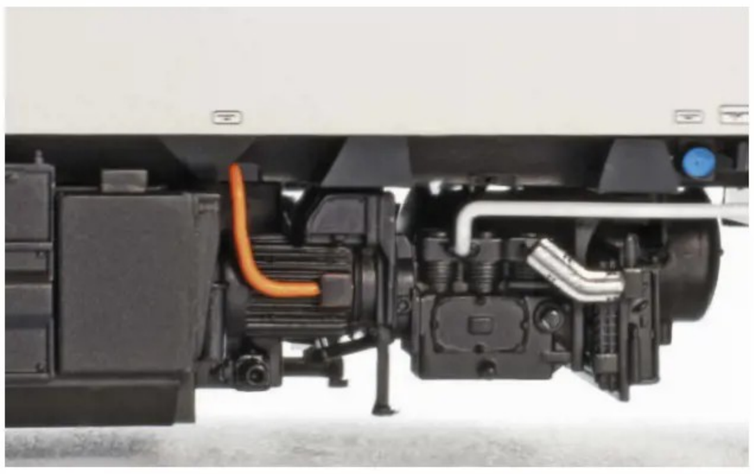




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Cover: Decauville 0-4-0T's 'Chuquitanta' and 'Lily' normally resident at the private Richmond Light Railway in Kent, travelled to the Ffestiniog Railway Society's AGM weekend. Chuquitanta has been to the line before and when the pair enjoyed a light-engine run over a line much, much longer than their normal haunt, *Joey Evans* was there to capture the scene as they emerged from the Garnedd Tunnel north of Tan-y-Bwlch.
The inset photo by *Ted McAvoy* shows the very last weekend of peat operation at Bord na Mona – yes it really has ended, and Ted got in some driving on the last day, as he describes in this issue.

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# June 2024

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NARROW GAUGE WORLD

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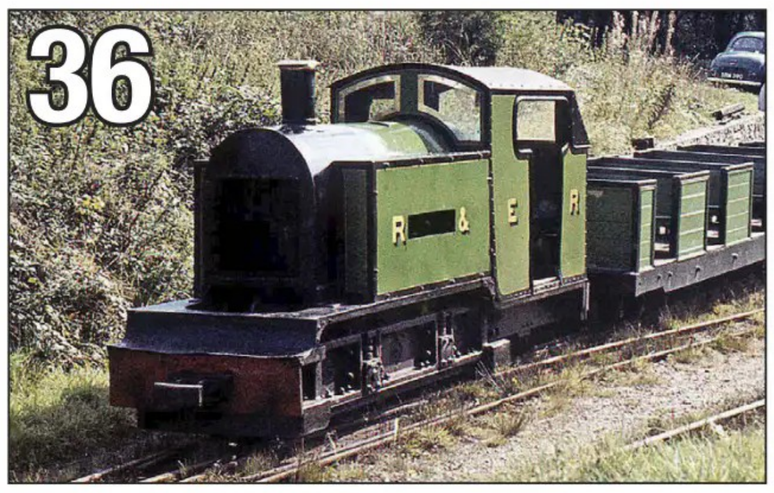


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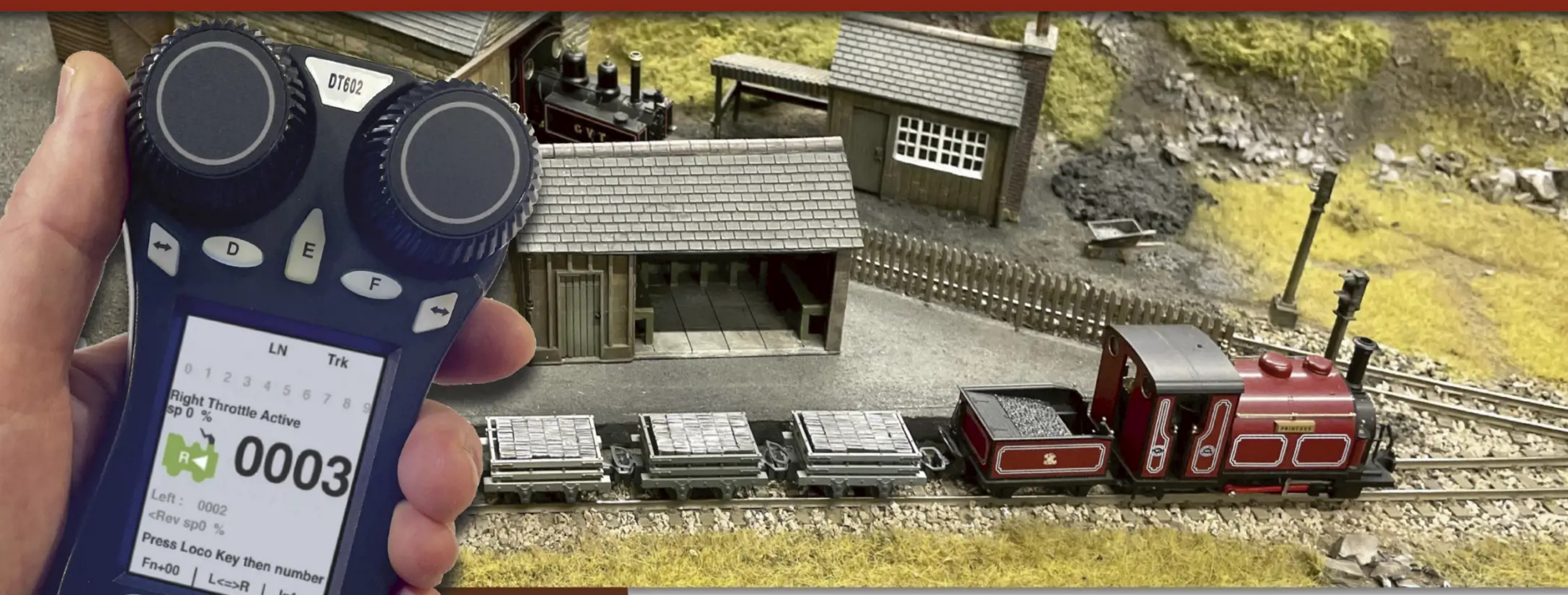


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# This is the modern world...









*"Simply, there is nothing quite like the way we do heritage in the UK..."*

**Photo: The Alishan Forest Railway celebrates the completion of the rebuilding of Tunnel 42 on 17th May. But how many readers are staring in horror at the decoration?**

**The inset shows the delegation from the Alishan line after being shown around the Fairbourne Railway by your editor on 1st May. They seemed to like the coverage in the magazine...**
***Photos: Albert Wu/AFR***

Welcome to ***NGW***184, and it feels like the narrow gauge scene has really accelerated over the past month, perhaps courtesy of some reasonable weather at last!

I make no apologies for a second successive month talking about an amazing line on the opposite side of the world to ***NGW*** Towers, the Alishan Forest Railway in Taiwan.

The picture above shows the Alishan's Tunnel 42 on the day of its completion, 17th May – the new 1106-metre long bore reconnects the entire length of the mountain line for the first time since the tunnel's predecessor was washed away in a typhoon in 2015, so that's good news and we look forward to the official reopening of the complete line in July.

I bet, however, many readers are staring at the photo in barely-disguised horror – or to be more precise, the decoration applied to the tunnel portals.

It may offend the purists, but the bright paintwork was clearly created to be attractive to the vast majority of visitors to the Alishan line, and will no doubt go down well especially with young travellers.

I thought about this as I composed this month's lead news story, on the 2ft gauge Theme Park line in Holland that is intending to convert its steam locomotives – including two Orenstein & Koppels over a century old – to battery operation, primarily by installing electric drivetrains in their tenders and removing weighty items. This could include, we understand, the boilers, replaced by lighter faux representations to maintain the original appearance.

I was not at all surprised at the howls of angst that went up amongst members of the enthusiast community. While I agree with the view that the best route would be to buy new battery locos and release the steamers for preservation, this possibly doesn't work for the Efteling theme park both in terms of cost and the long-held image of its railway it wants to protect.

Like it or not, sustainability concerns are something about which we cannot stick our heads in the sand and wait until they go away. While I can't imagine such a move as the Efteling's happening on a UK heritage line, pure commercial operations won't have that level of heritage loyalty, while sustainability is becoming ever more a part of our lives even in the heritage sector – like it or not, in today's world we are a dirty industry...

## Eager to learn

Talking of the Alishan a party from the railway and its operator, the Cultural Heritage Office, came to the UK last month, primarily to be present at the entry into service of the Mitsubishi diesel that has been loaned to the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway – the two lines have been affiliated for a few years now.

A family holiday meant that unfortunately I was unable to be at the W&LLR event, but during their time in the UK the party was keen to experience as many railways as possible, so on the preceeding Thursday I showed them round the Fairbourne Railway, on behalf of the line's manager Murray Dods.

The Alishan line originally signed its 'sister railway agreement' with the W&LLR in a bid to learn how we do heritage in the UK – quite simply, there is nothing quite like the heritage railway scene we have here. During the visit to the Fairbourne the party had a long discussion session with Murray and myself, asking involved questions about the way UK lines are operated and managed. I'm told they had a similar extensive Q&A session at the Welshpool line on the following day.

It's pleasing to see how what is a major line on the other side of the world turning to the UK to learn how to improve its operations and appeal to a wider audience – similar to the way, for example, that the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway benefits from the learned imput provided by its UK-based support group the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Society.

Major global lines turning to the UK is of course a major vote of confidence in how we do things here, and for that we should definitely be proud.

Finally – I had a mail from a reader this month telling me of his difficulties finding a shop selling the magazine. As I've said before the retail news industry is making it steadily more difficult for niche publications (and we are) to get a spot on their declining shelf space. But there is an answer – subscribe! Go on, you know it's the best way... Enjoy your ***NGW***.

***Andrew Charman***

Send UK NEWS stories to Andrew Charman by email, editor@narrowgaugeworld.co.uk, or by post to 12 Maes Gwyn, Llanfair Caereinion, Powys, SY21 0BD. Tel: 01938 810592



# Plan to convert steam loco to battery sparks controversy

Plans announced by the Efteling Steam Railway in Holland to convert its steam locomotives to battery-electric operation have produced mixed reactions but anger from enthusiasts.

The 600mm gauge line, which runs for 3.5 kilometres in an oval route around a popular theme park in the city of Kaatsheuvel, has three operational steam locomotives on its roster – two Orenstein & Koppel 0-4-0s, 'Aagje' of 1911 which arrived on the line in 1969 after previous service at a brickworks and mining loco 'Moortje', dating from 1908 and acquired in 1974, plus 'Trijntje', an 0-4-0 built by Alan Keef Ltd in 1992.

Efteling theme park has previously declared its intention to be climate neutral by 2030 and climate-positive by 2032, and as part of this programme has now announced plans to convert its steam locomotives to electric operation. "To achieve (our ambition) it is necessary to ensure the trains are more sustainable," a press release from Efteling stated.

"The appearance of the trains will be retained, only the propulsion will be modified – to approximate the nostalgic experience of a steam train ride as much as possible, show effects will be added."

Reaction from visitors on the park's website was mixed, some commenting that they would prefer the cleaner trains while others saying they would miss a true stream train experience, but the announcement predictably sparked extensive criticism from the enthusiast sector.

Amongst widespread adverse comment on social media, some museums backed calls for Efteling to acquire new battery engines and release the steam locomotives to the heritage sector. Among the criticisms the park was accused of turning its steam railway into "Disneyland" (missing the fact that the locomotives that operate at Disney theme parks are steam-powered).

It appears that the conversion will involve fitting the battery propulsion units into the locos' tenders, with various other work done particularly to reduce the weight involved. Unconfirmed reports suggested this could include removing the boilers.

A follow-up release form Efteling confirmed rumours that the conversions are to be carried out by Alan Keef Ltd and the first loco arrived at the UK rail engineering specialist's works near Ross-on-Wye on 16th May. Speaking to ***NGW***, managing director Patrick Keef said that one of the seasons that Efteling engaged with the company was due to its understanding and sympathy for the historic nature of the locos and the need to be able to undertake the work in a suitable manner.

"Everything that is being proposed by us will be entirely reversible, and we will be providing Efteling with all they need to be able to recreate a steam loco from the E-Locomotive should the need ever arise in the future," Patrick said.

"All parts that are removed will be carefully indexed and preserved and kept at Efteling – they have a heritage department dedicated to this. I genuinely believe that the finished result will be impressive."




■ **The Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway's Barclay 0-4-0 'Dougal' arrived at the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway on 22nd April ahead of the overhaul that has been agreed between the two 2ft 6in gauge lines, and was immediately reunited with familiar rolling stock. Cravens-built Chattenden & Upnor Railway bogie carriage 196, now resident just 15 miles from its former working environment, ran on the W&LLR between 1961 and 1978.** ***Photo: Liz Fuller/S&KLR***

# Local firms see benefit from FFWHR Boston Lodge funding

As work continues on the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways' (FfWHR) Interpretation scheme at the north Wales 2ft gauge line's Boston Lodge works, the line has revealed the levels to which local businesses working on the project have benefited from more than £3 million in funding provided by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), the Ffestiniog Railway Society and Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railway Trust.

During the last 18 months the railway has made extensive use of local skills and craftsmanship, resulting in significant contracts for 20 businesses across Gwynedd and North Wales.

"It has been really important to reinvest this money back into the community here as we restored old buildings and built new ones, transforming the site to make it fit for the future and enable us to offer guided tours to showcase the heritage skills that keep the railway running," said the line's Heritage Project Manager, Dr Edwina Bell. "We have a wealth of construction skills locally and I was determined to use them."

FfWHR General Manager Paul Lewin emphasised the importance of the Interpretation and Boston Lodge Project making the busy works a place where the local community and visitors can step into a real working site and understand the area's pioneering spirit. "We now have a state-of-the-art classroom and facilities to enable us to do that," he said. "When you visit you will see the project has allowed us to rescue historic buildings at Boston Lodge, bringing them back into use, as well as creating some new buildings, thanks to the skills and endeavour of our contractors.

The project includes work experience and skills development activities and new interpretation across the railway. Young people particularly can learn practical skills that are focused on the needs of the railway, including infrastructure, works, marketing, interpretation and administration.

Boston Lodge is due to open for tours later this year.




**Ffestiniog staff with some of the contractors who have been working to transform the Boston Lodge site.** ***Photo: Chris Parry/FFWHR***



# Rheidol museum opens with further exhibits

The Vale of Rheidol Railway celebrated the official opening of its new museum and events space in Aberystwyth on Friday 3rd May, marking the completion of the line's 'Wales to the World' project.

The museum building, which was erected by the Great Western Railway as Aberystwyth's standard-gauge loco depot in 1938, and then from 1968 served as the 2ft gauge VoR's motive power depot until its new shed and workshop was opened in 2012, has been completely transformed to offer 5000 square feet of exhibition space.

Inside are displayed some of the line's own collection, alongside exhibits from around the world including some from the extensive collection gathered by the VoR's former owner, the late Peter Rampton.

Newly added for the opening were unrestored Couillet 0-4-0 'Sabero No. 1' and a directors' saloon both built for the Hulleras de Sabero Railway in Spain, while it was also revealed that further restoration for the museum is underway (see page 29).

The building project was completed on budget, despite the VoR having to navigate Covid restrictions and increasing costs through the last phase of construction. "Delivering the project has been challenging at times," said VoR managing director Llŷr ap Iolo. "However, we now finally have the facilities to welcome visitors to the railway and offer a fantastic experience and day out. This makes the business more sustainable, both as an all-year round attraction and as a large local employer".

The official opening ceremony was performed by Steffan Roberts, Deputy Director of Tourism, Development and Sport of the Welsh Government. As well as £1.6m of funding from the European Regional Development Fund and £256,000 from the Welsh Government, the project received £300,000 from the Coastal Communities Fund (administered on behalf of the Welsh Government by the National Lottery Community Fund), and £100,000 from the Railway Heritage Trust towards the atrium and reconstruction of the portico entrance.

Those present included representatives of the funders and contractors that made the project possible as well as personalities from the heritage railway sector including from fellow Welsh narrow gauge lines.

The museum will now be open daily until the start of November. Entry is £5 for adults, £3 for children or free for those travelling on the train. It is also intended to use the facility as a hub for community events and within a week of the opening it hosted the Machynlleth Wind Band. The venue is also available for private functions and events: further details are available from the railway.

***X marks the spot – see page 29.***

**Above: Vale of Rheidol managing director Llŷr ap Iolo watched on as Welsh Government deputy director of tourism Steffan Roberts cut the tape to officially open the new museum.** ***Photo: Andrew Charman***

**Right: The Machynlleth Wind Band was one of the first groups to make use of the museum's community space.** ***Photo: Phil Budd/VoR***





# Taiwan delegation rides Alishan loco's first Llanfair service

The Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway welcomed a delegation from Taiwan on 4th May, marking the official entry into service of the 1972-built 523hp Mitsubishi diesel locomotive DL-34 that the Alishan Forest Railway has loaned to the W&LLR.

The delegation from AFR operator the Alishan Forest Railway and Cultural Heritage Office took part in a joint ceremony with W&LLR staff and local dignitaries, which included the symbolic fitting of a headboard to the locomotive by Director-general of Forestry and Nature Conservation Agency Lin Hwa-ching and W&LLR Chairman Steve Clews. The party then travelled on DL-34's first public return service from Llanfair to Welshpool.

DL-34 arrived in Wales in 2023 on an initial three-year loan from the AFR, which has been affiliated with the W&LLR since 2017. The prime purpose of the loan is to provide a reliable works diesel to allow the Welsh line's works locos, 1949-built Baguley-Drewry no 7 'Chattenden' and former Taiwan Sugar Corporation Diema no 175, to be released in turn to undergo much-needed heavy overhauls.

DL-34 is powerful enough to rescue an entire passenger train and its steam loco if required, and over the past 12 months the W&LLR team has worked with specialist contractors to modify the loco's brake system and couplings for use on the Welsh line, test the loco and train drivers in its use.

The event also saw an exchange of ideas between the two heritage lines, including further co-operation in promoting tourism in their regions, best practice in operation and maintenance, and engaging with new audiences both as visitors and volunteers. The Alishan delegation also visited other heritage railways during their time in Wales, ***NGW*** editor Andrew Charman showing them round the Fairbourne Railway on 1st May (*see page 5*).

"We hope that this loan will help further our educational and cultural co-operation going forwards," W&LLR general manager James Brett said, while Steve Clews added; "This loan is the culmination of four years of discussions and hard work and is a great opportunity for our two railways to continue building their relationship."

Lin Hwa-ching commented; "Under the excellent care of the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, we believe that DL-34 will traverse the beautiful hills and plains of Wales gracefully."

DL-34 is due to operate more passenger trains during the summer and days when it is working will be published on the railway's website in the coming months.




**Above: Both guests and W&LLR passengers enjoyed the first trips of DL-34 to Welshpool.**

**Left: W&LLR chairman Steve Clews and AFR head Lin Hwa-ching with the joint headboard that DL-34 carries.**

***Photos: Albert Wu/AFR***

# Rail ale 'finale' set for Dinas...

The Welsh Highland Railway will be hosting its highly popular Cwrw ar y Cledrau/Rail Ale festival on 7th-8th June, but potentially for the final time in its current form due to planned development work later in the year at Dinas station where the event takes place.

Organisers are, however, confident of continuing to stage the event from 2025 in a different form, but still involving the 1870s stone-built goods shed which is regarded as the centre of the Festival.

This year's event promises the usual wide selection of specifically selected real ales and ciders, all from microbreweries, many of which are based in North Wales.

Live music will also be a feature of the festival along with a range of food vendors. Regular steam and diesel-hauled trains will run throughout the weekend between Caernarfon, Dinas and Waunfawr to serve the event. The Festival runs each day between 11am and 11pm and tickets will be available to buy in advance through the website www.rail-ale.com or on the door.

# ...as Welshpool hosts beer and live music

The Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway will be following up the success of its Beer Festival held last year with a three-day 'Midsummer Madness' event on 21st-23rd June.

The display sheds at Welshpool Raven Square station will be the focus of the Festival, with a range of beers and ciders on offer and the railway's recently purchased mobile catering unit in attendance offering hot food.

Friday and Saturday will both feature full programmes of live music, with a country theme on the Friday and rock on the Saturday. Trains will be operating as normal on the W&LLR with combined festival entry and train tickets available.

Full details of the event are online at www.wllr.org.uk/events

# Manx carriage in return bid

The Isle of Man Steam Railway Supporters Association is in negotiations with the Three Foot Gauge Society to return an unrestored Manx Northern Railway six-wheeled carriage to the island.

The vehicle, dating from 1879, left the Isle of Man in 2012 and is currently at the Southwold Railway Trust in Suffolk where only some work has been done on it.

The IOMSRSA is seeking a potential site for the vehicle on the island, with no space available on the Steam Railway.




■ *Stuart Avery* was on hand when the Bure Valley Light Railway celebrated the 30th anniversary of the building of its ZB class locomotives on 27th April. 'Blickling Hall' and 'Spitfire', both built for the line in 1994 were joined by 'John of Gaunt', built in tank engine form to the ZB design in 1997 and almost hidden behind Blickling Hall, 'Mark Timothy', another ZB constructed in the style of a Leek & Manifold Railway loco which entered service in 2004.

# Richmond plans double celebration for Pixie

The Richmond Light Railway (RLR) will stage a pair of events next month to mark the return to service of one of the best-known examples of the Bagnall 0-4-0ST, 'Pixie'.

Built in 1919 and spending its working life at the Cranford Quarry in Kettering, Northamptonshire, the 2ft gauge loco came to prominence in 1962 when it was purchased for preservation by the Reverend Teddy Boston. He ran the loco on the very short railway he built around his rectory in the village of Cadeby, Leicestershire.

Teddy Boston died in 1986 but his widow continued to run the railway until 2005. Pixie passed to a private owner and was last steamed in 2006 – a long overhaul then began but had not been completed when the loco was acquired by Jeremy Martin for the RLR. Restoration restarted at the private Kent line and was completed at the Ffestiniog Railway's Boston Lodge works.

Pixie's official return to service will be at an event starting at 10.30am on Saturday 6th July. Following a small rededication ceremony the loco will haul its inaugural train for invited guests at 11am.

The rest of the RLR's steam fleet will operate the intensive service that is typical of the line's annual Charity Steam Fair, including some Cadeby recreation trains with Pixie. There will also be a historic photo display of Pixie's life available to view between services while paid-for refreshments will be available.

On the preceeding day Pixie will be the focus of a private Photo Charter between 9.30am and 4pm. The event will recreate scenes in historic photos from the loco's life, alongside the morning steam-up in the wood shed area and customary run-pasts.

Quarry Hunslets 'Elin' & 'Sybil' will be in steam providing further photo opportunities not available during public running days.

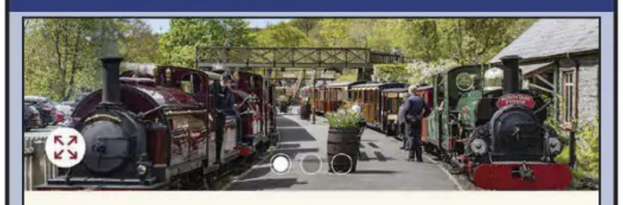
"Pixie is held in great affection by many railway enthusiasts thanks to Teddy's welcoming and encouraging persona, giving countless enthusiasts their first taste of a driving a real steam engine," Jeremy Martin said. "Teddy's close friend was the Rev. W. Awdry, creator of Thomas the Tank Engine and the Railway Series – he was immortalised in the famous stories when Awdry depicted themselves as 'the Thin Clergyman' and 'the Fat Clergyman', Teddy known as the latter."

Tickets for the open day are £15 per adult and £10 for children, and for the photo charter £60 per person, available from the line's Facebook event page or for the open day at www.ticketsource.co.uk/rlr/t-qjglxzx while to book on the photo charter the address is www.ticketsource.co.uk/rlr/t-vvkrlla

**Below: 'Pixie' as many enthusiasts remember the loco, being driven by Reverend Teddy Boston on his Cadeby Light Railway. *Photo: RLR Collection***



# BRIEF LINES




## Mobile app for FFWHR trips

The Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway has launched a mobile app as part of its Interpretation & Boston Lodge project. Passengers are given information on points of interest and history along the line. Younger visitors also have 'out the window' games to play. The app is available from both the Apple and Google Play stores.

## Lewin takes HRA role

Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway general manager Paul Lewin has been appointed Vice Chair of the Heritage Railway Association. Paul replaces Talyllyn Railway President and former GM Chris Price. Chris, now heading the Bovington Tank Museum in Dorset, remains an HRA director.

## Charity draw for GLT tickets

Three pairs of Great Little Trains of Wales 'golden tickets' worth nearly £400 and allowing the winners to enjoy up to 11 trips on member lines are up for grabs in a draw organised by Save the Children branches across Wales. Entries can be made at www.justgiving.com/page/emma-berry-1712827993575

## Mountaineer progress

A team of Ffestiniog Railway volunteers mounting a restoration of Alco 2-6-2 'Mountaineer' successfully lifted the boiler from the frames in March. The group will now make further tests to analyse the amount of work required on the lcocomotive.

## Lynton election

Our story on the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway in ***NGW***183 included a wrong date for the line's AGM – we apologise for the error. The meeting was held on Saturday 11th May – a member's attempt to put a motion to remove the Chairman from the Trustee board was not accepted for voting on.



# Boston Lodge to design new boiler for Darj 19B

The Darjeeling Tank Locomotive Trust (DTLT) has decided to design and construct a new boiler for its B-class locomotive 19B – as reported in ***NGW***183 on stripping the loco down for overhaul at the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust serious issues were discovered with the 1903 Low Moor iron and copper boiler, revealed to have come originally from classmate 27B.

The decision to build anew throws up new problems as unlike an overhaul to an existing boiler, a new design must be developed to current standards and certified by an appropriate body. The DTLT has reached an agreement with the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways' Boston Lodge Works to design the new boiler and take it through to certification.

FFWHR chief mechanical engineer Jon Whalley, design engineer and boilersmith Bob Yates and director Paul Lewin visited the DTLT at Statfold on 7th May to examine the old boiler shell and firebox and discuss requirements for the new design. A plan for a new all-steel, flanged and welded boiler with a riveted foundation ring has emerged, based on the original envelope but to modern standards.

A provisional timescale will see the design completed by July and certification by Christmas. Assuming that the required funds can be raised a contract will then be placed for manufacture of the boiler, with the aim to have 19B in steam in early 2026.

DTLT chair Jeremy Davey was delighted to place the contract so quickly and grateful to the FF&WHR's Paul Lewin, his team and several other parties who offered their support to the efforts to return 19B to steam as quickly as possible. "It gives me great confidence for the future of heritage steam in the UK that so many skilled organisations are here, able and willing," Jeremy said.

Project engineering lead Will Smith expressed his confidence that with Boston Lodge's highly regarded boiler design and manufacturing work, a very high quality design will be produced. "Alongside the great work from Statfold's fitters on the mechanical overhaul of the locomotive, 19B will be fitted with a boiler that will provide many years of trouble-free service," he said.

Funds for the design and certification were already to hand when the decision was made to renew the boiler. DTLT treasurer and trustee Pete 'Fuzz' Jordan added; "We have approximately £75,000 left to raise towards the estimated construction costs and fundraising will continue to achieve that as soon as possible."

**Above: FF&WHR CME Jon Walley (right) and boilersmith Bob Yates examine 19B's existing boiler at Statfold.** ***Photo: DTLT***



# Rail freight put on standby for station build

The Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway has begun work on its new station and interpretation centre at the South Loop terminus in Skegness Water Leisure Park, following delays caused by relentless rain which made access to the site impossible.

Improving ground conditions have enabled contractors to clear the site, install a septic tank and begin work on the new platform and associated fittings.

The LCLR and its contractors had prepared some of the line's First World War freight stock to move plant and materials to the site but a spell of sunny and windy weather made this unnecessary. However it remains on standby if further rainfall causes ground conditions to deteriorate.

A grant of £24,250 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, with a contribution of £8,000 from the Water Leisure Park's owners and hosts of the LCLR, Ellis Bros Ltd, is paying for the project, with some work being done by volunteers from the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway Historic Vehicles Trust.

**Above: Site visit: An inspection train was run to the LCLR's new station for grant funders to see progress.** ***Photo: Dave Enefer/LCLR***




■ **The Crowle Peatland Railway in Lincolnshire held an open day over the weekend of 11th-12th May. The railway's oldest locomotive, Simplex 40S302 'Little Peat' worked a demonstration freight train. Originally employed locally in the peat industry, the loco was returned to working order in June 2021 following restoration.** ***Photo: Stuart Chapman***



# Talyllyn takes to the main line

A class 97 diesel locomotive was officially named 'Rheilffordd Talyllyn Railway' by Lord Peter Hendy, current chair of Network Rail, at Tywyn Wharf Station on 15th May.

The ceremony, involving loco no 97304, was presented as a testament to the close relationship between the Talyllyn and its standard gauge neighbour. This is set to be enhanced with the display of a wagon on the Network Rail siding to show how slate was formerly transferred from 2ft 3in to standard gauge rails.

"I'm very fond of this railway and it always seemed to me that it was a great shame that if we had dedicated locomotives on the Cambrian Coast line that they couldn't bear the names of railways with whom we have a very close connection," Lord Hendy said.

"It's taken a bit of time and quite a lot of effort to get to the stage where we could name this Class 97 after the Talyllyn Railway, but having taken so long to get here it seems particularly appropriate that it is on the cusp of the Talyllyn's 75th Anniversary – and unlike previous locomotives named after the Railway this one can actually get to Tywyn!"

Talyllyn Railway chairman David Ventry expressed the railway's gratitude to Network Rail for not only recent repairs to the famed Barmouth Bridge, maintaining main-line access to Tywyn but donations of sleepers and assistance with relocating the standard gauge wagon. "Life for heritage railways is becoming more difficult, as it is with big railways, but we are also grateful for the support from Network Rail and the Heritage Railway Association which is much appreciated.

***Photo: Luke Ryan/TR***

# Museums unite Derry and Donegal rail

Railway museums in Derry and Donegal are uniting to run railway heritage conferences, one at Derry's Foyle Valley Railway Museum, and the other at Donegal *(writes **Hugh Dougherty**)*.

Made possible by 8,100 Euros worth of funding from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs Shared Island Civic Fund, the cross-border railway heritage conferences will concentrate on the narrow gauge railway heritage of County Donegal and Derry. They will be held at the end of 2024 and be followed by a publication in 2025.

Both conferences will include displays, speakers, panel discussions, model railway layouts, and all with a focus on recording stories about the 3ft gauge County Donegal and Lough Swilly Railways, which once served Donegal and linked the county with Derry itself. Both museums say that working together in this way will boost awareness of railway heritage throughout the North West.

County Donegal Railway Heritage Museum manager Niall McCaughan is delighted to have secured the funding linking them for the first time with the Foyle Valley Railway Museum.

"The series of events will help us engage the wider public to tell the story of railways in the North West," he said. "We intend to use the railways as a 'vehicle', to bring disconnected communities together to start new conversations, establish new partnerships and look forward as well as back at our rich, railway heritage."

Dermot O'Hara, Destined chief executive officer, added: "We at the Foyle Valley Railway Museum are fortunate to have a great collection of Donegal railway stock which operated on both sides of the border and, of course, our location is where trains departed for Donegal.

"This project gives us the opportunity to talk about the strong links between the border communities, the negative effects that the closure of the railways here have had on the region, and also to look to the future."



**Right: Donegal 2-6-4t 'Drumboe' will be part of the Donegal Railway Heritage Museum conference input.** ***Photo: Hugh Dougherty***

# BRIEF LINES



## Telford tram on way back

Operators of the 2ft gauge steam tramway that forms part of the attractions at the standard gauge Telford Steam Railway in Shropshire are hoping to reopen it later in the year. The tramcar that runs on the line is currently stripped down undergoing the most extensive overhaul it has ever been subject to.

## Tom and Ogwen to Amerton

Threlkeld Museum's Bagnall 0-4-0ST 'Sir Tom' and Avonside 0-4-0 'Ogwen' from Statfold will be the guests at the Amerton Railway's Summer Steam Gala on 15th-16th June. Amerton has its own version of the Bagnall class, the 1897-built 'Isabel'.

## Snowdon back to summit

The Snowdon Mountain Railway has recommenced services to the summit of the highest mountain in Wales, having started the season running to the final intermediate station of Clogwyn. Steam services are expected to restart in June.

## Gala at the waterworks

The Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway will stage a Railway Gala on 15th-16th June with model railways and the adjacent Kempton Steam Museum operating alongside services on the oval 2ft gauge Middlesex line.

## Harrogate in the works

The Statfold Barn Railway's 1944-built Peckett 0-6-0ST 'Harrogate' entered the works in early May for the start of its 10-year overhaul. Meanwhile the restoration of the museum's Hunslet-built Tamar class loco (3756/1952) is making progress with the loco's boiler remounted on the frames. ***Photo: SBR***






# Sierra Leone UK support group celebrates 10 years

The Friends of the Sierra Leone National Railway Museum celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2024 and marked the milestone on 27th April, Independence Day in the West African nation.

The Friends was set up in 2014 by a group of volunteers from the UK interested in the history of Sierra Leone, its former 760mm gauge railway and the National Railway Museum established by Colonel Steve Davies in the former motive power depot in Freetown. The charitable organisation exists to encourage, foster, assist and promote the work and activities of the museum.

Members promote the Sierra Leone National Railway Museum (SLNRM) worldwide, through an active Facebook Page, a regular newsletter and through the delivery of special events with a 'pop-up museum' telling the story of the railway and the museum. Members visit Sierra Leone on a regular basis as volunteers to assist in the work of the museum.

There is also the Freetown Chapter of the Friends, which was established in 2018 and is supported by members of the local community. They provide voluntary support for the museum and advocacy in the local community.

The 27th April celebration was held on the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, which has one of the former SLR Hunslet locomotives and two bogie carriages, repatriated in 1975 following closure of the SLR. The SLNRM signed a twinning agreement with the W&LLR on the occasion of its own 15th anniversary celebrations in Freetown in March 2020.

The station concourse at Llanfair Caereinion was decked out with Sierra Leone flags, and the 'Pop-up Museum' was displayed in the entrance, including a brief history of Sierra Leone and the story of the railway, along with images of the exhibits in the museum in Freetown.

A display of William-Bickers-Jones's hand-built 16mm scale models of Sierra Leone Railway locomotives and rolling stock was exhibited in the Llanfair Connections visitor centre.

At 12.30 guests, visitors and W&LLR staff assembled on the platform, where a welcome speech was given by W&LLR chairman Steve Clews and a response was made by Helen Ashby, chair of the FoSLNRM.

Dressed in Sierra Leone national colours the Castle Belles, a ladies' choir from Castle Caereinion, entertained the assembled group with a suite of songs and led them in singing the Sierra Leone National Anthem before guests travelled to Welshpool in the newly refurbished ex SLR second-class 'Independence' Coach No 1066, one of 49 carriages built by Gloucester Carriage & Wagon Company in 1961 as an independence gift.

A lunch of binch, traditional Sierra Leonean black-eyed bean stew and sour-dough bread was served, followed by tropical fruit salad with drinks including West African Star Beer.

Having viewed ex-Sierra Leone Railway Hunslet 2-6-2 no 85 the group returned to Llanfair in the SLR first class Independence Coach no 1207.

Back at Llanfair, a 10th Anniversary celebration cake was cut by Steve Clews and Helen Ashby and shared by the assembled visitors and guests.

"It was a wonderful celebration, despite the cold weather – a definite departure from the Sierra Leonean tradition," Helen Ashby told ***NGW***.

Anyone interested in joining the FoSLNRM can contact secretary Tim Procter at tprocter40@googlemail.com

**Above: Newly refurbished SLR carriage 1066 and its first-class sister 1207 formed the special train. The inset shows Friends and W&L chairs Helen Ashby and Steve Clews combining to cut the celebration cake.**
***Photos: FSLNRM***

# Bus tour recalls Donegal lines

Irish tour specialist Tailte Tours has revived The Hills of Donegal Excursion, once a popular day tour run from Dublin and Belfast by the Great Northern Railway of Ireland, which included a trip through Donegal on the 3ft gauge County Donegal Railways (*writes* ***Hugh Dougherty***).

Tailte is offering an all-day trip by bus from Dublin on Saturday 6th July to the 15 inch-gauge Difflin Lake Railway at Oakfield Park, Raphoe, where excursionists will enjoy a steam train ride. The bus will then run down through the Barnesmore Gap, to view the County Donegal track bed which carried passengers on the original Hills of Donegal excursions, before arriving at Donegal Railway Heritage Museum for a guided visit.

According to Tailte Tours marketing volunteer Niall Kelly, Donegal's rich railway heritage, once served by two major narrow gauge networks, made an ideal destination for the 2024 tour.

"We decided to name the tour after those promoted by the GNR(I), a company quick to see the potential of promoting railways for leisure travel, "Niall said.

"These days, we have to travel by bus from Dublin, something that could change in future if and when rail links are restored to Donegal as suggested by the All-Ireland Rail Review."

The fare for the excursion is 79 Euro, and profits, as with all Tailte Tours, will go towards supporting voluntary run railway museums and heritage lines in Ireland. Full details are at www.tailtetours.com

# Nine-strong Simplex run

The Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway's Diesel Day on 15th June will feature a cavalcade of nine heritage diesel locos.

The line-up will be formed of the famed Motor Rail Simplex locos, built for the trench railways of the First World War, to move loads of soldiers, armaments, water, medical supplies and fodder for horses over the notoriously deep and dangerous mud which would otherwise have prevented access to the trenches and the fighting.

After the war the locos found a whole host of uses including in Lincolnshire moving heavy loads of potatoes, sugar beet, fertiliser, clay, bricks and timber until improving roads and road vehicles made them redundant.

Spokesman John Chappell said: "Diesel Day 2024 will showcase them running in a variety of combinations – a similar cavalcade was staged after the end of the Covid lockdown when volunteers were allowed back on site, but the line was not open to the public.

"(The run) was enjoyable and showed the remarkable progress in restoring this significant collection, so we're delighted to be able to offer the public the opportunity to participate".



■ The Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust debuted a second locomotive on its recently established 12¼-inch gauge Mease Valley Light Railway on 12th May. The 2-6-2 tender loco 'Carol Ann' is believed to be the largest engine on the gauge yet built by the Exmoor Steam Railway, the products of which were featured in a three-part series in *NGW*181-183. *Photos: James Waite*




■ The Ffestiniog Railway Society's AGM weekend, which always features special attractions for the Welsh line's members to enjoy, was graced by a pair of visitors from Kent this year. The Richmond Light Railway's 'oldest and youngest' Decauville 0-4-0Ts, 'Chuquitanta' (810/1885) and 'Lily (648/1912) hauled special trains during the weekend, at one point performing a motorail service with a Model T Ford pick-up as their load. Lily is set to become the first visiting loco in eight years at Amberley when it takes part in the Sussex museum's rail Gala on 20th-21st July.
*Photo: Steve Town*




■ Two unusual visitors added to the attractions of the Raveglass & Eskdale Railway's Gala over the weekend of 4th-6th May. The 0-6-0ST 'Mr Hallworth', having its first outing away from its home line since being completed last year for the Perrygrove Railway by North Bay Railway Engineering, and the 0-4-0ST + tender 'St Egwin', built in 2003 by the Exmoor Steam Railway and normally resident at the Perrygrove's now sister 15-inch gauge line the Evesham Vale Light Railway, were pictured meeting at Irton Road station by *Matt Ditch*.




■ Having celebrated its 30th anniversary at the Bure Valley Railway (*see page 9*), the line's ZB-class 2-6-2 'Spitfire' headed south to star as the visiting loco at the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway's Steam & Diesel Gala on 11th-12th May – on the second day *Steve Town* pictured the Norfolk 15-inch gauge loco heading one of the Romney line's signature multiple-header trains.



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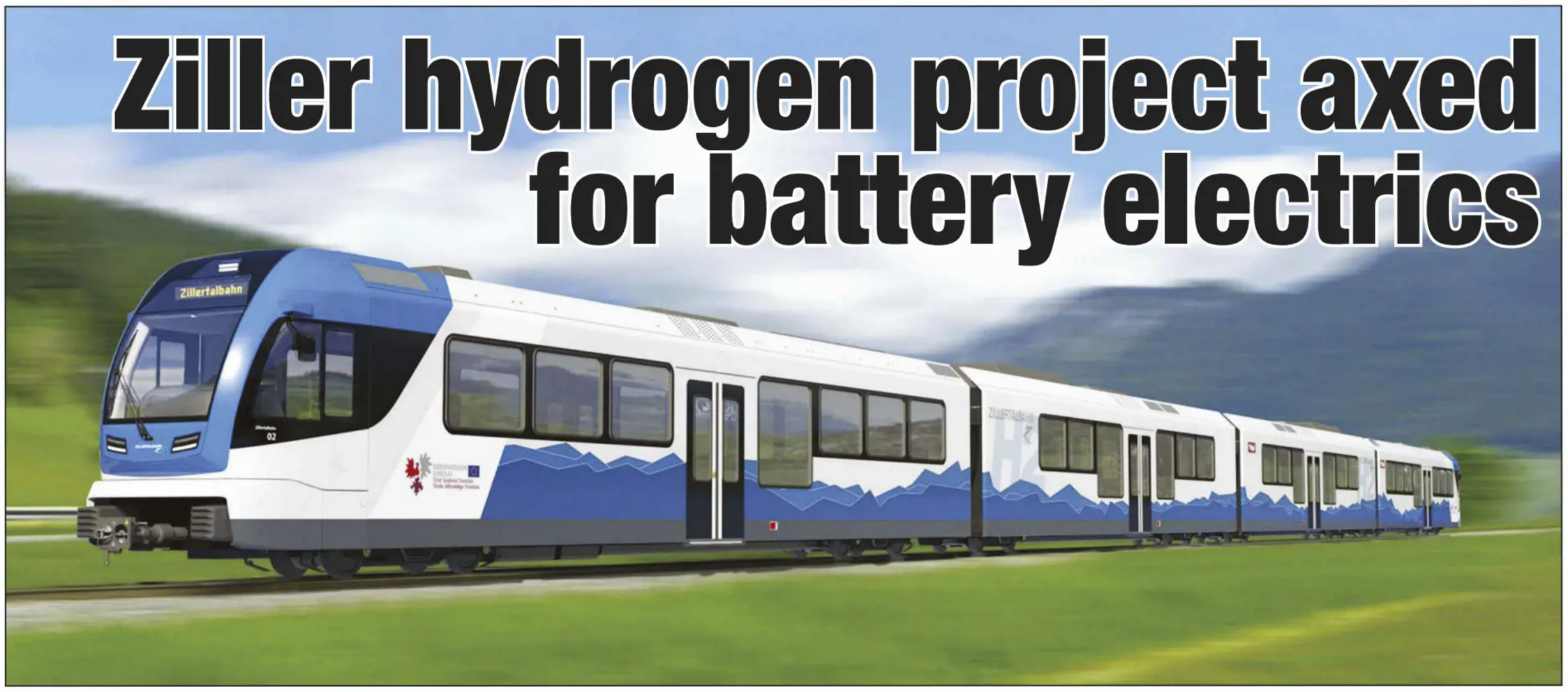
# Ziller hydrogen project axed for battery electrics




**AUSTRIA**

Bold plans by the Zillertalbahn to replace its current diesel-powered trains with multiple-units propelled by hydrogen fuel cells have been dropped in favour of battery-electric units.

The plans to employ hydrogen fuel cells, which only emit water, on the 32km long 760mm gauge line were announced in 2018 and were formerly endorsed by the Tyrol Government as recently as July 2023. Estimates at the time suggested that the move would save up to 900,000 litres of diesel fuel per year, with obvious environmental advantages.

The project, which planned to have hydrogen trains running in 2027, was projected to cost €100 million to implement, with the Federal Government contributing half of the budget, while operating costs would rise by €2.7 million per annum, though with high hopes that the price of hydrogen production would reduce substantially in future years.

The plans did not attract universal backing with opposition parties, including the Greens, calling for its cancellation due to the uncertain costs. There were even suggestions that the line should be converted to standard gauge and electrified to connect with the national rail network.

Now electric has won the day, though not at the expense of the line's gauge. In April it was announced that the hydrogen plan would be dropped in favour of a conversion to battery-electric operation.

A study by a local university found that the attractions of the hydrogen project had been overtaken by improvements in battery technology. The study considered both completely battery and hybrid operation, concluding that conversion to battery traction would be cheaper initially but that hybrid operation, with new overhead lines, would provide a better route to eventual full-electric operation, which is not currently considered viable.

The line is still to announce whether it will go the battery or hybrid route. Decarbonisation of all public transport services in the Zillertal valley is planned to be implemented by 2030.

**Above: Out of gas: These hydrogen-powered trains will no longer be built by Stadler for service in the Tyrol.** ***Photo: Stadler***

# Early start made for poignant ceremony

A crew on the Puffing Billy Railway in **AUSTRALIA** were required to light up Baldwin 2-6-2T no 12A at the unearthly hour of 1.30am on 25th April, ready for the loco to make a 45-minute run to Emerald for the annual ANZAC Day event.

ANZAC Day commemorates Australian and New Zealand soldiers who have served in wars and peace-keeping operations. Dawn services are held around the country at local parks and war memorials and for more than 10 years the Puffing Billy has taken a steam loco to the service held next to the station at Emerald – the tradition is for the loco whistle to be sounded during the service after the minute's silence.




12A made the journey to Emerald light engine, fitted for the occasion with a deep Victorian Railways five-chime whistle. Following the whistle-blowing at around 6am 12A waited for the morning track patrol to pass and then returned to Belgrave to be handed over the daytime crew.

"Locals seem to appreciate the railway's participation," Alexander McCooke told ***NGW***. "Many people stopped to get a photo of the loco and there were several requests for extra whistling on the way back to Belgrave."

**Left: Headlight ablaze, Baldwin 12A is made ready for its important early-morning journey.** ***Photo: Alexander McCooke***

# British volunteers relay Sibiu line



Restoration of the 760mm gauge Sibiu to Agnita Railway in **ROMANIA**, featured in ***NGW***182, has further benefited from the efforts of members of the line's British-based support group SAR UK (*writes* ***Dave Rowbotham***).

In early March, a small group of volunteers from the UK visited the line and spent a week helping local supporters with relaying of a turnout at Hosman station. This included complete resleepering and restoration of the formation to its original profile following subsidence since the line closed in 2001.

During their stay, in what was described as "decidedly Welsh" weather, the group contributed 29 man days to the relaying project, which was successfully completed shortly after their visit, in rather sunnier weather than the UK team enjoyed!

Another visit by SARUK is being planned in early September for a second trackwork week, leading up to a weekend of steam-hauled passenger trains on the line, again using former Bowaters Paper Mill 0-6-2 Manning Wardle 1877, which has been based at the line since 2023.

**Above: British volunteers used to track repairs in Welsh winters were served up familiar conditions during their week in Romania.**
***Photo: Dave Rowbotham/SARUK***

# Safety test marks start on route to driverless trains

The 1200mm gauge Bergbahn Rheineck – Walzenhausen rack railway in northeast Switzerland has tested a collision warning system, as the first step in its plans to introduce fully autonomous working without drivers to the line.

In *Encounters from the Narrow Gauge* in ***NGW***182 Donald Brooks described how the line, which dates back to 1896 but was converted in 1958 from a funicular to a 600-volt electric railway, was set to be replaced by the brand-new autonomous system in 2026, with globally-renowned rolling-stock specialist Stadler supplying the new hardware.

The line runs just short of two kilometres between Rheineck and Walzenhausen near Lake Constance (Bodensee, in the local Swiss-German dialect). Ahead of the construction of the new stock Stadler has begun testing its warning system on the current vehicles.

The system, known as Nova Smartsense, detects obstacles on the track ahead of the train and automatically initiates braking.

A spokesperson for operator Appenzeller Bahnen (AB) said that the next two years will be used to collect extensive data and experience with the collision warning system, adding; "These long-term tests are crucial to ensure the safety and efficiency of future driverless operations."

According to AB the reopened Begbahn will be "the first fully automated inter-city adhesion and rack railway in the world".

**Readers can send in news from overseas lines for inclusion on these pages – contact details are on page 3**




# Peter Pan marks 40 years of visits to Maldegem

Over the weekend of 4th-5th May Kerr Stuart Wren 0-4-0ST 'Peter Pan' crossed the Channel to make its latest visit to the steam festival at Stoomtrein Maldegem-Eeklo in **BELGIUM** (*writes* ***Sjors van Dongen***).

Both the loco and its owner Graham Morris were celebrating the 40th anniversary of their first visit to the festival in 1984. Peter Pan operated on the 1.2km long 600mm gauge line that heads west from Maldegem – the line laid on the former standard gauge trackbed of NMBS/SNCB line 58 which formerly continued from Maldegem to Brugge.

With the loco facing east rather than west, as the other narrow gauge engines at Maldegem do, some new photographic opportunities were opened up for festival visitors, including with part of the former crossing keeper's building on the Bogaardestraat in Maldegem and where the narrow gauge line crosses underneath the main road.

***Kevin Hoggett*** *of Stoomtrein Maldegem adds:* To mark the occasion of the 40th anniversary, a ceremony was held with the Flemish Minister of Finance and Heritage, Mattias Diependaele, who presented Graham Morris with a signed certificate and then drove Peter Pan, under the watchful eye of the loco's owner, as far as the museum shed.

The minister was very enthusiastic about what he saw in Maldegem and told Graham that he had visited York Railway Museum with his family.

**Above: 'Kerr Stuart Peter Pan' took a reverse route under the road bridge on Maldegem's narrow gauge line.** ***Photo: Sjors Van Dongen***

**Below: The Kerr Stuart was suitably dwarfed by one of the four standard-gauge locos in steam at the Maldegem festival.**
***Photo: Kevin Hoggett***



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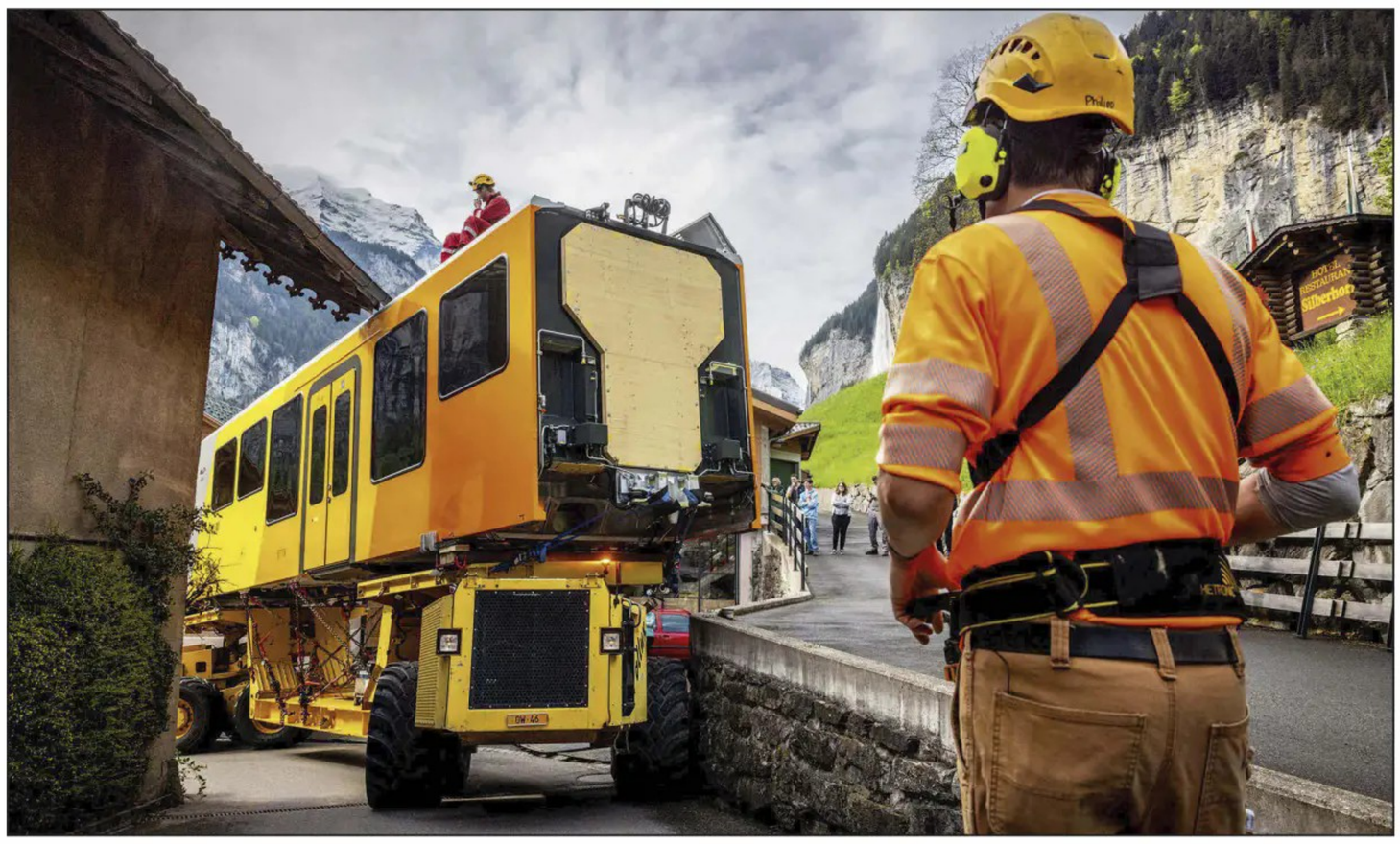
# Road and Rail conquer the mountain







## SWITZERLAND

These remarkable pictures show the final two brand-new railcars being delivered to a metre-gauge mountain railway, again being transported to the line by a tortuous road route.

The autumn 2023 delivery of the first of three new Stadler Be4/6 railcars to the Bergbahn Lauterbrunnen-Mürren (BLM) was reported in ***NGW***181 (*writes* ***Donald Brooks***). On 13th and 14th May the remaining two cars were transported to the BLM using the same method as the first, with the articulated units split for the journey.

A specialist vehicle carried the units up the steep and winding service road that climbs more than 750 metres from Lauterbrunnen in the valley, which the BLM serves only by cableway, to the railway itself. The cars were then placed on the rails at Winteregg, the halfway station along the 4.3km line between Grütschalp and Mürren.

### Night testing

The first of the new cars has already been undergoing night-time tests in difficult conditions during the winter and these will continue with the two newly-delivered cars. Once commissioning has been completed, the new trains should enter service in time for the peak 2024 summer season.

The railway itself has been entirely rebuilt and with the new faster, fully accessible and higher capacity cars in service travel along the line will be completely transformed.

A comprehensive feature on the BLM will appear in ***NGW*** later this year.

***Photos: jungfrau.ch***

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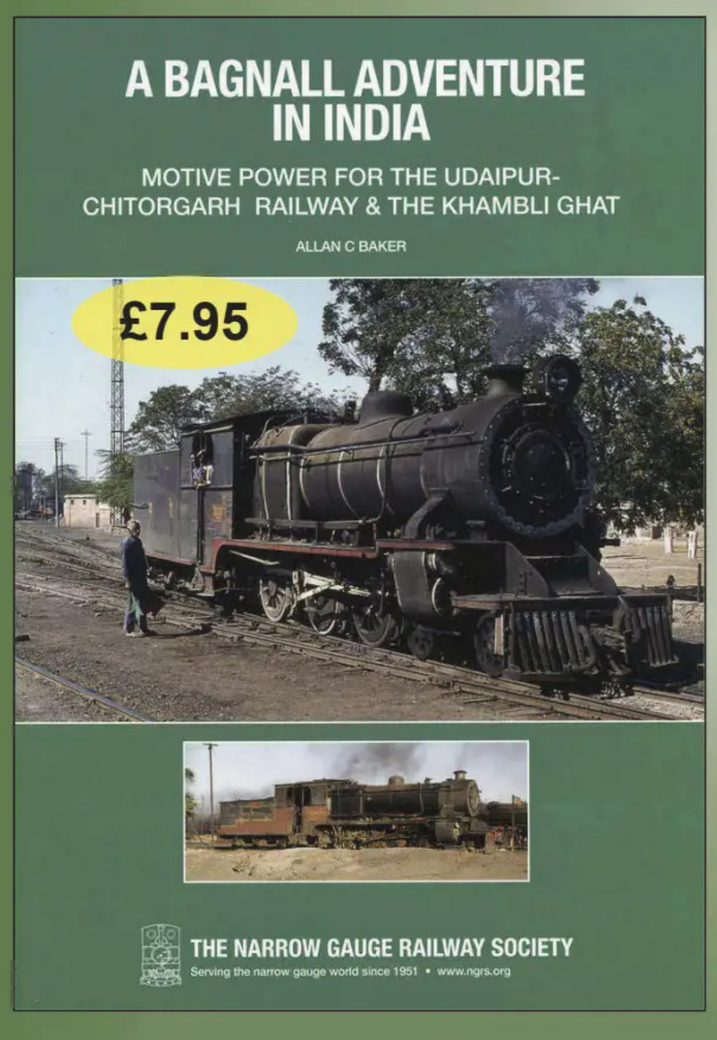
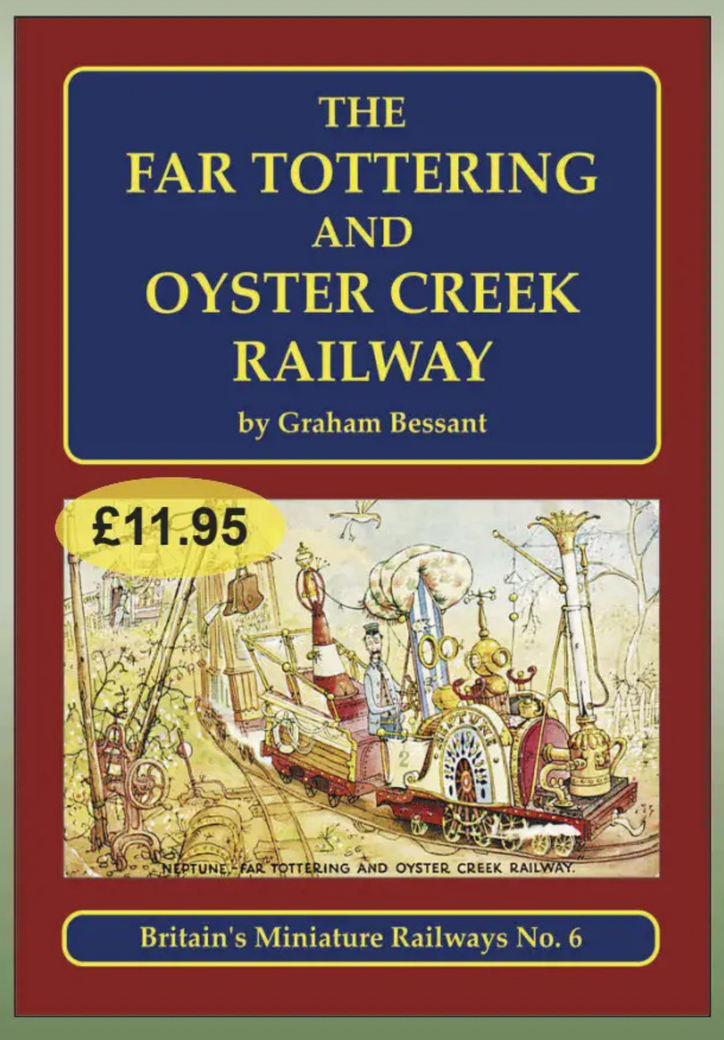
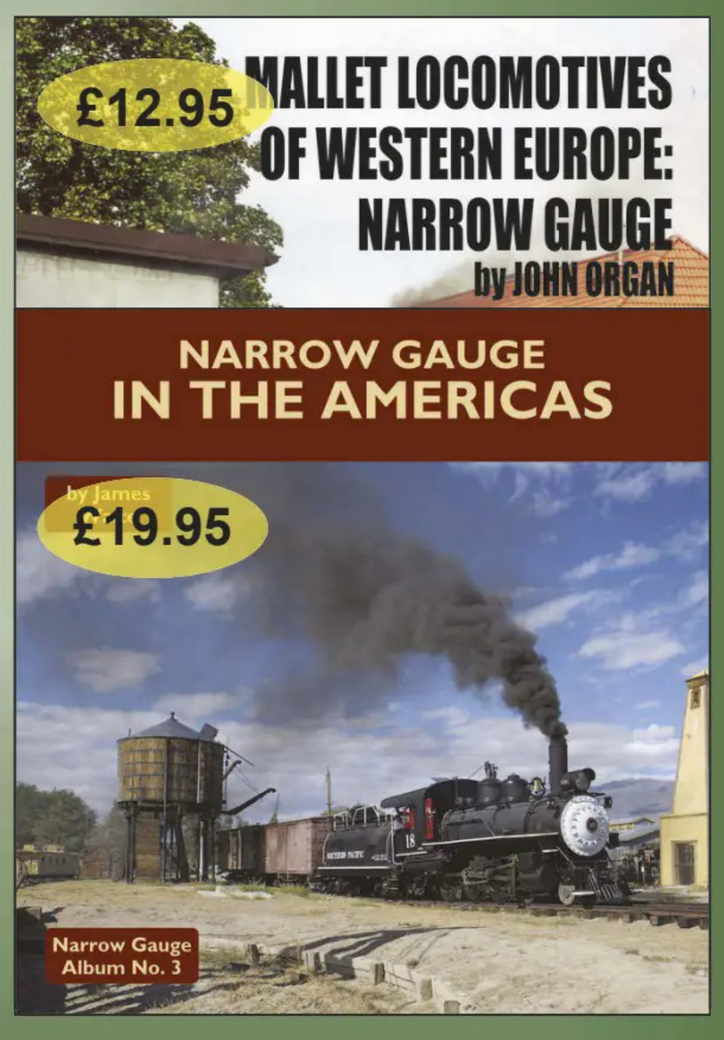








# Last Trains at Bord na Móna

**Peat haulage in the Irish Republic ceased on 29th March. *Ted McAvoy* was there for the final epic week.**



It is almost four years since Bord na Mona stopped harvesting peat but, even now, there's 150,000 tonnes of the stuff still out there on a few of the hundred bogs. Evergreen, the peat people from Northern Ireland, wanted every tonne that could be got but BnM's head honcho, for whom peat is a swear word, decreed that all peat operations must stop by 31st March. In practice, this involved one railway connecting three bogs with a tippler at Bellair, County Offaly.

The last week did not go well. On the Monday, 25th March, we assembled 15 wagons with a loco at each end. As soon as I climbed into the cab of LM 434, Robbie Killian announced that I would be driving. Oh goody, I thought, until we turned off the main line onto the bog. I've spent months on the bogs but this track was atrocious, abysmal, ridiculous, sitting uneasily on a bog composed of at least 90 per cent water – and that is not an exaggeration.

Several rail joints had sunk out of sight. At times we would lurch to the left, lean to the right, swing wildly back level and then hit a 20-degree rail joint throwing us towards the dark forbidding ditch. Bellair North bog is enormous and even the near end we were heading towards was well over a mile away, followed by an incredibly tight u-turn to reach the pile of peat.

**Above: It was fitting that the very last haulage of peat was by tippler shunter LM 163, a 68-year old Ruston & Hornsby veteran.**

**Below: Loading the last rake. Heavy-haul loco LM 434 was driven by the author during the final week.**




## Two-hand job

At this point, the wagons had endured enough and one jumped off. We put it back on and another left the rails. Indefatigable, we pressed on and loaded the rake. On the way back, my loco was pushing, not pulling, and that was tricky. Wagons don't like being pushed or squeezed, so I had only to push when the lead loco needed me, then quickly back off. One hand on the throttle, one on the sander button. Ah, the sanders! There wasn't a cat in hell's chance of us getting home without sand and we used a lot.

A derailment can and will happen anytime and, sure enough, it did, two-thirds of the way home. And guess what; the only machine capable of rescuing us was the loading shovel we'd left at the far end. I uncoupled and – er – sped back down the bog, dropping Robbie off to pick up the shovel. Another hour gone, but we did make it back and promptly rang the rail crew.

"You've got to fix it before we go out again," we said. There was a wry laugh at the other end but they turned up next morning, armed only with a pile of planks and some fishplates. Joe Clancy picked up the rails with his rail layer and planks were wedged under the softest spots. That was it.

## Getting worse

A load was brought in, and another on the Wednesday by which time the track had deteriorated from abysmal to diabolical. Everybody knew that the next trip would be the last. There were other problems – we'd run out of sand. Some arrived but much of it was wet and the shovel couldn't reach the top of the sand bunkers. Our tractor ran out of diesel.

Meanwhile, Pat Watkins and I ran out light engine with the last two surviving planks to pack up a sunken rail, then returned and coupled onto 20 bogie wagons. It was now or never and the bog gremlins must have been wreathed in smiles when they saw us set off. We didn't get far and the offending rail joint was capable of derailing the whole train. Somehow we fixed it, re-railed and made it all the way to the pile. We even loaded up and set off back but the gremlins were preparing our downfall. One wagon off became two. Two became four. Four became six...

Because this was the very last trip, there were a few dedicated enthusiasts around. While Pat and Noel Flynn went for the loading (and re-railing) shovel, I gave the visitors a ride back to the tippler before drawing clear the un-derailed wagons. Despite all our efforts, most of the rake had to be left out there overnight.

On the Friday, the gremlins had lost interest and the whole rake made it to the tippler siding. Lorries began to load, the rake grew shorter and, at 10.46am, 67-year old Ruston LM 163 dragged in the last wagons, bringing peat haulage to an end in the Republic. It seemed fitting that one of BnM's oldest locos should carry out the last rites.

Throughout our trials and tribulations, our two 12-tonne diesel hydraulic locos were faultless. They really are engineering and electronic masterpieces, unphased by the track, the gradients and the loads. They are a huge credit to Bord na Móna's engineers and designers, together with the workshop staff who built them.

Time for a group photo – I dragged all the fellers out of the cabin. From left to right in the picture on this page are Joe Clancy (rail-layer driver); Noel Flynn (train driver); Benny Lally (rail crew); Johnny Carr (Ruston driver and 'peat poker' – hacking at the peat that refuses to fall out of wagons); Ronnie Deegan (tippler operator for more than 20 years); visiting Evergreen peat lorry driver; Mark Seery (rail crew supervisor) and Pat Watkins (train driver).

This photo can never be repeated. Pat has already retired, Ronnie the tippler man is likely to follow. The rail crew are now far away, lifting a main line. I walked down the bog. All was eerily silent and would remain so. Another 12-tonne loco was down there, so I started it up and very slowly drove it back, drinking in the bog landscape we'd battled all week. As the years pass, the bogs will quickly re-wild and all traces of the railway will vanish.

My Bord na Móna friends set off home, the last of many thousands of Irishmen who've spent their lives bringing in more than 100 million tonnes of peat. NGW

■ Ted wishes to pass on his many thanks to the Bellair staff in the photo below and, absent on the last day, Robbie Killian.




***"The track had deteriorated from abysmal to diabolical..."***



**Above: How many NG drivers who read *NGW* would tackle track such as this? Ted did...**

**Right: ...and this is what happened as a result...**

**Below: A group photo that can never be repeated, taken immediately after the last loco movement.**

***Photos by Ted McAvoy, 25th to 29th March 2024***



# Metre Gauge around São Paulo

*James Waite* begins a three-part series on Brazil – a leading nation in railway preservation.

Back in August 2012 I arrived at Rio de Janeiro airport for my flight home after exploring some of Brazil's heritage railways, clutching a very big book I'd bought a few hours earlier and hoping I'd be allowed to read it onboard.

Most of my fellow passengers were members of the 183-strong Brazilian team travelling to the London Paralympics during that memorable summer of sport. They went on to win 43 medals, 21 of them golds, no mean feat. With their palpable bonhomie, the need to take care of their distinctive requirements and an outpouring of goodwill among the other passengers and staff no-one was fussed about one oversized train book!

Settling into it I was surprised to read that preservation in Brazil owes much to Leopold de Rothschild, Mr Leo responsible for the 12¼-inch gauge Exbury Gardens Railway in the New Forest, and there was even a photo of one of his letters of support. He was perhaps mindful that Rothschilds had financed the building of many Brazilian railways in the 19th century. A pretty loco model, presented by one of them, is on show in the engine shed at Exbury.

Working on my piece about Exbury published in last month's *NGW* reminded me of this trip and has prompted me to write about some of Brazil's metre gauge lines. This first part documents early preservation in São Paulo state – next month we will explore the shared history of two attractive lines further east, and we will finish with a look at the sugar railways of Rio state back in 1977.

**Above: Rede Mineir de Viacao no 505 at Jaguariúna – this is today the flourishing centre of the ABPF with locomotives from all over Brazil plus a fascinating carriage collection.**

**Below: Pacific no 401 wooding up at Anhumas – this is the terminus of the line reopened by the ABPF in 1984.**

***Photos by James Waite, August 2012 and July 2013***




## Rails to Jaguariúna

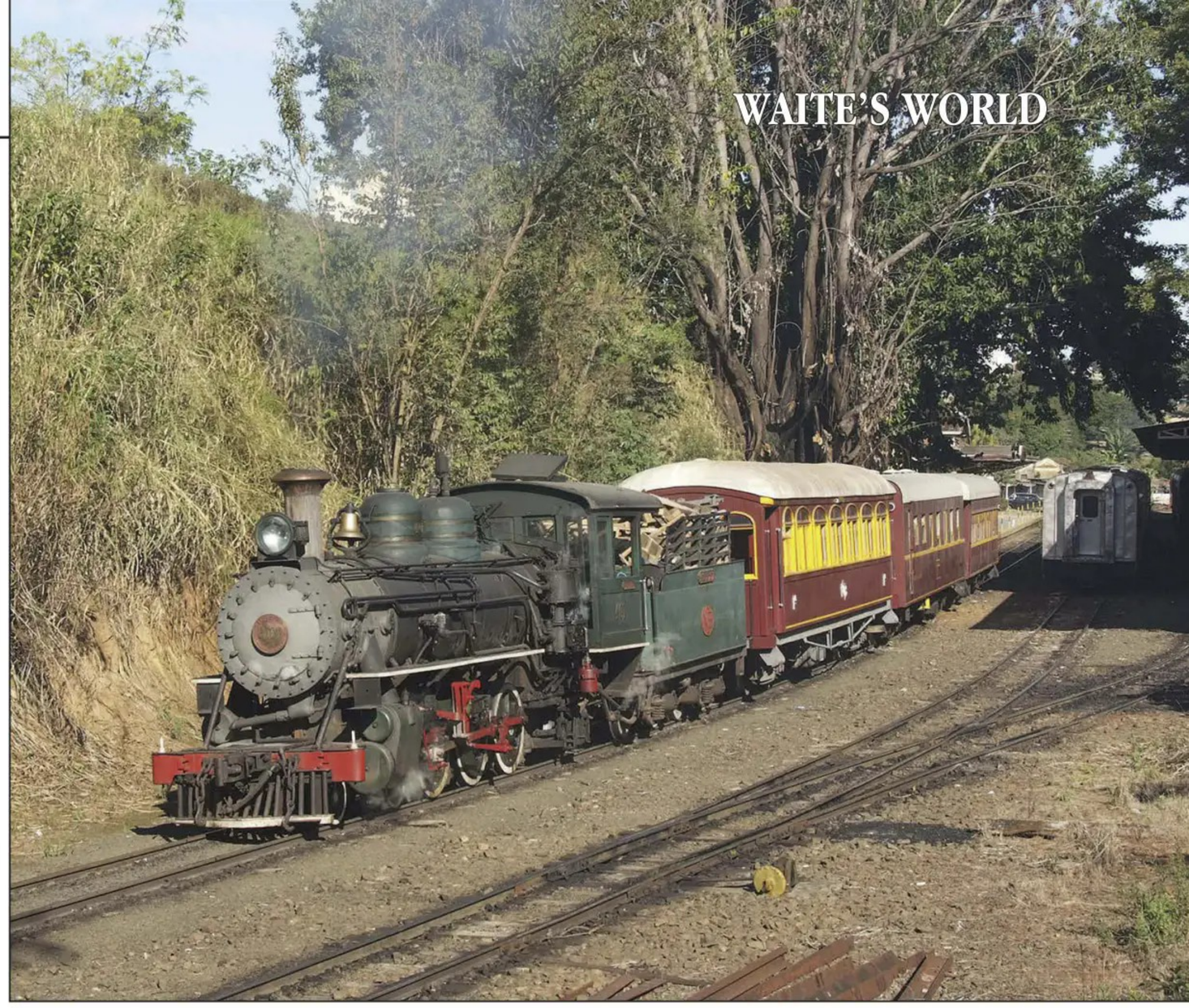
Emperor Dom Pedro II encouraged use of the Irish 5ft 3in or 1,600mm gauge, describing it as a "big gauge for a big country". It was duly adopted by the São Paulo Railway (SPR), a British concern, opened in 1867 between Jundiaí, northwest of São Paulo city, and the port of Santos.

The SPR had no inclination to venture beyond Jundiaí since there was a huge profit to be made from the block trains to Santos transporting the coffee and sugar grown further inland. There was often more traffic than it could handle, the limiting factor being its well-known cable inclines near the coast. It was content to leave other railways to head inland – no doubt they also earned good profits from coffee and sugar, but as their lines fanned out into thinly-populated districts they inevitably attracted less traffic and turnover became marginal.

The Brazilian-owned Companhia Paulista built on from Jundiaí, still at 5ft 3in, though it later added lines of metre gauge once it reached the remoter districts for which the wider track was not viable.

Campinas, the first significant city on its route, became the start point for the metre gauge EF Mogiana, its route winding its way through the




coffee country and eventually reaching Araguari, more than 600km away in Minas Gerais state. Its first section, 36km long as far as Jaguariúna, opened on 3rd May 1875. Later that year a branch reached Amparo in the east, and the main line was extended northwards to Mogi Mirim. With its new junction status Jaguariúna grew rapidly.

Just about the SPR's only significant enlargement came in 1903 when it took over the metre gauge EF Bragantina, which ran east from a junction at Campo Limpo to Bragança Paulista. It also served coffee estates and so made a fair profit, but its attraction to the SPR was that it could stymie a plan hatched by the Mogiana to build southwards along one of the few viable routes to the coast, and so could preserve its monopoly of export traffic. In 1912 and 1913 the Bragantina was extended, partly at least to block still further the path of

**Above: Paulista 4-6-0 no 604, built by Baldwin in 1895, shunting at Anhumas.**

**Above right: EF Noroeste do Brasil no 406 leaving Anhumas with a train bound for Jaguariúna. The distinctive leading carriage also came from the NOB.**

**Below: No 505, a Schwartzkopff product, on the approach to Carlos Gomes – the ABPF base in a period from 1985 when Leopold de Rothschild played a key role in providing covered accommodation.**

any other railways. It closed in 1967.

The Campinas-Jaguariúna section would have become much less busy had the Mogiana's plan to build to the coast succeeded, since its new railway would have begun at Amparo, and the branch to there from Jaguariúna would have become the main line. Instead the section was always the Mogiana's busiest, and it must have flourished even more after 1937 when the EF Sorocabana, owned by São Paulo state, at last broke the SPR's monopoly and completed a metre gauge route from Campinas to Santos facilitating through metre gauge traffic. It ran through the mountains far to the west, and unlike the SPR could be loco-worked throughout.

In 1961 the Paulista also became owned by São Paulo state. Ten years later it took over the Mogiana and the Sorocabana, along with the EF Araraquara and the EF São Paulo-Minas further north, and was reorganised as Fepasa, with grandiose plans for development. One which came to fruition was a new broad gauge line north from Campinas as far as Paulínia, a flourishing industrial centre, along with a metre gauge link from there to Jaguariúna, which led to closure of the old route from Campinas in 1977.

## Pioneer preservation

The same year saw the foundation of the Associaçao Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviaria (ABPF), the country's first and most influential preservation society. It was the brainchild of the late Patrick Dollinger, a French enthusiast who had moved to Brazil several years previously, and who was profoundly disturbed by the wholesale destruction of the country's railway heritage. He must have been a skilled and articulate advocate, and soon engaged the sympathy of regional politicians and senior executives »



within Rede Ferroviaria Federal SA (RFFSA), Brazil's equivalent of British Rail. He single-handedly persuaded an RFFSA official to order an immediate halt to activities at one scrapyard, and went on to negotiate the gift to ABPF of no fewer than 16 steam locos. He was also offered the Campinas-Jaguariúna line, then recently decommissioned.

Another founding member believes that ABPF only succeeded because Patrick was French; he was probably viewed as an eccentric foreigner, and if a Brazilian had asked for the same support he would have been dismissed as being on the make. Be that as it may Patrick was only just in time. Neither RFFSA nor Fepasa had any suitable locomotives available in São Paulo state but fortunately steam had survived longer in Minas Gerais, and it was not difficult to locate 16 locos which were more or less in working order.

ABPF set up its operating base at Jaguariúna, and in 1984 reopened the line as far as Anhumas, in the outskirts of Campinas. A crisis arose in the following year when the local authority in Jaguariúna expropriated the line into the town to make way for road improvements, demolishing vital bridges. The society relocated its base to Carlos Gomes further south, where its wooden-bodied rolling stock had to be stored outdoors. It soon deteriorated in the tropical climate until Mr de Rothschild came to the rescue and provided the finance for the first covered accommodation.

The next major advance was 20 years later when a high-level concrete viaduct was built to restore access to the old station at Jaguariúna and the railway has flourished ever since. There is a fascinating collection of carriages, and more locos have come from all over the country.

The latter include Pacific no 401 of the EF Noroeste do Brasil (NOB), which ran from the Paulista's broad gauge railhead at Bauru for no less that 1,272km through the vast Pantanal wetlands to the Bolivian border at Corumbá. Not so many years ago the Pantanal was inhabited by indigenous people who were in the habit of firing at trains with their bows and arrows, but today it's a wildlife reserve of global importance.

Also at the ABPF are the beautiful Paulista 4-6-0 no 604, Araraquara 4-8-0 no 9 (Borsig 8503/1912), and an unusual 0-10-0 no 8 'Tentugal' (Henschel 21687/1930) from the VF Leste Brasileiro up in northeastern Brazil, which survived because it spent a second life working on sugar railways. Several regional chapters of the society have been established elsewhere, and it's fair to say that thanks to the efforts of the ABPF Brazil is now among the leading nations in railway preservation.

**Above: Diners at the Hotel du Marias on the outskirts of Jaguariúna can sit next to beautifully restored carriages and a British-built locomotive. The ex Mogiano 4-6-0 is Beyer, Peacock 3817 of 1896.**

**Below: Among the locomotives that were housed at the Instituto Mairiporã until its closure in 2019 was the Soracabano line's no 4 – this Baldwin 2-6-2T built in 1906 was probably the first privately preserved loco in Brazil.**




## Perfect place to stay

ABPF was not the first preservation operation at Jaguariúna. In the town's north-western outskirts once lay the Fazenda Duas Marias, a farm which was acquired by enthusiast Alberto Macedo in 1969. It occupied a beautiful position overlooking a lake, but was devoid of trees or shelter.

Sr Macedo decided that the remedy involved a secondhand railway station, three metre gauge carriages, one each from the Paulista, the Bragantina and the Sorocabana and, for good measure, a former Mogiana 4-6-0 locomotive. He acquired them at an auction held by Fepasa shortly after its formation.

His daughter Rachel recalls that they were dilapidated on arrival, but the station was soon re-erected and the carriages, in particular, were beautifully restored and retain most of their original furniture and fittings. The family was not over-enthusiastic about the project, and Rachel remembers that when letters arrived from Fepasa notifying him of future auctions she hid them!

The farm has long since become the Hotel Duas Marias and now has lots of trees, but the station and the train are still there and form the heart of a distinctly unusual bar and restaurant. The Bragantina carriage holds a particular fascination for British enthusiasts with its SPR axlebox covers and the brass floor plates in its end balconies engraved with its lettering. Where else could one possibly wish to stay when visiting the Anhumas-Jaguariúna line?

## Uncertain changes

Atibaia, a town 85km southeast of Jaguariúna and once served by the

Bragantina, was home to a short privately-run heritage railway using stock from the old line. It was very popular but closed in 2009. At Mairiporã, 28km further on, was the Instituto Mairiporã, a privately-run school and college founded in 1963 by Dr Thomaz Melo Cruz, a committed educationalist and a keen enthusiast. In 1972 he acquired EF Funilense 2-6-2T no 1 as an educational project.

The Funilense opened in 1899 as a 60cm gauge line running north from Campinas through Paulínia, and the loco was one of two it bought after conversion to metre gauge in 1906. The Sorocabana took over on 9th January 1921, and the line closed in 1960, just a few years before the major industrialisation of Paulínia which might have given it a new lease of life.

The 2-6-2T became Soracabana no 4, and when it was bought by Dr Cruz it was probably the first privately preserved loco in Brazil. The collection grew to include Bragantina no 4 'Bragança', one of five 2-6-0s supplied by Kitson in 1881 for the line's opening, and no 18, a Beyer, Peacock 4-6-0 of 1937. It was the youngest of three similar 4-6-0s on the line and a type Beyers supplied to Brazil for many years.

There was also a 4-4-0ST of uncertain provenance, and numerous wooden-bodied carriages from the Bragantina, the Sorocabana, the Mogiana and the Araraquara, along with early Paulista four-wheeled broad gauge wagons, metre gauge rail-mounted cranes, stationary engines, and even a small aeroplane.

The locos were steamed most years between 1972 and 2018 for the institute's annual science and technology fairs. An educational project underway in 2012 was the building of a working replica of the broad gauge 2-2-2 'Baroneza', Brazil's first loco built by Fairbairn in 1854 – I don't know if it was ever completed.

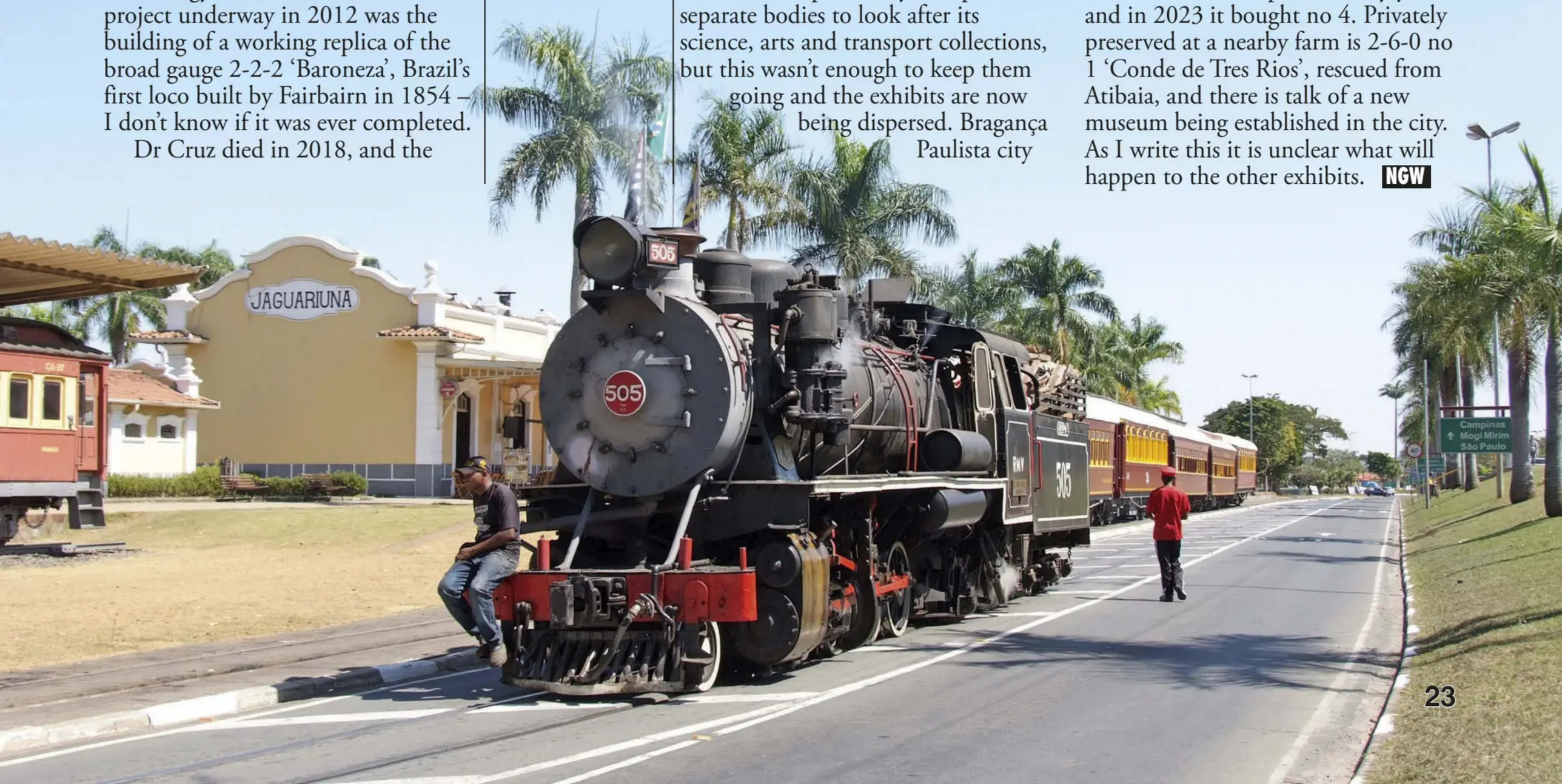
Dr Cruz died in 2018, and the institute closed less than one year later. He had previously set up separate bodies to look after its science, arts and transport collections, but this wasn't enough to keep them going and the exhibits are now being dispersed. Bragança Paulista city council had owned Bragantina 2-6-0 no 3 'Dr Luiz Lempe' for many years, and in 2023 it bought no 4. Privately preserved at a nearby farm is 2-6-0 no 1 'Conde de Tres Rios', rescued from Atibaia, and there is talk of a new museum being established in the city. As I write this it is unclear what will happen to the other exhibits. **NGW**





**Also on show at the Instituto Mairiporã were two Bragantina locos, Kitson 2-6-0 no 4 'Bragança' (above) and Beyer, Peacock 4-6-0 no 18 (right).**

**Below: Brazilian preservation in action, no 505 runs round its train at Jaguariúna.**



# Spring has definitely sprung...

**A host of photo charters over the past month have produced some superb images of the narrow gauge.**



**Above: Where's the track? The Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway does not host that many photo charters but perhaps it should – as this photo by *Andrew Simmonds* shows, it really remains one of the most accurate representations of industrial yesteryear. Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST 'Melior' is in charge of the train on 13th May.**

**Below: Workmates with varying fortunes? Not strictly accurate as even in its closing days the Bowaters Paper Railway would not have turned its locomotives out looking quite like 'Triumph' at the right. But the Bagnall is actually awaiting its turn in the Sittingbourne & Kemsley workshop, with oily rags in the smokebox generrating some atmosphere to compare with Kerr Stuart 'Melior' at left. The loco was making a final appearance before withdrawal for overhaul at the end of its 10-year boiler ticket.** ***Photo: Andrew Simmonds***








**Above: Spot the train... *Karl Heath* is a photographer that steps back to get the bigger picture, or in this case sets his drone free! On 26th April no 11 'Maitland' was running along the cliff tops at Keristal on the Isle of Man Steam Railway with the 9.50am service train from Douglas – the train had been strengthened to six carriages to cater for coach parties on what is proving a very busy season for the IOMSR.**

**Right: The glory of monochrome, and the fiddly nature of emptying an ashpan on a small 2ft gauge loco. *Joey Evans* captured the scene at Boston Lodge works during the visit by the Richmond Light Railway's Decauville 0-4-0 'Chuquitanta' to the Ffestiniog Railway on 19th April.**

**Overleaf: Road v rail on the Isle of Man. In fact the Foden steam wagon was outshopped in the colours of a Manx company but on the English mainland and then shipped over to the island for the photo charters on the Steam Railway. Here it meets Maitland on 22nd April.**

***Photo: Joey Evans***

NARROW GAUGE WORLD





**Above: We see few pictures from our photographers of the Great Laxey Mines Railway on the Isle of Man, perhaps because many think that at just quarter of a mile long, the highly unusual 19-inch gauge line offers little of appeal. Well over a weekend of photo charters on the island, *Joey Evans* proved that even the shortest lines can offer something special. Joey pictured 'Ant', a 2004-built replica of the 1877 original Stephen Lewin locomotive scrapped way back in 1935, accelerating away with another load of mine wagons.**

# X marks the spot

**The opening of the new Vale of Rheidol Railway museum is bringing locos and stock that were mythical for years back into the spotlight, as *Andrew Charman* reports.**

For decades enthusiasts of a narrow gauge persuasion talked of the mythical 'Collection X' – a host of narrow gauge locomotives and stock gathered from all over the world by the collector Peter Rampton.

Many thought him eccentric – your editor remembers attending the opening of the revamped Aberffryd station on the Vale of Rheidol Railway that he owned, when he made speeches in front of the Welsh education minister while holding a large stuffed albatross. Even a tribute issued by the VoR following his death in 2019 described Peter as "Narrow Gauge's Man of Mystery".

Since his passing, however, Peter Rampton has been revealed as a visionary, securing narrow gauge equipment that when it was available would likely have interested few buyers, and without his intervention would likely have been sent for scrap.

Now those items, safeguarded all those years ago, are beginning to appear again, in the new museum that was officially opened at the VoR's Aberystwyth terminus on 3rd May (*see page 7*).

Already on display, alongside items from the VoR and other railways when the museum welcomed its first visitors in April, were a yet-to-be restored 2ft gauge Dick Kerr petrol loco from the First World War and in contrast a beautifully restored Isle of Man Railway bogie carriage.

For the opening two new historic artefacts not seen for many years emerged into the light – a 600mm gauge Couillet 0-6-0T 'Sabero No. 1', built in 1895 for the Hulleros de Sabero line in Spain, and the very quaint four-wheel director's saloon that it hauled on said line.

## Big machine

It was also revealed, during opening day speeches, that the next loco to be restored for the museum will be impressive – a Gwalior Pacific, built by Bagnall for the Western Railway in India – it will rival the Welsh Highland Garratts for the title of the biggest 2ft gauge engines in the UK.




That's for the future and in the meantime we can enjoy the historic stock already in this important new museum, with the knowledge that it is going to be consistently added to in coming years.

It is sad that Peter Rampton never lived to see the fulfillment of his dream, but without doubt, for saving narrow gauge equipment which would otherwise have been lost, he deserves our thanks. **NGW**




**Above: The 1895 Couillet 0-6-0 'Sabero No. 1' is an attractive small locomotive.**

**Right: The director's saloon, with balconies almost as long as its covered accommodation, will likely prove a favourite for modellers.**

***Photos: Andrew Charman***

**Below: What's coming next... Two Gwalior Pacifics in service in India – one is being restored for the Vale of Rheidol museum.** ***Photo PeterJordan***



# Donostia goes Underground




***Donald Brooks*** **looks at metre-gauge modernisation in the heart of the Basque Country – including construction of a 4km tunnel.**

A continuous line of metre gauge rails stretches along the north coast of Spain from the French border at Hendaye to the city of Ferrol in the north west. The final section, towards the western end, opened as recently as 1972, almost a century after it had first been authorised.

As well as serving a remote and sparsely-populated area of northwest Spain, the main route and its branches play a key role in the public transport of major cities such as Gijón, Santander and Bilbao, where narrow gauge rail services are at least as important as their broad gauge counterparts. They form one of Europe's most important metre gauge networks, where major developments continue today.

This is particularly the case at the eastern end, in the Basque Country or Euskadi, where the autonomous government has invested heavily in rail. All lines are now electrified and major new construction has integrated the previous piecemeal arrangement of separate routes around Bilbao into a coherent whole, including two separately operated metro lines and a tramway.

Moving east from Bilbao the line as far as Durango was inaugurated in 1882, finally opening as a through route to San Sebastián in 1901. A merger in 1906 with other local narrow gauge routes created the FFCC Vascongados.

San Sebastián was reached by narrow gauge from the opposite direction in 1912, when the FC de San Sebastián a la Frontera Francesa opened its line from the Spanish border station of Irún, extending it across the frontier to Hendaye in 1913. In 1926 it became part of the Sociedad Exploradora de Ferrocarriles y Tranvías (SEFT), but because so much of the route is in tunnel the line has always been known locally as 'El Topo' (The Mole).

**Above: Four-car EMU 901, one of a series of 30 built by CAF in 2011, at the clean and bright Donostia Amara station in September 2012.**

**Below: Donostia centre. The Euskotren metre gauge network, serving Amara is in blue, the new underground route with Easo station replacing Amara in green, and the broad gauge RENFE route from the French frontier in black. *Map Courtesy ETS***

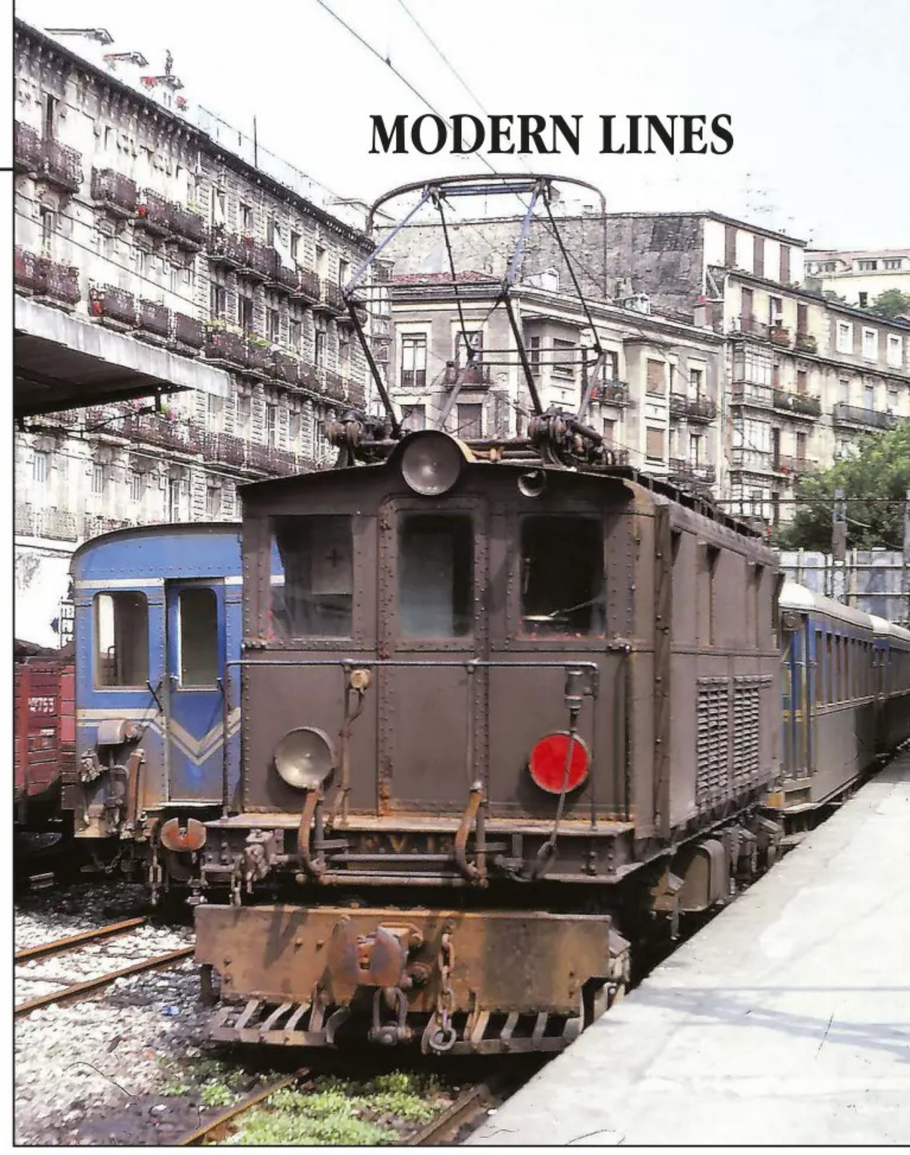



Although the Hendaye line was electrified from the beginning, the Vascongados relied initially on steam, with increasing traffic leading to electrification in 1929. In 1928 ten Bo-Bo electric locos with a typically Swiss 'Crocodile' appearance were supplied by Haine St Pierre/Brown Boveri, while CAF/Asea supplied seven more angular Bo-Bos in the early 1930s and in 1950. A series of electric motorcoaches came from Ganz in Hungary.

With the stagnation of the Franco dictatorship in Spain, very little changed until the 1970s, by which time both the Vascongados and SEFT were loss-making, leading to their takeover by the Spanish national narrow gauge operator FEVE in the early 1970s. Gradually things started to improve, with El Topo closed for a complete rebuilding, and by the end of the decade the lines were under the control of the Basque government, operated by Euskotren from 1982.

San Sebastián, now generally known by its Basque name Donostia, is where Euskal Trenbide Sarea (ETS), the Basque rail infrastructure manager, is currently concentrating on further major improvements to its metre gauge network. The city is served by a terminal station at Amara,



slightly out of the city centre, where the Vascongados and SEFT originally had their own stations alongside each other. SEFT trains ran through the city streets on a loop serving the old town and beaches until the 1950s.

Even though Amara station was completely rebuilt in the 1980s, reopening in 1990 and combining the Vascongados and SEFT stations on a single site, it remains an inconveniently-sited terminus. Operationally it introduces an unwelcome reversal for the frequent suburban services from the east, which run through Donostia to terminate at Lasarte-Oria, not far south west of the city at the end of a short 1998 branch.

## Burrowing Mole

To solve the problem ETS is adopting a solution familiar across Spain and one for which El Topo provides a local precedent – the railway will be put underground. In fact the western exit from Amara is already below the surface, through a tunnel built in 2005 when a station was opened at Lugaritz, the new first stop out of the terminus. The 1.8km long double-track Lugaritz tunnel replaced the original 840m Morlans tunnel on a similar alignment. The latter has now been converted to a bicycle route and despite its recent construction the Lugaritz tunnel will in future be retained purely for goods.

Work is now well underway to construct a tunnel on a completely new alignment that should do much to resolve the operational and access issues at Amara. Approaching the current terminus from the east, trains will go underground and almost immediately reach Easo station, which will replace Amara.

The tunnel then continues on a sinuous route to a new station, Centro-La Concha, serving both the historic centre and the bay, effectively becoming the city's main narrow gauge station.

Continuing round the bay the line then reaches another new station at Bentaberri, not far from the Igeldo Funicular where wooden-bodied metre gauge cars climb to a celebrated viewpoint overlooking the bay. Finally the line rejoins the 'old' tunnel just before Lugaritz station, after which trains will resume their traditional westwards route towards Bilbao.

The new tunnel will be 4.2km long and is currently scheduled to open towards the end of 2025. Some 21,000 square metres of space will be freed up by the closure of Amara station and Donostia City Council is considering how best to use it.

All the new underground stations will be just two platforms metro-style, as will the services with trains operating every 7.5 minutes over the core central section between Lasarte, the branch terminus to the west, and Galtzaraborda, a few stations to the east. Longer-distance trains from Bilbao and Zumaia will also run through the tunnel.

**Above: FV 9 'Andux', one of the earliest series of electric locos built in 1928, stands at Amara in June 1976.**

**Above right: FV 13 'Arno', supplied by CAF/Asea in 1932, waits to leave Amara on a local service. In 1976 Spain was starting to emerge from the Franco years, but the surroundings still looked run-down.**

**Below: Ferrotrade railcar 2145, built in 1961, is a rare diesel visitor to the original Amara station. The wires were down for rebuilding of 'El Topo' in 1976 and it was running a shuttle service to Loiola. *Photos: Donald Brooks***

By 2027 there should be a further subterranean development in Donostia. In 2015 a short one-station branch, completely in tunnel, opened from Herrera, four stations east of Amara, to Altza. This branch will be extended to loop back to the original main line at Galtzaraborda and when it is completed all trains will use the new route.

Although the Euskotren image is resolutely modern, with CAF class-900/950 electric multiple units likely to dominate the motive power roster for the foreseeable future, both Donostia and Bilbao are well worth a visit to see what strong local commitment and investment can achieve on the narrow gauge.

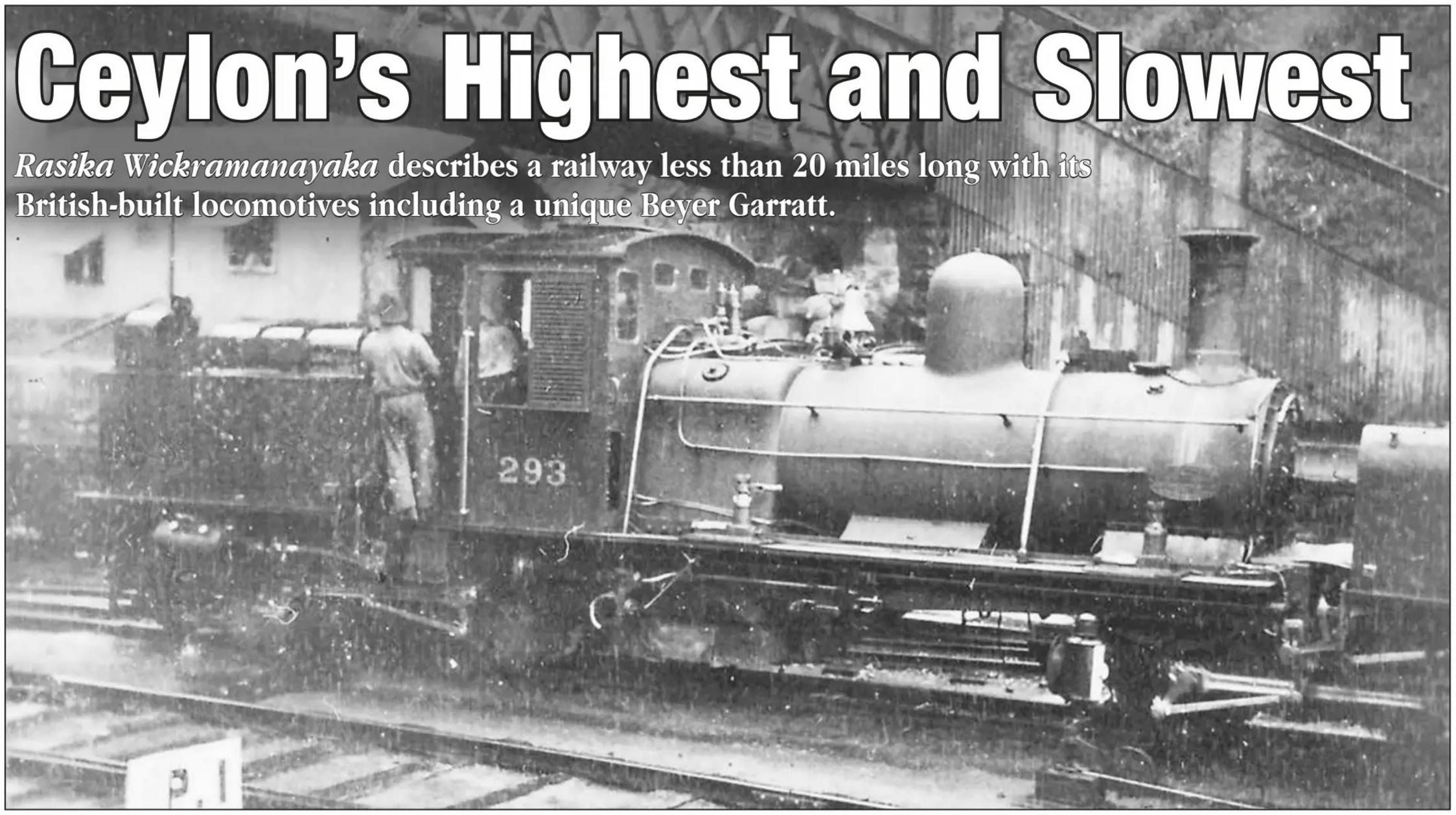
It's good to find somewhere where narrow gauge is the future of public transport and not just the past, though heritage is not forgotten with the Basque Railway Museum at Azpeitia nearby. NGW

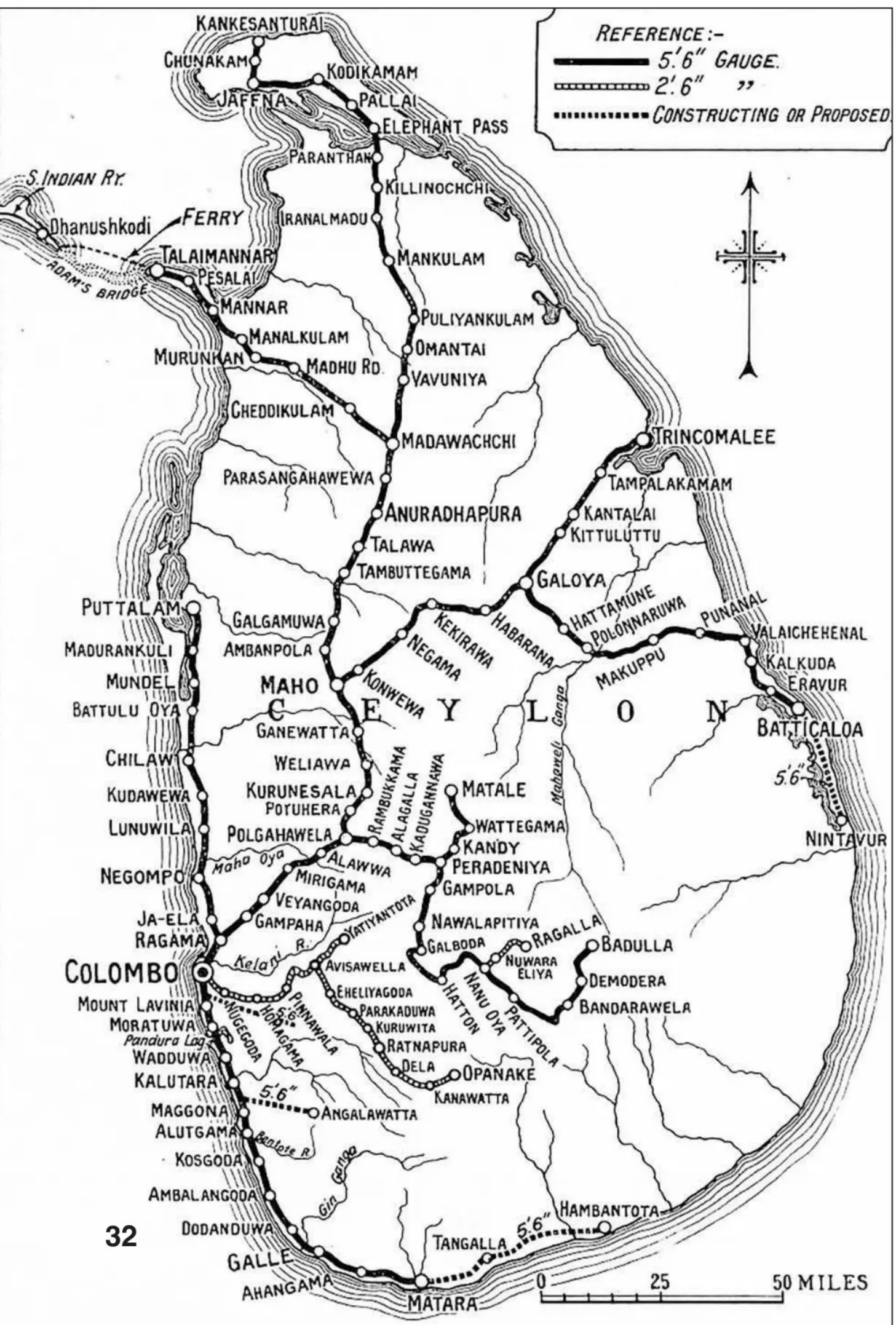
■ Donald wishes to thank the staff of Euskal Trenbide Sarea for their prompt and generous responses to all his requests for information.



# Ceylon's Highest and Slowest

*Rasika Wickramanayaka* describes a railway less than 20 miles long with its British-built locomotives including a unique Beyer Garratt.




**Above: Class H1 no 293, the only Beyer Garrratt in Ceylon, shunts at Nanu Oya on an unknown date.**

**Left: Rail network of Ceylon at its peak in 1929. The 2ft 6in gauge Uda Pussellawa Railway (UPR) to Ragalla diverges from the 5ft 6in gauge Colombo to Badulla line at Nanu Oya. Also shown is the 2ft 6in gauge Kelani Valley Railway from Colombo to Yatiyantota.**

**Facing page, top: Artist's impression of the UPR Garratt by *Dharshana Karunathilake*.**

**Facing page, right: Technical diagrams of a UPR class L1 0-4-2T and Beyer Garratt no 293.**

***Uncredited images from the author's collection. Loco technical diagrams by the author***

Sri Lanka, known as Ceylon until 1972, consists mainly of flat to rolling coastal plains with mountains in the south and centre. Following the British occupation in 1815, Europeans looking for investment opportunities were attracted by the mild climate and mineral-rich soil of up-country Ceylon.

Tea plantations gradually replaced coffee and the planters began to agitate for a railway, to transport their produce from the central highland settlement of Kandy to the capital of Colombo, more than 60 miles away. One outcome was construction of the Uda Pussellawa Railway (UPR), which claimed to be the country's most scenic line.

The first sod of the 5ft 6in gauge Ceylon Government Railway was cut in August 1858. The first train from Colombo to Ambepussa, 33 miles to the east, ran on 27th December 1864. It was then extended in phases, reaching Kandy in 1867, Nanu Oya in 1885 and finally Badulla in 1924.

From Colombo the 2ft 6in gauge Kelani Valley railway was built to serve rubber plantations. The same gauge was adopted for the 19-mile UPR, extending from the Badulla line at Nanu Oya to handle traffic from upland tea plantations. Construction started in November 1900 and passenger services to a terminus at Ragalla began on 25th July 1904.

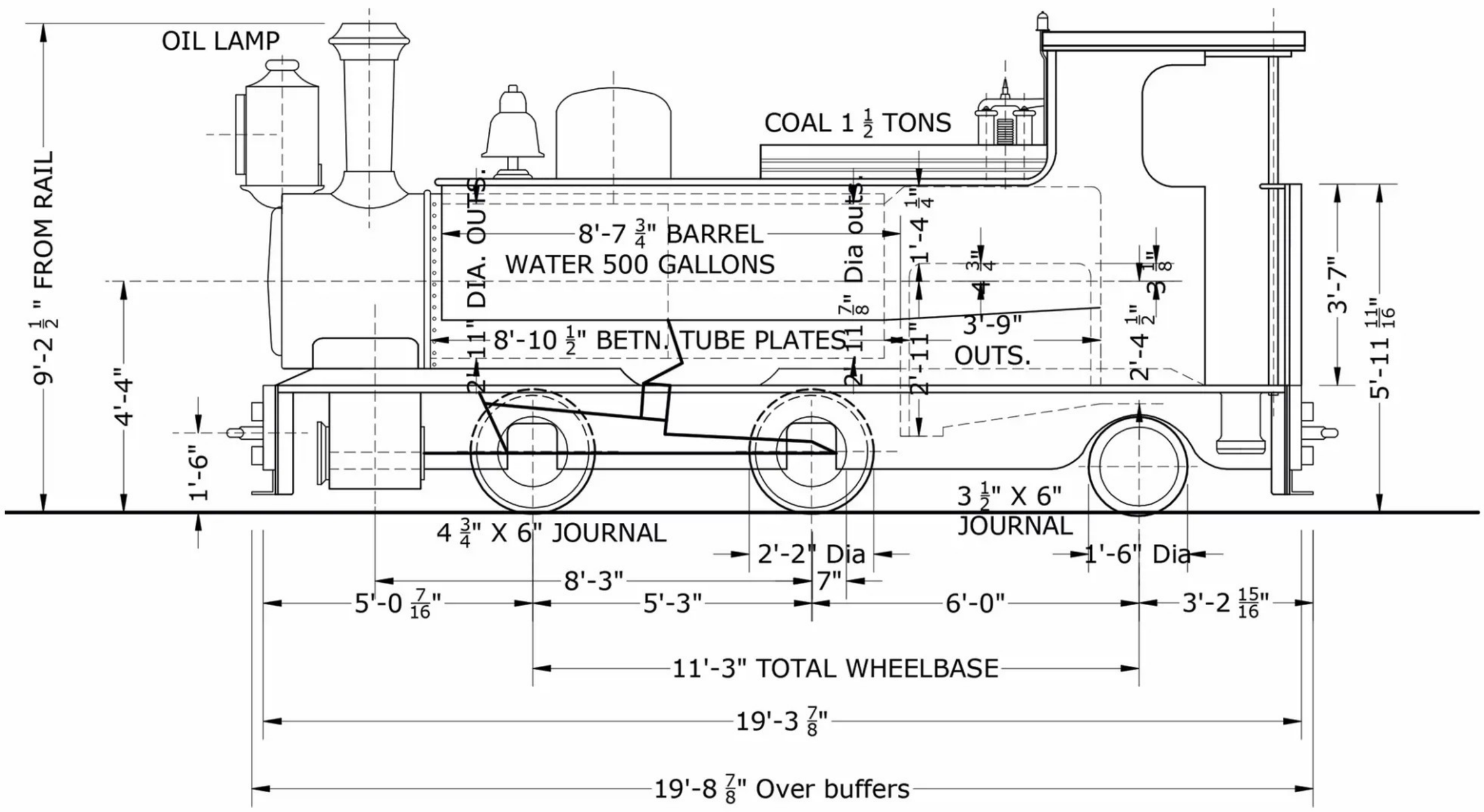
It was both the highest and most steeply graded railway in Ceylon. The ruling grade from Nanu Oya was 1 in 24 to the summit station of Kandapola, 6,316ft above sea level,

and there was then a descent of 1 in 16 to reach Ragalla at a more modest elevation of 4,981ft. There were also intermediate stations at Blackpool, Nuwara Eliya and Brookside.

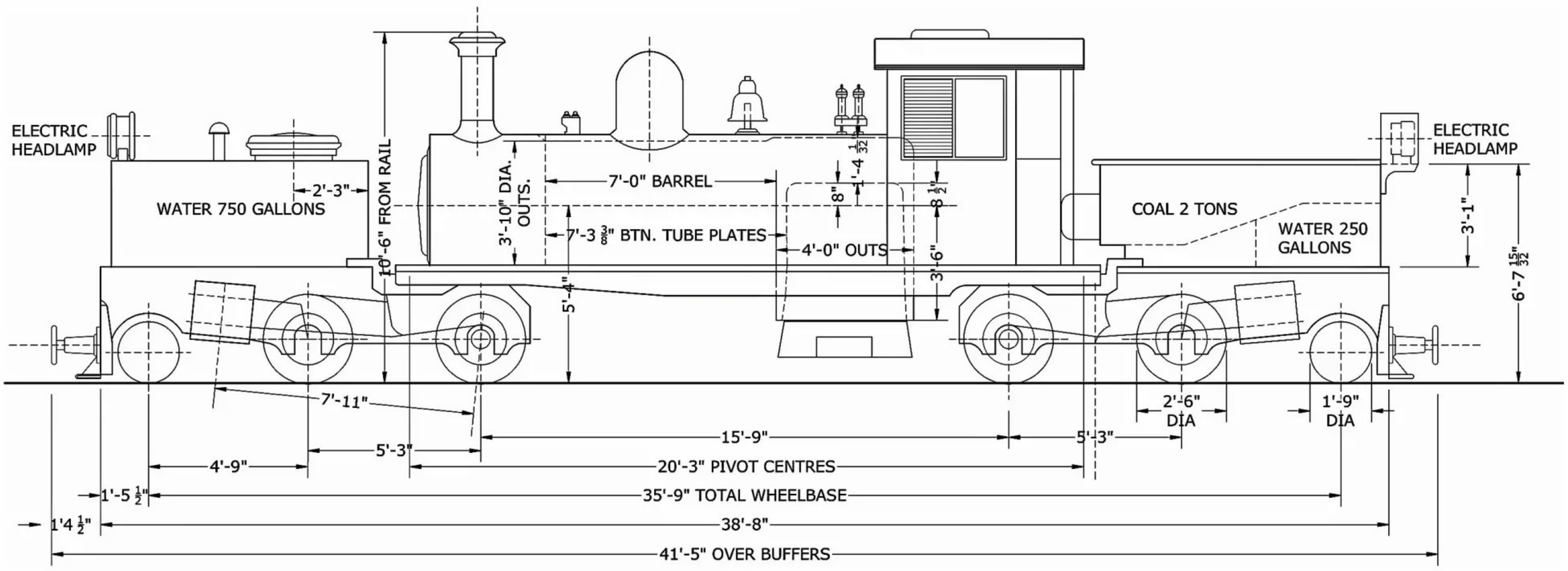
## Locomotives and stock

The first locomotive imported for use on the UPR in 1902 was built in the UK by Sharp, Stewart & Co. It was one of four 0-4-2 tank engines, later classed as L1 and numbered 120 to 123, which had a maximum speed of 12 miles per hour. In 1904 and 1920 the Hunslet Engine Company supplied two similar locomotives, classed L1B and respectively numbered 130 and 203. The six L1s had the ability to haul 30 tons on »




**Sharp, Stewart L1 class – approx scale 7mm/ft**




**Beyer, Garratt H1 class no 293 – approx scale 4mm/ft**




the steepest sections and 40 tons on other parts of the line.

In 1930 Ceylon ordered a specially designed Beyer, Peacock Garratt for service on the UPR. Later classified as H1 no 293, it was a 2-4-0 + 0-4-2 articulated locomotive with a maximum speed of 15 miles per hour. This was a one-of-a-kind machine and was used for both regular and special trains – it was able to pull 60 tons on the steepest sections and 70 tons elsewhere. Badly damaged in a derailment near Nuwara Eliya in November 1941, it was put back into service the following year but suffered lifelong mechanical and steam issues.

Due to the severe gradients, it was a common sight to see L1 locos coupled together to manage loads, and sometimes even the Garratt had to be banked. For passengers the entire journey took two and a half hours as the track and locomotives were not designed for higher speeds. As a result, the UPR was also the slowest railway in Ceylon. Due to the sharp curves, most of the passenger carriages were four-wheel and 11ft in length. Bogie carriages were relatively short with a length of 16ft.

## Rise and decline

During its early days the UPR had a profitable and positive impact on the up-country plantation economy. On opening in 1904, it helped to increase the annual tea harvest by 140 tons. Until the narrow gauge branch was built, planters on the Nuwara Eliya plateau had to transport their produce on a day's journey down the Nanu Oya pass in carts drawn by oxen. Other than tea, the trains carried rice, vegetables, betel, salt, oil cake for cattle, cinchona, timber and kerosene.

At its peak the UPR ran 16 trains a day – five 'goods' and 11 'mixed goods and passenger'. There was also a special train for the Ceylon Governor which was hauled by the Beyer Garratt. In 1932 the line carried 133,000 passengers and 24,000 tons of freight. However, in the space of only two years, the demand dropped to 7,779 passengers.

During the late 1930s the UPR was adversely affected by the increasing popularity of road lorries and buses which were faster, more effective and easier to use. The introduction of an 'omnibus' service from Nanu Oya to Nuwara Eliya and Ragalla by the Upland Bus Company hurt railway passenger transport. The bus service was much faster and provided door-to-door transit.

British colonies were economically hit by the First World War. Matters worsened when the Second World War started in 1939 – there were difficulties in obtaining coal, loco spare parts and also capital. Due to these issues among others, the passenger service was withdrawn on 7th January 1940 and in 1942 the line was completely closed beyond Nuwara Eliya and the remaining section out of Nanu Oya on 25th August 1948. The track was lifted by the end of that year and everything removed except the buildings.

Even though the line was closed, the stations were kept in operation until the late 1970s for goods services using road lorries. However, this was not popular among the railway staff and the public. In the late 1970s this service was handed over to the private sector, putting a final end to the most scenic railway line in Ceylon. There have since been discussions to re-open the UPR for tourist traffic but this has not materialised.

**Above: The wreck in November 1941 near Nuwara Eliya which damaged no 293. *Photo: Victor Melder***

**Below: Kandapola in 1904. At 6,316ft it was the highest station in Ceylon. *Photo: CGR/Akila Ariyapperuma***

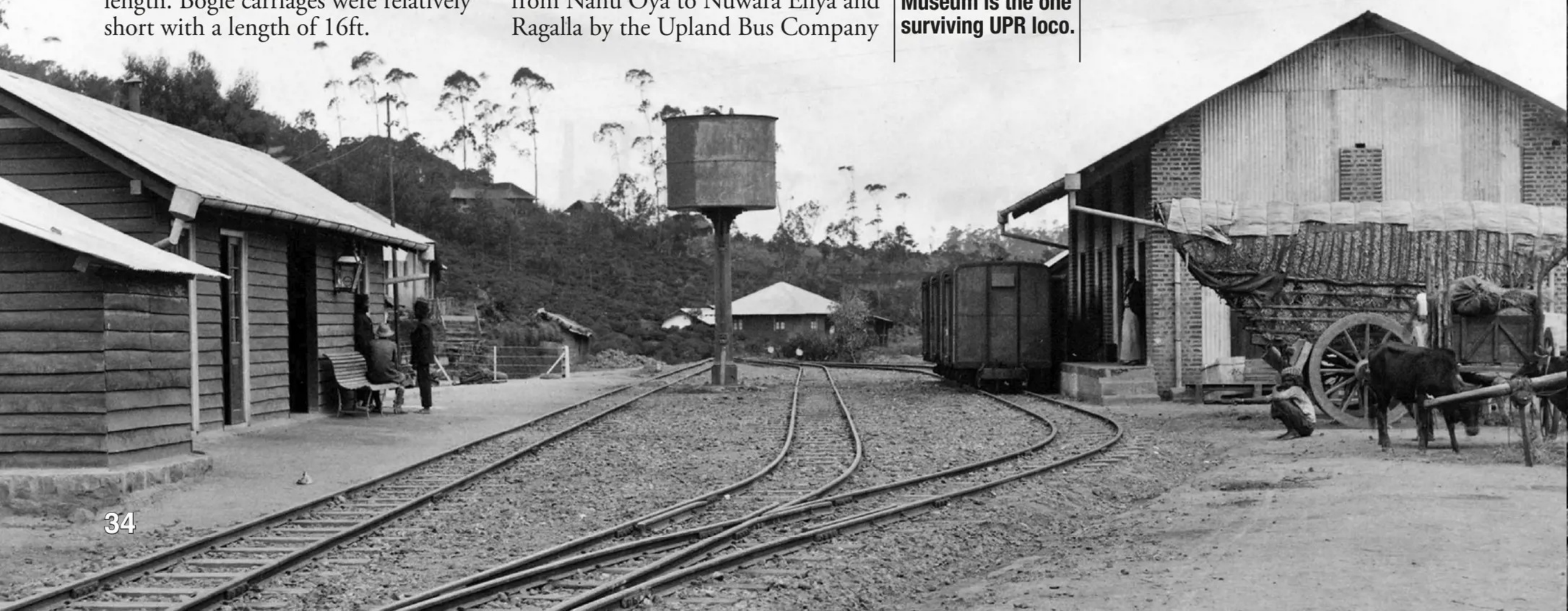
**Facing page, top right: Mixed train at Nuwara Eliya in the late 1930s behind a class L1. From left to right are three covered goods wagons, a 1st and 2nd class composite, a rare bogie 1st, a 2nd and 3rd composite and a brake van.**

**Facing page centre: Class L1B 0-4-2T no 203, built by Hunslet in 1920 and preserved at the National Railway Museum is the one surviving UPR loco.**

## After closure

The UPR locomotives and rolling stock were assigned to the Kelani Valley line. Except for no 203, all other class L1 locomotives were scrapped in around the 1970s. No 203 was used for light shunting at Dematagoda until withdrawn in 1974. Cosmetically restored in 1979, it was moved to a children's park in Nugegoda where it was vandalised largely due to lack of attention. In late 2019 no 203 was moved to the new National Railway Museum at Olcott Mawatha, Colombo, for restoration and display – it is now the sole surviving UPR locomotive. The Garratt also went to the Kelani Valley line and was occasionally used until withdrawn in 1972. It was unfortunately scrapped in 1981.

Only two UPR wagons survive. One is half a body of a bogie covered



goods steel wagon at the Dematagoda facility, which has been used as a storage unit. The other is a bogie liquid fuel tank wagon, which was converted to run on the Kelani Valley line as a water tank wagon and is preserved at the new National Railway Museum at Colombo. None of the UPR passenger carriages escaped scrapping – a first-class saloon and a bogie goods brake van were recently fabricated from scratch for the new museum (see ***NGW***178).

The existence of a lorry-based transport service for goods until the late 1970s led to the survival of most of the railway buildings. However, they were mainly built of timber and metal sheets and none was formally handed over to any party. Due to lack of maintenance and the quality and nature of the materials, most have now either been destroyed or are in poor condition. An exception is Nuwara Eliya station in Tudor-style architecture. Along with the goods shed, it remains almost intact and is being used as a bus depot for the Sri Lanka Transport Board. **NGW**

## More Information

*Railways of Sri Lanka* by D Hyatt, ISBN 0-9537304-0-9, Colombo and London, published 2000.
*Narrow Gauge Railways of Ceylon* by R S Wickramanayaka, ISBN 978-624-97577-1-4, Colombo, published 2021.
Rasika would like to thank Dr David Hyatt and Akila Ariyapperuma for their assistance with this feature.



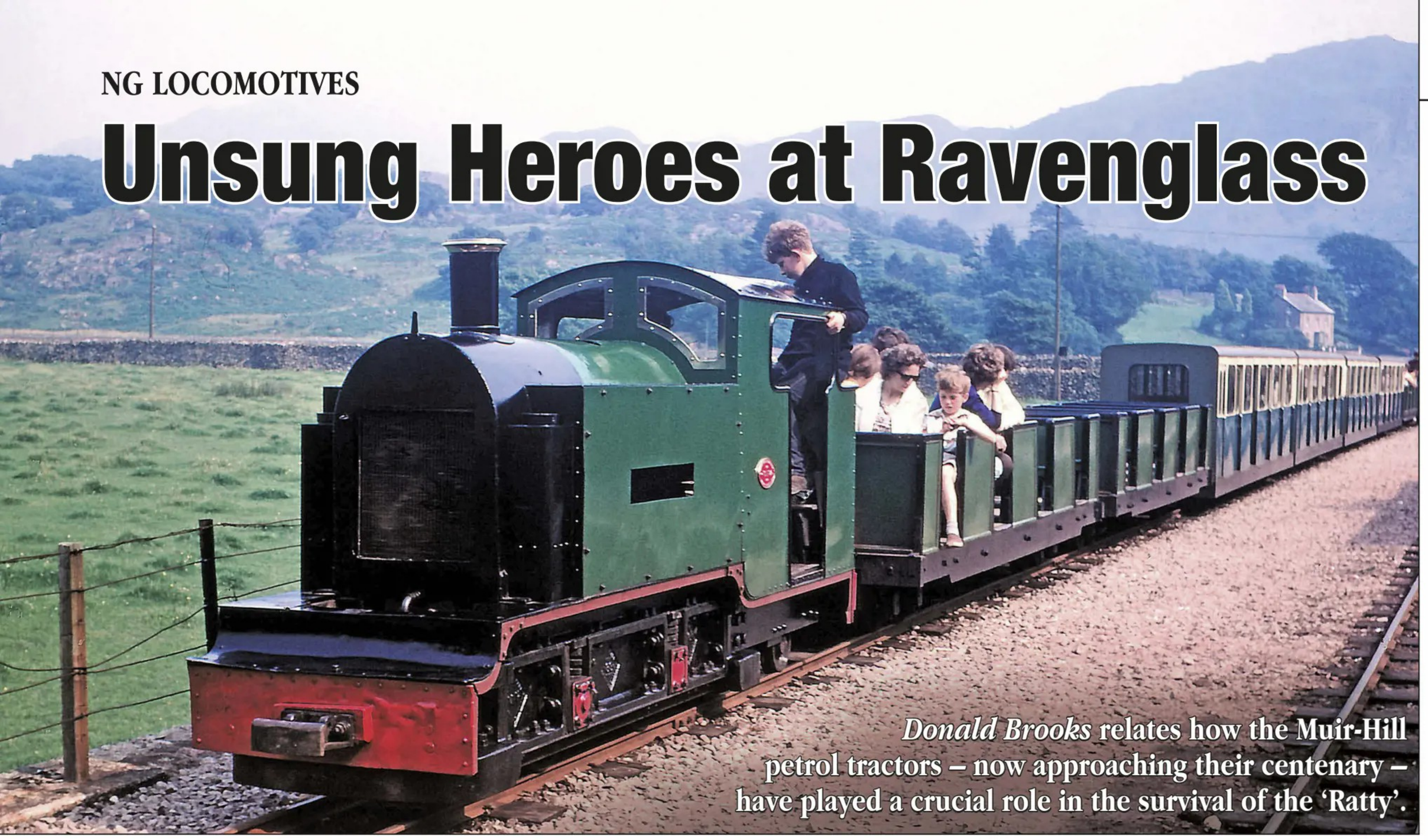



**Below: Nany Oya station on the 5ft 6in gauge Colombo to Badulla line in 1904, a year after it had been expanded to provide for the new UPR. The narrow gauge goods shed is at bottom right and clearly visible is the mixed gauge turntable.**
***Photo: CGR/Akila Ariyapperuma***



NG LOCOMOTIVES

# Unsung Heroes at Ravenglass



*Donald Brooks* relates how the Muir-Hill petrol tractors – now approaching their centenary – have played a crucial role in the survival of the 'Ratty'.

I still remember the first time I saw one of the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway's Muir-Hill tractors. As a young narrow gauge enthusiast in the early 1960s I was waiting by the lineside near Irton Road to watch a train pass by. Knowing only of 'River Irt' and 'River Esk' I was surprised to see neither but instead a locomotive which was clearly not even a steam engine, even if it looked vaguely like one. It was of course the line's Passenger Tractor, a locomotive that had already undergone the first transformation of its long career.

When the original 3ft gauge railway opened in 1875 it was a mineral line, transporting Eskdale's iron ore down to the Furness Railway. Passengers, carried from 1876, were few so when the mines proved unproductive the line was living on borrowed time, closing in 1913.

Its resurrection as a 15in gauge tourist route took place between 1915 and 1917, with the track gradually regauged from the Ravenglass end. Motive power initially consisted of quarter-scale locos, quickly supplemented by three secondhand Heywood 'minimum gauge' machines. The miniature locos struggled with the Eskdale gradients while the Heywoods were already well worn after decades of use.

Before long the RER saw mineral traffic again. An abandoned granite quarry at Beckfoot, about six miles from Ravenglass, reopened in 1922, with the Heywood locos handling most stone trains. In 1923 Davey Paxman delivered the Greenly-designed 'River Esk' specifically for this traffic, but early problems meant that another method of hauling the heavy granite trains to the crushing plant at Murthwaite and taking the processed stone on to Ravenglass had to be found.




**Above: With Harter Fell hazily visible in the background, the Passenger Tractor waits to head back to Ravenglass from Dalegarth. It looks immaculate with brasswork highly polished, though on this occasion its green livery is not lined out.**

**Right: For several years 'Quarryman' was often stabled at Dalegarth, where it could be used to help out if an emergency occurred at the top end of the line. Its more regular duties were on permanent way trains – a short rake of four-wheel stock is coupled behind it.**

***Photos: Graham Whitehead, 2nd August 1970. Uncredited photos in this feature by by Donald Brooks***

## Petrol to the rescue

The answer was provided by Muir-Hill internal combustion locomotives, with the first built in 1926. Muir-Hill, a relatively new engineering company, was based in Trafford Park, Manchester and one of its specialisms was converting Fordson agricultural tractors into railway locomotives, constructed on various gauges up to standard.

The Ravenglass line's new petrol/TVO tractor was a robust four-wheeled machine, designed for heavy haulage, unlike the line's earlier and lighter internal combustion locomotives. It was four-wheeled with its 20hp Fordson engine offering two speeds in each direction via a Muir-Hill gearbox, with chain drive to a single axle and a chain connection between the axles. Unfortunately for the crews, Heywood's 'stout mackintosh' principle was perpetuated and the tractor was cabless.

Once the design had proved successful, two further Fordson tractors were delivered by Muir-Hill in 1929. The class proved highly effective and despite being only 15in gauge the locomotives looked exactly like what they were – real narrow gauge industrial workhorses. They could easily have been taken for 2ft gauge machines and fully supported





Heywood's claims for 15 inches as the minimum gauge for practical use.

By the early to mid-1930s motive power requirements were changing. In 1929 standard gauge tracks had been laid between Ravenglass and Murthwaite, dramatically reducing the need for the Fordsons to reach the coast. At the same time increasing passenger numbers were placing major strain on the steam locos.

Consequently the earlier of the 1929 Fordsons, known as ICL4 or NG39, was rebuilt for passenger traffic in the early 1930s, its frames lengthened at the rear to accommodate the front bogie from Bassett-Lowke 4-4-2 'Sans Pareil'. The resulting 0-4-4 was given its unconvincing steam-outline bodywork to emphasise its new role.

Throughout the 1930s and into the Second World War the tractors shunted Beckfoot and Murthwaite and shuttled between the two while passenger trains, latterly summer only and suspended completely after the start of the war, were worked by steam and the Passenger Tractor. After the war the Fordsons were reported as still working well, though spares were becoming difficult to obtain. Thoughts turned towards creating one good unit out of the two in original condition, an idea that was carried out in 1953 when Beckfoot quarry closed.

In 1949 the Keswick Granite Company had bought both railway and quarry, effectively reversing previous priorities and making the railway's interests subsidiary to the granite business. With the quarry closed it was only a matter of time before the company decided to dispose of the railway, advertising it for sale in 1958 and 1959 and putting it up for auction in 1960 when no purchaser had been found.

## New owners

The line reopened for the 1961 season under new ownership, supported by the Preservation Society (RERPS), with the two surviving Fordsons still key members of the locomotive fleet, though their role was slightly eroded by the arrival of secondhand diesel 'Royal Anchor'.

By this time the original 1926 Fordson had been named 'Quarryman' and had acquired a permanent cab. For obvious reasons the Passenger Tractor became unofficially known as 'Pretender' though it never carried the name. The remains of the third Fordson, dumped at Murthwaite, were finally scrapped in the early 1970s.

As passenger traffic increased in the early years of the new regime motive power resources were stretched. In the 1960s the tractors ran considerable mileages on both passenger and works services, with Quarryman recording a maximum of 1,512 miles in 1965 and Pretender managing 4,627 in 1968 on a line barely seven miles long. In 1970 one of the most spectacular incidents involving a Muir-Hill loco occurred when spilt fuel in the shed ignited, causing Pretender briefly to catch fire.

**Above: Muir-Hill's tractors were very basic locos indeed. The rudimentary homemade cab that was fitted to Quarryman did at least provide some basic protection in the loco's later days, though not much when running cab first. (July 1971)**

**Above right: Quarryman in its original cabless form displayed in the museum at Ravenglass. The loco should be back in operational mode for its 2026 centenary. (22nd October 2017)**

By the 1970s both tractors were feeling their age and with the arrival of the diesel 'Shelagh of Eskdale' in 1969 they became less necessary for front-line service. In 1975 the recently reconditioned Fordson engine in Pretender failed and as a matter of urgency the RER engineers fitted it with a refurbished Perkins P6 diesel engine, leading to a bodywork redesign around the larger engine and radiator. The chimney was replaced by an offset exhaust pipe, so Pretender was no longer pretending and was subsequently nicknamed 'Perkins'. The rejuvenated loco proved busier than ever and in 1979 it ran 5,359 miles, probably the only occasion it achieved the highest annual mileage of any loco on the line.

With more diesel motive power joining the fleet Quarryman was effectively redundant and after 1980 it was only used very occasionally, gradually becoming a museum piece. »



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Perkins also had less work and for most of the next three decades its duties were largely restricted to works trains and emergency or relief passenger services. It became something of a pretender again in 1980 when its exhaust pipe was removed and a chimney refitted.

This proved to be a minor change compared to the complete transformation that took place in 1984/5 following a serious mechanical failure. The locomotive was totally rebuilt as a modern single-ended diesel with fully-enclosed cab and, resplendent in yellow livery, was formally named Perkins. The livery was later offset by a black band along the top of the bonnet and around the cab while a further replacement Perkins engine, this time an 80hp 4/326, was fitted in late 1988. Major work to the transmission system in the winter of 1989/90 included the loss of the original Muir-Hill gearbox.

## Saving the day

With Quarryman a museum-piece in original cabless form, Perkins continued to fly the Muir-Hill flag on its usual works and relief duties. Its finest hour came in 2013 when, following the Ravenglass workshop fire in March which left most of the line's steam fleet unavailable, the 84-year-old loco managed a total of 5,878 miles, including 70 miles in a single day. Writing in the RERPS Magazine, General Manager Trevor Stockton described it as "the season that Perkins saved the day".

Perhaps unsurprisingly Perkins suffered another major failure towards the end of 2013. Although a further complete rebuild was agreed, it remained out of service for the next five seasons while the workshops prioritised the restoration of the steam locomotives. With some work contracted out to John Fowler, a Perkins 1004D 4-cylinder diesel engine was fitted, along with new wheels and bodywork, larger than before though similar in style. Livery was plain yellow, with wasp stripes on the cab end. Perkins was back in service in October 2019 – just in time for Covid.

Following the pandemic the line has operated fewer trains and with five steam locomotives in the fleet there has been less work for diesels. Perkins is rarely rostered for passenger services, though remains ever ready to come to the rescue – as I found in summer 2023. I had been expecting River Irt at Dalegarth on a late afternoon working but instead Perkins appeared on the Whillan Beck bridge. River Irt had been taken out of service with a recurrent tender compressor problem and yet again Perkins had saved the day. In the winter of 2023/24 a plaque was fixed to its cab in memory of the loco's regular driver Martin Willey, who died suddenly in 2014.

Over the years attitudes to the Muir-Hills changed in appreciation of what they had done to ensure the railway's survival. In an early RERPS Newsletter the Passenger Tractor is described as a "much unloved engine". Recent comment has been much more favourable, with Perkins a "hero" and a "real stalwart". It has even become a celebrity, appearing as 'Frank' in Christopher Awdry's book *Jock the New Engine*, with wooden and die-cast toys subsequently going on sale as a result.

Back in 1977 Muir-Hill rang Ravenglass to see if anything remained of the company's tractors and was astonished to find two still in service after roughly half a century. After another 50 years the tractors may still lack the glamour of steam, but whatever is planned to celebrate Quarryman's fast-approaching centenary, the Muir-Hills will certainly have deserved it. NGW

**Below left: On 4th September 1960 the RCTS ran what could have been a farewell tour of the Ravenglass and Eskdale line had things gone differently at the auction three days later. The Passenger Tractor hauled one portion of the special and is here preparing the stock at Ravenglass. *Photo: Gavin Morrison***

**Right: Looking smart if a trifle ungainly after its 1975 rebuild, the Passenger Tractor heads a train for Dalegarth under the side of Muncaster Fell. Its chimney was restored the following year. (26th May 1979)**

**Below: In its latest though maybe not last guise 'Perkins' arrives at Dalegarth with the 15.10 from Ravenglass, running late because of the failure of 'River Irt'. Behind the locomotive is the observation saloon 'Joan'. (22nd July 2023)**

# Not so small objects...

**Bachmann has gone 7mm – the biggest news in the scale for years?**




What was expected to be just another model railway show at the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust on 13th April turned into a special occasion, when Bachmann Europe used the event to announce its entry into the British 7mm Narrow Gauge market. The maker unveiled enough ready-to-run locos, wagon stock and even buildings to construct a small layout.

*NGW* first heard rumours in early 2023 that Bachmann was planning to expand from its now extensive range of 009 4mm scale items into the larger scale. But the whispers subsided almost as soon as they started so everyone, including ourselves were taken by surprise by the revealing of the range, which Bachmann has decided to dub NG7 Scale.

Now this new moniker might pique some of the goodly number of modellers who already work in the scale, which we in the UK know well as 7mm narrow gauge or in its most popular form 0-16.5. The latter came about because early proponents of the scale followed the same path as did the pioneers of 009 – using standard gauge track from the next scale down, in this case the hugely popular 00, to form the starting point for their narrow gauge models.

## What's in a name

The Bachmann NG7 range is made to 1:43.5 scale just like established 7mm narrow (and indeed standard) gauge models and fully compatible with everything that's already out there, including of course the full range of track made by Peco.

Whether we need another new way of describing the scale is open to debate – we can't imagine the long-established 7mm Narrow Gauge Association (which any modeller in this scale would do well to join by the way) changing its name any time soon – but you must admit NG7 does rather easily roll off one's tongue...

It's a minor point – the importance of Bachmann's arrival in the scale cannot be under-emphasised, especially when one takes a look in detail at the initial offerings.

First we have four different versions of the ubiquitous Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST, a prototype Bachmann is familiar with, its 009 version launched just over a year ago having proven a big hit to the point where they can be hard to find.

On offer are the open-cabbed Alice-class 'Alice' from Dinorwic Quarry and small quarry-class 'Margaret' from Penrhyn, plus the closed cab locos 'Britomart' and 'Una' – both worked at Pen-yr-Orsedd Quarry and today Britomart lives on the Ffestiniog Railway, while Una is resident at the National Salte Museum in Llanberis.

## Individually accurate

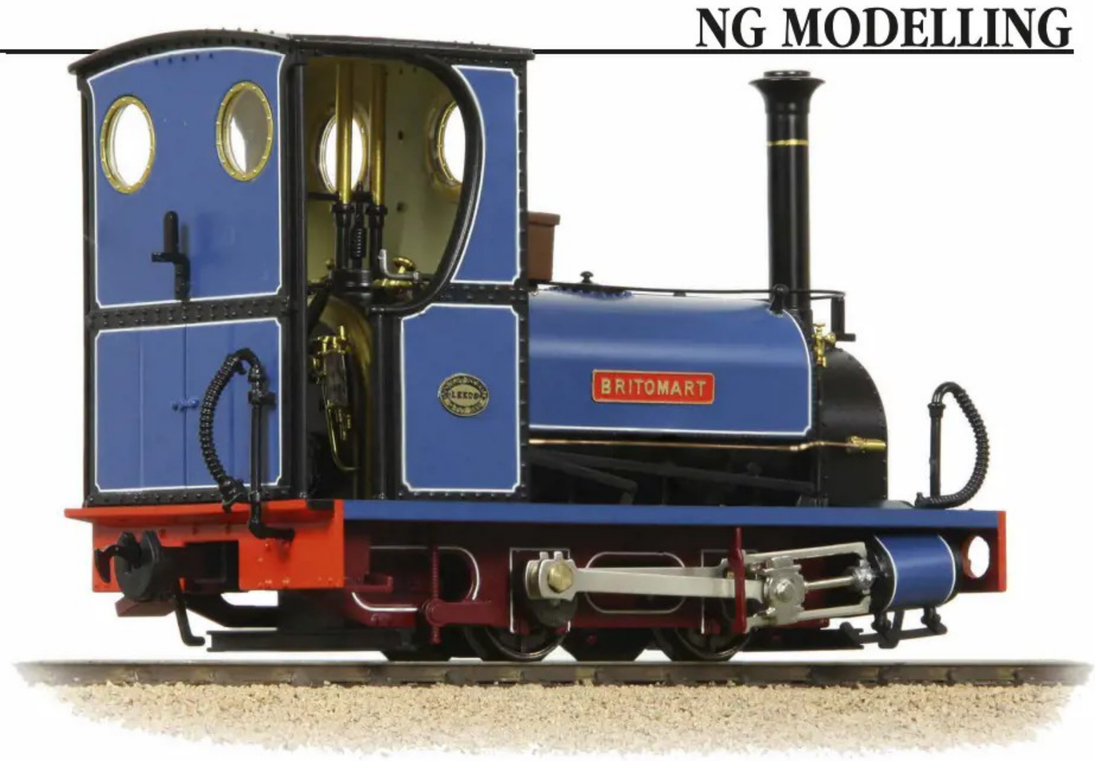
These are not simply one model in four different liveries but accurate replicas of the real thing – the frame profiles differ dependent on the loco being modelled, as does the length of the chimney and the safety valve covers. Details such as lamp irons are only fitted to locos that had them – only Britomart for example carries its signature toolbox ahead of the cab.

Mechanically these locos follow Bachmann's proven format. They have a diecast metal chassis block, gearbox (with




**Cabless Hunslet options currently comprise Dinorwic's 'Alice' (above) and 'Margaret' from Penrhyn (left). Note the levels of detail, from individual rivets to the discernible markings on the pressure and water gauges.**




gearing for prototypical speed) and motor cradle giving a nice mass for haulage capability, a coreless motor and bearings on each axle.

A Next18 DCC decoder socket is fitted and a speaker to allow conversion to DCC, but sound-fitted versions will also be available offering sounds on both DCC and analogue control.

The chassis is fitted with standard NEM coupling pockets, but Bachmann has also come up with its own alternative coupling. Again you might ask why bother? But the move is aimed at increasing realism, as the alternative is a chopper-style coupling, a miniaturised version of the type used on many of the heritage narrow gauge railways in the UK today, while a further option on offer is a hook and loop coupling as employed on many quarry lines.

When Bachmann launched its 009 quarry Hunslets everyone was wowed by the level of detail down to works plates one could only read with a magnifying glass, so with a much larger scale to work with it won't surprise readers to learn that the detail standards are little short of remarkable. The moulded body is made with separate cab, water tank and smokebox, and all drip with detail, as our pictures show down to individual riveting.

The cab interior is a work of art and perhaps the stand-out feature the hinged, posable firebox door, with lighting in the firebox beyond – admittedly something that debuted on the half-sized 4mm versions!

Other highlights include increments on the pressure gauge dial, the signature black and white stripes on the back of the water gauge enabling your 7mm scale crew to see the level in the boiler (and yes, Bachmann has produced a suitable crew), and of course the accurately etched name and worksplates.

## Wagons on the slate

To accompany the locos the first examples of rolling stock are all four-wheeled quarry prototypes from Dinorwic – all are made with a diecast metal chassis, metal wheelsets with proper curly spokes and NEM coupling pockets.

The options are a flat bed slate wagon of the type used to carry lumps of slab, a traditional slate wagon and a coal wagon – basically this was a slate wagon with its sides enclosed and was used to transport coal from the docks to the quarry for powering machinery. This is supplied with a load of coal from Bachmann's Scenecraft range and packs of four loads of dressed slates are also available for the wagons.

The wagons come in plain grey or the brick red used at Dinorwic, with the stencilling signifying which level they were assigned to.

Wagons are supplied with a discreet pin and eye coupling which attaches to the model using a NEM coupling pocket, enabling the assembly of a rake with prototypical spacing between vehicles. To couple to locomotives, a pair of chopper-style couplings is supplied with each wagon, and these can be fitted to suit individual operational requirements. Obviously standard 7mm scale couplings can also be used in the NEM socket.

Finally a trio of buildings have been released to go with the stock in Bachmann's Scenecraft range. Again inspired by Dinorwic Quarry structures, they comprise a slate-built engine shed, coal store and water tower with the distinctive steps, and they work equally well placed singly or together as in our picture.

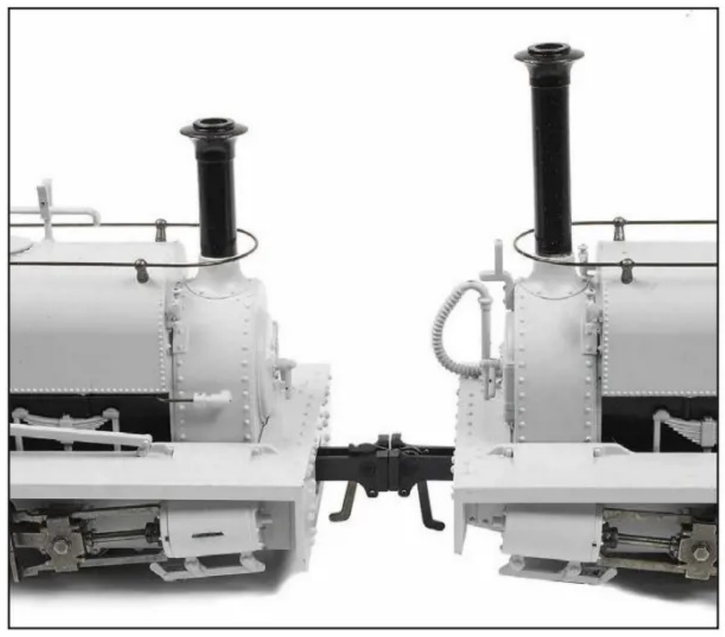
We've commented on Scenecraft before – while by no means the cheapest buildings on the market, these ready-made resin offerings are exquisite, especially their paint jobs, which are carried out by hand and really bring out the individual colourings of slate-built structures, right down to the staining at their bases caused by greenery growing up around them.

## Coming soon

The good thing is that you won't be waiting long to get your hands on the Bachmann NG7 range – all the production process is done and we are told they will be in the shops this summer. Before then we hope to review one of the locos.

To prices – the locomotives have a recommended price ranging from £199.95 to £214.95. Sound-fitted they jump quite substantially to between £310 and £325. The wagons range from £21.95 to £24.95. RRP for the buildings are £99.95 for the shed, and £39.95 each for the water tower and coal store.

No doubt these models are investments – the prices are what one expects to pay for finely detailed models in today's market but »



**Top: Pen-yr-Orsedd sisters 'Una' and 'Britomart' comprise the cabbed versions.**

**Above: A new prototypical chopper coupling is available for the NG7 range.**

**Below: Three versions of the quarry wagon, here in Dinorwic format with brick red paintwork and signwriting indicating which part of the quarry they were assigned to – Abyssinia was a level midway up the mountain.**





**Left: The three resin buildings are here placed together – the hand painting of the stonework really adds to the impression of a Welsh scene.**

**Below left: Even without their final livery the three wagons certainly look the part.**



it should be added that shopping around should produce savings – we've already seen several retailers offering the locos at cheaper prices and we noted for example that Rails of Sheffield is advertising a starter pack comprising Una, four wagons and all the buildings for just under £400, a significant saving on buying the items individually.

There is no doubting that Bachmann's entry into the 7mm narrow gauge scene is very big news for the scale. When one looks how this manufacturer more than any other has transformed the ready-to-run 009 scene over the past few years, with a range of superb models that has rapidly expanded and is still expanding, the thought of what might follow these initial 7mm offerings represents a very exciting prospect.

**Produced by Bachmann Europe**
**Web: www.roundhouse-eng.com**
**Prices: see text**









# Meanwhile, in 009 scale...

Bachmann's new venture into 7mm scale narrow gauge should not be taken as an indication that they've reached the limit of their 4mm scale 009 ambitions, even with the extensive range now on offer to modellers in what remains the most popular narrow gauge scale.

We know of course that more 009 models are on the way, the Drewry diesel for example just hitting shops with various new rolling stock liveries following – including on the four-wheeled Admiralty vehicles that offer so many possibilities, the full-size versions having found new uses on a whole host of heritage lines.

Overshadowed in the announcement of the NG7 range were some interesting additions to Bachmann's Scenecraft range of ready-made resin buildings modelled on those found on the Ffestiniog Railway, to go alongside Porthmadog Harbour station's booking hall, main hall and toilet block that were released last year.

The new offerings include another Harbour Station structure, the large goods shed that in the early days of preservation housed a museum and today houses the railway-themed pub Spooners.

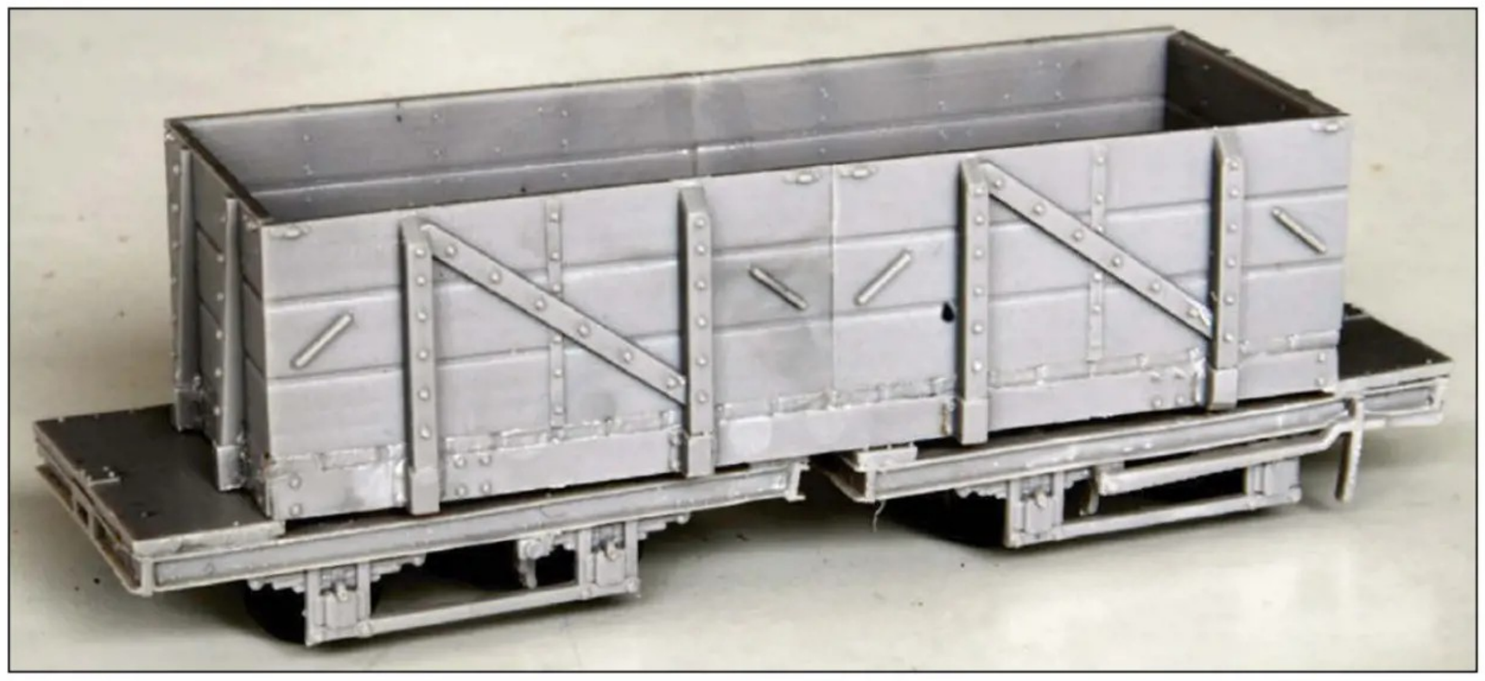
Perhaps of more interest, however, is another structure from Boston Lodge, the FR's engineering headquarters, to go with the very atmospheric-looking blacksmith's shop that we pictured in ***NGW***182. The two-road locomotive shed is an iconic structure on the FR, the backdrop to many a photo of England 0-4-0s and double Fairlies over the years. As with the goods shed the model is available with either green or red-finished timberwork.

Also now in shops is a neat little workers cottage – like the FR models being of very traditional slate construction it should be suitable for use on many fictional layouts with a Welsh theme – and the neat little wooden waiting room that can be found at the FR's Tan-y-Bwlch station.

As mentioned in the NG7 piece above you pay for quality with Scenecraft – the recommended prices are £74.95 for the goods shed, £99.95 for the loco shed, the cottage at £31.95 and waiting room at £34.95. Shop around and you will see cheaper prices, and you will be buying superb models – the hand-painted finishes are excellent, with as mentioned such details as the discolouration as building meets ground, – the waiting room model even includes a poster advertising the Welsh Highland Railway.

**Produced by Bachmann Europe**
**Web: www.roundhouse-eng.com**

# Dundas adds 009 WD wagons lost to history books



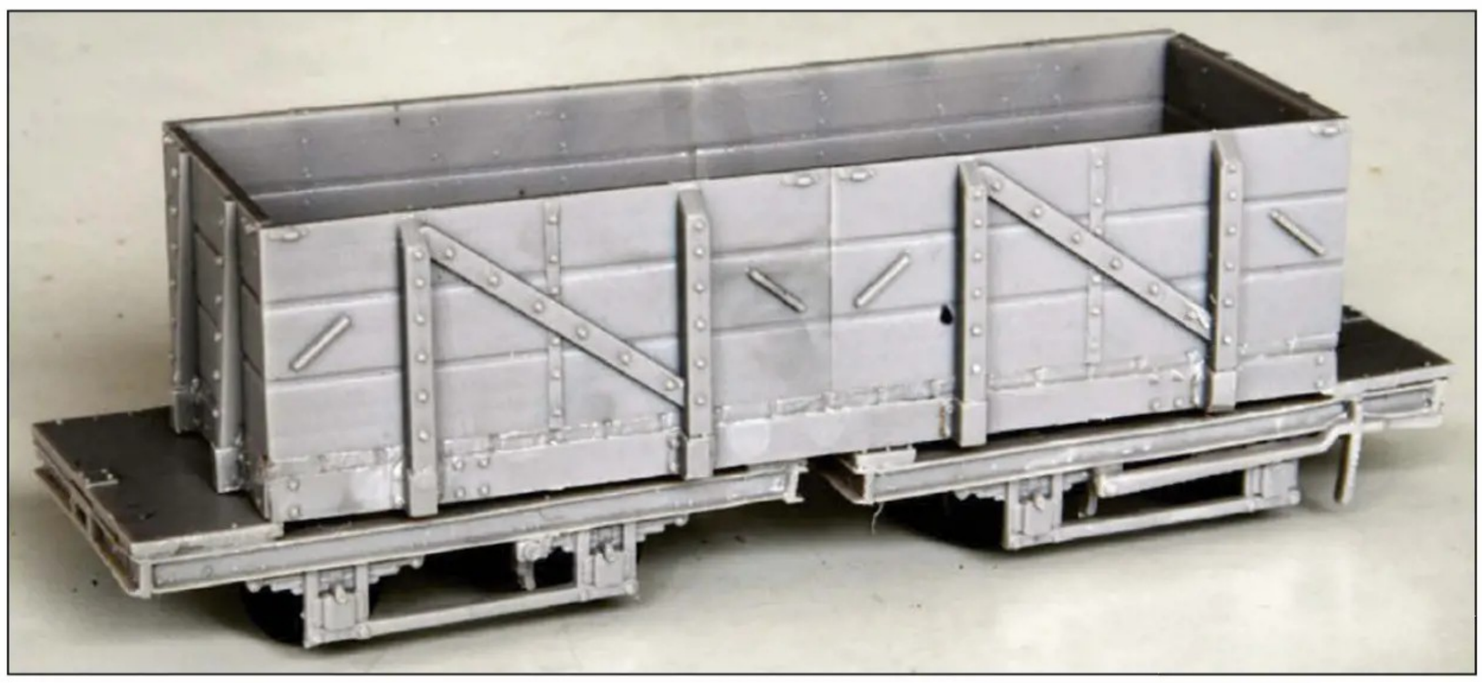
New products from Dundas Models are not something that happens that often and we always take notice, because this is one of the most renowned suppliers to the 009 scale market, having been offering a vast range it seems almost since the scale came into being.

The new releases are plastic kits for War Department wagons, and modellers will be pleased to hear they are of types of wagon that have been lost to history – no examples of the four-wheeled A-class and bogie C-class wagons are believed to have survived into preservation.

The A-class wagons are supplied in their removable sides form and can be purchased singly or in packs of three.

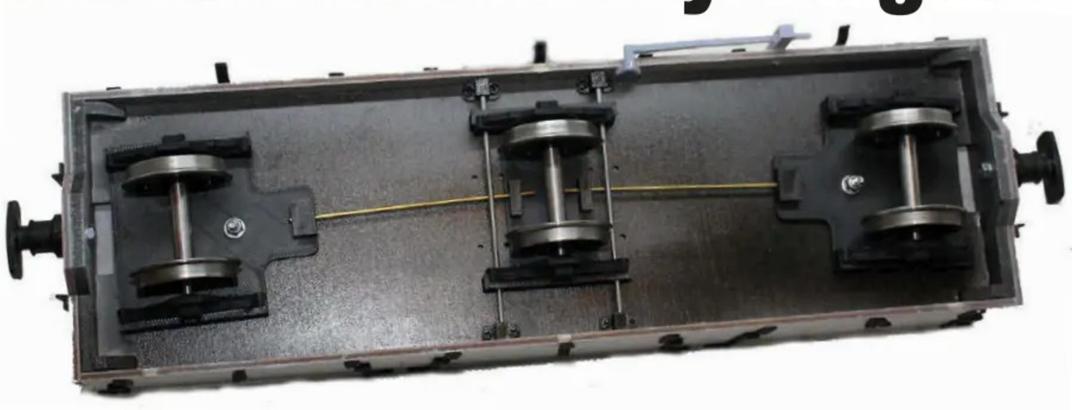
The bogie C-class wagon is offered in two varieties – the earlier version which had removable sides and a later model in which the sides were fixed and a door added. This was apparently done because in the chaos of the front line the removable components often got mislaid or damaged in use.

**Produced by Dundas Models**
**Tel: 01592 640896**
**Email: sales@dundasmodels.co.uk**
**Web: www.dundasmodels.co.uk**
**Prices: Class A wagon £8.95 or £23.60 for three. Class C with removable sides £20.15, with fixed sides £18.85**





# Six wheels on my wagon



New for 16mm scale modellers from Bole Laser Craft are these Southwold Railway six-wheeled coal wagons – the originals were built for the Suffolk line in 1896 using the Cleminson principle of articulation and proved so successful that more were ordered, the 3ft gauge line eventually having 16.

The model uses 3D printed components and steel slide rods to produce smooth and reliable cornering – the 32mm gauge version will successfully negotiate a Peco small radius turnout and the 45mm version a 'Radius 3' curve. The centre axle is also free to float vertically by 4mm which allows the wagon to negotiate 'bumps and dips' in the track. Tenmille 32mm diameter split-spoke wheels are included in the kit.

The wagon body is cut from 3 mm thick poplar plywood with tabs and sockets to allow easy construction.
Cost is £138 – for more details go to https://bolelasercraft.com






■ **Yet more good news for those modelling the Ffestiniog Railway in 009 scale – Peco has shown liveried samples of the 'Large England' 0-4-0STs it is producing in partnership with Japanese manufacturer Kato. The locos will be available in red, brown and green FR livery, plus a fictitious Southern Railway livery on 'Exmoor Pony' – surely not an encouragement to buy an England loco to go with your Peco Lynton & Barnstaple carriages? More details are at www.peco-uk.com**



# NEWS GALLERY EXTRA

**We got so many excellent photos sent in this month we thought we would share a couple more...**




**Above: A study in concentration... These three drivers were focused on their roles when the Apedale Valley Railway staged a 'Lister Fest' on 18th May, celebrating the iconic small internal-combustion locomotives that found use on so maon lines.**

**Below: "Hello, you're new..." Penrhyn Hunslet 0-4-0ST 'Gwynedd', a long-time resident on the 2ft gauge line at Bressingham Steam Museum in Norfolk, checks out a new and enormous arrival to the museum's standard-gauge display, the 9F 2-10-0 'Black Prince' that was formerly owned by railway artist Alan Bloom.** ***Photos: Joey Evans***



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This enchanting 3 foot narrow gauge railway was not only a tourist attraction in 1963, but a well-used means of transport around the green and picturesque island.

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# VIEWPOINT

## Troubles at the Lynton

I seldom send letters to magazines, but feel bound to do so in this case concerning the UK news item in *NGW*183 on the Lynton EGM.

I read with great dismay of the crass stupidity of the situation on the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway with regard to the 'EGM' – are these people so blinkered and wrapped up in their own self-importance that they cannot see that by having a toxic situation within an organisation, it simply makes people vote with their feet? Which means that the group concerned loses members and, as importantly, a source of finance.

For goodness sake, you are all supposed to be singing from the same hymn sheet! Get round a table and sort your problems out and move forward so that the restoration can proceed, otherwise you might not have an organisation at all!

***Nick Howell***

*Andrew C replies:* I cannot do anything but agree. As I've said previously, I read with complete disbelief the arguments that keep constantly coming out of Devon – especially speaking as a Trustee who in the past few weeks was re-elected to the Board of one of the UK's leading heritage narrow gauge lines after 12 years in post and who has over that time been consistently reminded of the standards of governance those in our position are expected to uphold...

## A Lincolnshire tractor

The recent articles featuring railways in Lincolnshire had me searching for my photographs of an unusual loco which was offered for sale by auction at New Bolingbroke in September 2007.

The loco along with a number of wagons were from a local farm potato railway. It is a converted Ransomes MG crawler tractor, of approximately 18-inch gauge.

The loco was not sold on the day and I have not come across any reference to it or photos of it since. Friends in Lincolnshire suggest it is now preserved in a tractor rather than a NG collection.

***Paul Hemnell***

*Andrew C replies:* Paul's pictures on this page are fascinating – can any reader throw a light on what might have become of this locomotive?

## Death of the timetable?

What is happening to that staple of the heritage railway world, the timetable? On viewing railway websites and literature it appears to me these days that the timetable is in serious danger of extinction.

All I want to see is a single page that lists the departures and arrivals at each railway's station on a particular day. Instead now with many railways I have to jump through various hoops to even determine whether trains are running on a particular day, let alone where to and from.

I also often have to pretend to book tickets to get the information I desire, and then when you don't follow through with the booking the web page keeps imploring you – pleading with "Are you sure you want to leave this page?"

While I'm on my soapbox, what's happened to the humble train service? Why is everything these days listed as an 'experience'? I don't want an experience, I just want to travel on a train... ***Mike Metcalfe***

*Andrew C replies:* I have sympathy! Especially when I'm trying to put together the monthly diary that appears on page 49... In fairness some lines have learnt – last year getting the information you needed from the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway website was a tortuous practice but this year opening days and train times can all be found presented on a single page.

As for 'experiences' – that Mike is I am afraid a symptom of the modern age. We are constantly told by the marketing experts that for the majority of railway travellers – and you have to remember the majority are not enthusiasts – offering simply a train ride is no longer enough. You have to make them feel they are getting greater value out of their visit, especially if you want them to come back, as of course all of us running the railways do.

In fairness, some of the experiences railways have come up with are very good, an example being the slate trails on the Talyllyn in which a guide travels with you and imparts some of the history of the line while en route. But I do still believe that some of us really do only want a train ride, and that should be remembered in today's experience-based world...

***"For the majority of railway travellers offering simply a train ride is no longer enough..."***





**Above right: This curious loco came up for sale in 2007 and may not even still be a loco! Can any reader tell us more? *Photo: Paul Hemmell***

# From a different age...

News stories in ***NGW*** often have your editor looking back at the railways concerned in previous times and how their surroundings have changed. Some of our regular correspondents, especially David Mitchell, are particularly good at responding to new developments by emailing in photos that show the line concerned in a very different light.

So for a bit of fun, we've delved into our archives to highlight just how much some railways have changed, or may change...



■ **Those present at the Vale of Rheidol Railway's museum opening ceremony (see UK News) were told that Devil's Bridge station will see development soon, including a new cafeteria. Back when *David Mitchell* visited the line in the 'Rail blue' years of the 1970s, the line's upper terminus was a very quiet and slightly bleak place...**




■ **When *Andy Sturt* visited the Talyllyn Railway in August 1970 he found a very busy scene on what was then a brand-new track layout at Tywyn Wharf, no 6 'Douglas' departing on a passenger service, the 3ft gauge loco 'Irish Pete' that would eventually emerge as the line's no 7 'Tom Rolt', and even a freight train passing by on the Cambrian Coast standard gauge. The scene here has changed markedly in the years since and if the plans detailed in *NGW*183 come to fruition, it will change again in the next five years...**

■ **Two more from the camera of *David Mitchell* in the early 1970s on the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, both scenes that have changed beyond all recognition. The then recently acquired 'Dougal' sits in front of its shed that today is the line's engineering office and dwarfed by the Keyse Cottage volunteer accommodation and industrial units that now occupy the fields behind.**

**As for the shot below right – today this is the W&LLR's Welshpool Raven Square station... You can still find just a bit of this trackwork if you look really hard...**





# That was the year that...

**Narrow gauge news stories from the archives and their legacy...**

## From 60 years ago

**National Trust Railway Museum st Penrhyn Castle**

The possibility of a railway museum with an industrial slant under the arrangements of the National Trust was first discussed with that body by Mr and Mrs J B Latham, of Woking, less than two years ago. The project was taken up enthusiastically by the Trust... By the strenuous efforts of Mr W R Parry, curator at the castle, and his small staff, the coachouses have been adapted and reconditioned to accommodate large exhibits and the museum opened on Easter Monday this year. The stress is on industrial locomotives, preferably with North Wales associations... The aim is to be complimentary to the work of the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at Tywyn, the Brockham Museum of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society and other museums concerning themselves with this branch of industrial archaeology.

(*NGN, June 1964*)

*A pertinent piece to read at a time when the National Trust's Penrhyn disposal policy is causing some controversy...*

**'Scaldwell' arrives at Brockham**




March 20th was the day for the delivery of the latest exhibit at Brockham, the 20-ton saddle tank 'Scaldwell'... The weather had not been kind and there were misgivings about the muddy lane, later to prove well-founded.

At around 10.15 a rather exhausted lookout came panting up the lane proclaiming that the loco had arrived but was bogged down on the other side of the (Redhill-Guildford line) crossing... The tractor and trailer was not bogged in but merely suffering from wheelspin. The trailer complete with locomotive was winched to the crossing where we met our first obstacle, the crossing keeper would not let us pass...

The Reigate stationmaster arrived about 11.30, and at first would not entertain the idea of us crossing... Finally he said we could try crossing after the 2pm train (*to give an hour to complete the move*) – this was met with strong opposition, which was summed up by the tractor driver with suitable expletives... After further persuasion the lorry was on the move again at 11.55 and the crossing was accomplished in eight minutes after a delay totalling nearly two hours! (*NGN, June 1964*)

*A frustrating day... Scaldwell became the only loco to steam at Brockham museum, and then only briefly to move it into a shed. Today it is at Southwold in Suffolk, with very long-term aims of a restoration to steam.*

## From 50 years ago

**Welsh Highland Light Railway (1964) Ltd** (Gauge 2ft)

It is planned to lay a single track throughout the Beddgelert siding site in 1974, with loops at each end and two sidings at the Pen-y-Mount end.

The company has been negotiating for the 6.7 acres of land adjacent to Beddgelert siding. The land has several buildings on it, including two barns and a farmhouse... The farmhouse would become a volunteer's hostel and the brand would serve as workshops/stores. (*NGN, June 1974*)

*Clearly the first appearance of what would become the Gelert's Farm site known to all Welsh Highland Heritage aficionados today. But one question – what happened to the farmhouse? We don't recall ever seeing a farmhouse...*




**Extracts from *Narrow Gauge News*, the news journal of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society – for more details of the Society and how to join up, go to www.ngrs.org.uk or see the advert on page 38.**

# Diary & Special Events

■ No responsibility can be accepted for dates on these pages and anyone planning a visit for a ride or to an event should check the line's website and/or social media feeds for the latest update before travelling. Not all trains operate over full lines.

## Special Events in June

Only events of interest to rail enthusiasts are included in this guide.

■ **Thur to Sun, Devon Railway Centre Open Day** Museum near Tiverton, 2ft gauge line. http://devonrailwaycentre.co.uk

■ **Thursdays in June, Talyllyn Railway Slate Trail;** Learn about railway's history, guides on train, photo stops and tours

■ **7th-8th June, Welsh Highland Railway Rail Ale;** Beer and live music at Dinas, shuttles from Caernarfon - ticket only

■ **8th-9th June, Statfold Trust Summer Spectacle of Steam;** Multiple locos working plus visitor – www.statfold.com

■ **15th June, Corris Railway Falcons will Fly Gala;** New-build Falcon no 10 and visiting Talyllyn no 3 working together

■ **15th-16th June, Amerton Railway Summer Steam Gala;** Bagnall 'Sir Tom' from Threlkeld, Avonside 'Ogwen' from Statfold.

■ **21st-23rd June, Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway Beer Festival;** Real ale/cider in Welshpool display shed, live music

■ **29th-30th June, Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway Steam and Beer;** Ales at Kemsley Down, live music

■ **30th June, Gartell Light Railway Open Day;** 2ft Somerset line, frequent timetable. 01963 370752, http://newglr.weebly.com




### Tramways

■ **Douglas Horse Tramway** www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/ Daily services

■ **Great Orme Tramway:** *Conwy* 01492 577877, www.greatormetramway.co.uk Open daily between 10am and 6pm

■ **Manx Electric Railway, Snaefell Mountain Railway:** *Isle of Man*, 01624 662525, www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/ Daily services

■ **Seaton Tramway:** *Devon* 01297 20375, www.tram.co.uk Daily services from 10am

### Miniature Railways

■ **Audley End Railway** (10.25in): *Essex* 01799 541354, www. audley-end-railway.co.uk Daily services

■ **Beer Heights Light Railway** (7.25in): *Devon* 01297 21542, www.pecorama.co.uk Daily services.

■ **Lappa Valley Railway** (15, 10.25, 7.25in): *Cornwall* 01872 510317, www.lappavalley.co.uk Open daily.

■ **Littlehampton Miniature Railway** (12.25in): *Sussex* www.littlehamptonminiaturerailway.com Open weekends

■ **Moors Valley Railway** (7.25in): *Hants* 01425 471415, www.moorsvalleyrailway.co.uk Daily – Summer Gala 15th-16th

■ **North Bay Railway**, Scarborough (20in): *Yorks* 01723 368791, www.nbr.org.uk, Daily services

■ **Rhyl Miniature Railway** (15in): *Clwyd* 01352 759109, www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk Fridays-Sundays

■ **South Downs Light Railway** (10.25in): *Sussex* 07518 753784, www.south-downs-railway.com Weekends

# What's On

| | Sat 1st | Sun 2nd | Mon 3rd | Tue 4th | Wed 5th | Thu 6th | Fri 7th | Sat 8th | Sun 9th | Mon 10th | Tue 11th | Wed 12th | Thu 13th | Fri 14th | Sat 15th | Sun 16th | Mon 17th | Tue 18th | Wed 19th | Thu 20th | Fri 21st | Sat 22nd | Sun 23rd | Mon 24th | Tue 25th | Wed 26th | Thu 27th | Fri 28th | Sat 29th | Sun 30th |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Alford Valley Community Railway:** www.avcr.org.uk | Services tba at press time, check website | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Amberley Museum:** 01798 831370 www.amberleymuseum.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Amerton Railway:** 01785 850965 www.amertonrailway.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Apedale Valley Rly:** 0845 094 1953 www.avlr.org.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Bala Lake Railway:** 01678 540666 www.bala-lake-railway.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Brecon Mountain Rly:** 01685 722988 www.bmr.wales | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Bressingham:** 01379 686900 www.bressingham.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Bure Valley Railway:** 01263 733858 www.bvrw.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway** 01472 604657 www.cclr.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Corris Railway:** 01654 761303, www.corris.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Evesham Light Rly:** 01386 422282 www.valleyrailwayadventure.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Exbury Gardens Railway:** 023 80891203 www.exbury.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Fairbourne Railway:** 01341 250362 www.fairbournerailway.com | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Ffestiniog Railway:** 01766 516000 www.festrail.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Great Laxey Mine Railway:** 01624 624007 www.laxeyminerailway.im/ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Golden Valley Light Railway:** 01773 747674 www.gvlr.org.uk/ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Great Whipsnade Rly:** 0844 225 1826 www.zsl.org/zsl-whipsnade-zoo | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Groudle Glen Railway:** 01624 670453 www.ggr.org.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | Eve | | | | | | | Eve | | | | | | | Eve | | | | |
| **Hampton Kemptn Rly:** 07583 560167 www.hamptonkemptonrailway.org.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Hayling Light Railway:** 07902 446340 haylinglightrailway.wixsite.com/ehlr | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Heatherslaw Light Rly:** 01890 820317 www.heatherslawlightrailway.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Isle of Man Steam Rly:** 01624 663366 www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Kirklees Light Rly:** 01484 865727 www.whistlestopvalley.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Launceston Stm Rly:** 01566 775 665 www.launcestonsr.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway** www.leadhillsrailway.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Leek & Rudyard Railway:** 01538 306704 www.rlsr.org | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Leighton Buzzard Railway** 01525 373888 www.buzzrail.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Llanberis Lake Rly:** 01286 870549 www.lake-railway.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Lynton & Barnstaple Railway:** 01598 763487 www.lynton-rail.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **North Gloucestershire Railway:** www.toddington-narrow-gauge.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Old Kiln Light Rly:** 01252 795571 www.oldkilnlightrailway.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Perrygrove Railway:** 01594 834991 www.perrygrove.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Ravenglass & Eskdale Rly:** 01229 717171 www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Rly** 01797 362353, www.rhdr.org.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Ruislip Lido Railway:** 01895 622595 www.ruisliplidorailway.org | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Sittingbourne & Kemsley Railway:** 01795 424899, www.sklr.net | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Snowdon Mountain Rly:** 0870 450 0033 www.snowdonrailway.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **South Tynedale Rly:** 01434 381696 www.south-tynedale-railway.org.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Steeple Grange Lt Rly:** 01629 55123 www.steeplegrange.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Talyllyn Railway:** 01654 710472 www.talyllyn.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Teifi Valley Railway:** 01559 371077 www.teifivalleyrailway.wales | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Threlkeld Msm:** 01768 779747, www.threlkeldquarryandminingmuseum.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Vale of Rheidol Rly:** 01970 625819 www.rheidolrailway.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Waterworks Railway:** 020 8568 4757 www.waterandsteam.org.uk | Trains tba at press time, check website | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Wells Walsingham Rly:** 01328 711630 www.wwlr.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Welsh Highland Railway** 01766 516000, www.festrail.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Welsh Highland Heritage Railway** 01766 513402, www.whr.co.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway** 01938 810441, www.wllr.org.uk | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **West Lancashire Light Railway** 01772 815881, www.westlancs.org | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **KEY** Trains (steam or diesel), Special events, No trains | 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 | 09 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

# Famous for Fifteen Inches

*Donald Brooks* has happy memories from the 1970s.

It is now almost 40 years since the 15-inch gauge Fairbourne Railway train reached Barmouth Ferry, yet many enthusiasts still think of the railway as a 15in gauge line, as it was when they first visited it.

This was how I first encountered the railway in 1968 and I still have many happy memories from repeated visits throughout the 1970s. It was then carrying around 100,000 passengers each year with up to 16 timetabled return services daily.

In many respects Fairbourne was for me the epitome of the British seaside – an attractive resort village, long sandy beaches, mountain vistas down the Mawddach estuary, the little ferry across to Barmouth and of course the essential miniature railway. The sun may not always have shone but a visit was always a pleasure, particularly when one of the steam locomotives was hauling the train.

In the 1970s four of these were associated with the line. Bassett-Lowke's 1923 4-4-2 'Count Louis' was probably the flagship engine, but rarely seemed to be in steam. The other three were all designed by Ernest W Twining and built by Trevor Guest in Stourbridge, the earliest, a 1949-built blue 4-6-2 of freelance appearance, named after its designer.

The other two, 2-4-2s 'Katie' and 'Sian', though outwardly almost twin sisters, were built a decade apart, with Katie constructed in 1954 and moving to Fairbourne in 1965. Sian was built specifically for the line in 1963, with some modifications incorporated to help it cope with the sandy environment.

## Steam stalwarts

Both these locomotives had a vaguely Great Western look, quite appropriate for the location, and were built to a larger profile than their predecessors, while still miniatures in appearance. They were the mainstays of the steam-operated service and were both in use when I visited on a May Bank Holiday weekend in 1975.

By the time of the last two 15in gauge seasons at Fairbourne they were the only two steam locos left, with Katie carrying the service in 1984 and a heavily-rebuilt Sian taking over in 1985, following Katie's sale to Wigan.

Sian, rebuilt in American style as 'Sydney', left a year later after the railway had been regauged to 12¼ inches. Since then both have led a nomadic life but they are now reunited in Yorkshire at the Kirklees Light Railway, with Sydney happily restored to original condition as Sian following a re-rebuilding by new owners the Sian Project Group.

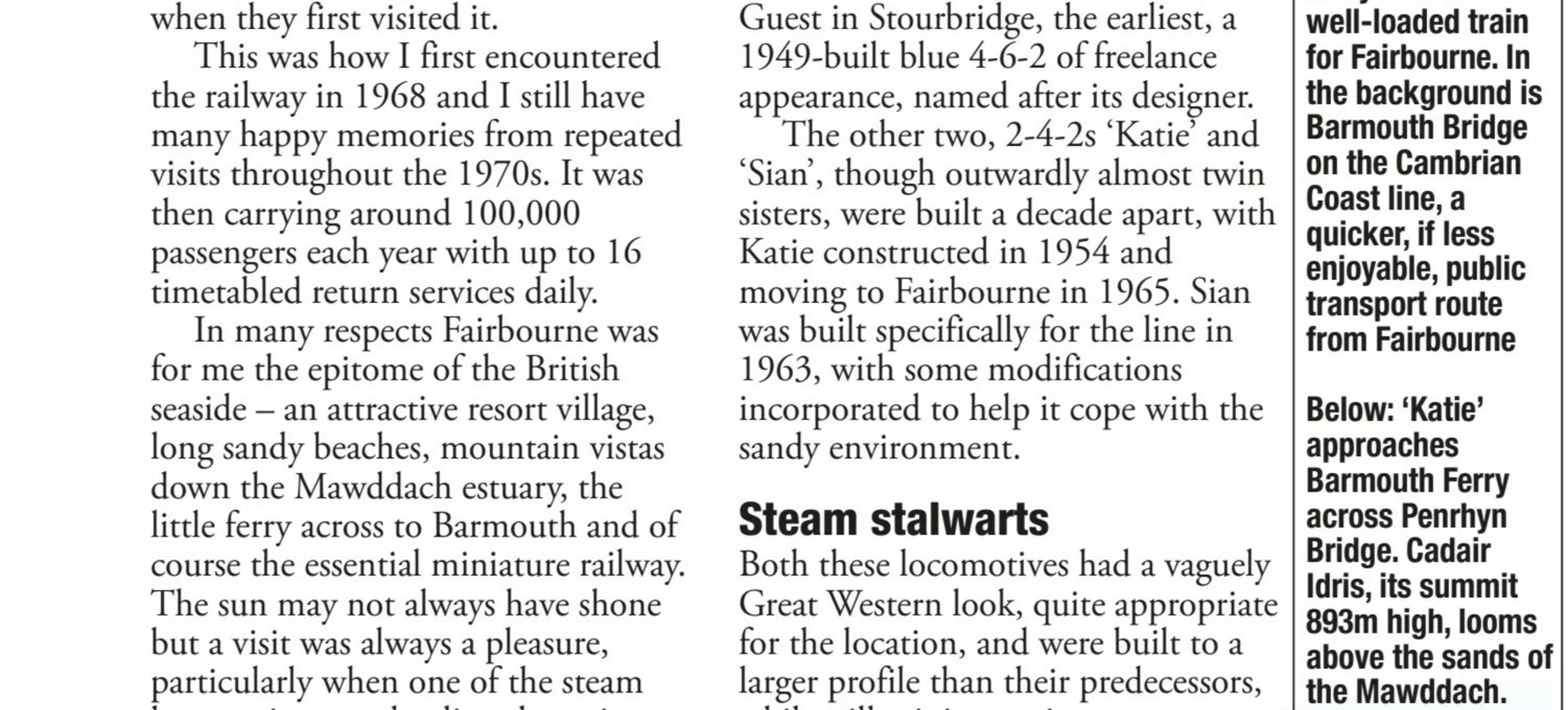
The Fairbourne's regauging for the 1986 season was controversial to say the least, but it did have a precedent as the railway had originally operated as a 2ft gauge horse-drawn tramway for two decades until 1916, making it a rare example of a line that has carried passengers on three gauges.

Today the line, owned by a charitable trust, is firmly established on the narrower gauge. It is a well-run and forward-looking railway and one that has not forgotten its past. A short section at the Fairbourne end has been dual-gauged to allow visiting 15in gauge locos to run again (*Count Louis made its latest visit last month as part of its centenary celebrations – Ed*), recalling the long-gone days when they worked through to the Ferry. NGW

**Above: 'Sian' leaves Barmouth Ferry with a well-loaded train for Fairbourne. In the background is Barmouth Bridge on the Cambrian Coast line, a quicker, if less enjoyable, public transport route from Fairbourne**

**Below: 'Katie' approaches Barmouth Ferry across Penrhyn Bridge. Cadair Idris, its summit 893m high, looms above the sands of the Mawddach.**

***Photos by Donald Brooks, May 1975***



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