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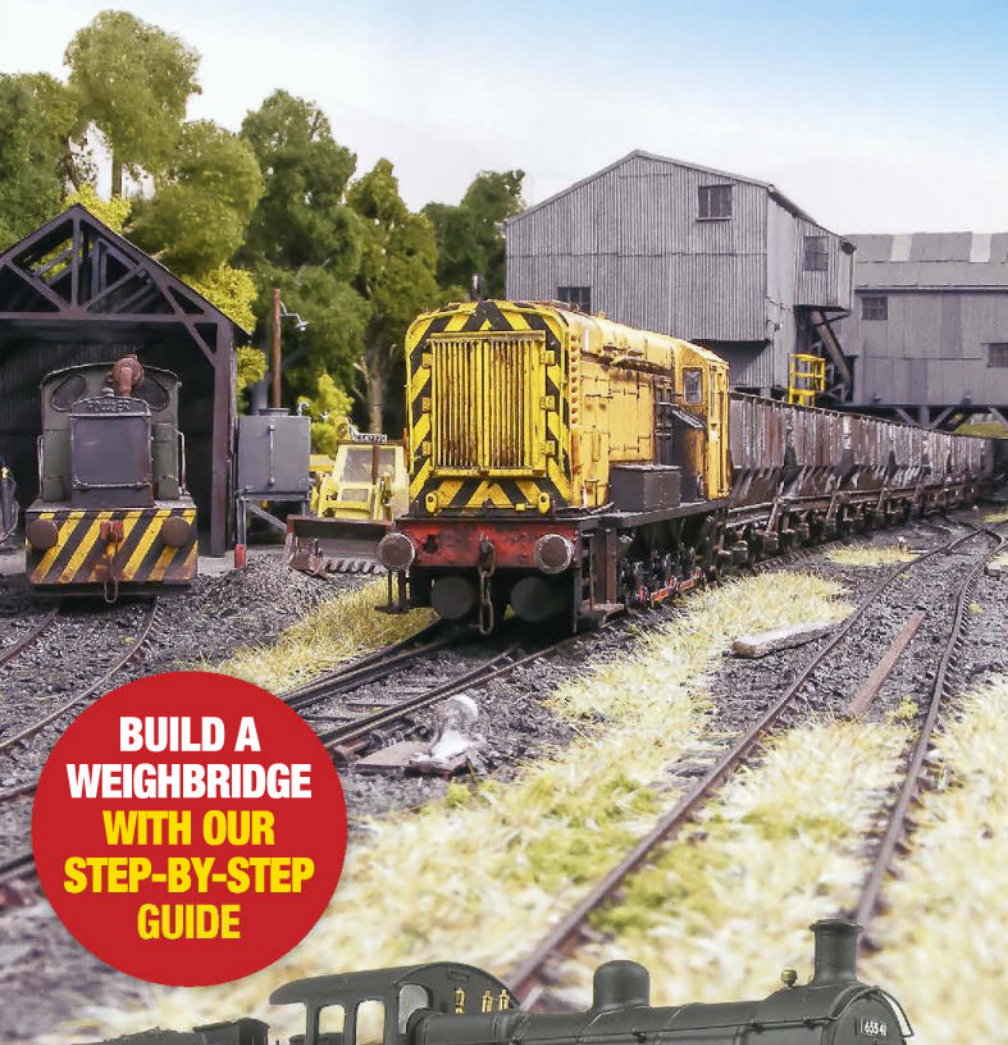
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R.T.R in unpainted brass/factory painted

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GETTING PRACTICAL

p60



p46 Build a Great Western Plate Layers hut

p48 Repainting old carriages: top tips

p51 Create an idyllic duck pond cameo scene

p56 Build a railway wagon weighbridge in 18 steps

p60 Constructing the Parkside Grain Wagon kit



p56

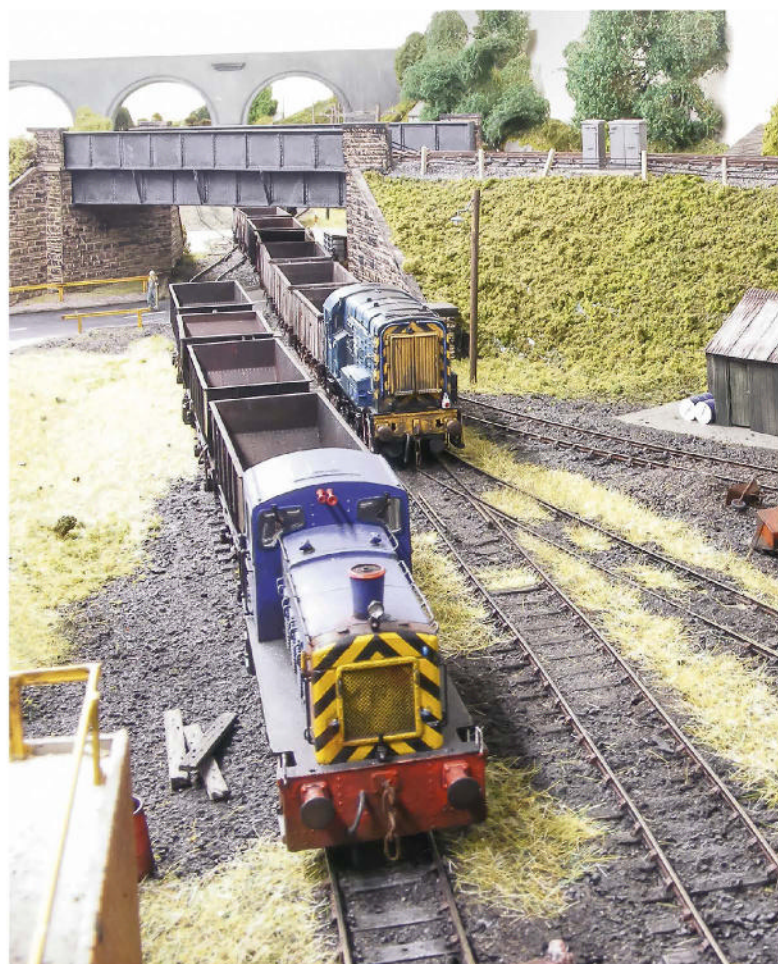
REGULARS

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p110 All the latest news headlines

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INSPIRING LAYOUTS



p20 Blacker Lane (OO)

A transformative time in history when wartime demand revolutionised the coal industry and the railways that served it.



p92 Heol-y-Cyw (OO)

This reimagined line gets plenty of action, including passenger services, freight workings and serving Raglan Colliery.



p34 Pothole City (N)

The latest layout to emerge from that master of N gauge layouts - John Cox, who has a bone to pick with the local council...



p102 Damems (OO)

One of the smallest manned stations in the country and a hive of activity, the eccentric Damems is recreated in model form.

TRACTION



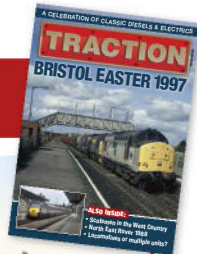
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p68 Operations around Bristol Easter 1997 - Part 1

p76 A North East Rail Rover in 1988

p80 Locomotives or multiple units?

p86 Scotsmen in the West Country



LATEST REVIEWS

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p116 Heljan Yorkshire Engine Co. Class O2 0-4-0 DH

p118 Heljan Southern Region CCT

p120 OO Works J17

p122 Rapido GWR 'Open A' O18 wagon

p123 Rapido GWR 'N19 10T Loco Coal wagon



p123

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31-461A	C Class SR Black.....	£106.20
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NR-P993EW	BP Grey BP067177 with.....	£14.25
NR-P993FW	BP Grey BP067184 with.....	£14.25
NR-P994A	BP Green no. BP067161.....	£13.45
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NR-P994C	BP Green no. BP067368.....	£13.45
NR-P994DW	BP Green no. BP067765.....	£14.25
NR-P994EW	BP Green no. BP067783.....	£14.25
NR-P994FW	BP Green no. BP067574.....	£14.25
NR-P995A	BP Black no. BP065762.....	£13.45
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NR-P995C	BP Black no. BP065771.....	£13.45
NR-P995DW	BP Black no. BP065770.....	£14.25
NR-P995EW	BP Black no. BP065765.....	£14.25
NR-P995FW	BP Black no. BP065766.....	£14.25

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2D-005-004	CI.59 59104 Hanson.....	£146.90
2D-005-005	CI.59 59005 Aggregate Industries.....	£146.90
GM2210403	CI.153 Scotrail.....	£123.20
2D-023-002	Class 221 Virgin.....	£213.75
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371-011SF	BR Class 08 Network Rail SOUND.....	£208.20

371-012	BR Class 08 RES.....	£123.20
371-336	Class 150/1 GMPTE.....	£203.95
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371-659	Class 57 ARRIVA Wales.....	£165.70

EXHIBITIONS

LUDLOW.....	JUNE 21
ROSS ON WYE.....	AUGUST 16-17
SWANSEA.....	SEPTEMBER 13-14
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CHELtenham.....	OCTOBER 25-26
NEC.....	NOVEMBER 22-23

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- * JDM Models (Town Square)
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- * West Hill Wagon Works
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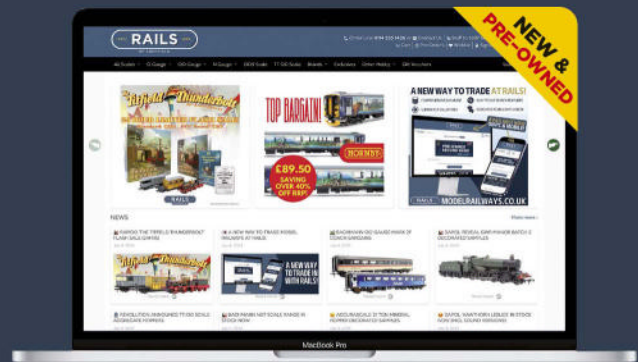


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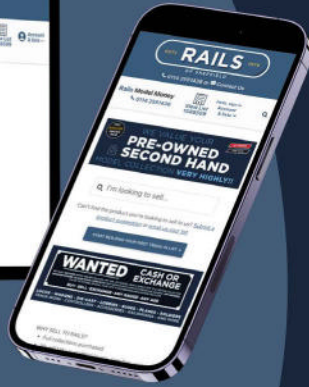
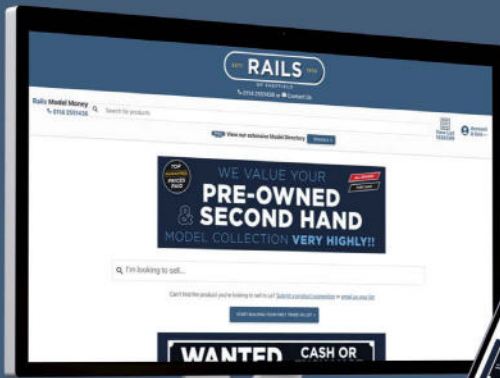
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T. Smart ★★★★★

I sold some used items to Rails recently, handled by Jake in the second-hand department.

All went very smoothly - once I'd packaged the items up, it was collected free of charge and I got a good price that was transferred direct to my bank a day after they received the items.

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Popped in last week to have a quick look. Wow, blast from the past! Huge collection of vintage toys, like a kid in a sweet shop. Recommend to anyone, shop assistant was very friendly and helpful, I'll definitely be going again.

R. Smalley ★★★★★

Perfect service from Rails as usual. Excellent packaging, quick delivery and outstanding customer service from Joe, who is friendly, helpful and goes out of his way to provide assistance, even when the circumstances are outside his control.

D. Ager ★★★★★

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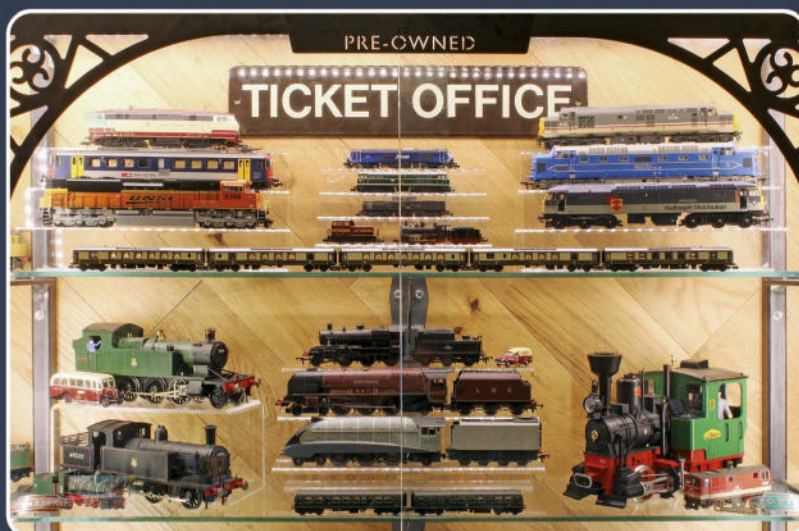
R. Rae ★★★★★

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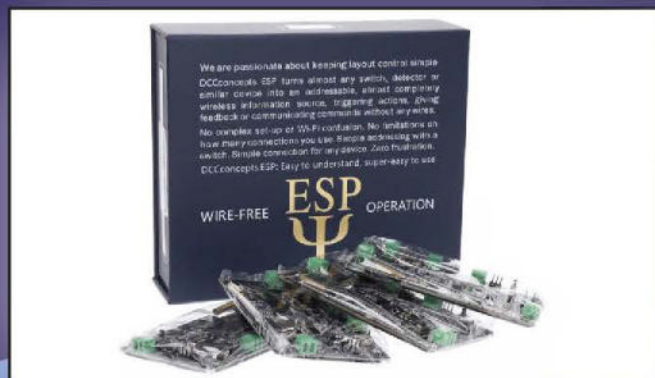
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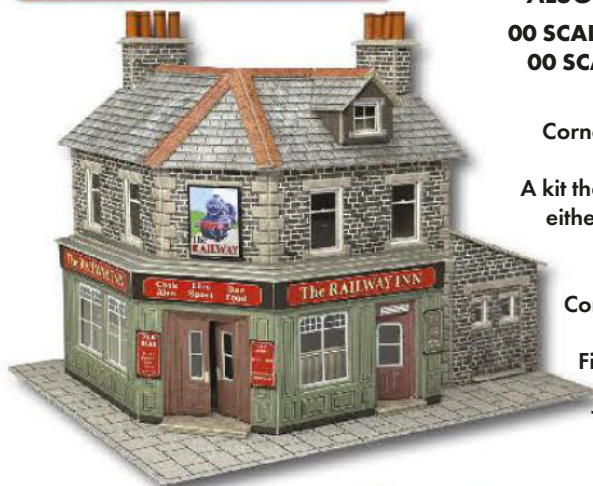
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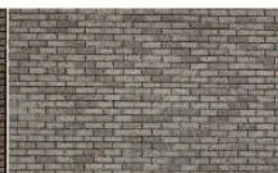
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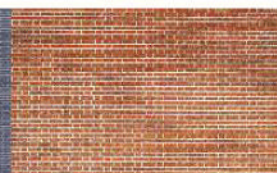
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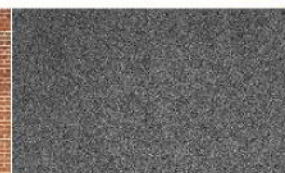
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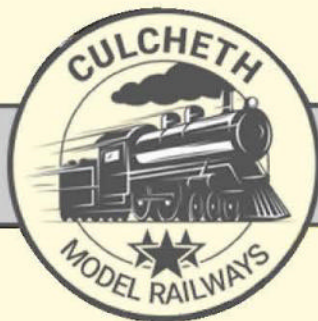
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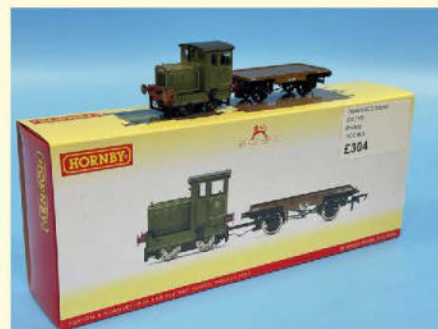
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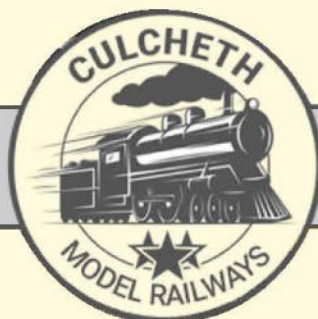
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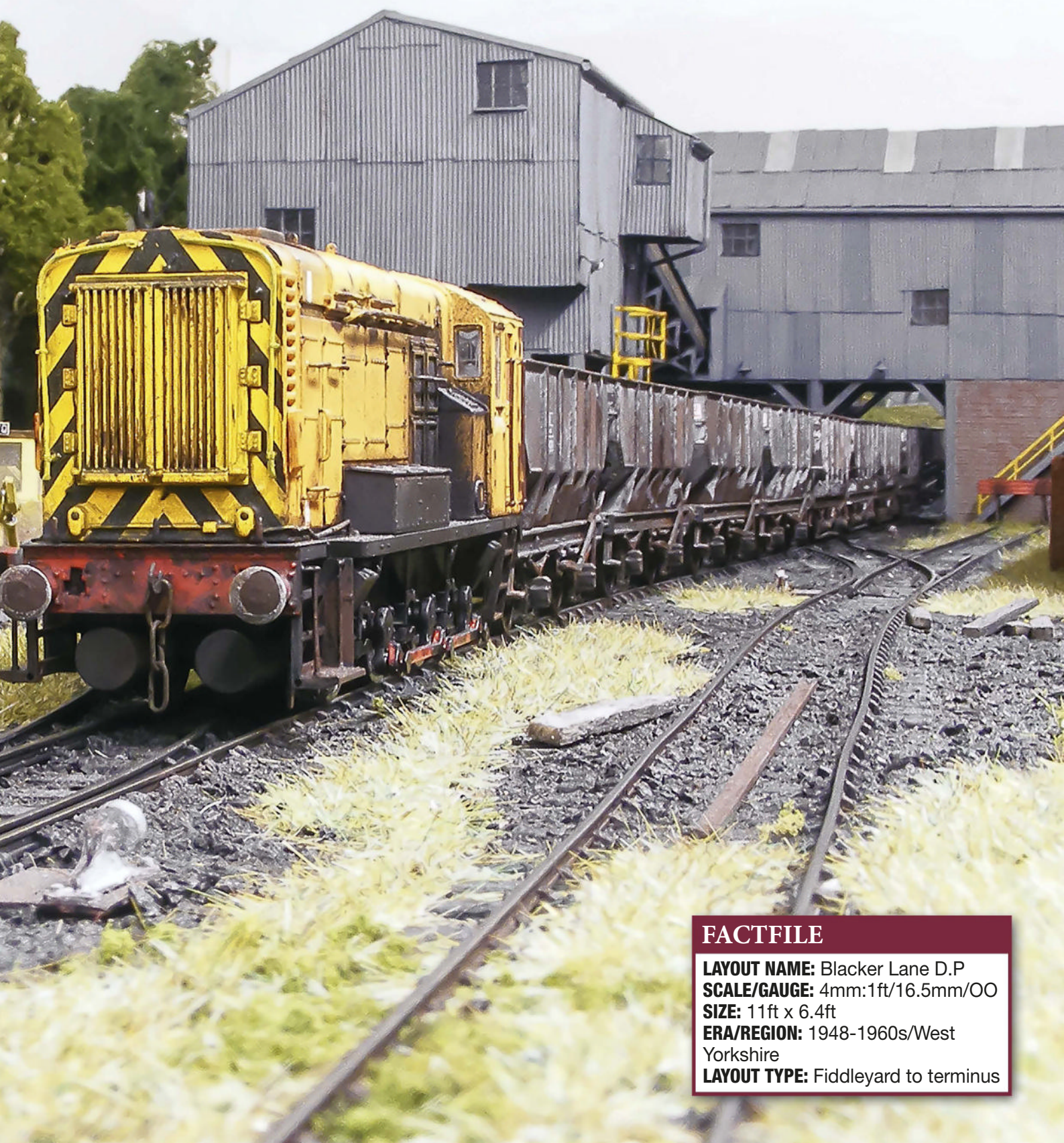


The yard at 'Blacker Lane' showing the engine shed and screens. Ex-BR Class 11, 12099, is at work whilst John Fowler 150HP diesel *George Barber* rests in the shed.

OPENCASTING

Talented modeller, Dave Hall, revisits a transformative time in history when wartime demand revolutionised the coal industry and the railways that served it.

Words & Photography: Dave Hall



FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Blacker Lane D.P
SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm:1ft/16.5mm/OO
SIZE: 11ft x 6.4ft
ERA/REGION: 1948-1960s/West
Yorkshire
LAYOUT TYPE: Fiddleyard to terminus

TOP RIGHT:

Pepper's Ex-BR 3F *Jocko* 47445 hauls empty internal use hoppers from the staithe.

MIDDLE RIGHT:

Ex-BR Class 14, D9531 crosses Blacker Lane.

BOTTOM:

The staithe on the Calder & Hebble Navigation with one of Hargreaves' barges being loaded from NCB internal use hoppers.



For centuries, coal has been mined, on a small scale and by hand, near to the surface in what were known as outcrops, but it wasn't until the Second World War that outcropping, or opencast mining as it is more commonly known, was mechanised and undertaken on a large scale in the United Kingdom. This new industry came about due to the huge wartime demand for coal, coupled with the lack of manpower, as many miners had been called to serve in the armed forces. Its conception was mostly down to the efforts of Albert Newby Braithwaite, a Yorkshireman, Conservative MP and director of one of the largest civil engineering firms in the country – Sir Lindsay Parkinson & Co. Ltd. Braithwaite believed that in the United Kingdom, there were up to 50 million tons of exploitable coal within 30ft of the surface. Sites could be opened and operated far more quickly and with far less manpower than deep mines, so the opencast coalmining industry was born.

Opencasting, undertaken by contractors who were mostly large civil engineering companies, was initially under the control of the Directorate of Opencast Production (DOCP), which was part of the Ministry of Fuel & Power. Although the National Coal Board (NCB) was vested on January 1st, 1947, it did not take responsibility for opencast mines, which continued

“...this is the first that I have built to use bullhead points and I think they really make a difference and are a huge improvement over the Code 75 stuff.”





to be operated by contractors until April 1952, when they came under the National Coal Board Opencast Executive (NCBOE).

The size of opencast sites varied enormously and some were not large enough, or would not last long enough, to warrant a rail connection, so the excavated coal was often transported by road for screening (sorting) and loading into trains for onward long-distance transport. Such sites were known as disposal points and one such site was British Oak, at Calder Grove, near Wakefield.

Named after a nearby public house on the Wakefield to Denby Dale road, British Oak used the existing sidings and connection to the former Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway at Flockton Junction, which were originally part of a private railway that served the collieries of Sir John L.L. Kaye Bart. Kaye's railway not only delivered coal wagons to the exchange sidings for onward transport by rail but also served a staithe on the Calder & Hebble Navigation, where coal was loaded by gravity into barges. This staithe continued in use during the site's time under the NCB and was latterly used to load barges supplying coal to Thornhill power station.

The British Oak site was operated on behalf of the various Government departments and the National Coal Board by the company of William Pepper, which later became part of the Hargreaves group of companies. Pepper/Hargreaves provided the equipment, workforce and road transport, but it is unclear to me whether or not all of the locomotives used there were owned by them or by the various Government agencies.



ABOVE: The *Jocko* propelling loaded hoppers toward the staithe. This is a repainted, detailed and weathered Bachmann model.

MIDDLE LEFT: D9531 and 47445 wearing the 'corporate livery' of Pepper/Hargreaves. The Class 14 is a repainted and weathered Heljan model.



BOTTOM LEFT: Blacker Lane itself and the weigh cabin in the foreground, with 47445 and D9531.

Modellers' Licence

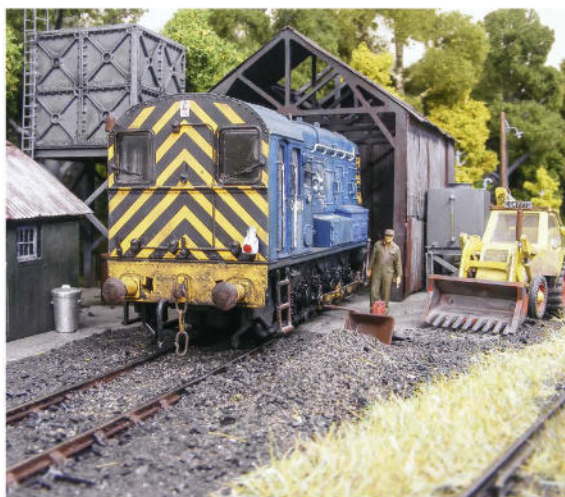
As the crow flies, British Oak is only a couple of miles from my home, and I have wanted to model it since first visiting the site in 1986. Early in 2023, after selling the O gauge colliery layout that I had squeezed into my 7ft x 12ft shed, I took the opportunity to at last model the site in 4mm. Being aware that there were going to be lots of compromises and that a true depiction of British Oak could never be fitted into the available space, I decided to build something that uses elements of British Oak, but named it 'Blacker Lane' in order to allow myself a degree of modellers' licence. Blacker Lane is the name of the minor road that runs from Crigglestone to Netherton, crossing the British Oak line on the level directly beneath the bridge that carried the former L&Y line from Horbury Station Junction to Crigglestone Junction.

The key features that I felt had to be included were the level crossing, the staithe and the former Midland Railway viaduct that spanned the northern end of the site. This viaduct carried the Midland Railway line that ran from Dewsbury to Royston and crossed both the line to the staithe and the one to the exchange sidings under different arches. The other major feature had to be the screens and buildings where coal was loaded into railway wagons.

To make the best of the available space, the layout runs down one long wall of the shed, across the end and back along the opposite long wall. This means that a tight curve had to be put in, but this wouldn't look right if left completely on show. With the O



TOP LEFT: The Fowler diesel passing the car hoarder's house with the PW/tool train.



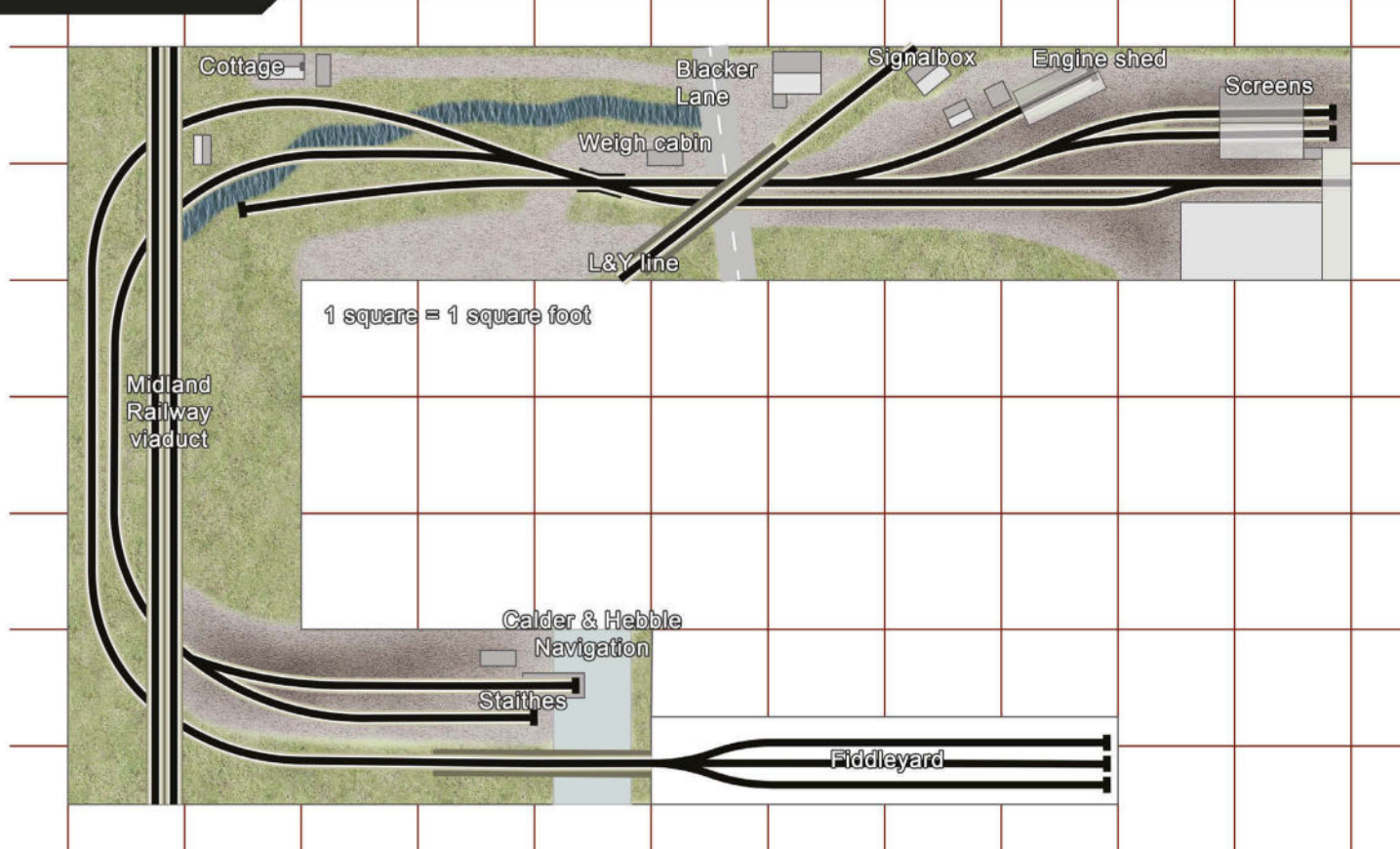
BOTTOM LEFT: Ex-BR 08016 outside the engine shed.

TOP RIGHT: The Jocko about to pass under the former Midland Railway viaduct.

MIDDLE RIGHT: The screens and coal loader buildings with 12099 shunting BR 21-ton hoppers.

BOTTOM RIGHT: An aerial view of the staithe, showing also the siding to the left and the waste tip to the right.

TRACKPLAN



gauge layout, I got around this by having the line go through a hole in the end of the shed with the curved track in a plywood tunnel that was cantilevered off the end wall. This 'tunnel' arrangement caused no end of problems, from being infested with spiders to developing leaks and eventually becoming so rotten that it had to be completely rebuilt, so I really wanted to avoid the need for the track to run externally of the shed. I then came up with the idea of having the viaduct span the width of the shed and the tracks going through an arch, running behind it and then passing under another arch to be brought back into full view, with the viaduct acting as a sort of view-blocker and not a backscene. It is an unusual idea, but I think it works.

A new approach

The baseboards are made from 9mm ply and are partially open-framed, covered with plaster bandage and newspaper papier mâché for the landscaping. The trackbed is partly plywood and partly built-up corrugated cardboard. I'm no carpenter, and it's not pretty, but it works and the baseboard is very sturdy and rests on a framework of 25x25mm softwood that is fixed to the floor and walls of the shed in which it is housed.

The layout is operated using DCC with a bus made using copper tape and the remnants of some fat multi-strand automotive copper wire that I found in a skip many years ago. The track is all Peco bullhead, except for that in the fiddle yard, which is code 75 flat bottom. Although not the first layout that I have used Peco's bullhead track on, this is the first that I have built to use bullhead points, and I think they really make a difference and are a huge improvement over the Code 75 stuff.



Key structures

By far the largest structure on the layout is the former Midland Railway viaduct. The prototype of this was built around 1907 and still stands today, although I believe it has been out of use since the 1960s. It carried the line that ran from the Midland main line, near Royston, to a junction with the L&Y at Thornhill and on to Dewsbury Goods.

On the layout, it acts as a sort of backscene without being a solid backscene, providing a useful view blocker without completely blocking off the tracks that pass behind it, which would make things troublesome for track cleaning or the re-railing of stock, should it become derailed. The model is made from 1.5mm mounting card that had the arches and bricks laser-etched into it and was provided for me in kit form by a friend. I painted it with grey acrylics approximating to the shade on the engineering bricks on the prototype and then smeared filler paste into the mortar courses before wiping the excess off.

The other large structures, the screens, loader and engine shed, were built using more traditional methods and are made from mounting card, Plastikard and corrugated aluminium foil. The workshop building is an etched brass kit from Severn Models.

The only other structure of note is what I call the car hoarder's house and yard. This is complete fiction as no such house exists at the real site; I simply liked the idea of a run-down building and a house with the long dirt track leading to it being dotted with seemingly abandoned and decaying cars. The house at the end of the track is inhabited by the car hoarder and his long-suffering wife. The outbuilding is constructed from styrene section and corrugated aluminium foil, while the house is a modified 'Parsnip Cottage' kit from Petite Properties.





The points are operated by under-baseboard rods, made from piano wire, and frog polarity is switched automatically by two Hex frog juicer units.

Setting the period

British Oak D.P. was operational from 1943 until 1993, although during the last seven or eight years of its life, the site spent some time mothballed, or at least without rail traffic. This large span of time gives quite a variety of motive power and rolling stock types and that's without using any modellers' licence. Over the 50-year lifespan of the site, there were 21 different engines based there, some of which were ex-main line shunter types that would never have been found in this part of the world during their previous ownership. I plan, eventually, to model every one of them and thus far have just over 50% of them on the roster at the time of writing.

My modelled time period begins after the Nationalisation of the railways, and to match the engines used from then until circa 1960 when the rolling stock still consisted of mostly former private owner wooden-bodied mineral wagons. The wagons have all been heavily-weathered and numbers in the British Railways P (ex-private owner) series have been applied. The wagons used are mostly Bachmann but with a small number of Oxford thrown in.

The next period is rather vague and uses steel-bodied minerals and hoppers, not all of which would have carried the particular lettering style at all times, but to have everything absolutely correct would require a lot of different trains, so despite the fact that some are



ABOVE: The Class 14 heads for the exchange sidings with a train of loaded MDV wagons. Some of the car hoarder's vehicles can be seen on the dirt track to the left.

MIDDLE LEFT: Austerity saddle tank, RSH 7164, never worked at British Oak but it did work for Wm. Pepper at another opencast site, so modeller's licence allows it to run on 'Blacker Lane'.

BOTTOM LEFT: Rusty wagons as far as the eye can see! Weathering steel-bodied mineral wagons is a particular interest of mine.

TOPS-numbered and some wagons have the post-1964 boxed style of numbers, such as COAL 16, the period covers the 1960s until the mid-1980s. The wagons used for this period are mostly Accurascale, with a smaller number of Bachmann and one or two Airfix kits.

Finally, there is the late part of site operations, up until 1993, which uses 32-ton air-braked hoppers (HAA), which are all by Accurascale.

There are also three trains of internal use wagons. Coal from the screens to the staithe was loaded into NCB wooden-bodied end-tipping mineral wagons and tipped using the original wooden staithe that dated back to the days of Kaye's, but this was replaced in 1969. The replacement was made from steel and was designed to be used with 21-ton hopper wagons. These were a mixture of ex-LNER, Liverpool Corporation and Ministry of Supply types. For my hopper train, I have used Hornby LNER type 21-ton hoppers, plus a single Charles Roberts design 22-ton ironstone hopper.

The other internal use trains are just a bit of modellers' licence. The first consists of NCB wooden-bodied minerals, which supposedly carries coal to a Landsales yard that never existed in reality, located somewhere beyond the backscene to the fiddle yard. The other is a small P.W./breakdown train consisting of a tool van, a ballast wagon and a flat, made from a mineral wagon. It all adds variety when operating.



TOP LEFT:

The Austerly is a hybrid build of Hornby and RT Models parts on a scratch-built chassis. The rather colourful livery is prototypical.



BOTTOM LEFT:

The 150HP Fowler diesel *George Barber* was built from a Judith Edge kit. The large exhaust silencer on the engine casing is a scratch-built addition as per the prototype.

BOTTOM: A general view showing the viaduct, Blacker Beck and the car hoarder's house and the ramshackle workshop attached to it.

“Although there is a reasonably lengthy run for a train, the entire layout is really a glorified shunting plank.”





Locomotives that match the time period of the stock, and which did work at British Oak are used. There are also some that didn't actually work there but worked at either other local Coal Board sites or at other opencast sites that were also operated by Wm. Pepper/Hargreaves. Occasionally, I run others simply because I want to, but they are plausible. I don't do the so-called Rule 1 and consequently will not run absolutely anything.

Operating sessions

Being what is essentially a private mineral railway, there is no timetable, so the running of trains in an operating session can be considered more like a shift with a number of trains to be loaded during the shift. With a visitor operating one train and myself another, with brews and biscuits in-between, a session can last a couple of hours.

Although there is a reasonably lengthy run for a train, the entire layout is really a glorified shunting plank. Empties are brought in from the exchange sidings (fiddle yard) and are run very slowly over the weighbridge. The train engine either runs round or is released by another engine and the train is split for shunting under the loading building. The original plan was to have real loose coal loaded, but for several reasons, this was abandoned in favour of simply having 'the hand of God' place fixed coal loads into the wagons as they are drawn out from under the building. The rakes of three or four full wagons are weighed again and the full train of 9-11 wagons is made up ready for departure or for shunting into the long siding while other wagons are shunted.



ABOVE: A closer view of the car hoarder's house and 08016. The fence atop the retaining wall between the house and the railway line is made from old house doors. These were all made from Plastikard and plastic strip.

MIDDLE LEFT: 08016 drawing empties slowly over the weighbridge, across Blacker Lane and into the yard. 08016 is a repainted, renumbered and weathered Bachmann model.



BOTTOM LEFT: D2049, an ex-BR Class 03, crossing Blacker Lane. The Bachmann model has had its buffers replaced with circular ones and has been repainted and weathered.

The train to the staithe is shunted and loaded in the same way, but, when ready, is propelled by the engine as it was in reality. This is because there were no facilities to run the engine round the train at the end of the line. The wagons have to be shunted over the staithe one by one and placed in a short siding. The coal loads for all wagons are made using card and real coal. Each has a magnet glued to the card, or embedded in the coal, which enables the loads to be removed by the use of a magnet that is glued to the shunting pole.

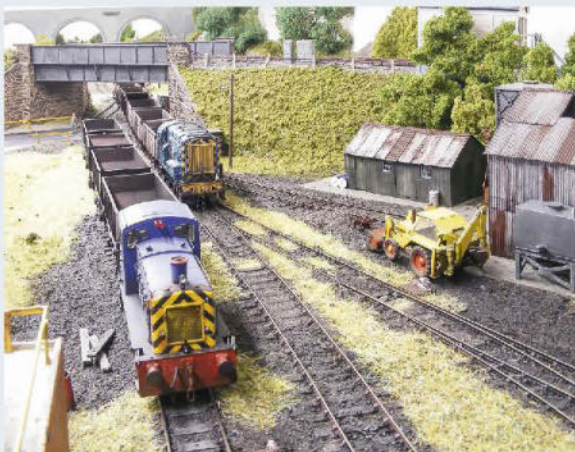
The shunting pole itself is a pen torch that is fitted with a length of brass wire and a tiny magnet. Every item of stock is fitted with 3-link couplings that have their end links made from iron wire. It is the other end, with the push-button switch, that has the unloading magnet.

Although, in reality, main line engines did not operate beyond the exchange sidings, another bit of modellers' licence is sometimes used to allow myself to indulge in running larger engines. The size of such engines is limited by the curve at the end of the shed, so for diesels, the limit is a Bo-Bo wheel arrangement and for steam, eight-coupled, but with no bogies, pony trucks, etc. The length of the engine isn't a limiting factor in itself, but the use of 3-link couplings will not allow anything with a large overhang from the driven wheelbase.

I hope this layout lasts and maintains my interest for many years but already I am itching to build something else. I have worked out that I have space for at least two micro layouts somewhere... ■



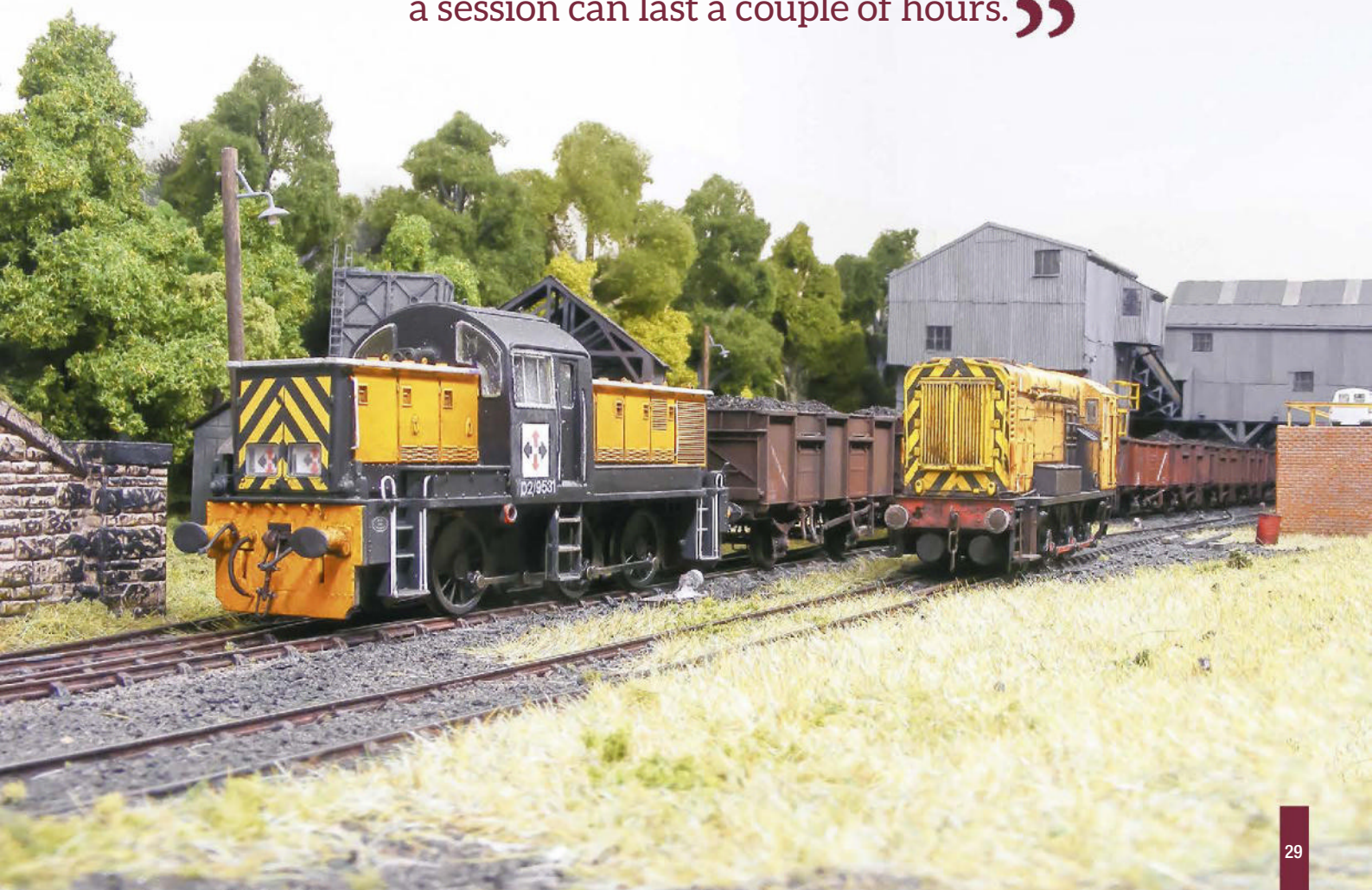
TOP LEFT: An aerial view of the yard and the former L&Y line. In reality, there was no signal box here, but it adds interest and helps to draw the eye away from the fact that the line ends abruptly.



MIDDLE LEFT: A view from the screens showing the embankment of the former L&Y line and the engine shed. The grey tank forms part of the refuelling facilities for diesels, and the JCB is for coaling steam engines.

BOTTOM: D9531 displaying the Hargreaves logo on the cabside and in the headcodes. The Class 11 is a Model Rail/ Heljan model that has been repainted and weathered.

“ With a visitor operating one train, and myself another, and with brews and biscuits in-between, a session can last a couple of hours. ”



EDITOR'S COMMENT

A couple of weeks ago, we lost one of our own.

After a short illness, Andy York sadly passed away on March 25th, 2025. We're all still trying to come to terms with this devastating loss, and in the next issue, we will be publishing a tribute to this wonderful man.

An exceptional layout photographer and a model expert, Andy's contribution to the pages in this magazine was vast. He leaves a huge void in our team, not only for his many, many skills but as a person, too. We will miss him more than we can say, and our condolences go to his wife, Wendy, and all his family and friends during this difficult time.

We've included four great layouts in the May issue, all offering something a little different. First up is the industrial 'Blacker Lane' in OO. Dave Hall is no stranger to these pages, and his latest layout sees him tackling new challenges depicting the 50-year lifespan of British Oak D.P. to great effect.

Next up is a brand-new layout from John Cox. This modern scene, set in the Midlands, aims to poke fun at the shortcomings of our local councils, while also proving something over a crowd-pleaser, especially with children, thanks to some comical guest locomotives.

The beauty of South Wales is modelled in OO by serial builder, Nick Palette, whose reimagined line from Llanharan to Tondur not only paints an idyllic picture but also offers lots of operational action, including passenger services, freight workings and serving the rejuvenated Raglan Colliery.

Last but certainly not least is 'Damems', modelled by the brilliant Ben Bucki. On the lookout for a new project to run his OO stock, Ben couldn't resist tackling the eccentric Damems in model form, which is a hive of activity despite being the smallest manned stations in the country.

We hope you enjoy the issue!

Happy Modelling

Debbie Wood

WEEKEND PLANS...

Bristol Model Railway Exhibition

What better way to spend your Early May Bank Holiday weekend? This three-day event plays host to over 30 layouts, a great mix of trade stands and a host of societies (over 40 stands), plus a number of demonstrations. Book your ticket today, visit: www.bristolmodelrail.co.uk

DATE: May 2-4th, 2025

Moray Coast O Gauge Group

The first show in the Moray area in Scotland will play host to a variety of layouts, not just in O gauge but OO and N as well. Held at the Burghead Community Hall, IV30 5TT, doors will be open from 10am until 4pm, and entry is by donation.

DATE: Saturday, May 17th, 2025

Salisbury Railex

Held at the new venue of Thruxton Motor Racing Circuit, SP11 8PN, the show this year includes over 20 layouts, including fan-favourite 'Bournemouth West'. There will also be a number of big-name traders in attendance, including Peco and Bachmann. Adult entry costs £10.

DATE: May 17-18th, 2025

Jarrow Model Railway Club exhibition

Jarrow Model Railway Club is holding its annual exhibition at Primrose Community Association, NE32 5QY. At the show, visitors can expect 14 layouts, numerous trade stands, parking, refreshments and disabled access in the building, with adult entry costing £6.

DATE: May 17-18th, 2025

Scarborough Model Railway Show

Held at the Newby & Scalby Community Hall, YO13 0RA, the club's 2025 show will feature 10 layouts in a variety of gauges, two demonstrators and four traders. Admission is £7 for adults and kids go free.

DATE: May 24-25th, 2025



PECO ACQUIRES SCOTTISH RETAILER

Peco Model Railways has announced the acquisition of Harburn Hobbies - a model railway retailer based in Edinburgh.

This marks a significant milestone for both companies, ensuring the continued success of a business with a remarkable history dating back to the 1930s.

Harburn Hobbies was founded in Leith by Mr. Hargreaves and Mr. Burns, whose combined names formed the now-famous retailer, Harburn Hobbies. In the 1950s, Colonel Jimmy Innes purchased the business before it was passed on to the Baird family in 1966. For nearly six decades, the Baird family has upheld Harburn Hobbies' reputation as a go-to destination for railway modellers across Scotland and beyond.

Peco and Harburn Hobbies have enjoyed a close partnership since the 1960s, making this acquisition a natural evolution of their longstanding relationship.

Peco recognised that Bob and Gillian Baird were approaching retirement and wanted to ensure that the well-established retailer continued to thrive. Situated near Edinburgh's city centre, with a convenient tram stop right outside, aptly named 'Harburn Halt', Harburn Hobbies remains ideally positioned to serve all railway enthusiasts.

The same friendly and knowledgeable staff will continue to serve enthusiasts at Harburn Hobbies, and Bob and Gillian will remain closely involved in the business during the transition period.

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LETTER OF THE MONTH

A NEW HOME



Geoff Williams' iconic EM gauge model of Aylesbury High Street station has a new permanent home at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre (BRC) and it will be run regularly for public viewing.

The layout depicts the original Aylesbury LNWR station as it would have appeared about 1910. It was built in Geoff's loft in the 1980s and passed to the Risborough & District Model Railway Club by his son in 2012. It was restored and converted to DCC and exhibited at Railex 2016 before, effectively, going into storage.

The Club has now arranged for the layout to be housed in the Museum at BRC and to be operated regularly on Steaming Days. This is part of a longer-term plan for the Club to move to a new Clubhouse at BRC.

The layout will be running for BRC's Easter steaming days and you will also be able to find out more about the history of the layout and the prototype on the Club stand at Railex 2025.

Roy Norton

WORKSHOP EVENT

Over the weekend of May 17th and 18th, we will be holding the fourth Model Railway Workshop event, hosted by the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways. The event was instigated by the late Paul Towers, who was editor of Model Railway News and a pioneering proponent of narrow gauge modelling back in the '60s. We are very pleased to help continue his legacy.

This has previously been held in the Gweithdy, the restored 'crinkly tin' building at Minffordd station, but this year, a serious electrical problem has occurred there. This means that we have had to relocate to the Porthmadog Ganolfan, the leisure centre next to the harbour in the town (LL49 9LU).

The event is therefore considerably bigger and will feature a selection of layouts in scales from 2 to 16mm as well as demonstrations of the skills required to build a model railway. So, if you would like to talk about baseboard construction, track laying, plastic and card kit construction, 3D printing, or scratch-building in metal, there is someone to talk to.



There will be some classic 'heritage' modelling on view too - some of the early 16mm scale models from the Merionethshire railway will be there and in 009, a portion of the late Derek Naylor's Aire Valley Railway - both classics from the 1960s.

The Ffestiniog Harbour Station will host platform rides on a quarry Hunslet and free parking is provided in the FWHR car park, a five-minute walk away.

For more details and updates, head to www.festrail.co.uk/model-railway-workshop
Paul Holmes

PUMPING STATION

This picture taken on 'The Priory Pumping Station', might bring back memories to Phil Parker of the day he spent filming at The Abbey Pumping Station Leicester in February 2021. I've called it the Priory pumping station as a mickey take on Abbey. Following the late 'Teddy' Boston's Olton Priors layout at Cadeby (1963 - 2004), which was based on Newton Abbot. The background is the Abbey Pumping Station beam engine house.

The loco is a Fourdees kit on a Bachmann 'N' gauge 'Percy' chassis.

Brian Gillespie



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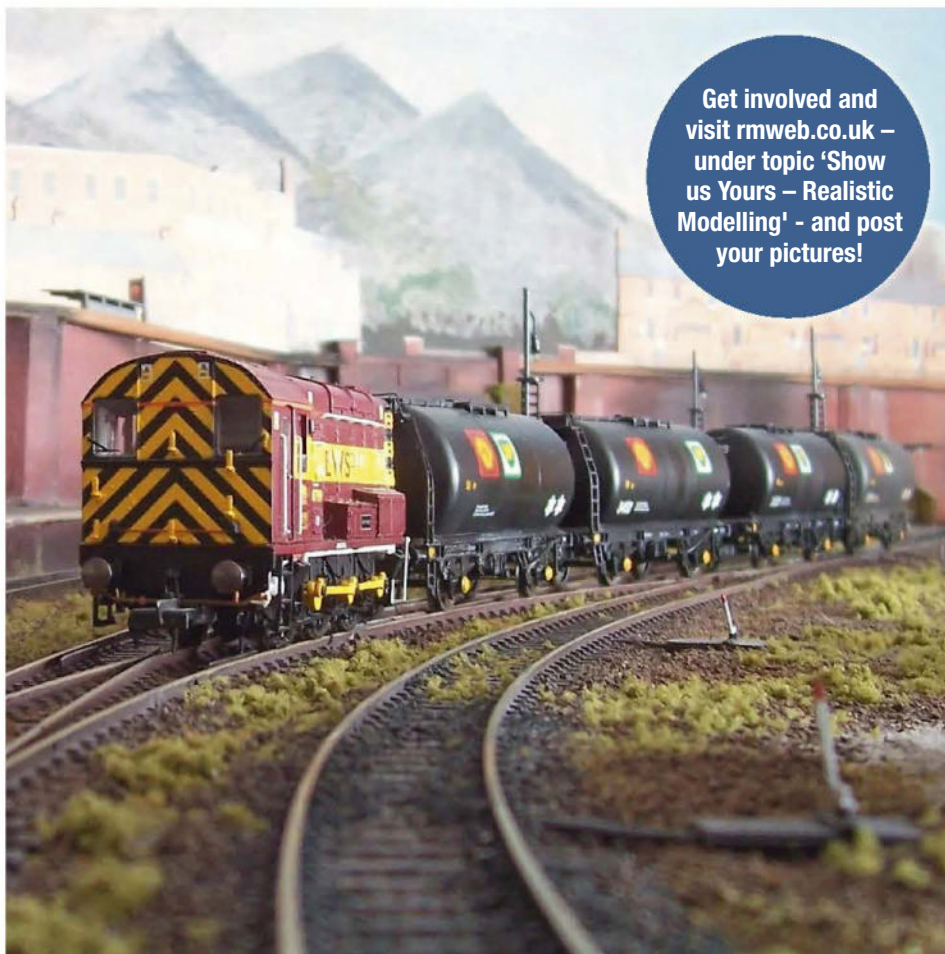
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Inspirational modelling with **RMweb**



Get involved and visit rmweb.co.uk – under topic 'Show us Yours – Realistic Modelling' - and post your pictures!

Burnt Mills is undergoing a revamp and extension. **RMweb user: mezzoman253**



LNER B12/3 1565 is kept in fine condition by the Boleyn Road cleaners. **RMweb user: Boleyn Road**



Evening shadows cast over the mountains. One loco is being serviced and another eases down the hill. Tŷ Bach shed. **RMweb user: Gwiwer**



Stanforth's Pie Shop, Skipton. **RMweb user: Stubby47**



Jacks Green shunting a coal wagon in Baker-Coopers exchange yard at Springfield Goods. **RMweb user: 92912**

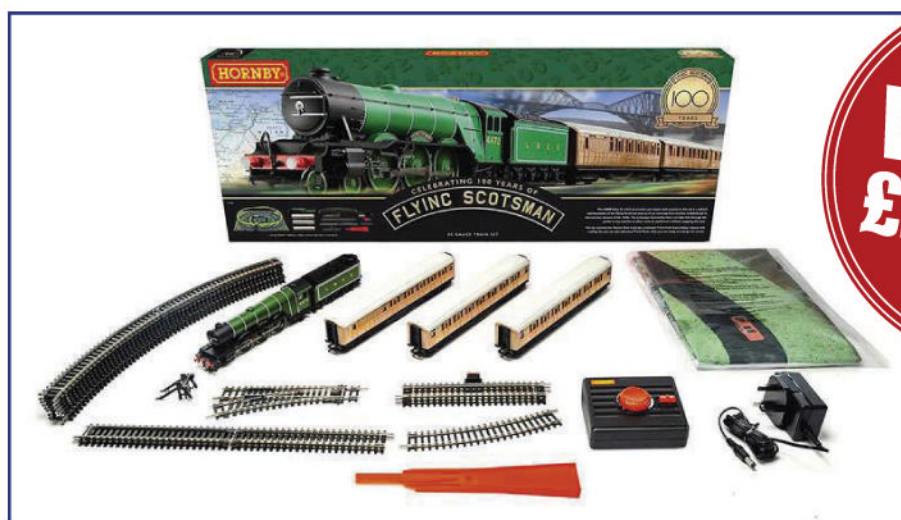


Another one from the new layout build at Merseyside Model Railway Society. Accurascale class 31514 rolls out from under the bridge. **RMweb user: Saxokid**

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POTHOLE CITY

Richard Hart describes the latest layout to emerge from that master of N gauge layouts - John Cox, who has a bone to pick with the local council...

Words: Richard Hart **Photography:** Phil Parker



A First HST passenger train waits in the inner Up platform of Oldbridge station. The driver's end of this Farish train sits on a Tomytec motorised chassis and is located at the far end, beyond the footbridge.



FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Pothole City
SCALE/GAUGE: 2mm:1ft/ 9mm/N
SIZE: 9ft x 4ft
ERA/REGION: 2000 onwards, pre-electrification/fictitious Midlands
LAYOUT TYPE: Roundy with shunting options

TOP RIGHT: Farish Malcolm Logistics Services loco Class 66, with a train of Cargo wagons, sweeps over the eastern level crossing on its approach to the Down through track at the station.



MIDDLE RIGHT: Farish diesel Class 33 passes the end of the goods yard with a rake of ARC cement wagons. This is one of two Dapol ARC rakes, one of which has been fitted throughout with Hunt's magnetic couplings from West Hill Wagon Works.



BELOW: A view across the re-fuelling point sidings where Hunslet-Barclay Class 20901 and locomotive 37699 receive some attention from maintenance staff.



Readers of BRM magazine and attendees at our exhibitions will have seen several layouts over the years designed and/or built by John Cox, either as N Gauge Layout Manager of the Alsager Railway Association or in his own name. Over recent years, John has been working a triple life; designing and leading the team on the ARA's new modular layout, 'Lowndes Rode', at the clubhouse, building the baseboards for the ARA's DCC N gauge layout, 'Smalldale Quarry', or at home building his own new offering, 'Pothole City'.

The name 'Pothole City' was chosen to capture the zeitgeist of the moment, featuring the plethora of craters in our highways and byways that either risk damaging cars or making passengers travel sick by the constant swerving. Needless to say, there are myriad such holes on the layout with attendant cameos.

Baseboard basics

The maximum dimensions of John's home-builds are governed by the need to carry them up and down the stairs and to fit into his car. Consequently, the scenic section of 9ft x 3ft is made up of four bolt-together sections, which are paired for transporting. The fiddle yard is a detached 9ft x 12

“It is always gratifying to hear children's reactions to seeing Eddie Stobart lorries among the road traffic.”





inches, bolted on behind the back-scene board. This comprises two sections, which bolt together for transit.

John uses 2 x 1-inch planed square edge (PSE) softwood timber to make his sets of frames, which, in this case, are 2ft 3ins by 3ft rectangles. This is fine for basic use, but if you intend to fit items such as Peco electric semaphore signals, 3 x 1-inch PSE offers more protection to the electrics, especially if you are going to be transporting your layout to exhibitions. Don't forget that PSE dimensions are those before they are planed down.

To add stability and keep a true plane by preventing warping, John adds a central batten to each frame. Each batten has holes drilled through them for the passage of wires. The abutting ends not only have 6.5mm holes drilled to take 6mm bolts with wing-nuts, but also have corresponding tongues and grooves to facilitate assembly and ensure alignment, so essential for successful exhibiting. Having been a joiner in a former life, John has a well-stocked tool cupboard, which includes a router for the t & g work.

Over the years, John has tried a variety of thicknesses of plywood for the board tops and found that 6mm is the optimum for exhibition layouts; 4mm is lighter but doesn't prevent warping and 9mm is very stable but heavy, and best suited to layouts that will remain in the attic or man-shed.



ABOVE: Colas Rail-liveried 37146 with a train of logs passes through the station on the inner Down line. The leading log wagon of the rake is fitted with a Peco coupler lift arm on an Elsie coupling for electro-magnetic uncoupling.



MIDDLE LEFT: One of the layout's cameos reflects John's interest in steam traction engines.

BOTTOM LEFT: A whimsy, much appreciated by children, is the sight of a Mr Blobby train emerging from the fiddle yard. This is powered by a much-decorated Parish Class 47.

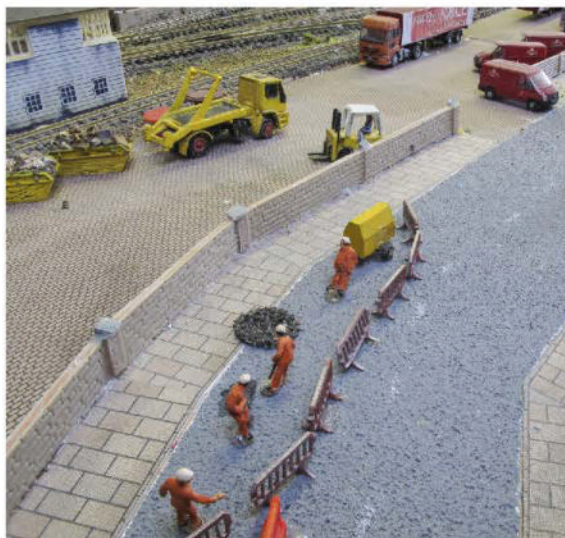
Being intended for exhibitions means having the layout at a height for everyone to be able to view the action, including, or even especially, people in wheelchairs and children. Therefore, John's preferred height for the baseboard is 34 inches off the ground. He has designed a self-standing trestle style sub-frame, with hinged legs held in place with diagonal struts, but which fold up neatly for transit. It is useful in that it can act as a table for standing the layout on upright, either whole or individual sections, and for undertaking below-decks wiring repairs, although it takes up more room in the car than if hinged legs are attached directly to the underside of the baseboard. Again, 2 x 1-inch PSE softwood is used.

Painting or varnishing the boards, frames and legs is a matter of personal choice but can be informed by where the layout will ultimately be stored; a damp garage might suggest the investment of a wood-preserving coating.

Creating the scene

The scene is one of a suburban location on the edge of the large town of Oldbridge, which justifies a major station. The immediate locale has workers' houses, an indication of former industry in the area, and newer out-of-town enterprises with retail outlets, distribution and road transport hubs and construction sites. It is always gratifying to hear children's reactions to seeing Eddie Stobart lorries among the road traffic.

Set fictitiously in the Midlands in the decades since the turn of the century, prior to electrification, John is not precious about allowing a considerable degree of licence to overlapping eras of road and rail vehicles. Our rose-tinted spectacles might suggest potholes weren't as bad a couple of decades ago, but if that's true, they've made up for lost time since.



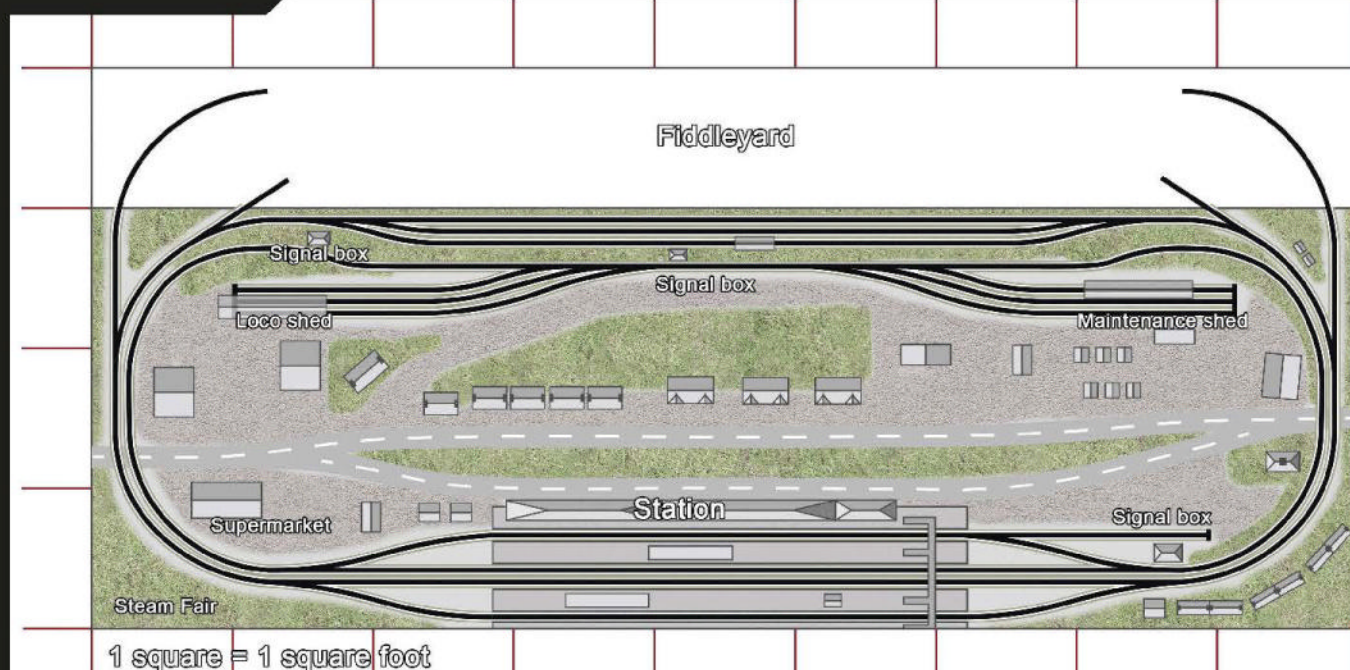
TOP LEFT: A One of the eponymous potholes. The recent advent of 3D printing has greatly assisted cameos such as this with barriers and traffic cones (although some cones seem to be missing).



MIDDLE LEFT: For many years, until quite recently, John was a school crossing patrol 'lollipop' man. Here, he is taking centre stage, supervising children across a Layouts 4 U zebra crossing.

RIGHT: A panoramic view of the station with a GBRf Class 66, number 66703, pulling a long rake of vans and minibuses on the Down line, while a Stobart coach arrives to take passengers from the Up HST on a sightseeing tour of Oldbridge's potholes.

TRACKPLAN





At first sight, 'Pothole City' is a typical roundy layout, but closer inspection reveals more than that, with shunting opportunities towards the back. A main line station occupies the layout front and centre, with four tracks accessed by five platforms, two of which are islands spanned by a long footbridge. The platforms are long enough to accommodate full-length passenger trains. The inner track leads to a long siding/head-shunt.

The main station buildings are of plastic and/or resin, with the passenger entrance being at platform height, requiring the approach roads to the concourse to be gently inclined.

In operation

John designed the layout with exhibitions in mind and, therefore, has an optional set-up, depending on whether the show is a two-, three-, or a one-day exhibition where setting-up time might be restricted.

For both formats, the inner, or anti-clockwise, track sweeps away from the station over a level crossing and is confronted with a choice of two routes: The first leads to a large yard area with two pairs each of three sidings before exiting to re-join the main line. Three of the sidings have to be reversed into and offer carriage washing and shed housing facilities. The facing three



TOP LEFT: Another pothole is fenced off and awaiting attention.

MIDDLE LEFT: These potholes have priority in receiving attention. Perhaps Oldbridge's Mayor lives locally!

BELOW: A Network Rail engineers' train, hauled by Class 37302, sweeps around the bend beside the steam traction rally on the Up line.



“ Our rose-tinted spectacles might suggest potholes weren't as bad a couple of decades ago, but if that's true, they've certainly made up for lost time since. ”





sidings include re-fuelling plant and storage/off-loading to the road transport hub. Trains seeking an onward journey from these sidings initially need to be shunted in reverse. In effect, this area acts as the fiddle yard for the inner circuit, with all trains on view.

The second track off the points is the straight-through main line, returning to the station.

The outer, or clockwise track, with its two platforms, leaves the station and passes over a level crossing before arriving at a set of points. Taking the right option leads to the choice of straight on for the main line return to the station or taking one of two passing loops cum storage sidings. The left option passes through the scenic break to the fiddle yard behind, where it further sub-divides into four looped sidings before emerging through the far end of the scenic break and re-joining the scenic main line before returning to the station.

However, for a one-day exhibition, John leaves the fiddle yard at home. Thus, the pair of turnout points at the rear of the outer circuit are set permanently to sweep in or out of the passing loops in lieu of the sidings it can no longer access in the fiddle yard. He anticipates making refinements to the arrangement after experiencing a few exhibitions.



ABOVE: A Load Haul-liveried loco number 56203, made by Dapol, passes an engine shed with a rake of coal wagons. In the foreground are some of the sidings.

LEFT: An ambulance with flashing lights (fitted by Kyte's Lights) speeds off to answer an emergency call. Has someone cycled into a pothole?

RIGHT: Another view of the Class 66 hauling the train of vans. John asks children (of all ages) to count the vans: it is a trick question, but we won't spoil it here; come and see it at an exhibition.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Farish diesel 47734 with a Royal Mail train emerges from the station on the Down line.

BELOW: A pair of DMUs in the sidings with one, a Farish Cross Country, enjoying a wash and brush up.



The whole operation is designed so there can always be trains either on display or moving; a feat not impossible if two operators communicate over the choreography. There's little more off-putting for the paying public for both trains being operated in the fiddle yard at the same time with nothing happening front of stage.

John has predominantly used Peco flexitrack, although he has experimented for the first time with Kato set track with the rails housed in moulded ballast. These can look very toy-like and plastic, but the skilful addition of granular ballast and weathering paint makes it difficult to pick them out. Turnout points, all of which are Peco insulfrogs to facilitate isolating idle trains, are driven by Seep point motors and are operated via a Gaugemaster CDU, using the stud and probe method; one for each direction. Power comes from a pair of Gaugemaster DC/ Analogue controllers so two operators can work alongside one another.

There is quite a lot of street and platform lighting on 'Pothole City', which are run off 3-volt DC supplies from Layouts4U. Vehicles with flashing lights came from Kytes Lights.

“The whole operation is designed so there can always be trains either on display or moving; a feat not impossible if two operators communicate over the choreography.”





Rolling stock

John has an extensive collection of locomotives and rolling stock, both passenger and freight. These suit the era of the decades around the turn of the century, being predominantly diesel powered, with an occasional heritage steam loco hauling a holiday special passenger train. He is also not averse to slipping in a *Thomas* and some of his friends if the audience looks likely to be appreciative. His loco fleet comprises mainly Farish and Dapol, but his flagships are his CJM diesels. Passenger trains include Virgin HSTs, Voyagers, Caledonian sleepers, DMUs of a variety of operators and, due to the application of vinyl sides, the Royal Train. Goods trains vary in length according to whether they are stabled in the fiddle yard or in the shorter sidings in the scenic section. Hewn timber, ARC cements, pleasure cruisers, vans and mini-busses (up to 48 on 16 flat wagons), coal, steel and shipping containers can all be found on the layout.

Never one to rest on his laurels, John's fertile imagination is already forming a plan for a module to fit into 'Lowndes Rode'; more of that anon. ■



ABOVE:

Diesel number 20901 emerges from the siding next to the construction site. From where did they acquire those cones, one wonders?

LEFT: Another view of the carriage washer, with *Mr Blobby* peeking out from behind a Farish One Anglia DMU on the far siding.

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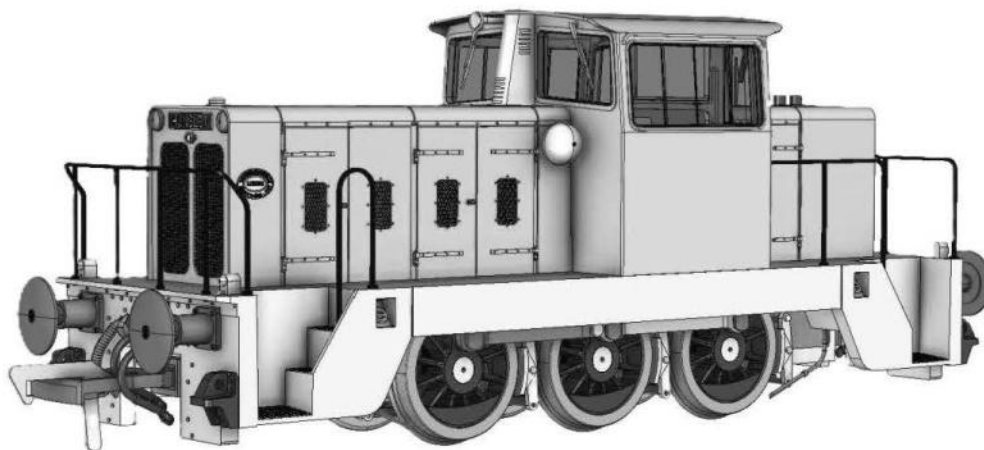


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Works #HE6614, 1965. NCB #503



Works #HE7017, 1971. HNRC #29



Works #HE8976, 1979. British Steel #403



Works #HE8999, 1981. Esso #D56

Note: Not all liveries and running numbers shown

- One of Hunslet's most successful designs with dozens built from 1965 and many still in use now in industry or on preserved railways.
- Models will include prototypical variations in equipment boxes, handrails, engine breathers and sandboxes.
- Launch versions to include National Coal Board green, British Steel yellow, Harry Needle spot hire and Esso refinery locos in red.
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Getting Practical with...

TOOL

of the

MONTH



Nail scissors

On my NG7 layout, one of the hedges sticks over the edge of the fiddle yard exit. Every time the train passed, it would nudge the duckets on the guard's coach, so a little trimming was called for. The perfect tool for this, and quite a bit of other scenic work, is a pair of curved nail scissors. Strong and sharp, they can delicately clip away offending greenery. Buy a pair for modelling use, though – don't pinch someone else's!



Ask Phil

Why are the bristles on a new paintbrush stiff?

Gum. Our modelling paintbrushes are supplied full of gum to protect the bristles in transit. When we unpack a new brush, we expect to see a nice, sharp point, so the makers ensure that this is exactly what we get. Making the brush usable simply requires it to be given a quick wash in water, which will remove the gum. Dry the bristles and restore the point by pinching with damp fingers, then you are ready to get painting.

New on the workbench

NG7 wheels from EDM Models

Free-running rolling stock needs nice metal wheels. Larger scales demand accurate detail. Both of these are provided by EDM Models' new range of metal wheels on 3D-printed centres. Printing in-house means that we can have the curly spokes beloved of narrow gauge railway concerns but not often seen in standard gauge, which is why simply using OO wheels won't look right. Tyres and axles are blackened metal, so no painting is required. Currently, 10.5mm diameter is offered with six and eight spokes, but the range will expand over time. Visit www.ngtrains.com for more details.





Phil Parker



Michael Russell



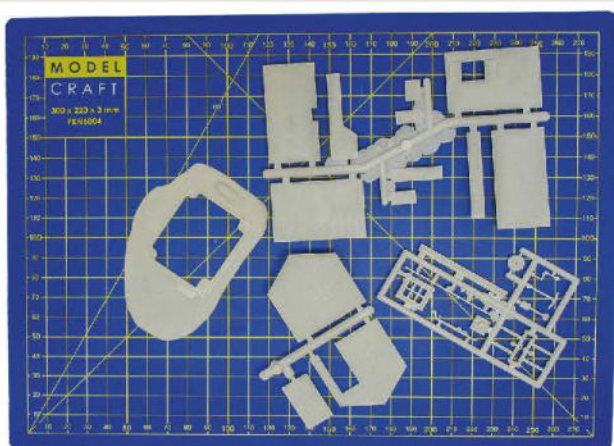
Chris Ford



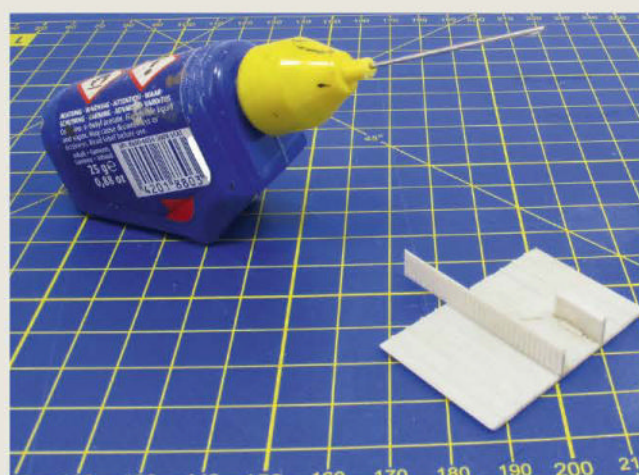
Michael Campbell

Build a Great Western Platelayers hut

Cooper Craft's classic GWR platelayers' hut disappeared from the market for years, but now this really useful lineside building is back from Cambrian Model Rail.



1 Due to the age of the moulds, there is a bit of flash on my kit, so the first job is to carefully trim this away with a sharp knife where it encroaches on parts I'll be using, such as the window and chimney breast.



2 Using a plastic cement with a nice long metal tube to aid accurate placing, I start assembling the chimney. Part numbers are on the back, and some of the edges are chamfered for a neat fit. Once in place, I run solvent on the joint to remove any excess cement.



3 I've swapped the door and plain wall ends to better fit the location I plan for the hut. This means they no longer match up with the entrance slab moulded into the base, but I won't be using this anyway, as it makes bedding the model into the layout much harder.



4 Walls are painted with Humbrol 155 (Olive drab) and then overpainted with thinned 173 (Track colour) while it is still wet, so they blend. The roof is a mix of 67 (Tank grey) and 66 (Grey). Bricks are 70 (Brick red). A little dirt on the chimney, and the model is ready for the layout.

Getting Practical



Repainting old carriages



Michael Russell

LAST MONTH, I showed how to refurbish second-hand carriage models to run alongside contemporary items. This time, I take those carriages and finish the painting so that they are ready-to-run. For the model that required a full repaint, I finished my model with matt varnish.

This was to fit in with the other carriages, but you may wish to retain the gloss finish or go for satin.

WHAT YOU NEED

HMRS

Pressfix sheet 14 BR steam era loco and coach insignia

Tamiya

TS-11 maroon

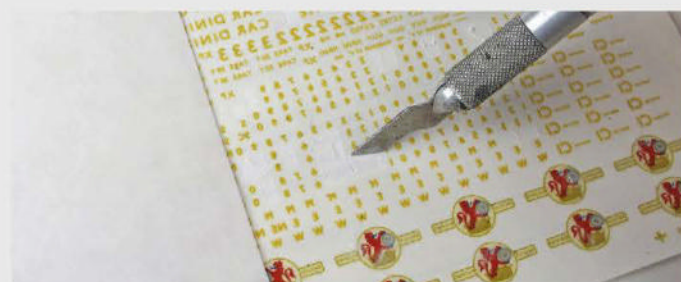
Other

Uni POSCA black, white and yellow pens, grey car primer, black car aerosol paint, brush-on metal primer, etching primer, modelling masking tape, DIY masking tape, dark grey acrylic paint, buff acrylic paint, acrylic thinners, cellulose thinners, superglue, Klear floor varnish (or diluted acrylic varnish), steel rule, scissors, craft knife, small modellers' paintbrush, rags, FDM 3D printer (optional).

TOP TIPS



TIP 1 Stop your rule scratching the painted surface, and prevent paint creeping under it, by sticking masking tape on the reverse side.



TIP 2 The HMRS transfers need to be protected while you are working with them. Use the protecting paper to avoid leaning on the rest of the sheet while working on it, as they will stick to you. Ensure that you observe the orientation of the protecting paper, as the reverse side will stick to the transfers and damage them.



1 Metal parts will need priming first. For small areas, such as the handrails and cables on the end of this suburban coach, I used a household primer applied with a brush. Many are now water-based, dry quickly and are less odorous and thus more suitable for indoor use.



2 New parts that need to be black were previously fitted underneath and I chose to hand-paint these using a brush and enamel paint. Weathering will be used to blend in the painted and plastic areas later.



3 The roof of this Graham Farish carriage has white metal ventilators fitted and so I employed an etch primer. When dry, dilute dark acrylic grey was then applied by brush and, if sufficiently diluted, you can keep brush marks to a minimum.



4 For a full repaint, remove all the factory-applied decals, otherwise they will mar the finish even through a layer of primer. Many will come off with IPA, but I had to resort to cellulose thinners. These are very strong, so apply a little and work quickly to avoid damaging the plastic.



5 The carriage was sprayed with a primer and then with a topcoat of maroon. If you are spraying a red topcoat, check on the correct colour of primer required - some reds require a black undercoat.



6 Where possible, if parts can be separated, then this makes life much easier as no masking will be required. The ends of the Hornby carriage are removable and could be sprayed separately with an etch primer and then matt black.

Getting Practical



7 I made new 3D window parts to be fixed in place over the existing glazing. These were stuck to some card using double-sided tape and then primed and painted at the same time as the body. They were glued in place on the carriage with superglue.



8 The lining was done with POSCA yellow, white and black pens and a steel rule. Hold the rule steady and aim for a consistent width stroke. Be careful that ink doesn't run along the edge of the rule and onto the body. A damp rag can be used to remove overspill or to start again if needed.



9 I protected the lining with a hand-brushed coat of Klear varnish and added a drop of buff acrylic paint to tone it down slightly. The decals can now be added. I used sheet 14 from HMRS and went for Pressfix to avoid damaging the paintwork, which is sensitive to alcohol.



10 To preserve your carriages in good condition, it is important to house them properly. Many older models have lost their boxes, so I made new ones by adapting a shoe box. You can also buy generic stock boxes off the shelf.

CONCLUSION

The most difficult part of repainting is the lining out, but there are no corners involved, which makes things much easier and so this is a good lining subject to start out with. The POSCA pens are very good, covering well and with good flow, but they only come in a limited range of colours. You could use decals instead and HMRS can supply these.





Build a duck pond scene



Phil Parker

YOU REALLY can buy all sorts of accessories for a model railway these days. Surely though, a duck pond has got to be one of the oddest!

World War Scenics is the company responsible for this resin pond, complete with waterfowl. It must have been an interesting meeting when they came up with the idea. But while it might seem oddball, what a lovely space-filling detail for a layout. Everyone loves ducks, and they seem to find

any tiny stretch of water, so a group in a modest pond is perfectly accurate.

The pond came to me in a bundle, complete with baseboard, pink flowers, glue and grass fibres. Maybe if you don't want ducks on the layout, it would make a fun side project. The pond is available separately if you prefer.

Once I'd started building, I realised that the board really needed another park-style feature. Handily, I had some playground equipment from Busch waiting for me, and so, despite it being HO scale, I've included it to make a nice park scene. Don't get hung up on scale with this sort of thing; if it looks right, it is right, and do you really know how big a climbing frame is anyway?

What I can say for certain is this is a modern playground. Spring riders never existed when I was young enough to play on them. In the 1970s, we had a Witches Hat and one of those rocking horses that seated seven kid. No soft places to land when we came off either...

Anyway, all we need for a nice scene that will appeal to everyone, and can be made to fit an odd corner of the layout.

WHAT YOU NEED

World War Scenics

Pond Bundle

Busch

Playground Equipment Kit (HO 1485)

Other

Figures, static grass applicator (electric or puffer bottle), knife, small saw, PVA glue, acrylic gloss varnish, "Universal Trail" powder, sponge, old paintbrush, ready-mix wall filler, brown emulsion, Railmatch sleeper grime spray, Glue'n'glaze.

Buy the
WWS duck
pond bundle
featured in this
article from
our online store at
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hooluh.co.uk/](http://worldofrailways.hooluh.co.uk/)

Getting Practical



1 The WWS bundle contains a laser-cut MDF baseboard, some Basing Glue, static grass fibres, 100 pink foliage tufts, and, of course, the one-piece, cast resin duck pond.



2 The baseboard slots together, and with a little PVA glue in each joint will provide a nice, solid board to build the scene on. The final size is 295mm x 210mm.



3 I want to sink the resin pond into the surface a bit to make it look more natural. The first step is to draw around it, then cut out a hole with a fine-tooth saw. A hole is drilled to start the cut, which doesn't need to be that precise as we'll hide any gaps later.



4 Using the leftover MDF, I create a couple of shelves to support the pond by sticking them under the board top. Using some card packing on them, perhaps from the box the kit arrived in, would lower the pond even further.



5 Time to fill the gaps with some DIY store wall filler and blend the resin edges of the duck pond into the surrounding landscape. While the filler is out, I use it to add a few lumps to the baseboard to remove the "flat Earth" look.



6 Since real British duck ponds have a kind of muddy brown water, definitely not blue, the resin is given a spray with Railmatch Frame Dirt. At the same time, the earth is painted with brown emulsion.



7 I like to start the scenic work with the paths, and these are simply Basing Glue painted on the board, and then sprinkled with "Universal Trail" from Specialist Aggregates. It's a very fine beige dust that looks like crushed stone paths.



8 More Basing Glue is applied over the entire board. While you can use a brush or glue spreader, I find that dabbing it on with a sponge gives a really nice smooth coat, with no ridges or lumps.



9 The electrostatic grass supplied in the kit is a really nice colour for springtime, but if that's all you use, the result will be too consistent, so I mix it up with some leftover fibres from other jobs. I'm using an electronic tool, but a puffer bottle will be just as good.



10 Time for some colour, courtesy of the coarse pink foliage tufts. They are self-adhesive, but this only really works on a hard surface, so I dip them in the Basing Glue and plant firmly in the grass. The model has 50 tufts so far, which I've bunched together for a dramatic effect.



11 When all the glue is dry and any excess fibres have been cleaned away, I give the water a couple of coats of acrylic varnish. For this sort of job, the quick drying time of acrylics means there is less chance of dust landing and sticking to the surface.

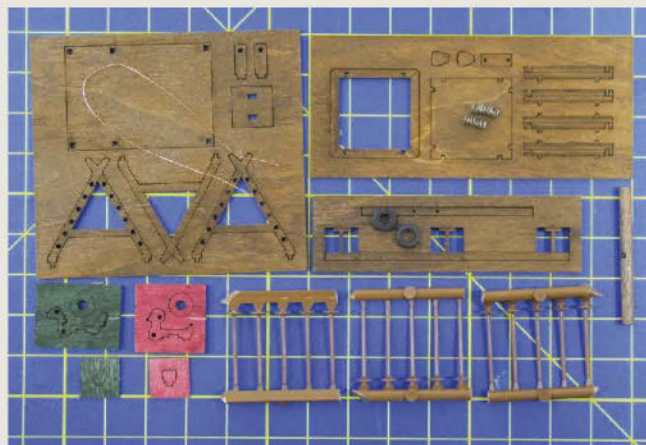


12 Once the water is dry, out comes the fine paintbrush so I can give the ducks some colour. I'm assuming they are mallards, and we have a male and three females, or at least youngsters who haven't started to colour up yet.

Getting Practical



13 Giving a cheap paintbrush a trim and dunking the fibres in Deluxe Glue'n'Glaze makes some rather unruly reeds at one end of the pond. I think they add a bit of texture to the scene.



14 To add a little extra to the scene, I've got Busch's Playground Equipment set, which is a multi-media kit with laser-cut wooden parts, some plastic rods, wire, springs and rubber tyres.



15 The simplest playground piece to build is the sandpit. Just slot the parts together with a little PVA glue. A dry-run is worthwhile, as they need to go in a specific order. The sand is more "Universal Trail" fixed with watered-down PVA.



16 Moving on to the climbing frame, the uprights slot into a wooden base, and are held apart with a beam along the top. Some of the plastic rods are fitted through holes in the uprights and then cut to length with clippers.



17 Bark is often used in playgrounds to provide a soft landing for anyone falling off the equipment. The contents of an unused teabag replicate this well in OO scale. If your model lives anywhere damp, give it a coat of matt varnish to avoid the tea growing mould.



18 One of my favourite items in this kit is the working seesaw, which uses another plastic rod as a pivot and some offcuts for the handles. One of the tyres is cut in half to fit under each of the ends.



19 The spring rider toys have a laser-cut circle base, into which the spring is fitted with superglue. The body fits on top, and more plastic rod offcuts become handles and footrests.



20 Figures provide a focus for a scene like this, and these are Hornby ready-to-use models, which fit the scene rather nicely and need no painting or modifying.



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Getting Practical

The base below the office looks a bit odd on a flat baseboard, so I built the ground up around it with card or expanded polystyrene and it looks much better. Here, the weighbridge sits proud of surrounding ballast and yard surface, but it could also be inset into a paved yard or quayside. The weighbridge itself is delightfully detailed, with the rail gaps perfectly positioned so it looks as though the weighing deck is separate from its surroundings.



Build a railway wagon weighbridge



Michael Campbell

WHILE WEIGHBRIDGES for road vehicles are often modelled, being found in many goods yards, weighbridges for railway wagons are less commonly seen. They would have most likely been found at sources of bulk traffic, such as collieries, quarries, docks, industrial complexes and larger goods yards. The rails that cross the weighbridge are separate from the adjoining rails, so the deck is free to deflect vertically.

A series of levers under the deck connect it to the weighing machine, housed in an adjacent office, from which empty (tare) or laden (gross) weights of wagons would be recorded to calculate the value of the load.

This kit is mixed media; the weighbridge is laser-cut wood, which provides a surprising level of detail, while the office is a traditional plastic kit. It also comes with a short "set-track" straight, which is exactly the same length as the weighbridge itself. While assembly needs only basic tools and techniques, attention to a few details can enhance the finish.

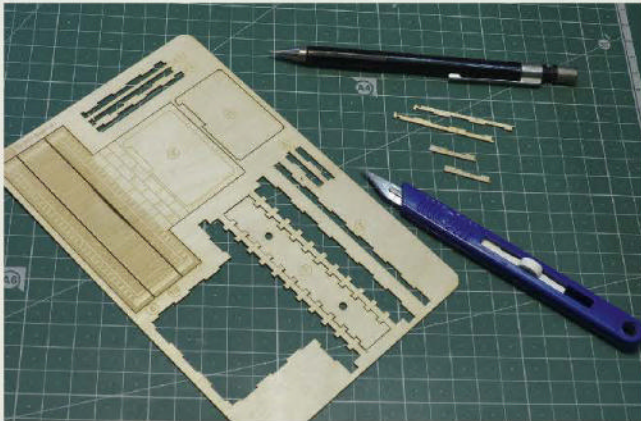
WHAT YOU NEED

Ratio

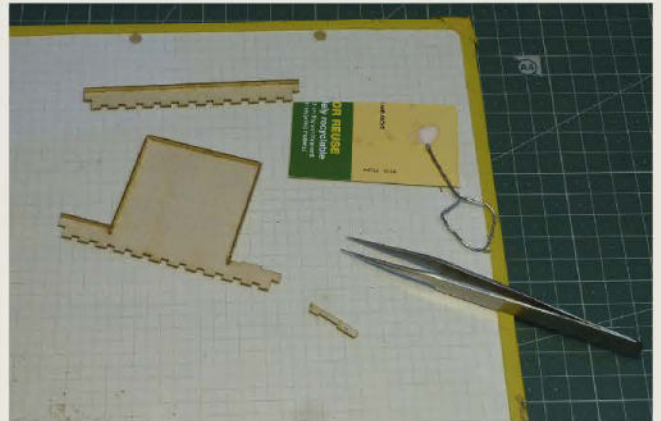
555 Railway Wagon Weighbridge

Other

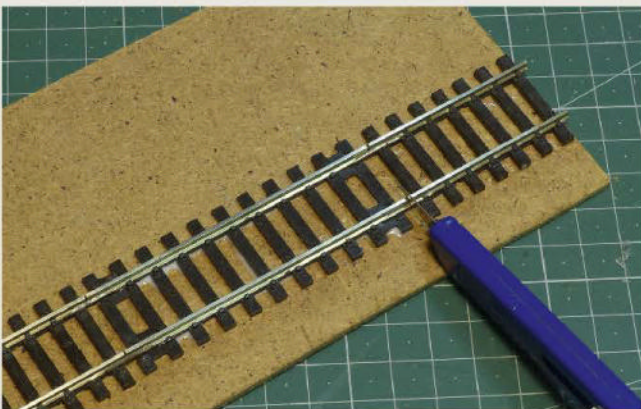
Craft knife or scalpel with sharp, new blades, steel square, fine files, razor saw blade, tweezers, pin vice and small drill bits, PVA or contact adhesive for the wood parts, plastic solvent or cement, paints of choice; I used red oxide car primer and a selection of acrylics



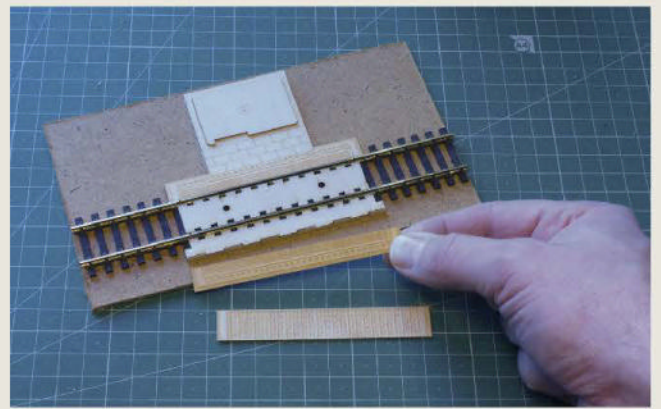
1 The weighbridge and base parts were cut from the fret with a sharp scalpel as needed. Smaller parts are numbered on the fret rather than the part, so I wrote the number on them in pencil.



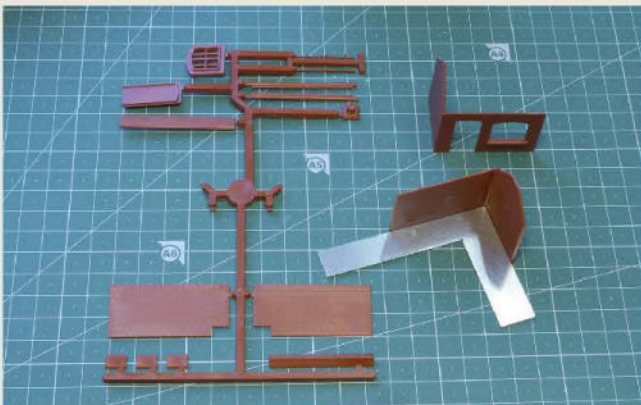
2 I used tacky PVA glue for assembly, squeezing a little onto scrap card and applying with a piece of wire. Using a glass surface (from an old picture) prevents parts getting stuck down by accident! A sheet of plastic will work, too.



3 When fixing the weighbridge track section in place, I deliberately left a scalpel-blade width gap in the rail joints so that the weighbridge section will be visibly separate from the adjoining rails.



4 I glued the weighbridge and base parts together, checking the fit against the track, but didn't glue them down yet. It helps to weight the parts to ensure the layers stay flat while the glue dries. Don't forget to paint the rails before final assembly.



5 Moving on to the office, I assembled each side wall to an end wall against a square and then joined them together. As the side walls can bow inwards, I also cut a length of sprue to brace across the walls.

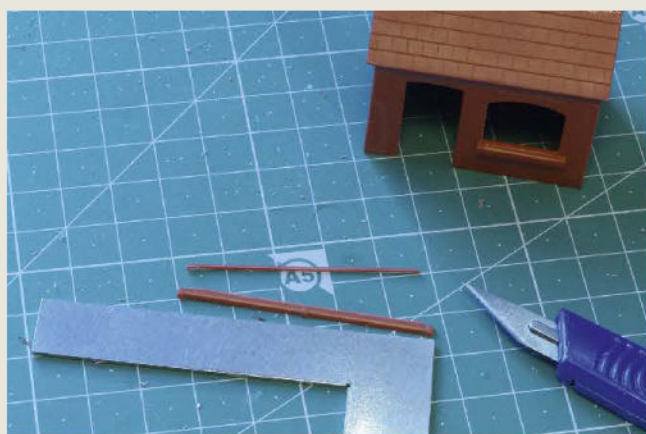


6 Having assembled the chimney, I thought the edges looked plain. I marked the position of the courses around the edge with a scalpel, then drew a razor saw blade horizontally across the edge to complete the courses.

Getting Practical



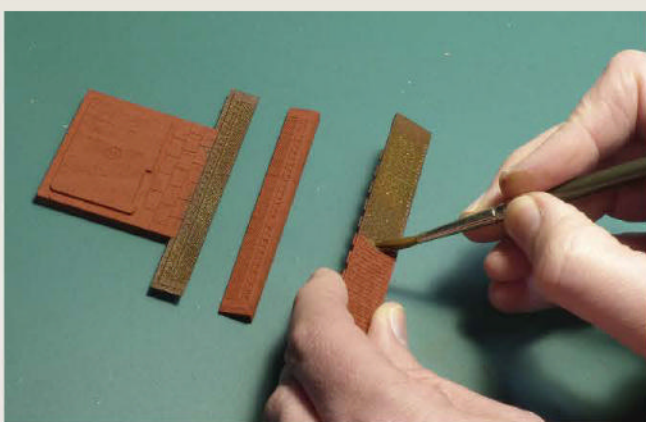
7 I also drilled out the chimney pot, carefully and slowly, with a 2mm bit in a pin vice while still on the sprue. It only needs to be a couple of millimetres deep to look convincing once painted black.



8 The gutters seemed to protrude too far, so to improve the look, I carefully sliced about 0.5mm from the support edge before cementing them to the walls just below the roof. The centre of the gutter is then just beyond the roof edge.



9 That meant the downpipes would also stick out too far, so I drilled small holes for the mounting pins to sit into, fixing the downpipes directly under the gutter. Note the sliver of tin foil used for flashing to hide the roof/chimney joint.



10 I primed both office and base parts with red oxide car primer to help a good paint finish. The weighbridge was then painted with a dark rusty brown; it doesn't matter if a little primer shows through in places.



11 A more orange shade of brown was then mixed, most of the paint wiped off the brush on kitchen towel, and dry-brushed over the raised detail of the weighbridge deck. Again, this can be patchy. The paving was then painted grey/stone and washed with a dark brown.



12 The office walls were painted a reddish brown, then shades were mixed with more orange, red, or black, and individual bricks picked out at random. You don't have to be that precise – a dab will do, and not all bricks are painted in this way.



13 The next step was to use a mortar colour of sand/grey, which was then mixed slightly thinner than normal. I then washed lightly over the walls, getting into the mortar courses, with a paintbrush.



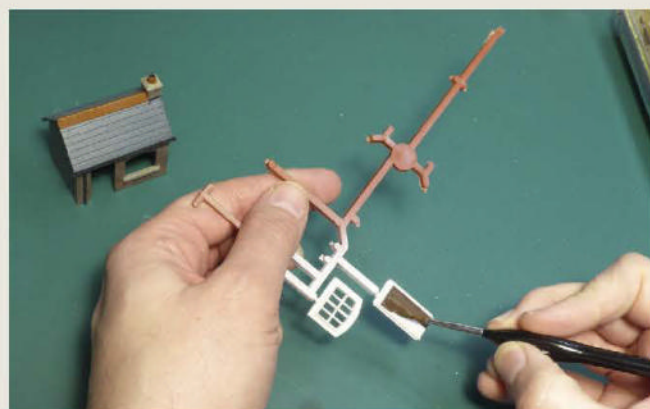
14 Almost immediately, this was wiped off with kitchen towel in diagonal movements, leaving the paint in the mortar courses. A slightly damp brush was used in corners and around gutters. A little paint remaining, toning down the brickwork surface is fine.



15 The roof was painted blue-grey, and then a thinner mix of paler grey, and finally a dark grey wash to put shadows between the slates. The capping and chimney pot was painted terracotta, and the window sill and chimney cap in a grey/beige stone colour.



16 The gutters and downpipes were painted an off-black, using paper to mask the wall behind the downpipes. After all your careful work on the brickwork, you don't want to accidentally get paint anywhere it shouldn't be!



17 I've primed the window and door in white while still on the sprue, which I would recommend doing. These were painted off-white and then the door was painted in a dark brown.



18 Finally, the weighbridge base was then glued in place, ensuring it sits below rail level and a snug fit to the track. Before fitting the office, I made a simple desk from scraps of plastic, painted brown with a paper "ledger" on it, and glued it by the window.

Getting Practical

The wagon was painted with acrylics and the transfers applied, though with my grab handle addition there was quite a bit of jiggery-pokery with the number/weight panel. This was sliced into three and squared off with some black paint.



Building the Parkside Grain Wagon kit



Chris Ford

PLASTIC WAGON kits have been with us since the 1950s and, despite the plethora of RTR vehicles available, they not only fill the gaps that these do not cover but, more importantly, push us into some proper modelling! This particular kit has been around for many years, but now, under the Peco banner, it has been seriously upgraded. The prototype is the Mark 2 version of the LNER bulk grain wagon, the first being taken from a GWR drawing and having full-size side doors and removable floors. The idea was that it could double up as a standard box van.

The day-to-day impracticalities of this are obvious and the Mk. 2 design replaced the doors with inspection windows and a hatch on one side. The main routes for these were between East Anglia and Scotland for distillery supplies, and though newer vehicles replaced them by the mid-1960s, a handful hung on into the 1970s in private industry.

The kit is well designed and goes together without any problems, though there are a couple of physical omissions added along the way. I also skirted around the instructions somewhat and left some of the more delicate parts, such as the hopper actuation wheels, to the end, as I anticipated there would be a lot of handling during the build.

WHAT YOU NEED

Peco

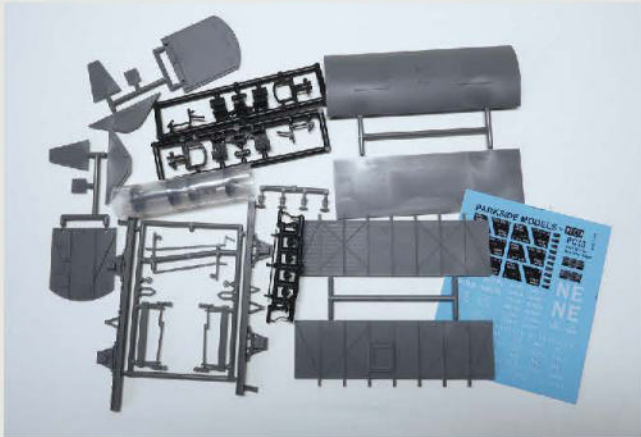
Parkside PC13 LNER Bulk Grain Wagon kit

Slaters

20 thou Plastikard

Other

Drills 2mm and 0.7mm, craft knife, Blu-Tak, small files/sanding stick, liquid solvent, brass handrail wire and paint.



1 The main parts look to have been completely retooled and there is a new set of buffers, which are a great improvement on the original Parkside items; though you still get the original set for the spares box! The transfers are also new, and once again there are plenty of spares.



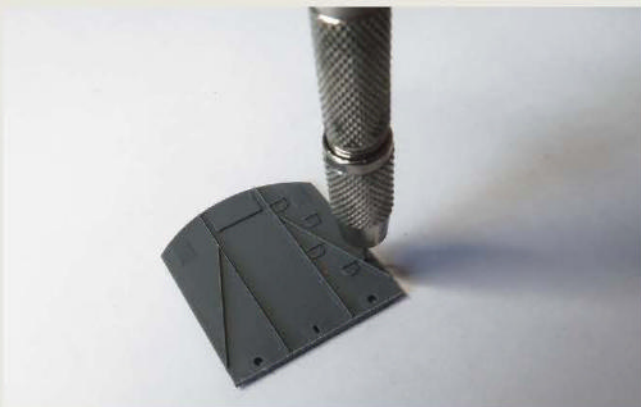
2 I tend to treat instructions with a pinch of salt, although I do read them first! My number one target is to get a free-running chassis. Here, the axleboxes have been cleaned out with a 2mm drill and the supplied bearings dropped in. I usually wash a little solvent over them; the soft plastic gives just enough 'grab'.



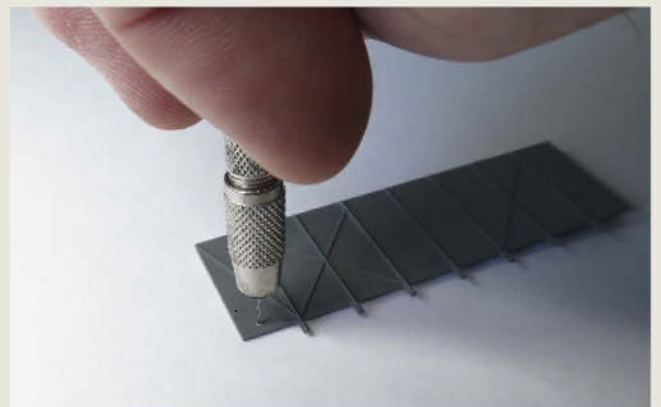
3 A dry run with some Blu-Tak is always a good idea to check that the axleboxes line up. In this instance, they were perfect, and it was just a case of tacking with some solvent, checking again, and then fixing firmly.



4 With the wheels removed, it was time to construct the hopper section. This was an entertaining part of the build and the finished section was thoroughly smoothed off with a sanding stick.



5 One thing that is strangely absent from this kit is the brace of handrails that adorn the prototype; the curved one running alongside the end steps is a particular feature. A 0.7mm hole was drilled level with the step on each end piece to take the lower end of this.



6 There are also grab rails on the roof at the top of the steps and at the bottom left of each side; these are presumably used in conjunction with the shunter's step. Again, 0.7mm holes were drilled on the diagonal.

Getting Practical



7 0.7mm brass wire was used for all the rails, and here it has been pre-bent with a long 'tail' to aid handling. When in position, it was secured with gel-type super glue, then trimmed and filed flush when completely hard.



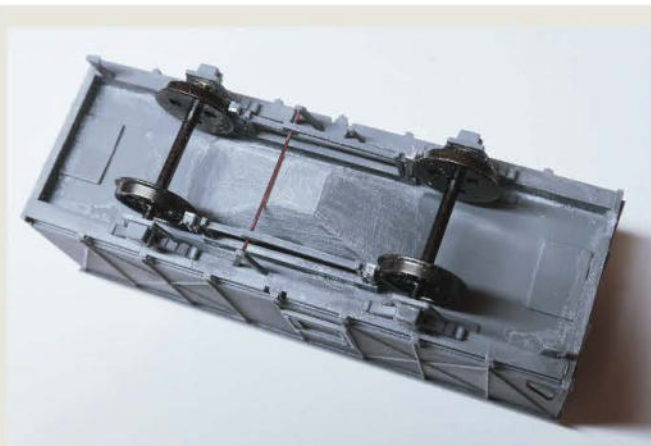
8 At the start of the end handrail curve, there is a spacing block and a loop to fix it. This was represented by a small square of scrap 20thou Plastikard.



9 The ends were fitted as per the instructions after quite a period of checking, using Blu-Tak to fix them while the sides were trial-fitted. Only when I was 100% happy were they fixed with solvent using a small engineer's square to check that they were upright.



10 With the sides on, it was time to add a little weight, here in the form of some scrap roofing lead. This was set in a puddle of UHU, but as a 'belt and braces' security, I added two lengths of the kit's sprue on top and welded these to the sides.



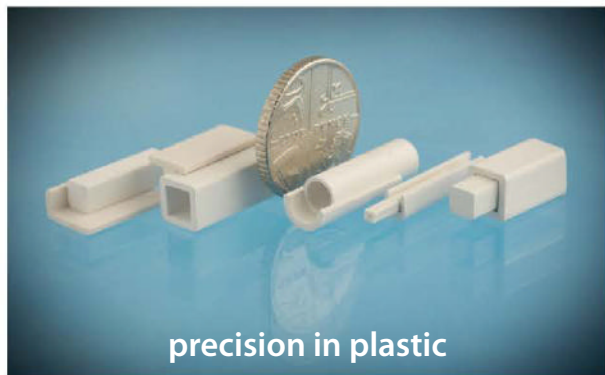
11 The brakes were added, though I used a length of 20thou rod in place of that supplied...OK, I lost it! Note that I always take a little off the brake shoe faces to give a smidge more clearance for the wheels.



12 The roof was added and more 0.7mm holes drilled. The grab handle sits 3mm from the edge and centrally within the right-hand panel. The hole for the long handrail sits inside the right-hand edge of the top vent. Buffers and brake levers were added and we are ready to paint!

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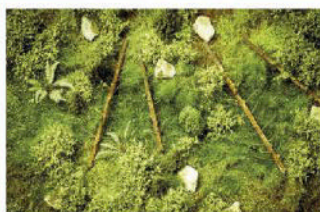
33 cm lengths or 1 metre • White, clear and colour sheet • pvc foam board • x large white styrene
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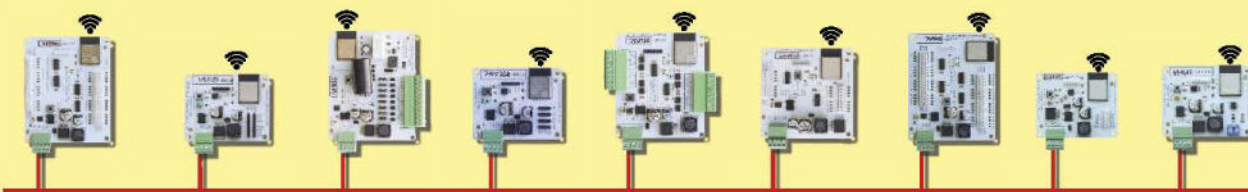
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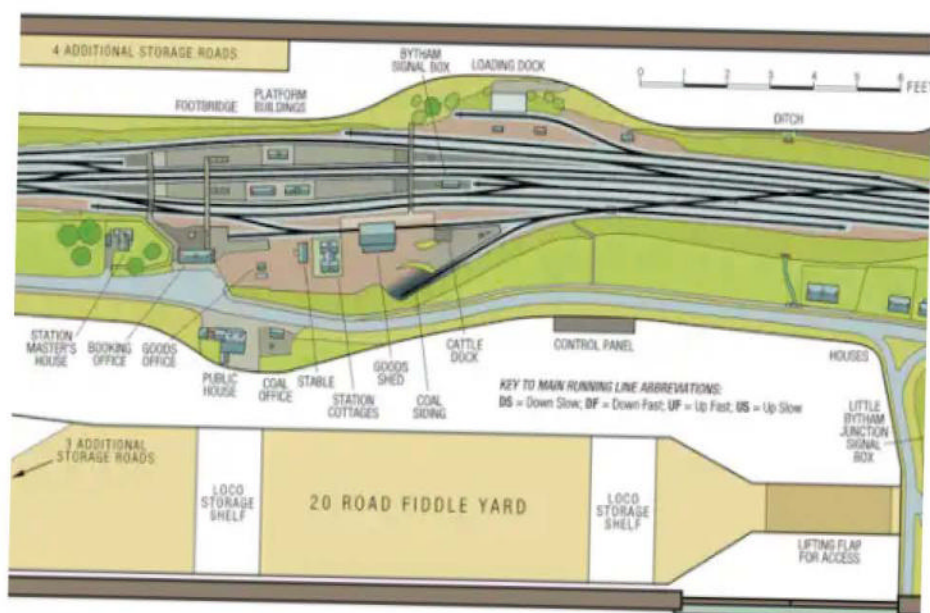


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Though Tony greatly admires those who do everything by themselves in the building of their model railway(s), it isn't for him. He doesn't possess all the necessary skills, time or inclination to do 'everything', and, like all the model railways he's been involved in the building of, 'Little Bytham' is very much a team effort – by a skilled team.

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ISSUE 296 | MAY 2025

BRISTOL EASTER 1997

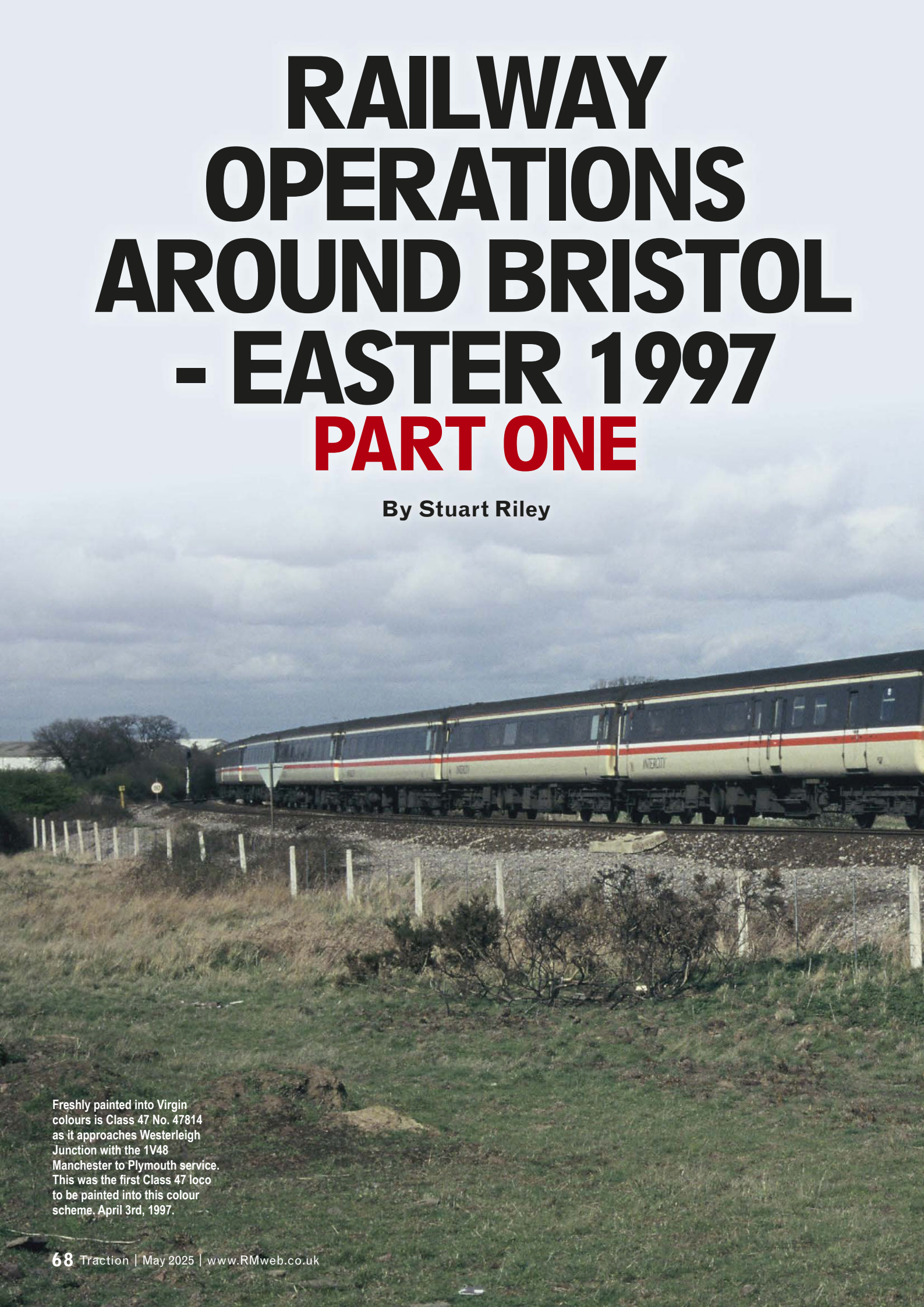


ALSO INSIDE:

- Scotsmen in the West Country
- North East Rover 1988
- Locomotives or multiple units?

RAILWAY OPERATIONS AROUND BRISTOL - EASTER 1997 **PART ONE**

By Stuart Riley



Freshly painted into Virgin colours is Class 47 No. 47814 as it approaches Westerleigh Junction with the 1V48 Manchester to Plymouth service. This was the first Class 47 loco to be painted into this colour scheme, April 3rd, 1997.

The four-week period, either side of Easter 1997, is one I will always remember well. I was in the final year of my degree course and faced with the daunting prospect of writing my dissertation and starting revision for my final exams, which were only a couple of months away. There were some positives, though. Four weeks back at home in Bristol, staying with my parents, enjoying home-cooking and catching up with friends more than made up for it. It also coincided with a period of very settled weather and long periods of glorious spring sunshine to enjoy. I decided I was going to use the time to combine my studies with taking photographs of the many freight, mail and loco-hauled passenger workings in the area.

Railway operations around Bristol at that time were particularly interesting and very varied. Porterbrook Class 47s were still regular performers on Virgin Cross Country (XC) passenger services, the rail freight scene was buoyant and, of course, it was a year before the Class 66 had begun to arrive from General Motors. It was also a time when there was great optimism around rail freight growth. Anything seemed possible. Freight operator English, Welsh & Scottish (EW&S) under the leadership of Chairman Ed Burkhart, were keen to attract new customers and traffic flows to rail even if it amounted to as little as a single wagonload.

Avonmouth Bulk Import Terminal (opened in 1993) was sending regular merry-go-round (MGR) trainloads of coal to Didcot Power Station, usually formed of a Class 60 and HAA/HBA coal hoppers. Hallen Marsh (Liquified Petroleum Gas), Chittening Industrial Estate (automotive, general goods),

Tytherington (stone), Barrow Road (refuse) and Westerleigh (refuse and fuel) were all active rail freight terminals. There was also a weekly trainload of gas oil from Fawley destined for St Phillips Marsh depot.

As well as freight traffic generated in the Bristol area, there was a healthy selection of workings passing through the area including nuclear flask traffic from Bridgwater to Sellafield, fuel oil from Robeston to Theale, steel from Cardiff to Purfleet, Ministry of Defence (MoD) stores from Didcot to Cardiff Pengam and china clay traffic from Cornwall to Irvine (Ayrshire) and Cliffe Vale (Stoke).

Both EW&S and Railfreight Distribution (RfD) were operating wagonload networks at that time. RfD's network, branded as Connectrail, catered specifically for European wagonload traffic via the Channel Tunnel and operated a daily trunk service between Newport Alexandra Dock Junction (ADJ) and Wembley. The EW&S Enterprise wagonload network was still growing rapidly. For example, during January 1997, a new daily service between Newport Alexandra Dock Junction (ADJ) and St Blazey was introduced, which served Hallen Marsh and Bridgwater, as required.

Bristol Temple Meads was the hub for mail operations in the south-west and was a busy interchange location where many services would exchange portions in the station. Direct mail services operated to and from Plymouth, London, Swansea, Low Fell (Newcastle) and Glasgow. Nearby Bristol Barton Hill depot was a Rail Express Systems (Res) maintenance facility responsible for maintaining and servicing mail coaches and the Res Class 47 fleet.





Making a fine sight and sound as they begin to climb Filton bank at Narrowways Junction are Class 37s Nos. 37038 and 37219 hauling a long rake of loaded PGA 'Gunnells'. April 1st, 1997.

Cardiff Canton's fleet of Departmental Class 37s were a regular sight around Bristol, in particular, working spoil trains to Stoke Gifford tip, situated adjacent to the Avonmouth to Bristol Parkway line. Stoke Gifford yard, adjacent to Bristol Parkway station was in use to deal with various engineers' traffic, including the spoil trains.

With plenty of workings to capture and a good choice of locations in and around Bristol, I set about planning a series of trips, focussing primarily on the mail and freight operations. With no RealTimeTrains or gen websites for information, it was left to the excellent Freightmaster timetable books for reference, along with local knowledge and tip-offs from enthusiast friends in the area.

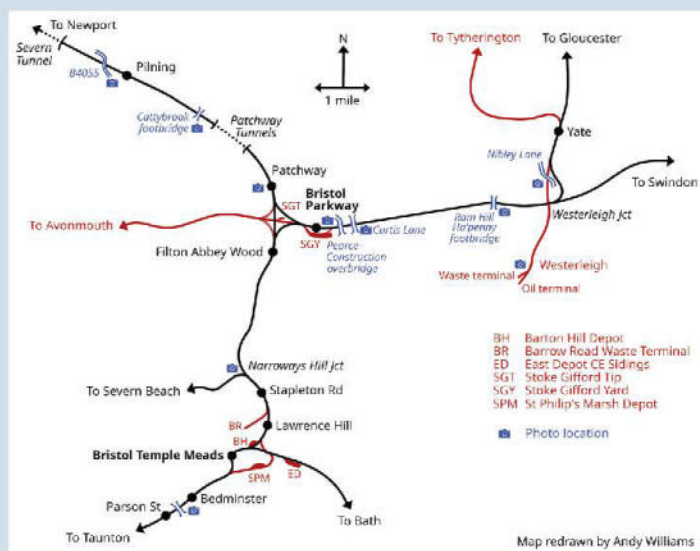
For these articles, I've chosen a selection of my photographs taken during the period between Tuesday, April 1st and Wednesday, April 9th, 1997, and pick up the story from April Fools' Day.

Tuesday April 1st, 1997

The day started bright and sunny, and with a decent forecast, I decided to drive to Bristol Temple Meads to photograph the 5C99 12:15 empty coaching stock (ECS) Mail working from Bristol T.M. to Plymouth. This was rostered for 2x Res Class 47s. When I arrived, Res Class 47s Nos. 47747 and 47736 were sitting in the middle road between platforms 3 and 5, waiting to depart. While there, 47822 arrived from the north with 1V46 09:10 Liverpool to Plymouth. With a couple of nice shots taken and time running out on the parking meter, I left to drive a few miles north to Narrowways Junction.

The grassy bank overlooking the junction provided the classic location for workings heading north out of Bristol. Shortly after I arrived, Class 58 No. 58042 ran south as a light engine before the unmistakable sound of a Class 37 could be heard thundering north through Lawrence Hill station just over a mile away. A minute later, a pair of Class 37s appeared at

TUESDAY, APRIL 1ST, 1997			
Bristol Temple Meads			
47747 & 47736	ECS mail stock	5C99 SX 12:15 Bristol Temple Meads to Plymouth	12:18
47822	Passengers	1V46 09:10 Liverpool to Plymouth	12:38
Narrowways Junction			
58042	Light engine	Unknown	13:16
37038 & 37219	Departmental - Ballast	Unknown	13:29
37137 & 37379	Aggregates	Empty bogie hoppers Tytherington quarry.	13:33
Pilning (B4055 Overbridge)			
56018	Domestic coal - Empty HEAs	6B20 MO 10:55 West Drayton to Coedbach	14:11
47770	Mail - ECS TPO stock	5S09 SX 14:33 Bristol T.M. to Cardiff	14:38
Cattybrook			
37013	Departmental - Ballast	7B51 WThFO 15:41 Stoke Gifford to Newport ADJ	16:04
47640	Mail	1M06 SX 14:25 Swansea to London	16:10
47328	RfD 'Connectrail'	6M14 SX 15:58 Newport ADJ to Wembley	16:23
Stoke Gifford			
47328	RfD 'Connectrail'	6M14 SX 15:58 Newport ADJ to Wembley	16:46
Ram Hill (Coalpit Heath)			
60056	Refuse - 'Binliner'	4B05 SX 17:47 Oldfield Park to Westerleigh Rail Head	18:16
60041	Enterprise / china clay	6V70 TThO 17:32 Cliffe Vale to St Blazey	18:28
Westerleigh Rail Head			
60037	Stabled	Loco stabled to work 6B47 empty tanks to Robeston	19:21
60056	Refuse - 'Binliner'	4B05 SX 17:47 Oldfield Park to Westerleigh Rail Head	19:27



RfD Class 47 No. 47328 pulls slowly away from the Up loop at Stoke Gifford with 6M14 Newport ADJ to Wembley 'Connectrail' service. April 1st, 1997.

the head of a long rake of loaded PGA Gunnell wagons on an unidentified working that may have originated from Meldon Quarry. Happy that I'd picked up an unexpected working, I decided to leave and make my way to Pilning but only made it as far as the footbridge crossing the main line when I thought I heard another Class 37. I ran back to the grass banking in time to see another pair of Class 37 heading north. Class 37s Nos. 37137 and 37379 appeared with another unexpected working. This time a rake of empty Foster Yeoman bogie hoppers heading for Tytherington. Two pairs of Class 37-hauled freights within four minutes of each other - it was my lucky day!

Approaching the B4055 overbridge at Pilning is Class 56 No. 56018 as it descends towards the Severn Tunnel with a colourful mix of empty HEA domestic coal hoppers returning from West Drayton to Coedbach. April 1st, 1997.

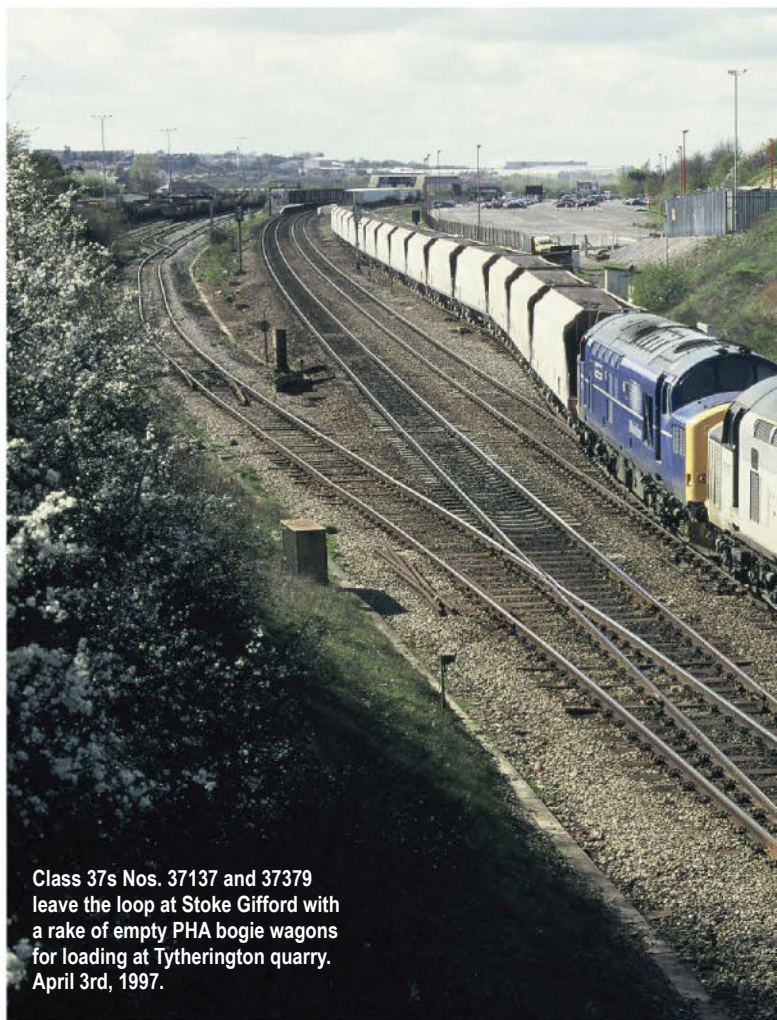


Res-liveried Class 47 No. 47775
Restive passes under the footbridge
 at Ram Hill with 1S81 mail service to
 Glasgow. April 2nd, 1997.



The footbridge at Cattybrook, to the east of Pilning, was always a pleasant spot to wait around, so it was off there next for the afternoon Mail from Swansea and Connectrail service from Newport (ADJ) to Wembley. By now, the sun was beginning to move round, making it backlit for eastbound workings. My notes suggest that Class 37 No. 37013 passed westbound at 16:04 with four Seacow hoppers, but I took no photograph. I can only assume I had wandered back to the car for something and missed it! Shortly after, Res Class 47 No. 47640 appeared with five mail coaches from Swansea. This was followed at 16:23 by RfD Class 47 No. 47328 with the 6M14 Connectrail service. Time to head home for tea, but not without calling at Stoke Gifford on my way through. 6M14 had been put into the Up loop next to Bristol Parkway station, so I was able to grab another shot of it from the Pearce Construction overbridge only 20 minutes after seeing it at Cattybrook.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2ND, 1997			
Cattybrook			
60041	Enterprise	6C20 SX 13:45 Newport ADJ - St Blazey	14:10
47776	Mail - ECS TPO stock	5S09 SX 14:33 Bristol TM - Cardiff	14:20
Ram Hill (Coalpit Heath)			
47805	Passengers	1V48 12:17 Manchester - Plymouth	15:26
47789	Light engine	Unknown	15:30
47775	Mail	1S81 SX 12:44 Plymouth - Glasgow	15:54
60056 & 60033	Coal - Empty MGR hoppers	Didcot Power Station - Avonmouth	16:42
47186	RfD 'Connectrail'	6M14 SX 15:58 Newport ADJ to Wembley	16:46
47746	Mail	1M06 SX 14:25 Swansea - London	17:05
Nibley Lane (Yate)			
58042	Refuse - 'Binliner'	4B05 SX 17:47 Oldfield Park to Westerleigh Rail Head	18:25



Class 37s Nos. 37137 and 37379
 leave the loop at Stoke Gifford with
 a rake of empty PHA bogie wagons
 for loading at Tytherington quarry.
 April 3rd, 1997.



Transrail-liveried Class 37 No. 37673 has fellow classmate 37263 for company as they head south through Patchway station with 6C20 SX 13:45 Newport ADJ to St Blazey 'Enterprise' working. April 3rd, 1997.



After tea, it was back out again to Ram Hill near Coalpit Heath for 6V70 china clay empties from Cliffe Vale to Exeter. In lovely soft evening light, EW&S Class 60 No. 60041 appeared at 18:28 with seven wagons in tow. From there, a short drive to Westerleigh Rail Head finished off a very productive and enjoyable day. Class 60 No. 60056 arrived with the Avon Binliner whilst another Class 60 No. 60037 was preparing to depart with the empty fuel oil tanks returning to Robeston refinery in west Wales.

Wednesday, April 2nd, 1997

After missing the 6C20 Newport ADJ to Exeter Enterprise working the previous day, I decided to have another go. The possibility of a pair of Class 37s hauling a mixed consist of wagons was not to be missed. I chose the footbridge at Cattybrook again. Luckily, 6C20 appeared but not with a pair of 37s or a mixed rake of wagons. Instead, EW&S-liveried Class 60 No. 60041 turned up, hauling a single loaded bogie Cargowagon flat destined for Bridgwater. While there, Res Class 47 No. 47770 worked the TPO ECS stock from Bristol to Cardiff, as it had the previous day.

With the sun becoming hazier, I decided to head to the Ha' Penny footbridge at Ram Hill. The highlights included Res Class 47 No. 47775 hauling 1S81 12:44 Plymouth to Glasgow mail service, a pair of Class 60s Nos. 60056 and 60033 returning to Avonmouth with empty MGR hoppers and finally, RfD Class 47 No. 47186 hauling a well-loaded 6M14 Connectrail service.

To round off the day, I visited Nibley Lane near Yate to photograph the evening Binliner working to Westerleigh. Mainline Blue-liveried Class 58 No. 58042 rounded the curve from Westerleigh Junction at 18:25 with eight PFA container flats loaded with the distinctive light blue Avon County Council containers. Class 58s were the booked traction for the Binliner at that time.

Thursday 3rd April 1997

Feeling that my luck had to change with 6C20, I made my way to Patchway station in plenty of time, arriving just as an early running 5S09 ECSTPO stock powered through behind Res Class 47 No. 47786. The frustration of missing 5S09 was not helped by cloud starting to build up. Undeterred, I wandered over to platform 2 and waited. Shortly after No. 47776 had run as a light engine towards Filton, I heard the unmistakable sound of a Class 37 climbing up through the cutting from Patchway Tunnel. Moments later, a pair of '37s' appeared on 6C20. Transrail-liveried Class 37 No. 37673 and Dutch-liveried classmate 37263 trundled through hauling a couple of empty china clay tanks returning to St Blazey and a nice rake of MEAs loaded with Welsh coal for Plymstock cement works; all in some lovely spring sunshine and cloudy backdrop. Perfect!

As 6C20 disappeared towards Filton, I wandered back onto the station footbridge and noticed another pair of Class 37s heading east around the curve between Filton and Bristol Parkway. I quickly jumped in the car and headed to the overbridge at Stoke Gifford, hoping they had been recessed in the Up loop next to Bristol Parkway. A few minutes later, I was peering over the bridge parapet and there sitting in the loop with a rake of Yeoman hoppers once again for Tytherington were Class 37s Nos. 37137 and 37379. At 14:46, the points went across to give the '37s' the road. Two pairs of Class 37s again within 20 minutes!

Another target working on my photo hit-list was a new twice-weekly automotive flow of Fiat cars from Italy to the Chittening Industrial Estate near Avonmouth operated by RfD. With no backload from Avonmouth, the empties were diagrammed to run north as 6M43 15:55 to Washwood Heath Yard in Birmingham. I decided not to risk driving to Avonmouth as it was a bit too tight for time. Instead, I drove to Nibley Lane. Luckily, I made it just in time as it was running very early. The train was slowing to take the route to the Midlands at Westerleigh Junction as I was parking up on Nibley Lane. A quick sprint to the field next to the line was rewarded with RfD Class 47 No. 47210 hauling a long rake of STVA cartics. The time was 15:13. 6M43 was running over an hour and a half early.

The twice-weekly RfD automotive working from Avonmouth to Washwood Heath rounds the curve at Nibley Lane behind work-stained RfD Class 47 No. 47210. April 3rd, 1997.

THURSDAY 3RD APRIL 1997			
Patchway station			
47786	Mail - ECS TPO stock	5S09 SX 14:33 Bristol TM - Cardiff	13:56
47776	Light engine	Unknown	14:12
37673 & 37263	Enterprise	6C20 SX 13:45 Newport ADJ - St Blazey	14:28
Stoke Gifford			
37137 & 37379	Aggregates	Empty bogie hoppers to Tytherington quarry	14:46
Nibley Lane (Yate)			
47210	Automotive	6M43 TThO 15:55 Avonmouth - Washwood Heath	15:13
47814	Passengers	1V48 12:17 Manchester - Plymouth	15:20
47793	Light	Unknown	15:36
47749	Mail	1S81 12:44 Plymouth - Glasgow	15:44
Ram Hill (Coalpit Heath)			
47306	RfD 'Connectrail'	6M14 SX 15:58 Newport ADJ to Wembley	16:34
60046	Coal - MGR hoppers	Avonmouth - Didcot Power Station	16:47
37887	Empty fuel oil tanks	6B24 MSX (Q) 15:35 Didcot Power Station - Cardiff Tidal	17:04
47774	Mail	1M06 SX 14:25 Swansea - London	17:05

Around this time, Porterbrook had started repainting their fleet of Cross Country Class 47s in black and red Virgin colours. I had yet to see or photograph any of the locos. That was about to change as Class 47 No. 47814 rounded the curve from the north with 1V48 12:17 Manchester to Plymouth. I chose to wait around for 1S81 mail working to Glasgow before returning to Ram Hill, once again, Res Class 47 No. 47749 passing with 1S81 at 15:44.

A couple of 'as-required' workings listed in the Freightmaster book were of particular interest. An MoD working from Didcot to Cardiff Pengam operated by RfD and empty fuel oil tanks from Didcot Power Station to Cardiff Tidal were booked for an EW&S Class 37. Both workings were due through Bristol Parkway between 17:20 and 17:30, so I was



Another load of imported coal from Avonmouth to Didcot Power Station heads east through Ram Hill behind Class 60 No. 60046 *William Wilberforce*. April 3rd, 1997.



hoping to photograph one of them at Ram Hill. After a wait of just over an hour, Transrail-liveried Class 37 No. 37887 came into view, hauling a rake of bogie fuel tanks and running as 6B24 15:35 Didcot Power Station to Cardiff Tidal.

During the hour waiting at Ram Hill, RfD Class 47 No. 47306 headed east with 6M14 to Wembley, Class 60 No. 60046 passed hauling loaded MGR hoppers to Didcot Power Station and 47774 worked 1M06 Swansea to London Paddington mail service. Not a bad afternoon's work. Amazingly, all my pictures were taken in sun despite there being plenty of cloud.

Friday 4th April 1997

The weather was overcast, so I decided to catch up with some revision and work on my dissertation. My notes suggest I did sneak out for an hour to photograph 6C20 again at Patchway station. Disappointingly, EW&S Class 60 No. 60041 appeared again for the second time that week with only three wagons in tow.

FRIDAY, APRIL 4TH, 1997			
Patchway station			
60041	Enterprise	6C20 SX 13:45 Newport ADJ - St Blazey	14:33
Stoke Gifford Yard			
37038 & 37219	Stabled in Stoke Gifford Yard	N/A	14:45



Approaching the Ha' Penny footbridge at Ram Hill is Class 37 No. 37887 *Castell Caerffili/Caerphilly Castle* with empty fuel oil tanks returning from Didcot Power Station to Cardiff Tidal. April 3rd, 1997.

A NORTH EAST RAIL ROVER IN '88

By Adrian Willats

This trip was by way of marking an anniversary. It was 10 years since my friend Robert Martin and I had made our first very local rail trip together, not long after meeting one day during college lunch break and finding that we were both interested in trains. By 1988, we had travelled widely by rail, mostly in England but also a few parts of Scotland and Wales, attended many works and depot open days, established a regular calendar of annual visits to major bus rallies and been on our first few railtours.

Plans were made to travel from our homes in Portsmouth and Hayling Island to York, where we would base ourselves at a hotel quite near the city centre and railway station. Travelling from Havant, we used the Mark 1 stock electric units that had been part of our story right from the beginning and would continue to be so for some years yet. Our journey from Kings Cross was by InterCity 125 (HST), as completion

of the full East Coast Main Line electrification was nearly three years away. We would, however, be lucky enough to observe a test working of which more later.

Staying just over a week in September, we travelled by rail to Newcastle, Leeds, Carlisle (via Settle), Keighley (for the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway), Huddersfield, Scarborough, Hull, Darlington, Bishop Auckland, Durham, Leeds, Bradford and Halifax. Instead of the 'traditional' Saturday to Saturday, we opted for Wednesday to Thursday. One day was devoted to staying in York itself, during which we visited the National Railway Museum and did a combined bus and riverboat city tour. Although beyond the scope of this article, we also took a considerable interest in (and photographs of) local bus services, our other principal transport interest.



A brand new and pristine-looking No. 90014 is stabilised at Carlisle. The loco is almost certainly on a delivery test run.



Sprinter unit No. 150220 is seen at Scarborough, probably working a Trans-Pennine service.

I did not keep detailed notes of train services used or which locos and units we saw, but I can give some general information about what we photographed during our holiday. There were still some loco-hauled passenger services (including our trip over the Settle & Carlisle route), but many services in the rover area were in the hands of Class 150 and 156 'Sprinter' units.

We did see the older generation of DMU, in the form of Metro-Cammell Class 101, in passenger service at both Leeds and Hull, with an 'Express Parcels' conversion seen at Bradford right at the end of our stay. Indeed, we travelled in a '101' on our journey from Scarborough to Hull. At Leeds, we saw 155345, one of the seven Class 155s that were owned by West Yorkshire PTE, which remained as two-car units after the other 35 were converted to become 70 single-car Class 153s.

The era of the modern railbus had well and truly arrived, with units of Classes 142, 143 and 144 with their four-wheeled vehicles seen at various places and in several different liveries, including BR Provincial Services blue and white, and Regional Railways and Tyne & Wear PTE. We also saw some of the older narrow-bodied Class 141s, by then being 'reworked' and appearing in red and cream (with 'Metrotrain' branding) instead of their original light green and cream (officially 'Verona Green and buttermilk!'), which we had seen in York four years earlier. I look forward to becoming reacquainted with one of the preserved units; we came close to a ride on the Colne Valley Railway years later, but they suddenly substituted something else!

ECML long-distance services were still in the hands of InterCity 125 sets, as mentioned earlier. The wires, however, had been energized as far as Leeds and, thanks to a 'sympathetic' member of staff at that station kindly advising us of its approach, we were able to see and photograph one



Loco No. 47119 Arcidae is on a train of Shell bogie tanker wagons from Stanlow passing through Leeds station.



The 'blunt' end of loco No. 91003 having run round the stock of its test train at Leeds.



Preserved railbus (either No. E79962 or E79964) is at Keighley, with a working to Oxenhope.

of the test trains arriving. We particularly appreciated this effort by the gentleman involved, as we have always behaved responsibly and safely when on railway premises and have often been rewarded by being given little bits of information by kindly staff. The locomotive, No. 91003, ran round the stock and coupled up 'blunt end first' for the return journey, making that day the only time I have ever photographed that end of a '91'!

We did also see some freight traffic, but my only photograph of any was at Leeds of 47119 *Arcidae* in two-tone grey with petroleum subsector markings, appropriately hauling bogie tanker wagons. The loco had only been named the previous month and was one of several dedicated to hauling trains of Shell products. The names were Latin terms for different kinds of shell, with the company's familiar logo accompanying each nameplate; rather unusual and perhaps a little 'obscure' for most enthusiasts!

Preserved modern traction was not neglected, with our trip from Keighley to Oxenhope being aboard one of the two four-wheel railbuses resident on that line. I regret to say that I did not note at the time which of the two it was (E79962 or E79964), as I think both were in use at that time. It was nevertheless an interesting ride on a vehicle type relatively rare in preservation and which, if their introduction in the 1950s had been accompanied by modernisation and automation of signals and level crossings, might have made a greater difference to the economics of operating the lines on which they were used. The Keighley & Worth Valley's railbuses were built in West Germany by Waggon und Maschinenbau, Gmbh in 1958 – five being supplied to BR as part of plans to introduce such traction on branch lines or other lightly used routes. Other railbuses were built by Wickham, AC Cars and Park Royal (five from each), with two being built by Bristol, with bodywork by fellow state-owned company Eastern Coach Works of Lowestoft.



'Re-worked' Class 141 railbus unit No. 141119 is at Leeds station in red and cream livery with 'Metro train' branding for West Yorkshire PTE.



'Pacer unit' No. 143009 is in Regional Railways two-tone blue livery at Bishop Auckland station with a service to Saltburn.



No. 143024 is at Carlisle in Tyne & Wear PTE livery with 'TW Pacer' branding having arrived from Newcastle.



An 'Express Parcels' DMU is at Bradford Interchange. The power cars are almost certainly Nos. 53230 and 53218. On the lower end of the cab is the inscription 'Max. Tail Load 40T'.

Mark 3b Pullman No. 11091 *Sir Stanley Matthews* is seen in a train formation at Carlisle.

Also, during our visit to the NRM, we saw various diesel and electric exhibits, including pioneer Class 20 D8000 and prototype HST power car 41001. D8000 was in BR green livery with grey roof and red buffer beams, featuring the headcode discs as used on many early diesel classes. The HST power car was in 'reverse' grey/blue livery, like that worn in their later years by the 'Blue Pullman' sets.

My photographs show a selection of the traction mentioned above. We enjoyed travel to a variety of places, some we were returning to, others being first visits. As with the Northwest Rail Rover that we used five years later (see TRACTION 269), we were using a unified, national British Rail network (albeit with some PTE involvement) and planning all our trips using the bulky BR all-line timetable book. This was, apart from more local pocket timetables, still the only source of travel information that we could carry around with us (no 'web' or mobile phones in those days) or maybe leave in our hotel room once the day's details had been transferred to much smaller and lighter pieces of paper! Stations visited varied from the large and busy (like Newcastle, Carlisle and York) to the much more basic. Examples of these were Halifax, with its island platform and not much else (the large buildings of former, grander times now boarded up and disused), and Bishop Auckland, a single platform terminus whose relatively recent station building had nevertheless still received the attention of the graffiti 'artists'!

One final point. Those readers perhaps not familiar with BR Regional Rail Rover tickets of that period may be puzzled by the inclusion of Carlisle, clearly on the *West Coast Main Line*, in a *North East Rover*? The answer is simple – it was common to both rover ticket areas! We had a varied and enjoyable time, with, for the most part, either reasonable or good weather. We saw, photographed and travelled on a variety of traction, new and not so new, all adding to our knowledge and experience of the British Rail network – a single, unified system, which has, of course, since made way for the many different operators who provide today's services.





Transport for Wales has recently aimed to improve passenger perception by substituting DMUs with locomotive-worked push-pull trains on long-distance services. This scene at Crewe on February 27th, 2024, shows 67022 attracting attention as it propels a rake of Mark 4s on the 13.30 Manchester Piccadilly to Carmarthen. COLIN BOOCCOCK



LOCOMOTIVES OR MULTIPLE UNITS?

Colin Boocock discusses the merits and demerits of the use of multiple units instead of trains worked by locomotives. Why are units sweeping the board?



A modern example of a unit train is the Hitachi 800 series of InterCity Express trains. Because of the curtailment of the electrification programme at the outer ends (no wires up in Bristol Temple Meads or Swansea), all the GWR 800-series units are bi-modes, diesel and electric. A nine-car set is seen leaving Reading on an up service to London Paddington on July 4th, 2018. COLIN BOOCOCK

For several decades now, the trend has been to replace locomotive-hauled trains by unit trains, whether by HSTs, 'Voyagers', 'Pendolinos', or, more recently, the Hitachi 800 series.

There have been a few notable exceptions to this rule. These include the employment by Chiltern Railways of otherwise redundant Mark 3 coaches in push-pull formation with Class 68s, and the perhaps unusual choice by Trans-Pennine Express of brand new push-pull trains from CAF, ordered with the aim of replacing some of its Class 185 DMUs. There are also the push-pull trains of cascaded Mark 4 coaches in use between Manchester and South Wales. Our very few sleeping car trains are by necessity locomotive-hauled (but remember that Japan has run EMUs with sleeping coaches in them, so they don't necessarily have to be locomotive-hauled in future!).

Otherwise, in the UK, we just have odd remnants of locomotive haulage, such as the Class 91s working Mark 4s push-pull on the East Coast Main Line, but we won't have these for much longer.

Clearly, there have to be valid reasons why EMUs and DMUs in their various forms are displacing locomotive-hauled trains in the UK and on the European continent.

Intelligent substitution of hauled trains by unit trains goes back at least to the late-1950s. A good example is the introduction of diesel traction on the London Charing Cross to Hastings line. The original plan was for a Class 33 Bo-Bo diesel locomotive to haul up to 12 short-underframe (57ft) coaches. This was the longest train that could be fitted into the platforms at the Charing Cross terminus, allowing for a second Class 33 to take over at the other end of an arrived train and still be 'inside' the departure signal. Realisation that the use of diesel multiple units with longer carriages could permit more seating capacity resulted in the decision to make up six-car DEMU sets of longer underframe (64ft 6in) stock. Because the short underframes for the first batch of hauled carriages were already under construction at Ashford Works, these were used under the first sets of Hastings DEMUs, but the rest of the Hastings DEMU fleet had the longer underframes and usefully greater seating capacity.

At London's Marylebone terminus, hired-in 68008 (left) heads a fast service to Aylesbury and (right) 68012 is ready to leave with a similar push-pull rake of Mark 3s bound for Birmingham. Flanked by the two '68s' is four-car DMU 165026. COLIN BOOCOCK





The Hasting DEMUs began to replace steam locomotive-hauled services between London Charing Cross and Hastings as early as 1957. In this 1960 view, a pair of six-car units passes Hither Green at speed on an up service. The leading unit is a later one on long underframes, whereas the rear unit is an earlier short underframe unit with lower seating capacity. These trains were geared for 90mph. COLIN BOOCOCK

Also, in the 1960s, came the six-car Trans-Pennine DMUs that held the fort between Hull and Liverpool for several decades. More modern DMUs eventually replaced them in the 'Sprinter' era.

Advantages of multiple units over-hauled trains

In any given train length, the presence of a locomotive or separate power car reduces the space available for passenger accommodation; a locomotive plus five coaches is almost the same length as a six-car multiple unit. This matters if accommodation at termini is tight as it is today, for example, at the East Midlands Railway platforms at London St. Pancras where the new Class 810 trains have been designed uniquely with 24 metres long carriages to enable 10-car trains to fit in there. Those trains, like many others, can be run in half-length formations (five-car units) for off-peak workings, which produces economies. In earlier times, HSTs could fit in at St. Pancras, but they only had eight 23-metres-long coaches, plus the two power cars and they were fixed formations.



The 1970s saw firstly the prototype and then the first production trains of the High Speed Diesel Train concept, soon known as HSTs and also more formally as InterCity 125s. They were built as seven and eight-car sets, early ones with two catering cars (buffet and restaurant) but these were soon reduced to one catering car in each set. 95 HST units were built and they rescued the reputation of the InterCity business and of British Rail as a whole. This one arrives at Derby on April 2nd, 2012, on a Newcastle to Plymouth Cross Country service. COLIN BOOCOCK



Introduced in 1960, the Trans-Pennine DMUs were six-car sets on 63ft 6in underframes and dubbed as Inter-City units even though their maximum speed was only 70mph. They included a buffet-griddle car; the catering car was later removed from each set due, apparently, to lack of demand. COLIN BOOCOCK



It only needs one of these Class 170 'Turbostar' units to stand with its diesel engines idling to make it hard to hear station announcements. This is 170416 between services at Derby on July 23rd, 2021, in what was then the new livery for East Midlands Railway. COLIN BOOCOCK



Arriving at York and already switched to diesel mode is bi-mode Trans-Pennine Express unit 802206 on a Newcastle to Liverpool service on December 6th, 2019. Sound insulation on these trains is good, making the noise of their diesel engines less intrusive both inside and outside the train. COLIN BOOCOCK

Another thing you can do with many multiple units is to fit the end cars with outer end gangways. When they are running in multiple, passengers and staff can then access all coaches in the train, which can have advantages. Admittedly, you can't do that easily if the outer ends are streamlined.

A useful feature of a multiple unit is that its carriages are semi-permanently coupled together. All the vehicles in the units are maintained together and they all go to works together when heavy overhauls are needed. You can also do that with the passenger stock in a push-pull train, but the locomotive often has a different maintenance sequence and sometimes it is maintained at a different depot. So, when the locomotive is being maintained, the depot has to set aside the carriages that are not due for maintenance, or it has to replace the locomotive with another one that has been waiting spare.

A really useful characteristic of a multiple unit is that greater redundancy of systems can be built into the design. By redundancy, I mean having more than one way of achieving a function. For example, if a locomotive engine fails (not uncommon), that is called a single point of failure and immediately immobilises the train. If an engine or a traction package on a multiple unit fails, the train can usually keep going and continue to provide a service, even to keep time. That is a positively major advantage of multiple units.

A modern locomotive is usually around 80 tons in weight and has four axles, which means that there are normally only

four traction motors. Longer unit trains such as the 800 series or two 'Voyagers' in multiple can have many more traction motors spread along the train, through which it is possible to exert more tractive effort and accelerate faster from stops.

Disadvantages of multiple units

DMUs and EMUs do have disadvantages. For example, the noise from the diesel engines on a DMU is ever present and can be an irritation to passengers, including those on stations trying to listen to station announcements when a train is standing near with its engines idling. The Stadler units in East Anglia and South Wales have separate power vehicles within the units which makes the passenger areas inside the carriages quieter, but there are space and financial costs of having an extra vehicle in the train.

In the 1970s, when I was working in the Doncaster Division, I noted that the BR costing system showed that depot costs of maintaining a three-car DMU were about the same as the depot costs of maintaining a Class 47 locomotive, though their duties were different. Modern multiple units are designed to need much less maintenance by dint of extending the mileage intervals between depot examinations. I would reckon then that the costs of overhauling and maintaining a locomotive plus carriages would be generally higher than for a comparative multiple unit. The maintenance and overhaul costs of multiple engines is certainly higher than one big one.

The Southern Region of BR and its successors have largely relied on gangwayed EMUs for the longer-distance fast services. With a maximum speed of 100mph, this Class 444 five-car unit at Bournemouth awaits a second similar unit to arrive from Weymouth, which will couple to the rear of the train. The 10-car train will then form a fast service to London Waterloo with full gangwayed access throughout the train, of which the guard and catering trolley can make full use. Photographed on October 9th, 2021, this route is part of the South Western Railway operation. COLIN BOOCOCK





From left to right at Norwich on October 2nd, 2019, are brand new Stadler articulated bi-mode units (diesel and electric) of Class 755, Nos 413, 423, 409 and 417. These units have their power sections in short 'pod' vehicles, which have through walkways but do not carry seated passengers. As a result, the passenger areas are quieter than in units with under-floor engines. COLIN BOOCCOCK

Strategy

On a railway that is advancing its electrification of routes, such as in Scotland, there has to be a plan to match the onward march of electrification to the rolling stock replacement programme, so that withdrawal of older life expired or cascaded DMUs can take place when new EMUs are delivered to replace them. That isn't always easy to achieve, which is one reason why, in the UK, we have so many used but good units sitting in store because they can't easily be redeployed. Hopefully, if Great British Railways is eventually allowed to run its own electrification and rolling stock replacement programmes, we may see much more common sense being applied to this issue in future. A sensible rolling stock replacement and cascade strategy is as much an art as it is a science!

Meanwhile, our current railways have been forced to complicate some of their multiple units so that they can run at full speed under electric wires and also beyond them because electrification schemes are incomplete. So, we have to live with bi-modes that are electric trains with diesel engines added under some of the carriages. These trains carry and move the extra weight of their diesel engines, alternators and fuel tanks when running under the wires in electric mode, a clearly less economic situation than using single-mode electric units.



At the back of this TPE service from Scarborough to Manchester Airport, calling at Huddersfield on January 30th, 2020, is Caterpillar-engined 68023. These Mark 5 push-pull trains have been withdrawn, replaced by the older Class 185 DMUs that they originally displaced. This reduced the variety of TPE train types on long-distance services from four to three! COLIN BOOCCOCK

With locomotive-hauled push-pull trains, the ability eventually to replace diesel locomotives with electric ones was behind TransPennine Express's purchase of those Mark 5 push-pull trains. That idea appears to have fallen through the gap caused by the Government's failure to fund a positive start on the Northern Powerhouse Rail programme. These new push-pull trains were withdrawn and stored after only a few years' use, replaced by older class 185 DMUs that would otherwise have been retired before their life expectancy. That is, however, one less type of traction for TPE's train maintainers to get to grips with!

In summary, multiple units outweigh locomotive-hauled passenger trains in terms of carrying capacity, acceleration, flexibility and cost.

As an enthusiast, I much enjoyed the adrenaline rush when sitting in a train from Manchester climbing over the Pennines with a Class 68 roaring away at the rear, but economics have since ruled that experience out. Indeed, the first nail in TPE's Nova 3 coffin came when the good residents of Scarborough complained about the noise of Class 68s' diesel engine running overnight as the locomotives kept the trains' air-conditioning systems working. Then, the disadvantage of having three different types of new trains for similar duties in the TPE area finally sank home. The fun couldn't last!



Riding in an all-electric unit is quietest of all! At Stirling on December 7th, 2019, three-car unit 385045 has terminated on a service from Glasgow Queen Street. COLIN BOOCCOCK

SCOTSMEN IN THE WEST COUNTRY

By J Crosse



When the class started to be delivered, the West Country had numerous branch lines and byways, and whilst passenger traffic was often worked by multiple units replacing steam power, the freight duties had still to be locomotive-worked. This introduced a degree of inefficiency as the branch steam engine would have also covered the freight runs, but now both a unit and a loco were required. Some branches lost their passenger services long before the infamous Beeching Report of 1963 but retained freight traffic. One such had been the route from Newton Abbot to Exeter via Heathfield and Christow, where the last passenger trains called in 1959. 10 years later, freight was still to be seen at Heathfield, in this case worked by D6310. It had arrived in January 1960 and spent seven years at Laira before moving to Newton Abbot. Two months after this picture was taken in April 1969, it left the far west with a move to Bristol Bath Road. Note the small yellow panel and also the reporting number boxes. These were not fitted when new, this only being the case for D6337 onwards. COLOUR-RAIL.COM





Entry into service of what became Class 22 under TOPS designations started on January 12th, 1959, when D6300 was initially allocated to Swindon but rapidly re-allocated to Plymouth Laira at the end of what must have been the longest regular delivery run as the engines had to travel from Glasgow to Plymouth via Swindon for acceptance testing. Strangely, the first six were rated at only 1000hp, so the same as the Class 20 Type 1s. D6301/2 also arrived in January 1959, but it was to be May before D6303 appeared, with D6304 in June. D6305 did not make it to Laira until January 1960, this being after the arrival of the first production machines D6306 and D6307. It was not that common for the class to work in pairs on passenger duty, but D6300 and D6303 are seen in the late autumn of 1959, so employed near Plymouth. At this time, the livery was green with a single 'white' body stripe. Yellow panels were still around two years away. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



In the early days, what was common was double heading with both steam and Type 4 diesel power over the South Devon Banks. The D63XX replaced typically 'Manor' 4-6-0s and 2-6-2 51XX tanks on pilot duties. Working arrangements had yet to be modified to allow unassisted climbs of the Devon banks by solo Type 4s except on very light passenger trains. It would seem that the initial plan was that all of the class would be based in the West Country, with the lines west of Plymouth targeted to become 'steam free' by around 1961. D6329 is seen at Tigley assisting 5029 *Nunney Castle* on a summer Saturday Swansea to Penzance service on July 22nd, 1961. D6329 had been delivered in June 1960 and allocated to Laira, but in early 1961, it was transferred to Newton Abbot. T OWEN/ COLOUR-RAIL.CO.UK

The 1955 British Railways Modernisation plan identified a need for several thousand diesel and electric locomotives to eventually replace all steam power. It primarily dealt with 'main line' types rather than shunters and defined four power classifications, including Type 2 having a horsepower range between 1100 and 1500, and these were targeted to replace steam engines classified as having power classifications of 3 or 4. This would suggest use on branch lines and light freight duties, while being able to work in multiple with other class members could allow them to be used on heavier passenger turns. A primary concern for branch line use would have been the weight of the locomotive, as many had infrastructure originally designed for use by much smaller steam engines.

The Modernisation Plan brought forth a raft of Type 2 designs, most of which were ultimately ill-fated, in part due to the fact that many of the duties for which they were designed disappeared almost as soon as they were built due to both line closures and the changing ways of dealing with freight traffic.

Another former Southern Region haunt was Exmouth. This branch was served by trains from Exeter Central and in steam days was worked by the likes of Ivatt 2MTs and Standard 3MTs which had themselves replaced M7 0-4-4Ts. This line did see DMUs following the Western takeover but, of course, freight traffic was required to be loco-worked, on this occasion by D6322 seen at Exmouth in September 1966. It has yellow panels and even electrification flashes but had not yet received its headcode boxes. It was new to Laira in July 1960 and moved to Newton Abbot in August 1965. Officialdom then showed a re-allocation to Bristol Bath Road in May 1967, with a move back to Laira the following month. Did it ever make it to Bath Road? Withdrawal came in November 1971 and it was cut-up at Swindon in May 1972. COLOUR-RAIL.COM

Initial orders for pilot batches of locomotives resulted in the 'Baby Deltics' (10), Metrovick Co-Bos (20), Brush A-1-A (20) becoming Class 30 and later Class 31, BR Derby (Class 24), BRCW (Class 26) and the two North British types. These were produced in both a diesel-electric and a diesel-hydraulic version of their Type 2 design, with only six of each comprising the initial order for each.

As has been well documented, instead of waiting to evaluate each of these designs to decide which one type would become standard, bulk orders were placed subsequently, in many cases, before the first of each type had been delivered. This eventually led to the Class 24s (and later Class 25) becoming dominant, initially within the Midland Region, Class 31s on the Eastern and Class 26 and later Class 27 on the Scottish.

When it became evident that fewer locomotives than originally envisaged were required, all of the smaller classes and indeed even the Class 24s met an early end, including the Class 22 D63XX, which were a Western Region speciality, with both Classes 25 and 31 being sent west to replace them on the few duties that remained for Type 2 power.





The changing of regional boundaries provided an unexpected bonus for the Class 22s. As mentioned earlier, their planned traditional work in the West Country was in rapid decline but, in 1963, they were thrown a lifeline when the Western Region took over all of the former Southern Region lines in Cornwall and west Devon. Here the passenger duties were still all steam-worked, whereas on the Western steam west of Taunton was by now almost extinct. Trains on the Southern route were generally lightweight and ideal for Type 2 power, and the D63XX were immediately rostered for this work, although the Western Region soon set about the closure of almost all of the acquired lines. This lovely scene was taken on September 6th, 1966, at Padstow, where D6306 is in charge of the 17:15 from Wadebridge. The added reporting number boxes can be clearly seen. On later locos, these were fitted flush with the nose. D6306 was a Laird machine throughout its nine-year life. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



North British were building the Class 43 'Warships' alongside the D63XX in 1961, with delivery of both types running behind schedule. Believed to be at the direction of the Western Region, building of the D63XX was stopped to allow North British to concentrate on the 'Warships'. Thus, arrival of the D63XX slowed and then stopped, with D6332 and D6333 arriving in July and August 1960, respectively, D6334 in December 1960, D6335 in February 1961 and D6336 in July. Deliveries then ceased until D6337 arrived in March 1962. Thus this May 6th, 1962, view shows a brand new D6343 at Swindon, four days before it was officially allocated to Laird. Note the flush fitting reporting numbers as applied from new when deliveries resumed in March. It only stayed in the West until May 1964, when, with work running out, it moved to Old Oak Common. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



The penultimate class member, D6356, struggles manfully into Paddington at the head of what will be at least a 10-coach train and possibly 12 in this undated view. A number of the class worked in the London division in later years, all allocated to Old Oak Common, primarily on empty stock duties. They also had freight rosters and worked, for instance, in deepest Oxfordshire on the Witney branch pick-up goods. In its less than 10-year life, the loco wandered from its first home at Bristol Bath Road in September 1962 to Old Oak in October 1964. It made a brief visit to Laird, arriving in May 1969, for almost immediate storage before returning to use from whence it had come at Old Oak in February 1970. Finally, it returned to Laird in May 1971, but lasted in traffic just another five months. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



Entering the final chapters of the Class 22s, we need to look again at liveries, as some did indeed survive long enough to receive corporate blue. D6327 is a very rare bird in that respect, as it received blue along with yellow panels and a central arrow motif while retaining both the D prefix and the old style of numbers. Also clearly visible in this view, taken at Paddington, is the Western Region yellow route disc on the cabside. It arrived at Old Oak in December 1965 and stayed until February 1970 before its final move to Bath Road. COLOUR-RAIL.COM



If things had gone to plan, you would still be able to see 6319 today as it was set aside for preservation. It had been put to store at Laird from September to October 1971 before withdrawal and had been selected, and it seems possibly paid for, in a life as the sole surviving example of a North British main line diesel. It was then moved to Bristol Marsh Junction and noted stored from November 3rd, 1971, to October 1972. It was towed to Swindon Works on October 5th, 1972, but was cut-up in error on November 10th, 1972. The loco displays the later interpretation of blue livery with full yellow ends, cabside arrows and no D prefix when seen at Laird in June 1971. K FAIREY/ COLOUR-RAIL.COM

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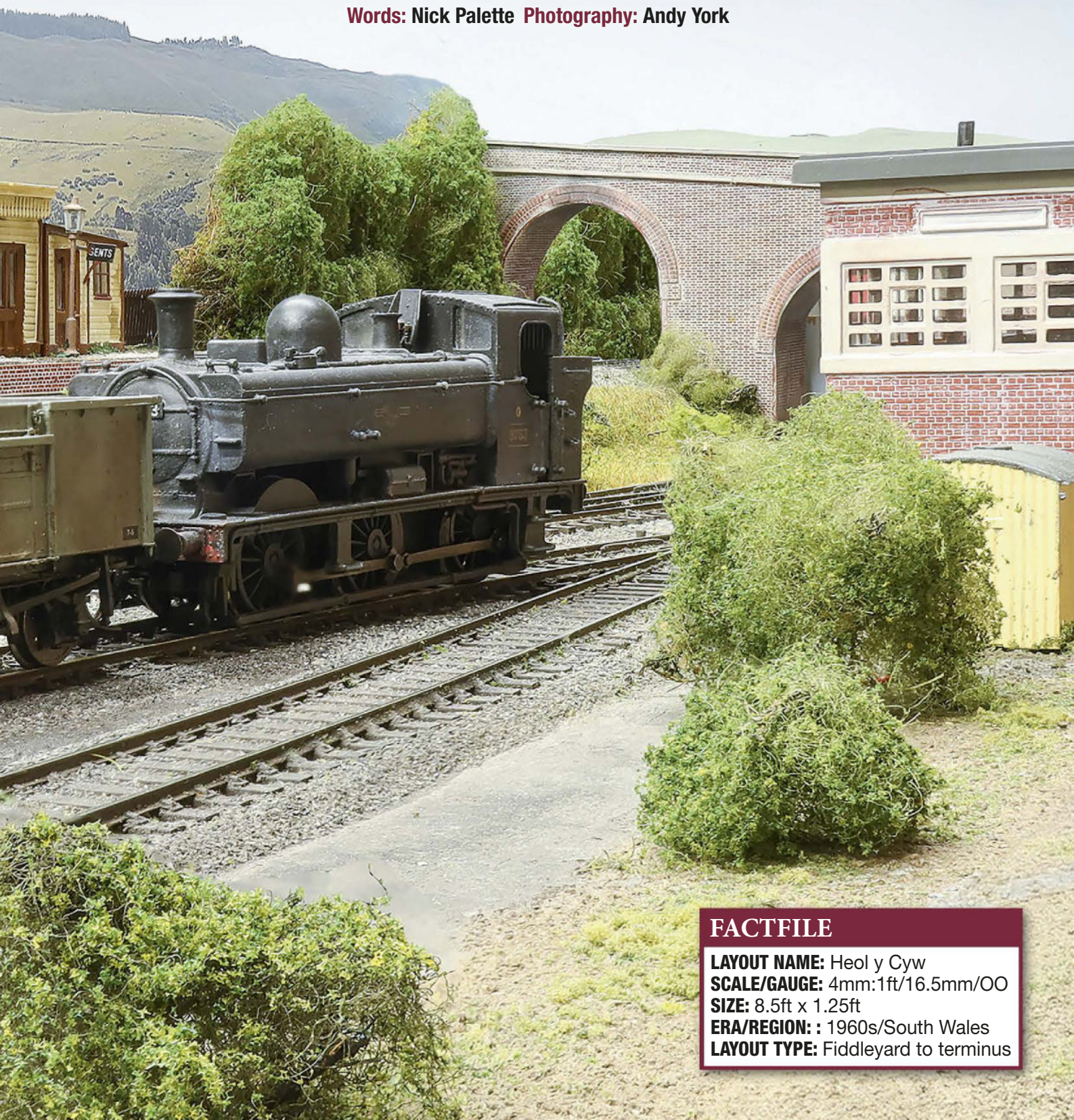
Pannier tank 9753 draws a rake of empty mineral wagons forward, passing a 56XX 0-6-2 tank loco awaiting its next turn. In the background is the halt on the through line with a solitary passenger awaiting the next train.



ALTERING HISTORY

This reimagined line from Llanharan to Tondy gets plenty of action, including passenger services, freight workings and serving the rejuvenated Raglan Colliery.

Words: Nick Palette **Photography:** Andy York



FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Heol y Cyw

SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm:1ft/16.5mm/OO

SIZE: 8.5ft x 1.25ft

ERA/REGION: : 1960s/South Wales

LAYOUT TYPE: Fiddleyard to terminus

TOP RIGHT: A view through the road bridge as a pannier tank brings a train of empty 21t hoppers into the yard at Heol y Cyw. In the background, 2-8-2T 7224 and an English Electric type 3 diesel are present.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Another view of the empty hoppers and pannier tank, this time through the trees. The austere wartime replacement signal box is visible on the left.

BOTTOM: Looking towards the road bridge as a 56XX loco brings more empty hoppers for exchange and delivery to the colliery. Loaded hoppers are on the left, awaiting a loco. The pannier tank and shunter's truck are to the right.



This layout, like many, takes liberties with geography, history, railways and, no doubt, other aspects as well. It would be interesting to see a map showing all the “what might have beens” and altered railway routes!

This assumes that the former GWR line from Llanharan to Tondur, which, as far as I know, was always a freight-only line, has a passenger service and that there was a small halt at the village of Heol y Cyw. In true GWR fashion, this was some distance from the actual village.

Up until the late 1920s, there was a colliery, Raglan Colliery, which was close to the village. So, we also assume that the colliery was closer to the railway and was still open in the 1960s.

Now we have the basis for the layout.

First steps

The layout was inspired by a plan by the late Iain Rice that appeared in his book *Designs for Urban Layouts* (Atlantic Publishing 2002) as a three-section industrial-themed layout in which the sections would be stacked one on top of the other with a common removable cassette, which would go from one level to another. One of the sections was the exchange sidings with the rest of the railway network. It was this section that gave me the idea for ‘Heol y Cyw’, which represents the exchange sidings for a colliery.

“...I have fond memories as a child living in the Newport area, of the large ex-GWR tanks on coal traffic, so I decided I would try and replicate that.”





Originally, it was going to be based in the East Midlands, but I have fond memories as a child living in the Newport area of the large ex-GWR tanks on coal traffic, so I decided I would try and replicate that. Hence the change of location and the name.

The layout comprises two scenic sections, which, when joined, form a layout 7ft long by 15ins wide. A cassette fiddle yard bolts onto the end.

Construction followed tried and tested methods, with plywood used for the baseboard framing and MDF used for the surface. The sections are joined by 6mm bolts, and plugs and sockets are used to carry the power across the joint.

Cork tiles were stuck to the MDF to form a surface for the track. I wanted to differentiate between the exchange sidings area and the running line at the back, so I decided to raise the running line by about one inch to achieve this.

The track on the sidings level is Peco code 75, while that on the raised running line is Peco code 100. The track is ballasted with my usual mixture of Gaugemaster N scale ballast and various colours of Woodland Scenics fine ballast. I like to give a variegated look to ballast, as in real life, it isn't all one uniform colour.

Operation is by DCC with solenoid point motors. The point motors are powered by a separate 16v AC supply and changed via sprung toggle switches. Frog polarity is changed via Gaugemaster frog juicers.



ABOVE: The train of loaded hoppers seen previously now has a loco and is ready to depart. WD 2-8-0 90566 has the duty while an English Electric type 3 diesel looks on.

MIDDLE LEFT: Another view of 90566, ready to depart with a loaded coal train.



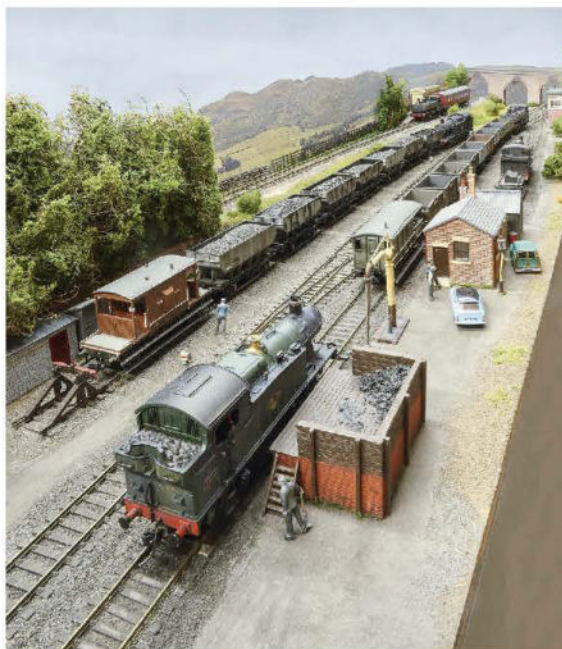
BOTTOM LEFT: An aerial view of the local passenger train, formed of a 64XX tank and auto coach, as it arrives to pick up the only passenger. To the left, we can see both loaded and empty trains awaiting departure from the yard.



Scenic touches

The backscene is from ID Backscenes and was chosen as, I think, it is a reasonable representation of the mountains of South Wales. I feel a photographic backscene is a must these days and I have used several of the commercial offerings on various layouts as well as creating my own from photos taken in a specific area. With current technology available in the home, it's not too difficult to combine several photos, and many local printers will print the resulting combined image. My local printer even offers to enhance it to ensure it will print correctly. Cost-wise, it is not that much more than a commercial backscene, but it gives your layout a unique appearance.

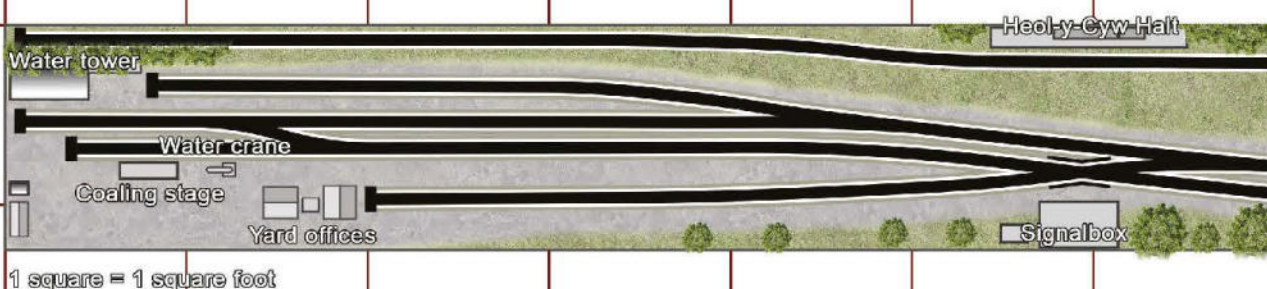
The ground cover is a mixture of commercial items and things collected from the garden and even the roadside. I remember a quote in an article many years ago that said, "Nothing looks as good as real earth as real earth" – how true.



ABOVE: The loco servicing area and small yard office, with several members of staff going about their business. In the background, we can see the hills surrounding the station and yard.

LEFT: An overall view of the layout. The local passenger train is returning to Tondy while loaded and empty trains are sitting in the yard awaiting departure.

TRACKPLAN



Cassettes

TOP RIGHT:

0-6-2 tank 5660 sits on the loco servicing siding to be fuelled ready for its next turn of duty.

MIDDLE RIGHT:

The auto train leaves Heol y Cyw for Tondy.

BOTTOM: The auto train, pulled by pannier tank 6417, arrives at Heol y Cyw halt on its way from Llanharan to Tondy.



The main scenic feature is the bank in front of the raised running line. This is plaster bandage covered with earth and static grass. The bushes are wire armatures with Woodland Scenics poly fibre, in turn covered with Woodland Scenics ground foam secured with cheap hair spray.

A break from the norm

I have always been one for using what is available off the shelf wherever possible. Unusually, for my layouts, this one contains a signature feature that was scratch-built, namely the road bridge where the tracks exit the scenic part of the layout. Given it's not my normal way of doing things, I did quite enjoy the process. It is made from arches cut out of 4mm MDF and thinner plastic sheet for the inside of the arches. The whole thing was then laminated with brick sheet and coloured using a technique I picked up from, again, Iain Rice. The whole of the brick surface was painted with mortar colour and left to dry. Then good quality coloured pencils, in my case Faber-Castell, were used to provide the brick colour. It is similar to doing a brass rubbing in that the pencil is lightly rubbed over the brick surface several times, building up the depth of colour and making sure the mortar lines are still visible in the original colour.

“I feel a photographic backscene is a must these days and I have used several of the commercial offerings on various layouts.”





Observation is key here, as bricks are not uniform in colour. Even bricks from the same batch, fired in the kiln at the same time, will have variations in colour – some darker, some lighter. This is achieved using different pencils – I used Indian red as the main brick colour with burnt Sienna, raw umber and dark sepia for variation.

Trees were made from twisted wire with coverings of static grass, poly fibre and ground foam. The pine trees were made using a method I found by a fellow on YouTube who goes by the name of Boomer Dioramas. He is Canadian and lives in Vancouver and his scenic techniques are second to none. Despite his trains not being everybody's cup of tea, he is well worth a visit to see how he not only makes trees but other scenic features such as roads, buildings, etc.

On the subject of buildings, the usual sources were used – a mixture of resin and kits.

The trains of Heol y Cyw

Operation is based on the exchange of loaded and empty coal wagons. A typical session starts with a train of loaded wagons hauled by a pannier tank arriving from the colliery into the main track. The pilot loco then comes from the front siding and removes the brake van and shunts it to the back siding. The pilot then returns to the loaded wagons and shunts them into the back siding to re-join the



ABOVE: 2-8-0 tank 5243 leaves the exchange sidings for the main line with a train of loaded 21t hoppers. In the background, the auto train arrives at the station.



MIDDLE LEFT: While coal is king and the main commodity handled on the layout, there is a daily mixed freight that runs between Tondy and Llanharan. Pannier tank 9753 slowly makes its way along the "main" line.

BOTTOM LEFT: Another view of the 56XX tank arriving with empty hoppers for the colliery.

brake van, albeit with it on the other end of the train. The pilot returns to the front siding. A main line engine - large tank of 42XX or 72X, or maybe a 9F or WD - then moves from the loco siding and is coupled to the loaded wagons. The train is then ready to leave via the connection to the main line (in reality, the fiddle yard). The incoming pannier tank goes to the loco service siding to await its next trip, taking empty wagons to the colliery for loading.

The same process is undertaken in reverse, with a train of empty wagons arriving from the main line connection and the brake van and loco swap ready for departure to the colliery.

The wagons are kept in rakes of loads and empties and the whole rake is swapped in the fiddle yard using cassettes.

In the meantime, a passenger train, in the form of an auto train or single-car DMU, runs along the raised running line, stopping at the station.

For many years, I have used Kadee couplers. However, as the rakes of wagons are largely fixed and don't need to uncouple on the layout, I have adapted the inner couplings with a simple hook and loop made from staples. Kadee couplers are used on the ends of each rake, as well as on all the locos. Permanent magnets provide uncoupling where required.



TOP LEFT: An aerial view of the loco servicing area. This shows the coaling stage, water crane and water tower. There's a selection of buildings that are for stores and other uses that only those who work there know!



MIDDLE LEFT: A quiet period at Heol y Cyw, which shows locos resting between duties. Present are: pannier tank 4680, 2-8-2 tank 7224 and 9F 92233. The daily mixed freight from Tondy is on the upper line.

BOTTOM: The auto train is on its way to Tondy while 4680 sits in the siding. Loaded and empty trains are currently in the yard awaiting locos.

“A typical session starts with a train of loaded wagons hauled by a pannier tank arriving from the colliery into the main track.”



All the locos and stock are weathered to different degrees, ranging from light weathering on some of the wagons (as if they are relatively new), to downright dirty and shabby. The same goes for the buildings. Light weathering has been applied to give a more realistic appearance.

The layout has populated by figures from the Dapol range, some of which have had arms cut off and replaced at different angles to give variety, and from the more recent ModelU 3D-printed range. The latter has been used for many of the loco crews.

Some of the locos carry headlamps but, unfortunately, this was not complete before the photos were taken, so some appear bare!

Final thoughts

This layout has provided a slightly different focus as it doesn't have a main station (someone commented that it was unusual as all my previous layouts had a station at the left-hand end) and the operating emphasis is on freight as opposed to passenger, which is a welcome change.

As a regular exhibitor and member of the organising team for the Stafford Show, it is always a pleasure to meet and commune with others in the hobby, both fellow exhibitors and visitors. It's good to know that one is passing on one's own experience and knowledge to others, likewise, learning new techniques and getting ideas and inspiration oneself. ■



TOP LEFT:

Large tank loco 5243 is leaving Heol y Cyw light engine. WD 90566 is at the head of a train of loaded hopper sand and will follow the light engine. To the right, we see the shape of things to come in the form of the first EE type 3 locos that will soon dominate coal traffic in the Welsh valleys.



MIDDLE LEFT:

A great picture that shows the fantastic backscene from ID Backscenes. The trees were made from twisted wire with coverings of static grass, poly fibre and ground foam.

BOTTOM:

56xx tank number 5639 arriving with empty hoppers. In the background we can see the station and the surrounding hills.

“... the operating emphasis is on freight as opposed to passenger, which is a welcome change.”





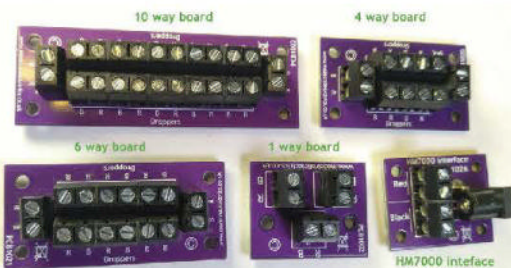
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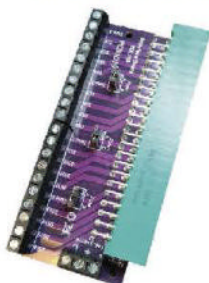


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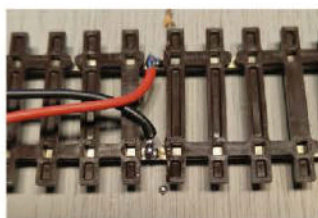
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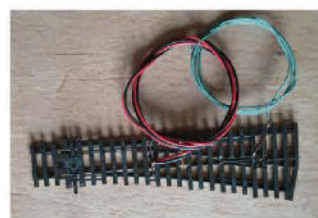


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ACTIVITY HUB

One of the smallest manned stations in the country and a hive of activity, the eccentric Damems is recreated in model form by the talented Ben Bucki to run his growing collection of OO stock.

Words & Photography: Ben Bucki



FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Damems

SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm:1ft/16.5mm/OO

SIZE: 1ft x 4ft

ERA/REGION: KWVR/West Yorkshire/
Preservation

LAYOUT TYPE: End-to-end/Micro shelf

A morning passenger turn to Oxenhope waits and loads at Damems; one of the constraints of the station is that the loco on a southbound train always blocks the level crossing, but then there's not much in the way of road traffic to inconvenience on the steeply-graded, cobbled lane.



TOP RIGHT: The marketing department at the KWVR does a lot of drone footage for its social media channels, so it seemed a good excuse for a rooftop shot of the model. The visiting Class 31 slows for a stop with a Keighley-bound afternoon train.



MIDDLE RIGHT: The Class 101 waits at the platform with a morning train; visible on the left are the simple goods sidings, in use for storing engineers' stock on this operating session.



BELOW: It must be a gala day, as 43924 trundles through Damems with a demonstration goods train. The real 4F (currently withdrawn for overhaul) has long been one of the stalwarts of the fleet and holds a place in history for being the first steam loco removed for preservation from the legendary Woodhams Scrapyard at Barry in 1970.

My local preserved railway, of which I am a member, is the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway in West Yorkshire. Considering it's a relatively short line at under five miles length, the stations of the preserved KWVR demonstrate a surprising amount of variety. There's Oxenhope, the rural terminus at the foot of the moors, and urban Keighley at the other end of the line, with its cross-platform interchange with the electrified Aire Valley route. There's Oakworth, most associated with the filming of *The Railway Children*, Ingrow West, the suburban station with locomotive and carriage museums, and Haworth, which is the stopping-off point for Bronte Country (and hub of the railway with loco sheds and workshops). But my favourite is probably Damems; not only the smallest on the KWVR, but it has a claim to being one of the smallest operational manned stations anywhere in the country.

It oozes eccentricity, with the short platform having a proper wooden station building, a compact signal box for the manually-operated gated level crossing, the former stationmaster's/crossing-keeper's house right beside the line, and very well-tended gardens. With a cobbled lane winding down the wooded hillside to cross the railway, the composition of the site is pleasantly photogenic. What's more, this is no mere wayside halt; the proximity of the main passing loop for the KWVR means that Damems tends to be a hive of activity even on a normal timetable day. During galas, it's almost ridiculously busy.

“...such a wide variety of motive power has been on the railway at some point or another, you can excuse just about anything appearing at ‘Damems’.”





The layout

Given all this, Damems really appealed to me for a build. I was looking to create something for my growing collection of OO gauge (until recently, I'd mainly built photographic dioramas in this scale) and Damems ticked a lot of boxes. Back in lockdown, I'd used it as the subject matter for my first layout-planning exercise, and when I returned to the theme for a piece written for the Hornby Collectors Club in 2024, I decided to actually build the planned layout I'd proposed back in 2020.

However, I wouldn't have room for anything large when I built it; if there's a downside to Damems, it's the linear nature of the site. To the north, the gentle S-bends and the trees where the line runs parallel to the River Worth would provide a possible way of screening the exit on a really long layout. To the south, there's Damems Loop, interesting enough in itself, of course, complete with its Midland Railway signal box, but no natural scenic break until the curves in the cutting at the far end. Overall, it's a bit long, even with some compression of the site. I only had a board a few feet long to work with for storage reasons. What I've ended up with is a shelf layout that has the main features of Damems, which hopefully can be extended now I've moved house.

Because I was forced to just model the station area, I took a historical liberty with the site. These days, Damems is on a stretch of plain line, but in the industrial heyday of the valley, the station had a kick-back siding just past the house. I thought that re-instating it as a fictional engineers' storage siding would add a bit of interest, allowing a little bit of shunting. It's a touch short, but that does impose an operational constraint on the plan, which makes it more engaging to run.



ABOVE: 43924 piles on the speed as it passes through with a demonstration goods train. A fun feature of gala days at the real Damems are trains like this; usually, a morning freight runs the whole line, then in the afternoon, the goods works top-and-tailed as far as Damems before heading back to Keighley.



TOP LEFT: The view down the path towards the platform as the 101 prepares to depart for Oxenhope.

BOTTOM LEFT: Another of the classic views of Damems; down the steep, cobbled hill towards the level crossing.

If I'm operating the layout as a gala day timetable, then one thing I like to do is use the siding for a loco and brake van shuttle. A small tank engine and one or two brakes can just squeeze in while the main services run past. If the layout is being run as a 'normal' Saturday, then having an excuse for a diesel shunter to collect or drop-off a random wagon gives a break from passenger trains trundling about.

Creating the scene

A really accurate model of Damems would require the principal structures to be built bespoke; no bad thing, given they are relatively small, simple buildings, so a useful first step perhaps for a modeller who's looking to scratch-build. There is a great deal of scope for detailing, from things like platform lamps and fire buckets to the beautiful gardens.

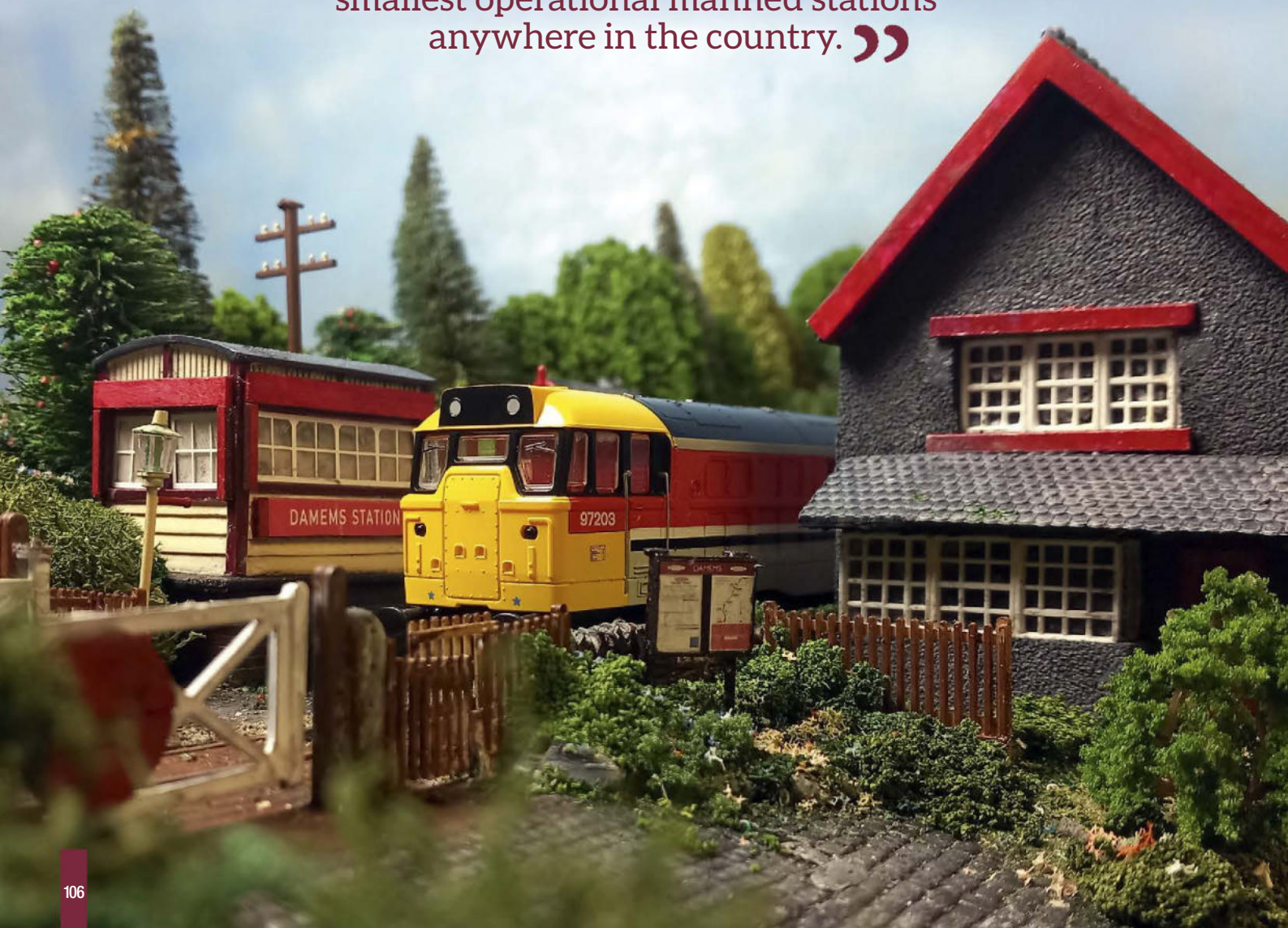
As this was a piece I was specifically doing for the Hornby Collectors Club, I set myself the challenge of just using products from their present and past ranges wherever possible, which resulted in something a little more in the spirit of Damems than a strictly accurate build. The main features are the single-track level crossing (I used the venerable Dapol, ex-Airfix kit, which lent itself to shortening of the gates to two panels), the platform-level signal box - a near prototypical resin model that existed in the Skaledale range, the platform shelter/store and the former railway house.



LEFT: A view across the sidings towards the station- I'll admit it's a bit of a crude representation of the real thing and could do with replacing, but given it was made on the table of a caravan in mid-Wales last summer, from scraps and upcycled bits from a broken kit, I don't think it's too bad.

BELOW: I was very taken with the British Rail Research-liveried Class 31 when it visited for the anniversary gala a few years back and wanted to add the Hornby model to my fleet just for this layout. The loco slows to a halt with an Oxenhope train.

“...it has a claim to being one of the smallest operational manned stations anywhere in the country.”



The History of Damems Station

The rural surroundings of Damems today hide the fact this was once an area of heavy industry; a surviving former mill sits near to the station, and the woods to the north were once allotments shared between this mill and a much larger, more-recently demolished structure on the outskirts of nearby Ingrow. Within a short walk of the platform was the higher-level double-tracked main line of the Great Northern Railway, cut into a shelf as it steeply climbed towards Queensbury, then on to Bradford and Halifax. It all underlines just how much was squeezed into this narrow valley at one time.

Built in the 1860s, Damems was always the smallest stop on the line, though equipped for a while with a siding for the nearby mill. The little station led an apparently uneventful life and was the first to close in 1949 during rationalisation of the branch under British Railways. Trains continued to pass the overgrown platform until BR admitted defeat and closed the branch. After much clearing of weeds and replacing the scrapped structures, Damems Station reopened in 1968 under the control of the preservation movement. With vast swathes of new home building going on in the immediate area, Damems has (for the time being) managed to retain the atmosphere of a rural stop, and its period look has seen it used for a number of television productions (*Born and Bred*, *Poirot*, and *All Creatures Great and Small*, *The Railway Children Return* amongst many others). With the main passing loop for the railway nearby and a steep climbing gradient approaching the platform, Damems makes for a great place to watch the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway at work.

BELOW: 43294 slowly passes through Damems with a mid-day passenger train for Oxenhope; Damems is a request stop, and you have to make sure you're in the right carriage for the short platform. It adds something to operating sessions; I flip a coin to decide if the service stops or not.

I scratch-built the wooden station from scraps and bits from the spares box, and I'll admit it's a bit crude. Most of it was card, with detail parts from a damaged 'Town and Country' range kit, with wooden stirrers for the timberwork. Really, it needs replacing at some point with something a bit better. The stationmaster's house was kit-bashed from another old Hornby 'Town and Country' kit, a "Bell Inn", which I had bought damaged second-hand. Cutting and re-arranging the walls to better reflect the window placing of the prototype, it was faced with sandpaper to represent the rendered/pebble-dashed finish of the real thing. Again, it's a little on the crude side, but worked within the constraints of the project.



ABOVE: It's the 2024 diesel gala, and visiting D1015 calls at the station. 21.06.24



ABOVE: A wintry scene as the stalwart Class 101 DMU pulls away towards Keighley. 23.11.24

Damems can give the impression of being miles from civilisation, and I wanted to represent that in the model. Being limited as ever by budget, the scenery was very much a mix of upcycled and second-hand products. A mix of static grass sheets and scatter materials provided a scenic base atop the carved foam and papier-mache landforms. More scatters and the venerable techniques of moss and flock were used for bushes. A hint of the well-kept gardens came through the use of some coloured scatters, which were sourced from a dolls' house shop. Trees are a mix and frankly a bit crude, being mainly from a big box bought second-hand at a show, but they fill the background nicely. When the layout gets extended, I intend to allocate a bit of budget to add some signature, higher-fidelity trees for certain cameo scenes. Finally, resin walls and the standard Hornby platform fences were used, though with colour-washes to tone them down a bit.

Operational potential

At the real Damems on a normal Saturday, things often kick-off with a DMU or railbus operating the first two full-line-return services. It also tends to be the day when the engineers are out on the line, so the unit may end up crossing a goods train at the nearby loop. Throughout the day, this engineers' train will frequently travel through Damems, running alongside the passenger diagram in the spare path, with it either working light-engine, on engineers' stock, or moving freight wagons or empty carriages between yards, giving a legitimate excuse to run non-passenger workings on a layout set in the present day.



Passenger diagrams outside of the peak season tend to be of 3-4 carriages hauled by one of the varied fleet of steam locomotives; anything from the vintage 'Coal Tank' no.1054, through various BR Standard-types, up to giants like the 2-8-0s. For variety, summer weekends often feature a large diesel (Classes 20 or 37) on a passenger set with the on-train bar, instead of the unit. Sundays usually feature two-train passenger workings; out of season, it's a DMU on the second diagram, but summer holiday weekends frequently feature steam haulage and vintage carriages.

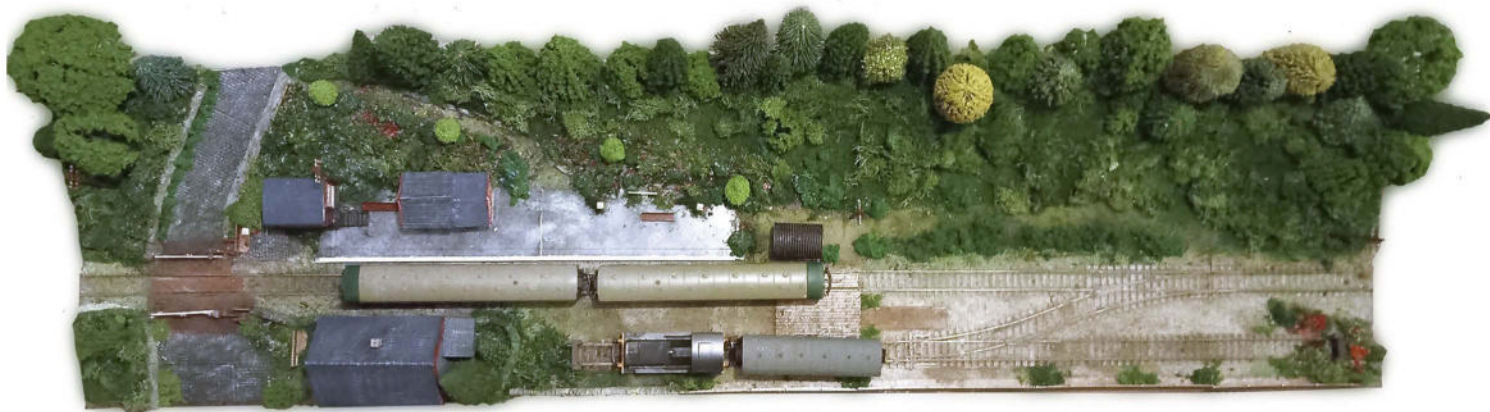
My collection of OO stock is a bit varied; to be honest, I tend towards tank engines and diesel shunters, which isn't bad at representing the pioneer days of the KWVR but doesn't match well with the modern era of the line. That said, such a wide variety of motive power has been on the railway at some point or another; you can excuse just about anything appearing at 'Damems'. *Flying Scotsman* has been a few times, Class 50s, Deltics, High-Speed Trains, Class 66s and 70s, GWR tender locomotives, even vintage machines like the Liverpool and Manchester *Lion* have all appeared.

I was able to acquire the Hornby model of 4F 43924, which handles most of my trains, as well as a Lima class 101 DMU. This latter machine is going to need a bit of modification; it's not quite in the right livery for the body style, but mine's due an upgrade with a new chassis this year, so it'll probably get a repaint. Hopefully, the forthcoming Rapido model of S160-class 5820 'Big Jim' will join the collection, as it's my favourite member of the fleet, and Bachmann some years ago did a model of the Ivatt 2MT tank in the red 'house livery' of the KWVR, which would look great on the layout. A Heljan W&M railbus is also due to be added when funds permit, as it's very much a signature member of the fleet for off-peak days and could be left shuttling back and forth to represent the 'Railcar Wednesday' timetable.

The real Damems is a wonderful little station and packs an amazing amount of character into a small space. The composition of the site suits it nicely to being the subject for a micro layout, but the sheer variety of trains - many of which can be replicated from the RTR ranges of the major manufacturers - make it a pleasant layout for just watching the trains go by. ■

ABOVE: The classic view of Damems, as you climb the road up to the level crossing from the bottom of the valley.

BELOW: The layout from above; the plan is eventually to extend it at either end when it's permanently set up in the workshop, but for now, cassette fiddle yards at either end suffice.



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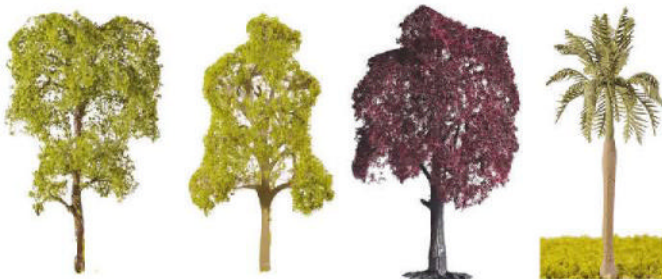
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THE LATEST HEADLINES

IRM reveals new Class 800 loco in OO



Accurascale IRM has announced the GSR B1A Class "800s" 4-6-0 express passenger locomotives as its first foray into ready-to-run steam locomotives.

Available in three liveries, the lengthy specification includes a centrally mounted, high-quality 5-pole skew-wound motor, with single flywheel, fully fitted brake rigging, aligned to wheel centres, prism-free flush cab glazing, duel-LED flickering firebox, die-cast underframes with all cylinders, linkages and piping applied separately.

Eroded metal, plastic and wire detail parts, including (but not limited to) handrails, lamp brackets, running gear, brake gear, draw gear, nameplates and cab side plates are also included.

With the assessment of the first EP now complete, which turned up very few issues, the artwork files are currently being finished off and passed to the factory to produce the deco samples. The PCB schematics have been completed by ESU as well, which means that the deco samples should also be fully sound functional.

The sound project has been built from the ground up, using a combination of newly recorded 4-6-0 3-cylinder sounds, which Accurascale IRM's sound engineer has then married to the sound curves taken from archive recordings of 802 *Táilte*. This should provide for a complete authentic sound file, with great drivability.

Like the NIR Hunslet locomotives, this is planned to be a very exclusive production run due to the nature of there being three class members in various guises during their short careers. Accurascale IRM cannot guarantee that there will be a future production run of these locomotives, so we would advise anyone who wants a 800 Class locomotive in OO gauge to get ordering ASAP from this production run.

Delivery of the Celtic Queens is slated for Q3 2026 and can be ordered exclusively from the Accurascale website, priced at €349.00 DC/DCC Ready and €449.00 DCC sound-fitted.

New brewery ventilated vans announced

A selection of artworks and decorated samples of new ventilated vans have been released by Dapol, which will be available from May in OO and O gauge.

Clean versions are pictured, but each model will also be available in a weathered variant. The OO models will feature a detailed body moulding, NEM pockets with self-centring couplings and containers with posable doors. In O gauge, metal sprung buffers, metal Instantan couplings and brass bearing pockets are featured.

Proposed Liveries; Titanic Brewery Atlantic Red, Titanic Brewery Cappuccino Stout and Titanic Brewery White Star Golden Ale

Priced at £13 in pristine condition and £14.20 weathered for OO versions and £55.51 in pristine and £57.91 weathered in O gauge, these wagons are currently in production and will be released in May 2025 - pre-order with your preferred Dapol stockist to avoid disappointment.



New LMS Standard 20T brake vans from Bachmann

The new Branchline model marks the first time this iconic vehicle has been modelled in OO by Bachmann. However, the type has a proven pedigree, following in the tracks of the successful N scale models produced by Graham Farish. Thanks to an extensive tooling suite, models of all three diagrams can be produced, covering their entire working lives and capturing the numerous differences seen on the real vehicles, including;

- Vans fitted with vacuum brakes, through vacuum pipes, or unfitted
- Shallow or deep guard duckets
- Narrow or wide ducket beading
- Flush or rivetted end panels
- 18-inch or extended buffers
- Shallow or deep ballast weights



Alongside these individual features, every model boasts a high fidelity, injection moulded bodysheet, which sports finely-moulded rain strips on the roof, precisely engraved panel lines, and rivet detailing in all areas extending as far as the rears of the end panels and undersides of the ballast weights. Separate metal handrails are fitted throughout, including the balcony safety bars, which can be fitted in the latched 'closed' position or left hanging 'open'. Beneath the solebar, the W irons, axleboxes and springs are crisply moulded, supplemented by separate brake blocks and brake rigging. The exterior look is completed with the addition of separate footsteps and footboards, while metal buffers are employed along with blackened metal wheelsets and the standard tension-lock couplings are carried in NEM coupling pockets.

Inside, the body includes the stove with full-height chimney, brake handwheel, ducket seats and tool chests. Flush glazing is fitted to the duckets and at either end of the cabin.

Five models make up the initial release, and these have a RRP of £44.95 each. Delivery is scheduled for Q4 2025 and the following items can now be ordered from any Bachmann retailer:

- 38-975 LMS 20T Brake Van LMS (LMS) Grey
- 38-976 LMS 20T Brake Van LMS (LMS) Grey
- 38-977 LMS 20T Brake Van BR Bauxite (Early)
- 38-978 LMS 20T Brake Van BR Bauxite (Late)
- 38-979 LMS 20T Brake Van BR Engineers' Grey & Yellow



Dapol announces improved tooling of LMS Suburban coaches

The hugely popular coaches, which were produced in both ready-to-run and kit form, were sold in their thousands before being discontinued in 2018.

Dapol has revealed its decision to dust off the tooling again and make some modifications in its in-house tool shop at Chirk to relaunch these OO models.

Some of the key improvements are listed below;

- New separately fitted underframe details
- Dynamo added
- Vacuum cylinders upgraded as separately fitted parts
- Extra framing added
- Brake shafts added
- Upgraded bogie pivot fixing
- New UK-produced metal wheels
- New adaptor clips for NEM pockets
- Re-polished glazing

The initial livery to be produced will be in BR carmine. LMS and BR lined maroon versions will be announced in future production runs.

Priced at £35, Dapol is making some final fitting adjustments before moulding, decorating and assembling these models begins in Chirk and are expected in shops in Q2 2025.

The design team is now turning its attention to upgrading the Stanier corridor variant of this coach and seeing what can be done to improve this range.

The Wagon Yard 10T open wagons

The new OO wagons are available exclusively from The Wagon Yard and printed in-house on quality 5-plank wagons supplied by Rapido Trains UK.

The RCH 1907 spec. 10t open wagons will be available in three liveries; Red Tape, Bodgitt & Scarper and Acme Corporation.

Designed and printed in the UK, features include side doors, twin-sided brakes, angled V-hangers, plain tapered buffers, split-spoke wheels running in metal bearings and fitted with NEM coupler pockets.

The wagons are available immediately from www.thewagonyard.co.uk and are priced at £34.95 each.





OO Class 350 and 450 'Desiro' EMUs in OO

After the N gauge versions of the Class 350 and 450 'Desiro' Electric Multiple Units made their debut last year, it's now time for modellers of OO to look forward to these units returning to the Bachmann Branchline range.

Each of the Branchline 'Desiro' units is formed of four cars, with two driving vehicles sandwiching a pair of trailers. The Class 350 units can be most easily identified by the poseable sprung metal pantograph protruding from the well on the roof of one of the trailer vehicles, while the Class 450s feature an empty pantograph well on the roof and instead are fitted with third rail pick-up shoes on the bogies.

The roof features several components depicting the cabling, insulators and air conditioning units. At the cab ends, there are separate windscreen wipers on the windows and an illuminated destination panel. Under the solebar, each vehicle has electrical boxes, brake equipment and other auxiliary gear, along with sandboxes and sandpipes where appropriate. Inside the cars, the driver's cabs feature a seat and control desk with controls and dials, while the passenger saloons feature detailed depictions of the tables and chairs. The decorations in the cabs and passenger saloons are all enhanced by internal lighting.

Sound-fitted versions of each model will also be available for the first time and will feature an ESU Loksound V5 DCC Sound Decoder that has been programmed using an exclusive sound project that contains over 20 functions. These new 'Desiro' EMUs have now entered production and are available to pre-order now. Prices are £469.95 and £569.95 for sound-fitted versions.

Available models

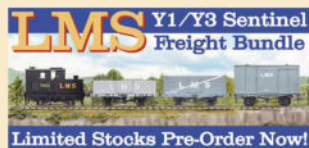
- Class 350/4 4-Car EMU 350407 First TransPennine Express
- Class 350/3 4-Car EMU 350372 London Northwestern Railway
- Class 450/0 4-Car EMU 450036 South Western Railway

Dapol releases Sentinel Freight bundles in O

The two bundles consist of an LMS and a B.R. Departmental bundle, each will include the appropriate Sentinel and three pieces of rolling stock. There are only a limited number of each bundle available and they are available to pre-order now, priced at £250.00 each.

Included in set 1 is a Sentinel Y1/Y3 LMS 7160, a 5-Plank Wagon LMS 24365, a 7-Plank Wagon LMS 60950 and an LMS Standard 12T Van Grey 505010.

Included in set 2 is a Sentinel Y1/Y3 BR Early Crest Dept. 39, 14T Slope Sided Mineral BR Grey B11532, 14T Slope Sided Mineral Black 9151 Denaby and a 14T Slope Sided Mineral BR Grey B197525.



JSModels reveals new Rail-Served Warehouse kit

The new OO gauge kit builds into a sizeable 3-storey rail-served warehouse, factory, or large goods shed.

The model features large double doors at either end, allowing a goods siding to run right through. Inside is a full-length loading platform, which feeds through to the road loading bay at the front.

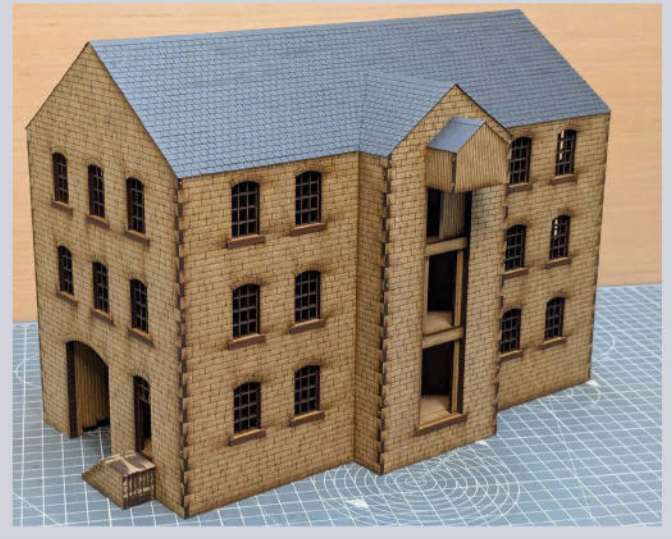
Access for personnel is provided via a door at either end, with steps to ground level, which can be placed to the left, right, or straight ahead of each door.

The building has a footprint of 290 x 165mm (excluding the steps at either end) with a total overall height of 215mm.

Optional parts are included to model any of the doors, either open or closed, as well as blanking panels, which can be used to block off some of the windows.

It is available with stone finish as standard; a brick version is also possible on a cut-to-order basis. 7mm and 2mm scale versions are also possible, again on request.

Priced at £95, each kit is made in the UK from a combination of 2mm and 3mm high-quality MDF and also includes laser-cut card roof slates, glazing material for the windows, as well as full-colour, illustrated assembly instructions.



Railhead launches limited edition collectible figures

Railhead has chosen five railway engineers for its first set: '20th Century Speed and Power', which will be available both as a strictly limited edition of 90 individually numbered hand-painted sets and in an unpainted version.

The hand-painted limited edition will retail at £69 and the packs of five figures will be individually numbered with a certificate of authenticity signed by the full Railhead team in recognition of its status as the first set of its kind. The unpainted edition gives modellers the opportunity to provide their own finish and will retail at £19.





TMC unveils exclusive Class 31 in OO

The Class 31, 31601 *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and accompanying three Mk. 2F TSO and one Mk. 2F BSO coaches in the bright pink colours of the Wessex Trains franchise are available exclusively from TMC.

These all-new exclusives for OO benefit from Bachmann Europe's forthcoming, further revised, Class 31 tooling for 'OO', which now features a 'Bach-up' stay-alive system, all-wheel electrical pick-up and reinforced driver's cab windscreen. Meanwhile, the precision-tooled Mk. 2F coaches are offered in a choice of standard or upgraded 'DCC onboard' with lights.

The Model Centre is offering discounts of 15% off RRP if 31601 *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and 31452 *Minotaur* are purchased together in DCC-ready, DCC sound-fitted, or DCC sound-fitted 'Deluxe' guises.

Both locomotives are offered at the below prices and are expected to arrive early next year.

- 31452 (35-825Y) + 31601 (35-825Z) DCC-ready duo: £340.00 (£199.95 RRP each)
- 31452 (35-825YSF) + 31601 (35-825ZSF) DCC sound-fitted duo: £526.00 (£309.95 RRP each)
- 31452 (35-825YSFX) + 31601 (35-825ZSFX) DCC sound-fitted 'Deluxe' duo: £611.00 (£359.95 RRP each)

TMC is offering all three Mk. 2F Tourist Second Opens (TSOs) and Mk. 2F Brake Second Open (BSO) individually with (or without) interior lights.

- Four-coach bundle (standard): £305.00 (save 15% off RRP)
- Four-coach bundle (DCC onboard with lights): £372.00 (save 15% off RRP)
- Single coaches (standard): £80.95 (save 10% off RRP)
- Single coaches (DCC onboard with lights): £98.95 (save 10% off RRP)

New Hornby LNER Azuma Class 801/2

Another OO model is revealed, which forms part of Hornby's celebratory 200 collection. The new limited-edition LNER Azuma Class 801/2 Railway 200 is available as either a five-car train pack or a coach pack of four, priced at £549.99 and £289.99, respectively, and are arriving by the end of the year.

LNER unveiled a commemorative livery to mark 200 years since the first passenger journey on the world-famous Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR).

According to the rail company, *Darlington* has been designed to hail the town's world-changing contribution to the railway throughout the years and showcases significant events and landmarks from its history.



Included on the striking livery is *Locomotion No. 1*, the first locomotive to haul passengers on the S&DR, the first edition of the Northern Echo, published in Darlington and the UK's first truly national newspaper, Hopetown, the Darlington railway museum located on the grounds of the former S&DR works; capped off with an LNER Azuma train and the design of the new entrance to the station.

In a special event at Darlington station, the train's livery was unveiled with help from Voices of Darlington Choir and Durham singer-songwriter, Sam Slatcher, who performed his composition inspired by the Stockton & Darlington Railway.

The station, which is managed by LNER, has also been decorated to remind the millions of customers that pass through it each year of this special anniversary.

Metcalfe newly re-designed Corner Shop/Pub kit

Perfect for OO street scenes, this kit will be available in red brick or stone finish and will be on sale in April, priced at £19.

A beautifully designed dual-purpose kit that gives you the choice of having either a pub or corner shop at the end of your street, it comes with a variety of signs and window displays, and two options of paving, a sample sheet of M0062 Paving or the M0060 Individual paving slabs.



New wheels for NG7 modellers by EDM Models

The 3D printed centres are fitted to blackened steel tyres and 26mm long pinpoint axles, so won't need painting to look authentic.

Manufacturing the centres in-house allows EDM to produce the characteristic curly spokes favoured by many narrow-gauge railway companies, something that you don't get by using OO wheels.

At present, 10.5mm diameter six and eight-spoke wheels are available, but owner Paul Martin assures us that the aim is to increase this over time.



New EFE Rail Isle of Wight Coaches announced



These brand-new models have been designed and produced exclusively for Bachmann's EFE Rail range and will be offered in 4-coach packs spanning multiple eras of operation, with every pack comprising one of each of the four different vehicle types.

Added separately are the ornate metal handrails aside every door, the coach ends steps, which are produced in etched brass, lamp irons at either end of each vehicle, and the emergency brake gear, which combines injection moulded components and metal wire pipework.

Glazing is added separately, through which the interior detailing, including seating and compartment partitions, can be viewed. Beneath the solebars, two styles of truss rod are modelled; the queen-post type found on the Brake Thirds and Third and the cross-channel type as featured on the Composite. Battery boxes are added individually along with the dynamo and brake equipment, complete with metal wire piping between the various components.

The bogies are adorned with separate springs and brake blocks to provide full relief detailing, while bogie footsteps are provided for the

guard on the brake vehicles, aiding their access to and from the brake compartment. The bogies are fitted with turned metal wheelsets and standard tension-lock couplings are employed, attached via a chassis-mounted close coupling mechanism.

Each model will be decorated inside and out to complete the look, including period-appropriate 'smoking' and 'no smoking' signage on the windows and with set numbers applied to each brake vehicle at the outer ends and on the solebars of the four individual coaches.

Four coach packs will be available initially, each containing four coaches and with an RRP of £269.95 per pack. Delivery is scheduled for Q4 2025, and the following items can now be ordered; E86021 LBSCR 54ft 'Isle of Wight' 4-Coach Pack SR Maunsell Green, E86022 LBSCR 54ft 'Isle of Wight' 4-Coach Pack SR Malachite Green, E86023 LBSCR 54ft 'Isle of Wight' 4-Coach Pack BR Crimson & E86024 LBSCR 54ft 'Isle of Wight' 4-Coach Pack BR (SR) Green.



Pre-order the New Hornby Southeastern Class 395

As part of Hornby's previously-announced 200 collection, more details have been released of the Class 395.

Hornby announced its 200 collection in January to celebrate the railways' huge milestone this year. Among the new announcements was an OO South Eastern Class 395 4-Car Train Pack, priced at £299.99, which we now have pictures of the completed models.

Available to pre-order now and expected in stores within the next few months, the new train pack contains 1x power car, 1x dummy car and two coaches in DCC-ready form. Set 395015 has received special vinyl coverings to mark the 200th anniversary of the first passenger train to be hauled on a public railway.

Alongside the train pack will also be a Rail 200 Southeastern Class 395 coach pack, priced at £119.99, which is also available to pre-order now and expected soon.

KMRC announces first TT:120 wagon

Kernow Model Rail Centre has announced its first exclusive TT:120 7-plank open wagon in the livery of Franks and Co. of Guildford, numbered 12.

The Kernow Model Rail Centre's first exclusive model in TT:120 is being produced for KMRC by Peco Ltd. The model is based on the standard RCH1923 9ft wheelbase 7-plank open wagon with fine plastic moulding with thinner wagon body walls for accuracy, interior detail, separately fitted brake lever, brake shoes in line with the free-running metal-tyred spoked wheels. A standard (removable NEM355) TT:120 coupler is fitted, compatible with other TT:120 rolling stock on the market.

The exclusive model is priced at £21.99 and is available online and from both Kernow Model Rail Centre branches.

Franks and Co. were a coal, gravel and salt merchant based in Bridge Street, close to Guildford station and had a number of private owner wagons in this livery of white lettering on black.



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Heljan Yorkshire Engine Co. Class 02 0-4-0 DH



Tony Wright



I'm not really well-up on reviewing diesel classes, but this diminutive little beauty has certainly caught my eye. It's presented in the bright yellow livery of Arnott Young's scrap yard in Dalmuir, in the lower Clyde valley, near Glasgow. It was bought from BR when it was withdrawn from the national network.

The Class was built by the Yorkshire Engine Co. of Sheffield in 1960/'61 and allocated the numbers D2580-D2869. With their lightweight, powerful Rolls Royce engine and incredibly short wheelbase of just 6', they were the ideal replacement for small steam tanks, particularly in areas featuring sharp curves, particularly dockyards. Indeed, they were first allocated to Bank Hall (Liverpool – an impossible shed to 'bunk' in my trainspotting days), where they replaced the ex-L&Y 'Pugs'. Liverpool was where I saw them, though

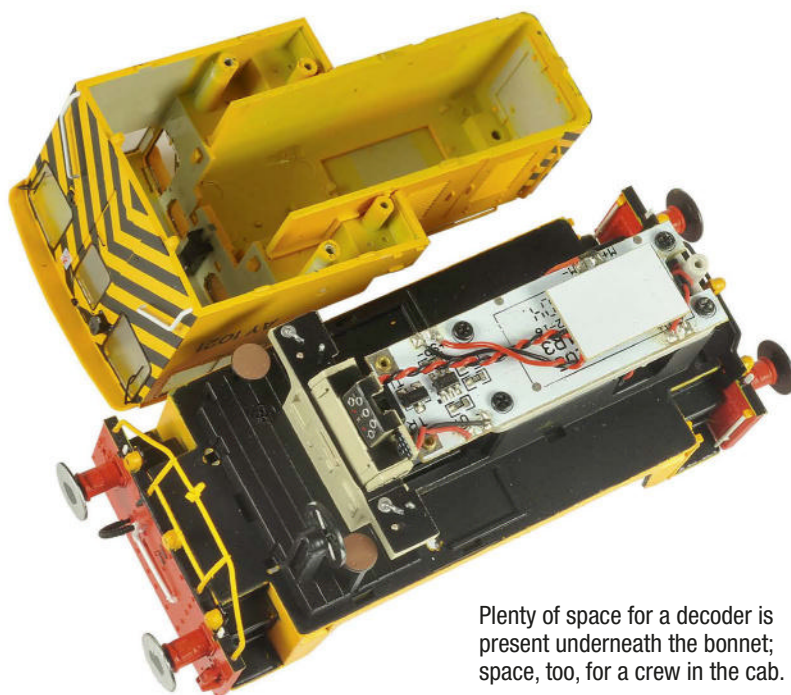
some ended up further afield in Lancashire. Sadly, any duties they were designed for were rapidly disappearing, resulting in their early demise. It would seem only four lived long enough on BR to be classified under TOPS, though 11 were sold into private industry. Seven have been preserved, including D2860, which is used to shunt exhibits around the NRM.

Heljan has a long pedigree in producing accurate diesel-outline models, and this latest (the firm's smallest to date?) is no exception. Though my 'modern image' library is far smaller than my 'steam-outline' one, checking on all the drawings and photographs at my disposal, everything seems to be spot-on. I think it's an exquisite little model, and not only in looks, because its performance is fully-up to its prototype's 170bhp in scale, helped by its high-quality coreless motor. Control (on simple analogue

– an ancient H&M 'Clipper') is superb, with silky-smooth, virtually silent running. It ran perfectly through my mixture of hand-built and Peco OO pointwork, though that is all live-frog. If dead-frog points/crossings are employed, the short wheelbase might cause stuttering. That being the case, pick-ups on a match truck might be needed (small shunters were often coupled to these).

Full provision for DCC is contained within the body (which is a bit of a fiddle to remove, necessitating lifting off the top front lamp) and a speaker is supplied on-board in the cab, underneath the control desk. Due to its short wheelbase, a stay-alive unit might be worth fitting for DCC-users. There is a bag of additional items for the user to fit – tension-lock couplings for one.

All in all, a really delightful little model, one which is sure to have great popular appeal. I thoroughly recommend it.



Plenty of space for a decoder is present underneath the bonnet; space, too, for a crew in the cab.

FACTFILE

Models:

D2861 in BR green with 'wasp stripes' and red buffer beam

D2864 in BR green with yellow buffer beam

02004 in BR green with no logo and a weathered finish

AY1061 in industrial yellow (2847)

Sam in industrial plain green with a weathered finish.

Diane in industrial Redland green - Gaugemaster collection

02005 in BR blue - Gaugemaster collection

D2860 in BR green - Locomotion Models exclusive

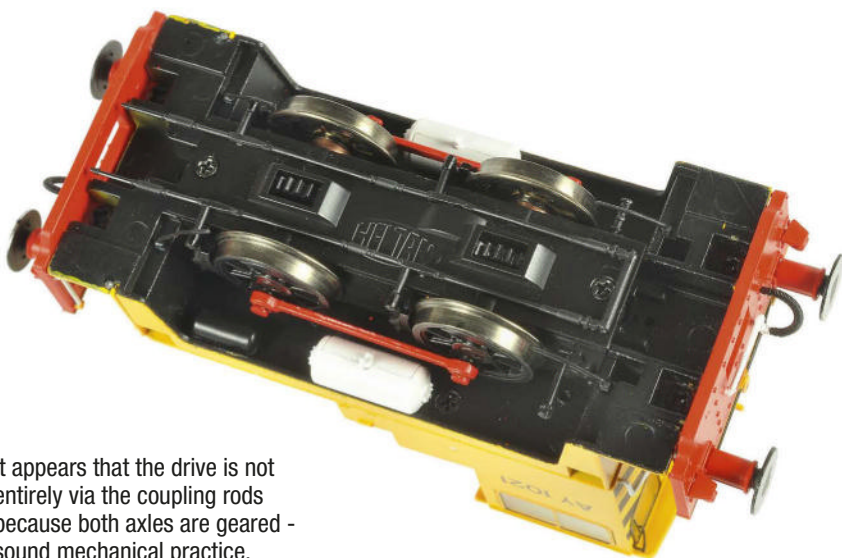
Era: 1960-1975

Construction: Plastic body with diecast chassis

Weight: 120g

Price: £169.95-179.00

Minimum curves: Radius 1



It appears that the drive is not entirely via the coupling rods because both axles are geared - sound mechanical practice.

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Excellent performance
- ✓ Overall accuracy
- ✓ Quality of finish



The veranda and handrails echoed contemporary American practice, though on a smaller scale.



A little beauty indeed. I'll be taking this lovely loco a stage or two further in a future issue of BRM.

Heljan Southern Region CCT



Tony Wright

To call the prototypes of this Southern Railway-built van 'ubiquitous' is something of an understatement. They could be seen anywhere from the Far North to Cornwall (especially in BR days) and they were very long-lived, many of these four-wheeled vans lasting well into TOPS days. The model provided for review is the SR CCT (Covered Carriage Truck) equivalent of the PMV (Parcels & Miscellaneous Van). Whereas the latter could not be used for the transport of road carriages/cars, the former was frequently used to cover any commodities, particularly perishable foodstuffs from Kent, where the end ventilators were particularly useful. The SR had less need for the transport of road vehicles than the other companies. The actual prototype of the model was built in 1931 (clearly legible by the 'plate printed on the solebar). It has (correctly) even-planking, but later-built types had uneven-planking (those built during and after the War), and

some had plywood bodies. These were mainly built by BR, and had roof ventilators. Liveries would have been Southern Railway green, BR crimson/maroon, Southern Region green and BR corporate blue, such was the longevity of the vans.

The impressive model is finished in Southern Region green, representing the '50s/'60s on BR. On checking with all the prototype drawings/photographs at my disposal, it appears to be entirely accurate in every way. Attention to detail is remarkable, even down to all the underframe components faithfully-represented; remarkable! Regarding the underframe, be very careful because the central vertical bar in the trussing does not appear to be attached to the back of the solebar on both sides and thus is rather flimsy. The whole thing rides superbly, with all wheels fully-sprung on tiny coil springs above the axleboxes. Under the vehicle's weight, they disappear, suggesting that the leaf springs are actually working; excellent design in

action, there. All the handrails are separate fittings, and the buffers are sprung, as are the fine screw shackles. The security bars behind the windows are nicely-represented.

The (plain) livery is very well-executed in the main, with just some slight evidence of white 'bleed' around the printing on the ends (only apparent in close-up photography). Regarding close-up photography, I needed that to be able to read the smallest printed detail – all entirely legible, and very crisply-applied.

There is a bag with bits and pieces for the owner to add; this includes the prominent footsteps, and I'm surprised they were not fitted at source – risk of breakage in transit, perhaps?

There's something about O Gauge that really captures the 'mass' of the prototype, something impossible in the smaller scale, and this fine model is certainly 'massive'. Not that should limit haulage, because it's exceptionally free-running.

Entirely-recommended.



Any apparent white 'bleed' is only apparent in close-up.



The only way I can read this superb application of lettering is via a close-up lens!



With the van on its wheels, the small coil springs disappear.



With the van on its side, the coil springs appear.

FACTFILE

Models:

- (9170) Southern Railway CCT No 2372 (even planks) era 3
- (9171) BR crimson CCT S1765S (even planks) weathered era 4/5
- (9172) BR(S) green CCT unnumbered (even planks) era 5
- (9173) BR blue NOV (CCT) S2017 (plywood body) era 7/8
- (9174) BR departmental olive ADB975276 (uneven planks) era 7/8
- (9175) BR blue CCT S1733 (uneven planks) era 6/7

Era: 1920-2000s

Construction: Plastic

Weight: 450g

Price: £199-219.00

Minimum curves: Radius 2

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Dimensional accuracy
- ✓ Finish
- ✓ Smooth-running
- ✓ Mass



Despite being invisible from most viewing angles, the underframe is complete in every way.



The footboards are not fitted as supplied because of the risk of damage in transit and also because some of the prototypes lost them later in their lives. Small brackets are supplied to suggest this. I've now fitted the footboards and will be taking this model a step or two further for a future BRM article. The model can be supplied with factory-applied weathering for £20.00 more.



OO Works J17



Tony Wright

Just in from this small RTR manufacturer is this fine model of the ex-GE G58 (LNER/BR J17) 0-6-0 in late BR condition.

The class was a development of the earlier F48 (LNER J16), introduced by Holden in 1900, and proved to be long-lived and very successful. Designed originally for freight-only work, from 1942, some of the class went to work on the Midland & Great Northern section and were equipped with vacuum ejectors and steam-heating, enabling them to work passenger trains. Indeed, five of these so-fitted worked on the London Tilbury &

Southend section in BR days (1952-1955) and could be seen on occasions at St. Pancras on special boat trains. Withdrawal commenced in 1954, with the class extinct in BR operation by the early-'60s, as rapid dieselisation of the ER in East Anglia rendered steam-operation obsolete. Fortunately, one (BR 65567) survives in preservation and is currently to be seen as part of the National Railway Collection at Barrow Hill.

I'm surprised that no RTR manufacturer has considered a J17 so far because it ticks most of the boxes regarding pre-Grouping, Grouping, BR and preservation. There have

been kits in the past; early BEC (designed to go on a Tri-ang 'Jinty' chassis) and then Crownline (now PDK). Now (and not before time?) we have a rather nice RTR manifestation, which I'm sure will be popular. Unlike the mainstream RTR manufacturers, this OO Works' example is really hand-assembled. To quote from the manufacturer – *'All our locomotives with tenders have cast metal bodies and heavy metal chassis to provide maximum weight for haulage. These handmade, fully finished, ready-to-run models are made to order in small batches in our workshop here in the UK.'*

Though J17s worked on the Midland & Great Northern system, they were vacuum-fitted, which this one isn't. Nonetheless, I think the loco makes a nice shot as it heads east on a mixed goods through Little Bytham.



And, well-made this model is and also well-finished, and it certainly has ample pulling power. Regarding running, it's exceptionally-smooth and powerful, easily negotiating all forms of pointwork, some of tight radii. Pick-up is by the 'American' system, whereby the loco and tender are 'live' to opposite sides, necessitating an insulated drawbar but no need of wipers on the rims of the wheels. In order to separate the two, a soldering iron will be required, and it's not even recommended that the loco body be removed for servicing. Should DCC-fitting be undertaken, then the body will have to be removed (we're told there's enough space inside for a chip), but if a decoder is 'cold-wired' (shouldn't that be hot-wired?), then any guarantee is invalidated (OO Works will not provide a DCC-fitting service). Thus, mechanically/electrically, this model is definitely 'old-school', even though it's got a coreless motor.

Checking on drawings and prototype pictures, the loco seems to capture the essence of a J17. It's well-proportioned, with sufficient detail to satisfy most. Speaking of detail (or lack of in places), it's a pity that the handrail below the smokebox front is not present, there are no brake cross-shafts and the rods are not fluted. The smokebox has no prominent rivets, though in BR days, most had prominent studs around the front and rear edges (including 65541). It's finished in a very uniform (and rather pleasing) satin black (which would benefit from weathering, especially the rims of all the wheels), with the cab glazed and painted to pick out details. The cabside numbers appear to be waterslide and there is evidence of the carrying film being present under powerful



lighting (under 'normal' lighting, any 'halo' disappears). The buffer stocks are black, when the BR painting spec' was for red (there were occasions when works still carried out the LNER black-stock tradition, Gorton in particular, but I'm not sure about Stratford). The tender carries the later BR crest, but (according to the RCTS) no J17 lived long enough to have the correct left-facing lion (which this one has) on the offside of the tank.

The model is obviously more expensive than a mainstream RTR 0-6-0, but its manufacturing process mainly accounts for

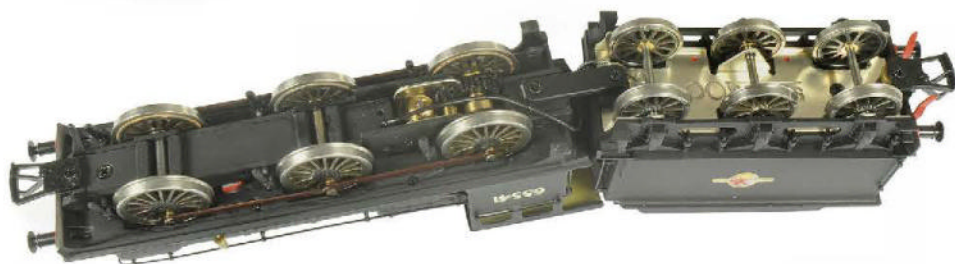
that. It's also all-metal, which also increases costs, and it does have a satisfying 'feel' to it. Its performance certainly justifies a premium price, but it's a pity minor detail omissions/inaccuracies are present (though a determined modeller could attend to these).

All in all, I rather like it and, especially for those who can't afford to pay someone to build one or who can't make one for himself/herself, this is the only way to obtain a J17. It's running on Markits wheels, and with the current non-availability of these, I suggest getting one while you can.

It's generally well-finished and certainly captures the 'ordinary' look of a J17.



The simplicity of both loco and tender chassis is evident here.



FACTFILE

Models:

LNER on tender with choice of number between 8150-8239 and 5500-5589
BR 65582 early or late crest
BR 65567 preserved early
Plain black, red buffer beam & coupling rods

Era: 1913 – 1950s

Construction: Cast metal body and heavy metal chassis

Weight: 470g

Price: £337.00 (plus P&P)

Minimum curves: Radius 2

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Overall quality of finish
- ✓ Heavy weight
- ✓ Excellent performance



Rapido GWR 'Open A' 018



Andy York



From low angles, the amount of fine detail, especially below the body, can be enjoyed, meriting space on finescale layouts, while their robustness means they can be enjoyed on the most basic of layouts.

2 850 'Open A' wagons were built from 1914 to 1920, resulting in the Great Western's standard 5-plank design becoming widespread, not just across their own lines but on inter-company trains so they could appear across the country. Like earlier O11 and O15 designs, the Diagram O18 wagons were built on 16' underframes, but the visual difference lies in the tapered foot drop door with the bottom plank of the door set at an angle, along with adjustments to the metalwork, a feature that became standard on many of the later GWR open wagon designs. Originally rated as 10T wagons, this increased over the years to 12 and even 13 tons.

Rapido's range of wagons span the years, starting with three differently numbered wagons in pre-1921 grey livery with 25" tall GW lettering, three for the 1921-1936 era with slightly smaller 16" lettering and three wagons in post-1936 livery with the small 5" lettering. The early BR era is provided for with the same GW grey livery, which is worn on both body and underframe but with post-nationalisation numbering with a W prefix. Moving on to standardised BR liveries, there are a further three numbered

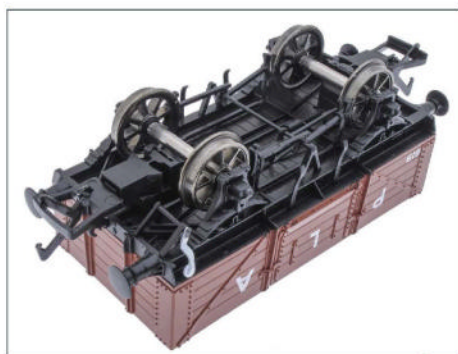
wagons in unfitted grey livery. All of these models are provided with fittings for the user to model a sheet rail in upright or lowered positions if desired; the brackets are to be glued onto the wagon ends with the sheet clipped into the holes.

A batch of O18s was also built for the Rhymney Railway and delivered complete with its own 'RR' lettering – these were identical, except they were provided without the sheet rail. There are no definitive records to say when the wagons disappeared from revenue service, but many wagons were sold to private railway companies, including the Port of Bristol Authority, Port of London Authority and Manchester Ship Canal, with Rapido providing an example of each in the launch range of 19 models.

Rapido has made a name for itself with pre-grouping and grouping wagon types with higher levels of accuracy and finesse than we have seen before, with full external, internal and underframe details, including brass bearings for smooth friction-free running, NEM coupling pockets and a high-quality livery application, and this very useful type matches those high standards.



Selected wagons include end mounts in raised or lowered positions for a sheet rail to add variety to trains.



The underside of the body features planked representations, while the spring and brake detail is to Rapido's usual top standards.

FACTFILE

Models: (review items in bold)

971001 GWR No.34004 - Grey 25" GW pre-1921
 971002 GWR No.98289 - Grey 25" GW pre-1921
 971003 GWR No.94250 - Grey 25" GW pre-1921
 971004 GWR No.97398 - Grey 16" GW pre-1921-1936
971005 GWR No.98480 - Grey 16" GW pre-1921-1936
 971006 GWR No.98652 - Grey 16" GW pre-1921-1936
 971007 GWR No.97199 - Grey 5" GW pre post-1936
 971008 GWR No.97728 - Grey 5" GW pre post-1936
 971009 GWR No.98000 - Grey 5" GW pre post-1942
 971010 BR No.90753 - GW Grey post-1948
 971011 BR No.98031 - GW Grey post-1948 Hybar
 971012 BR No.98649 - GW Grey post-1948
 971013 BR No.91584 - BR unfitted grey
 971014 BR No.99151 - BR unfitted grey Hybar
 971015 BR No.99350 - BR unfitted grey
 971016 Rhymney Railway No.295
 971017 Port of Bristol Authority No.61110
 971018 Port of London Authority No.619
 971019 Manchester Ship Canal No.5918
Era: 1914 - preservation
Construction: Plastic body & chassis
Weight: 30g
Price: £32.95
Minimum curves: Radius 1 (371mm)
Accessories: n/a

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Bodyside detail
- ✓ Underframe detail



N



1913 - 1950s



£££ 32.95

REVIEWS

Rapido GWR 'N19 10T Loco Coal wagon



Andy York



The eye is immediately drawn to the rounded corners of the wagon, which is a distinctly different profile from normal viewing angles, bringing variety to the appearance of freight workings.

Aside from coal traffic being one of the main revenue earners for the railways from day one, there was a significant requirement for coal for their own use, with much of that need being some way distant from the sources. The Great Western Railway was no different in this regard and had a need to transport their favoured South Wales steam coal from pits, particularly Aberdare, Radyr and Rogerstone, to engine sheds for major consumers such as Old Oak Common through to the smallest of branch line sheds. The GWR, over the years, provided their own internal service wagons from 10T, 12T, 20/21T through to 40T capacity, running as dedicated services for major sheds through to single wagons in mixed goods services for the furthest reaches of their empire.

Rapido's Diagram N19 wagon, built from 1914-1920, with an iron body sharing the same underframe as their earlier O11 and O15 designs, looks distinctively different from most other wagon types with its rolled and rounded corner profiles and wide door style

to aid unloading in coaling towers and even to basic stages. The model typically includes Rapido's exceptional underframe detail with its DCIII four shoe brake-system married to a pleasing body with riveting and a distinctive 5'4" wide side door for discharge. The interior shows the internal door joints and nice triangular-shaped corner brackets to the top of the body.

Our review model is in the 1921-1936 GW grey livery (seven parts black to one part white apparently – nothing more sophisticated than that) with 16" tall GW lettering. The earlier as-built livery with 25" letters and later grey with 5" small lettering are covered and also BR-numbered versions in GW grey with a W prefix number and the final BR unfitted grey with two different numbered examples available in each livery.

As ever, the running qualities are superb with spoked wheels running in metal bearings, with a high standard of decoration down to the solebar number in a recessed position. An all-round excellent addition to the range.

FACTFILE

Models: (review items in bold)

977001 GWR No.9876 - Grey 25" GW pre-1921

977002 GWR No.9882 - Grey 25" GW pre-1921

977003 GWR No.9902 - Grey 16" GW pre-1921-1936

977004 GWR No.9950 - Grey 16" GW pre-1921-1936

977005 GWR No.9916 - Grey 5" GW post-1936

977006 GWR No.23014 - Grey 5" GW post-1936

977007 BR No.9912 - GW Grey post-1948

977008 BR No.23016 - GW Grey post-1948

977009 BR No.W9331 - BR unfitted grey

977010 BR No.W23017 - BR unfitted grey

Era: 1913 – 1950s

Construction: Plastic body & chassis

Weight: 30g

Price: £32.95

Minimum curves: Radius 1 (371mm)

Accessories: n/a

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Underframe detail
- ✓ Running qualities



The inside of the wagon is suitably detailed, with plate joints and internal door joints, a nice addition is the triangular-shaped corner brackets to the top of the body.



The model utilises the same underframe as Rapido's earlier O11 and O15 models, the oddity here is that it shows a planked underside on an iron-bodied wagon.



The DCIII brake-system handle is a notable feature of the wagons.

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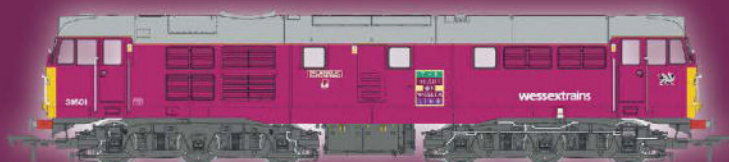


Mk. 2F Brake Second Open (BSO) 9525
(39-706Z) standard
(39-706ZDC) DCC onboard with lights

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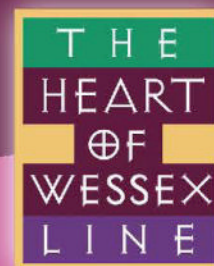
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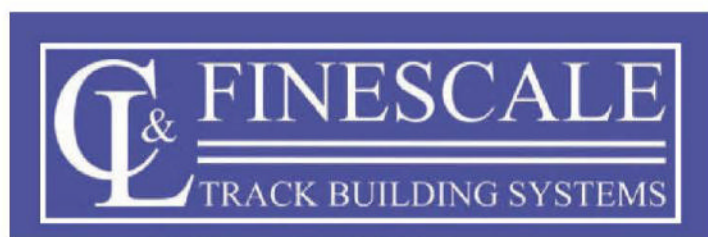
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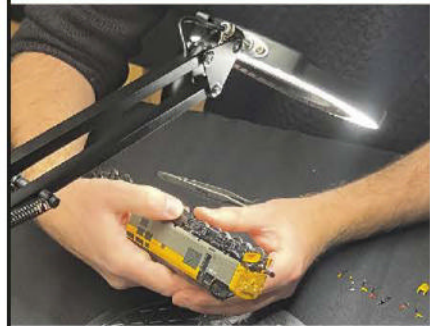


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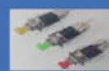
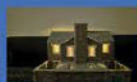
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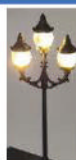
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- 08-09 February 2025 - Festival of British Railway Modeling (Doncaster Racecourse)
- 14-15 February 2025 - Burnham & District Model Railway Exhibition (Weston-Super-Mare)
- 01-02 March 2025 - Midlands Garden Rail Show (Warwick Event Centre, Lemington Spa)
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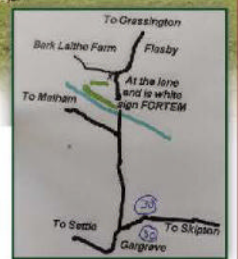


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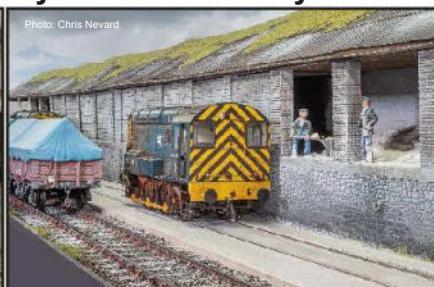


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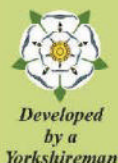
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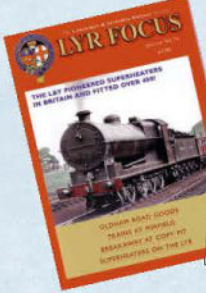
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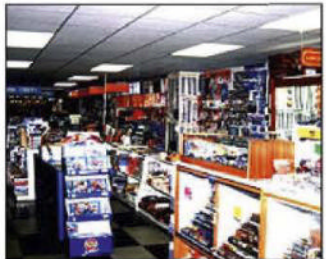
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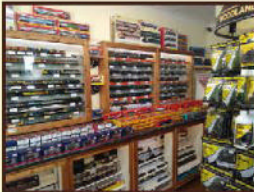
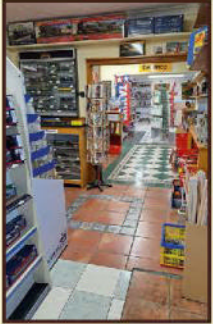
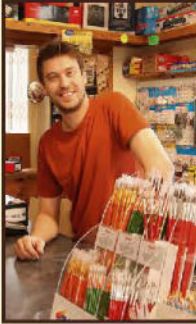
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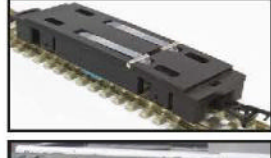
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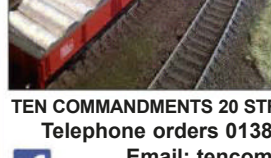
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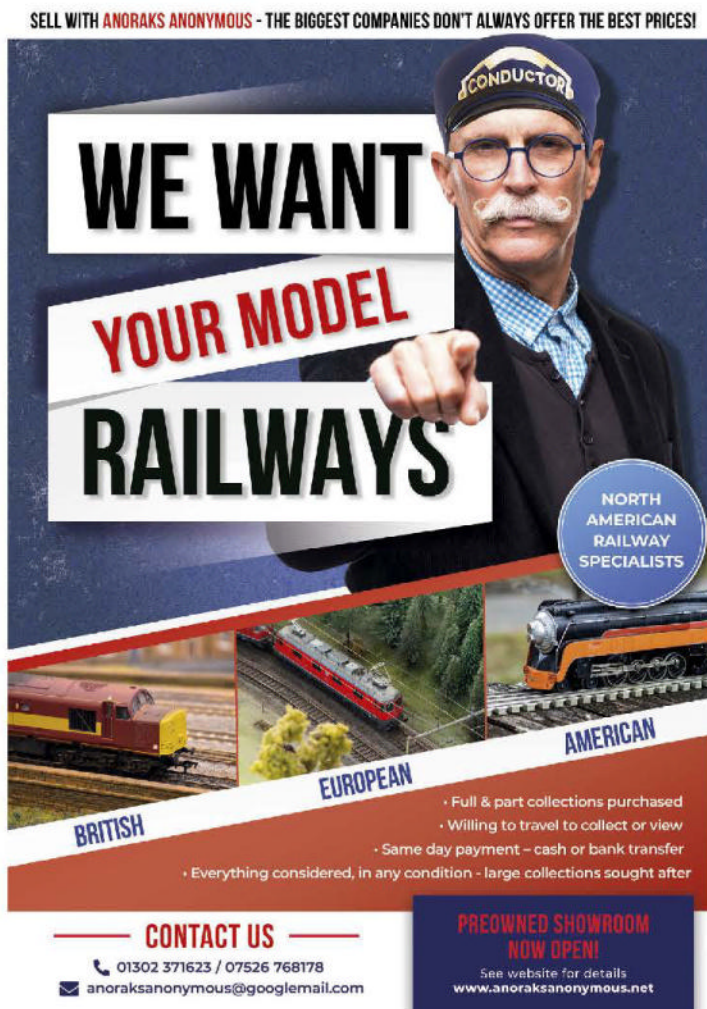
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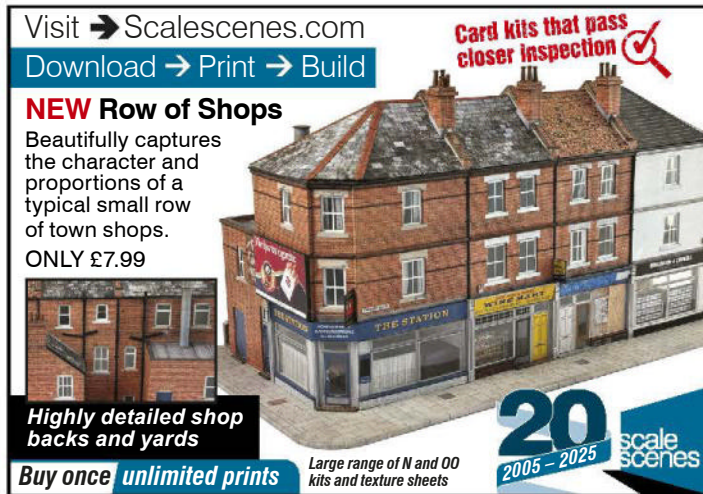
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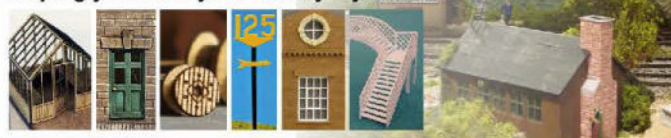
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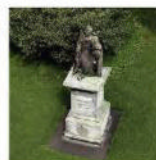
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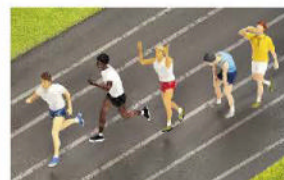


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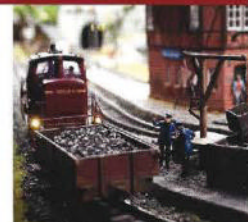
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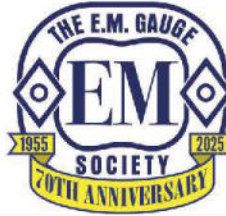
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Phil realises that this souvenir of Glasgow would be just too big to fit in his car.



Sarah took her family to see *Flying Scotsman* when it visited the Nene Valley Railway.



Rocking the high-viz look, Phil adds some last-minute detail to his layout at Ally Pally.



In Amsterdam, Debbie indulged in a bit of tram spotting.



Every show relies on an army of people working behind the scenes. Here are just a few of those at London, preparing for the doors to open.

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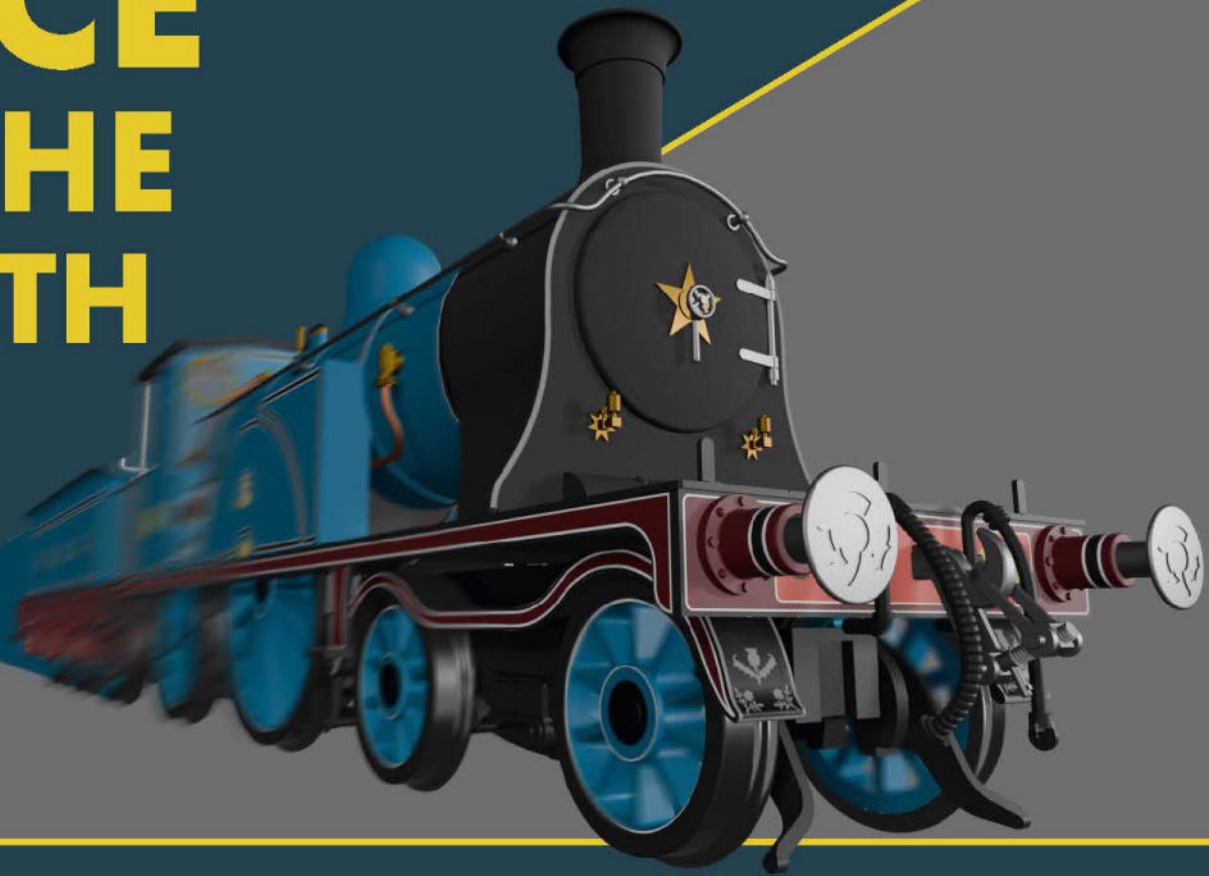
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