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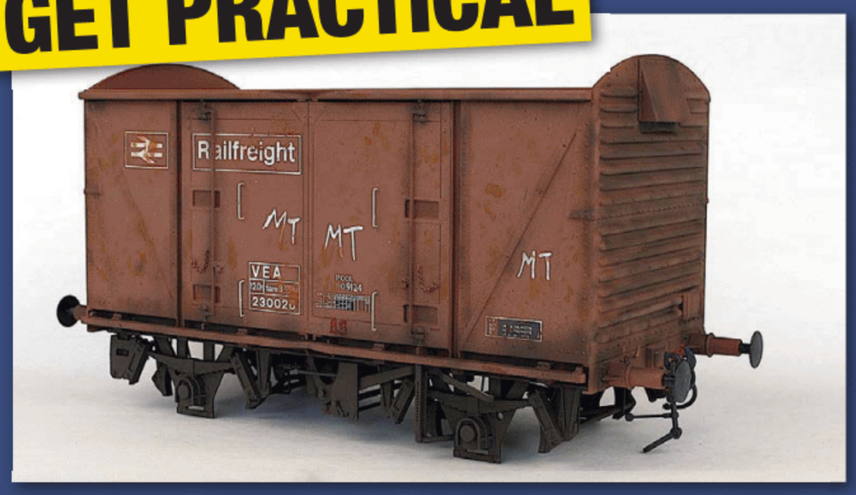

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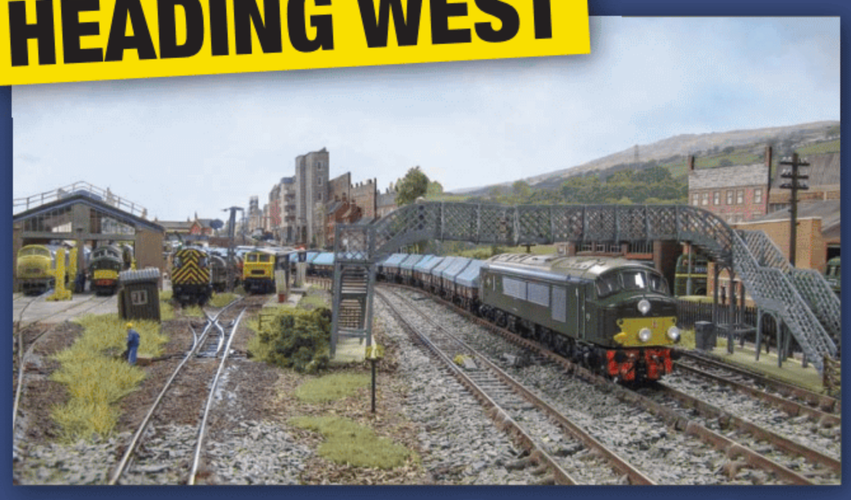

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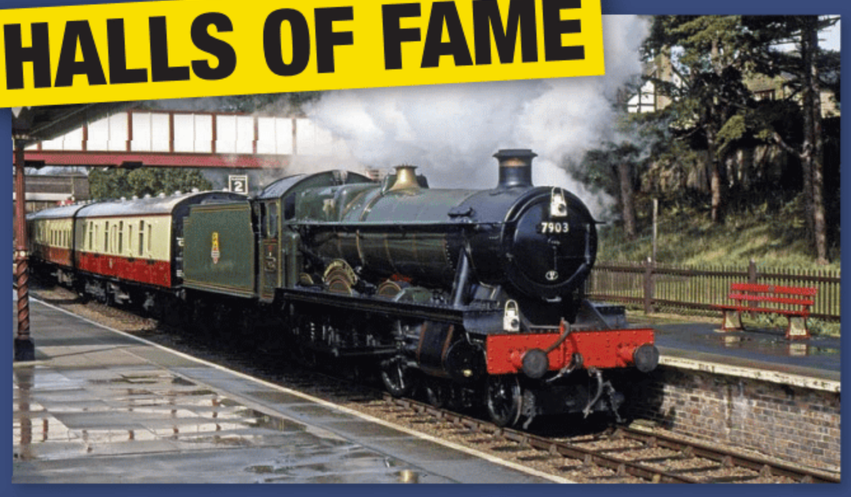

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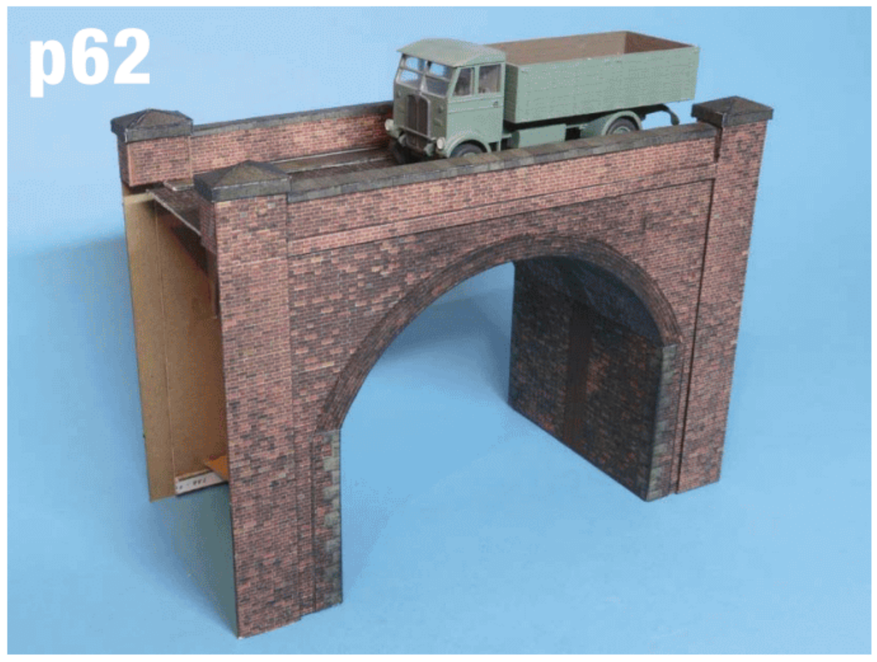

p44 Building a bus in N gauge

p46 Construct and personalise a house kit

p50 Modelling a scruffy corner

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p56 Budget modelling with Tony Wright

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REGULARS

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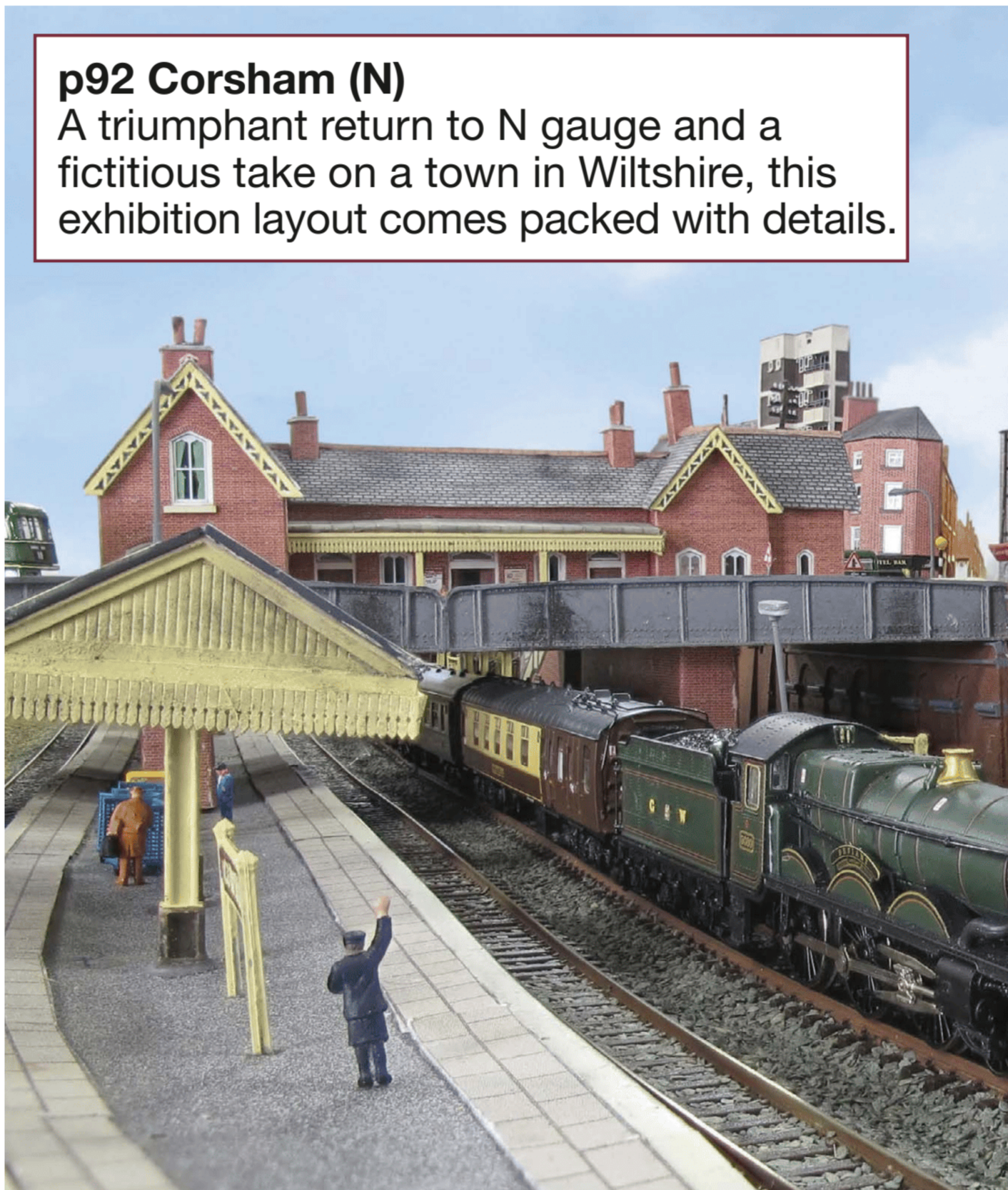
INSPIRING LAYOUTS

p92 Corsham (N)
A triumphant return to N gauge and a fictitious take on a town in Wiltshire, this exhibition layout comes packed with details.





p20 Blackfriars Bridge (P4)
A line rarely modelled as it lost its existence in 1900, has been captured by this group, who researched a period of history long forgotten.





p34 Five Mile House (OO)
This Club's latest prototype project brings an atmospheric model of a 1930s station based on an important Lincolnshire link.

TRACTION





p70 Aggregates Terminals: Part 2 - Exploring unloading points
p78 All change on the Wharfdale Line
p82 Southern Region electric multiple units away from usual settings
p86 Class 40s across the Pennines

LATEST REVIEWS

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p120 Hornby TT:120 Terrier A1/ A1X
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p128 Bryngaer, Cambrian Railways 2-Plank wagon
p130 Tri-ang Railways Remembered: RS9 'Intercity Express' set



p130

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R8072	LH Point	**£11.85**
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31-127	CL3000 BR ROD	**£118.45**
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31-136DC	D11/2	**£115.90**
31-931	LMS Compound	**£112.90**
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31-461A	C Class SR Black	**£106.20**
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32-131A	GWR 4575	**£140.20**
35-080	LBSC E4 SR Black	**£140.20**
35-075A	LBSC E4 Lined Umber	**£140.20**

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35-126	Harry Needle Cl20	**£152.95**
35-418	BR Class 47 Construction	**£203.95**
35-419	BR Class 47 Rft Distribution	**£203.95**
32-620	Cl. 90 Freightliner grey	**£195.45**
32-619	Cl. 90 EWS	**£195.45**
32-615	Cl. 90 Virgin Trains	**£195.45**
32-614	Cl. 90 BR RES red/grey	**£195.45**
32-613	Cl. 90 Intercity Mainline	**£195.45**
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31-267A	Class 419 MLV Blue/Grey	**£135.95**
31-265A	Class 419 MLV BR green	**£135.95**
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E83031	Cl. 144 BR WYPTE Metro	**£212.45**
E83022	Cl. 143 BR Provincial	**£212.45**
35-312	Class 37 BR Blue Thornaby TMD	**£212.45**
35-352	BR Cl. 20 BR Green	**£191.20**
32-652A	BR Cl44 Blue Ingleborough	**£161.45**
32-704	BR Cl46 Blue weathered	**£169.95**
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NR-P994DW	BP Green no. BPO67765	**£14.25**
NR-P994EW	BP Green no. BPO67783	**£14.25**
NR-P994FW	BP Green no. BPO67574	**£14.25**
NR-P995A	BP Black no. BPO65762	**£13.45**
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T. Smart ★★★★★

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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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S. Barltett ★★★★★

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 ★★★★★

I'm an international buyer, and particularly a fan of British N Gauge, my orders have always been fulfilled and packed above and beyond my expectations. The prices even factoring in the current exchange rate of the AUD to GDP and postage are often cheaper than what I can source here in Australia. A wide selection of manufacturers and models. I'd highly recommend this store.

D. ★★★★★

I've been a satisfied customer of Rails for a long time with my previous online orders. I'm happy to say that my first visit to the store today did not disappoint, as I expected! The service was outstanding, the staff know exactly what they're doing and are more than competent enough to help you get exactly what you're looking for. Would recommend to anyone looking for anything to try them first!



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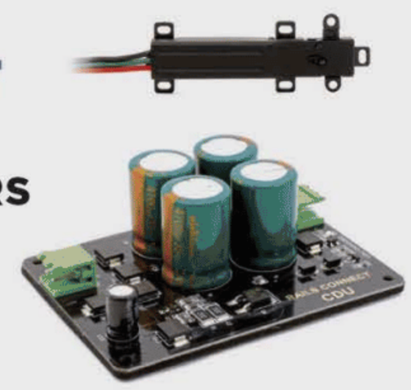

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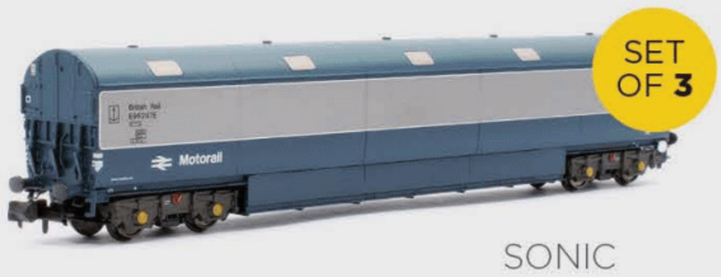

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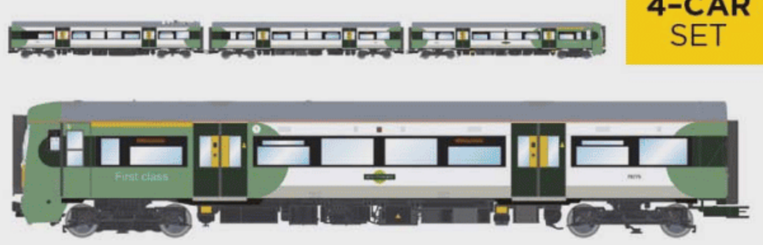

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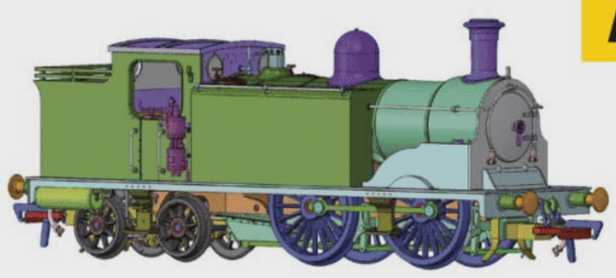

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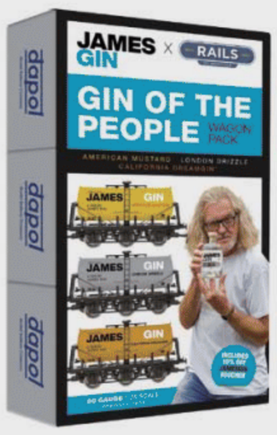



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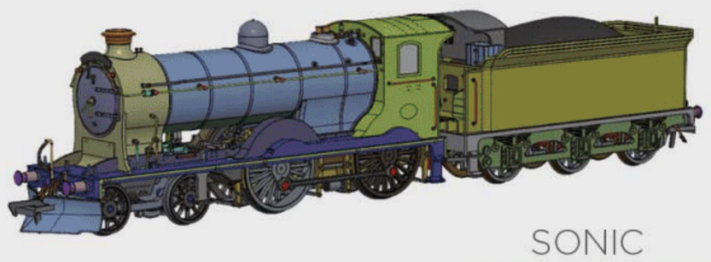

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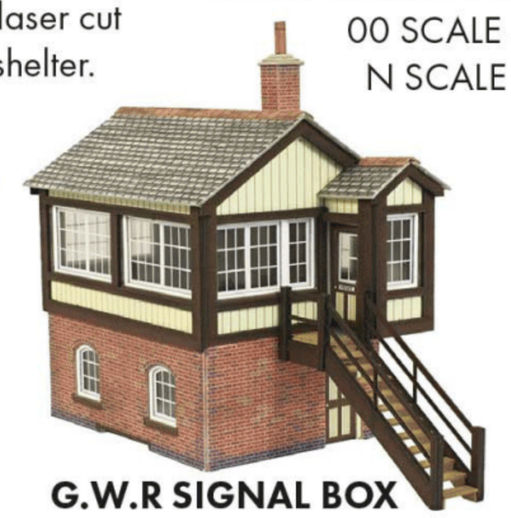

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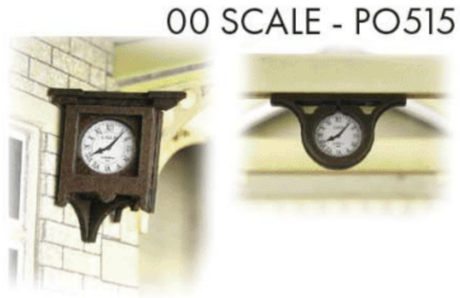





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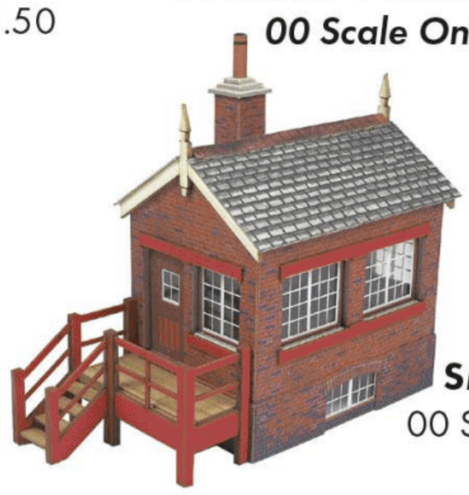

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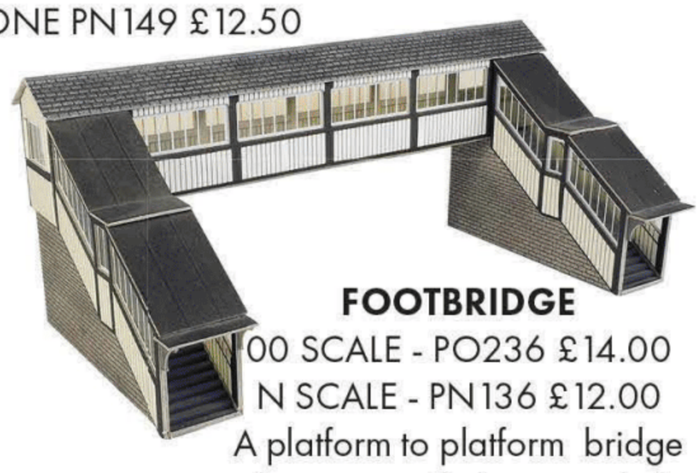

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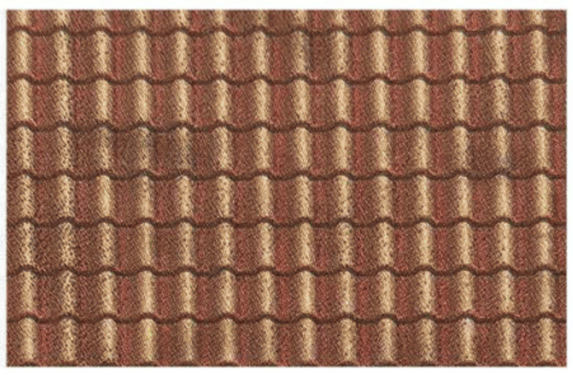





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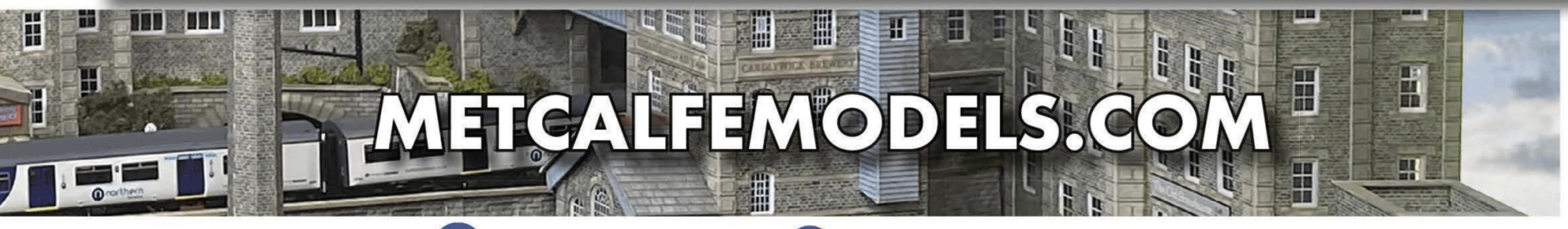

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LAYOUT | P4 | BLACKFRIARS BRIDGE

2-4-0 *Reindeer* entering Blackfriars Bridge with the City portion of an up train. The West End portion, bound for Victoria, will have been separated at Herne Hill. In the foreground, 2-4-0T *Amethyst* is turned in preparation for another suburban trip.

FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Blackfriars Bridge, 1873
SCALE/GAUGE: 1:76.2/4mm:1/18.83mm/P4
SIZE: 20ft x 6ft 5in
ERA/REGION: 1870s South London
LAYOUT TYPE: End-to-end

REWINDING 150 YEARS

The London, Chatham & Dover Railway, a line rarely modelled as it lost its separate existence in 1900, has been expertly captured by this group, who painstakingly researched a period in history long forgotten.

Words: John Birkett and Simon Turner **Photography:** Phil Parker



TOP RIGHT: Goods wagon, having been hauled into position, is on a wagon turntable being readied to go into the goods depot below the station platforms.

MIDDLE RIGHT: "Bill posters will be prosecuted". A man and his young assistant are putting posters onto the wall under Southwark Street bridge.



BELOW: View across Southwark Street bridge. In the foreground, a Midland train bound for Kentish Town enters the station while an LCDR train headed by 0-4-2T *Staffa* waits to head south. A line of wagons at the back waits its turn on the hoist to the lower-level goods depot (the cab road would become part of a goods siding).



As members of the Blackfriars Bridge Model Railway Group (formerly part of Norwood Model Railway Club), we had a reputation for making more esoteric 'might have been' layouts. 'Hawnby' was a fictional branch line terminus, set in Yorkshire, built on a sweeping curve with more countryside than station. This was followed by an industrial quarry scene set in Cumbria, built to explore the possibilities of Scalefour (or P4, as it was then known). This again was on a curve with both standard and narrow gauge elements. With the imminent retirement of that model, a decision was made that the new layout should be set in a real location, closer to our South London base.

We came to a choice between Woodside (a small branch line junction not far from home) and Blackfriars Bridge. In a moment of what can only be described as utter insanity, we opted for the latter! Part of our logic was based on the idea of modelling the London, Chatham & Dover Railway, a line not modelled often as it lost its separate existence in 1900. And we had acquired some information about Blackfriars Bridge, a station that had ceased to operate for passengers in 1886. We had a scale drawing of the station frontage, a 'contemporary' etching from the Illustrated London News and a trackplan in a 1873 OS map. There was also an LCDR timetable from about 1870; this showed that four companies (Chatham, Great Northern, Midland and London & South Western) ran trains through the station. It would

> "The fiddleyards use cassettes to hold the trains and move them from the arrival track to the departure track without turning them round."



certainly be an interesting (not to say esoteric) layout. The period selected, 1873, was chosen because of certain constraints. Shortly after this time, two major engineering additions to the station area were built. These were the extension of the goods warehouse to the east and the connection to the South Eastern Railway via the junction just south of the station. The project would be quite a handful in 1873, and anything later would be impractical for a movable exhibition layout.

We have amassed a large amount of material relevant to the station over the years, involving many visits to archive sources, including National Archive, London Metropolitan Archive and Southwark Local History Library (not to mention online searches). One surprise find was a rating plan showing the track and station building at both ground and first floor levels.

From our research, we also learned that you have to double check everything; not all published material is accurate! Even the *Illustrated London News* etching of the opening of the station must have been made using artistic licence.

The layout is designed in an end-to-end format, with the station building covering the fiddleyard at the northern end and an over-track signal box forming the scenic break to the fiddleyard at the southern end. The fiddleyards use cassettes to hold the trains and move them from the arrival track to the departure track without turning them round, simply switching the locomotive from one end of the train to the other.



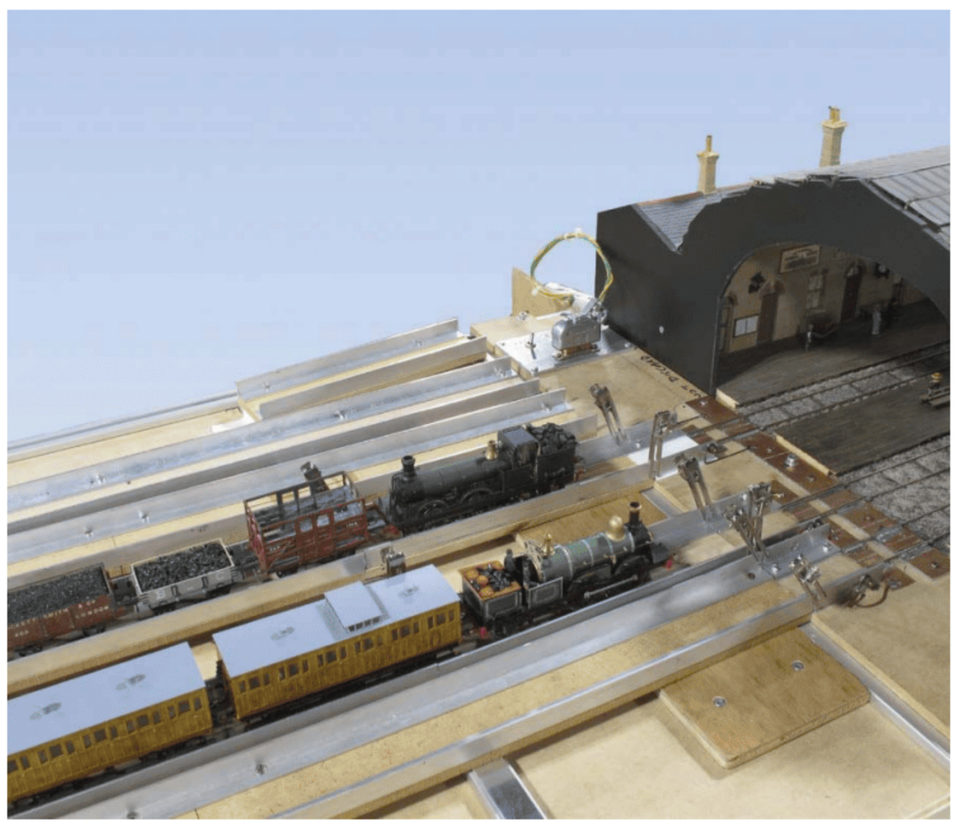


ABOVE: GNR 0-4-2T No 126 heads south with a goods train past a gang of workmen demolishing the buffers on an old short siding, prior to installing a new through track.

MIDDLE LEFT: A view down onto Hopton Street. This was a public thoroughfare before the station was built, but now serves as a road entrance to the goods depot.

BOTTOM LEFT: George Street is one of the roads running under the railway. The gantry signal box at the southern end of the layout can be glimpsed above.

TOP RIGHT:
Fiddleyard at the station end of the layout. Trains are formed up on cassettes, with locos on separate cassettes. These are then coupled together and to the station track using cheap hairgrips, which, while not ideal, give some alignment and electrical contact.



BELOW RIGHT:
Passengers waiting on one of the platforms. The seat is a Chatham design and is one of several produced for us by Chris Cox. On the platform is a set of typical LCDR carriages from the 1860s.



Rolling Stock

By the nature of the period modelled, the majority of the rolling stock has been hand-built or built from kits. Much research was involved to establish what kind of stock was being used in the early-1870s, and requests were made to friends who were either white metal casting wizards (mostly wagons), or etched brass geniuses (mostly carriages), once suitable drawings and/or masters had been prepared by us.

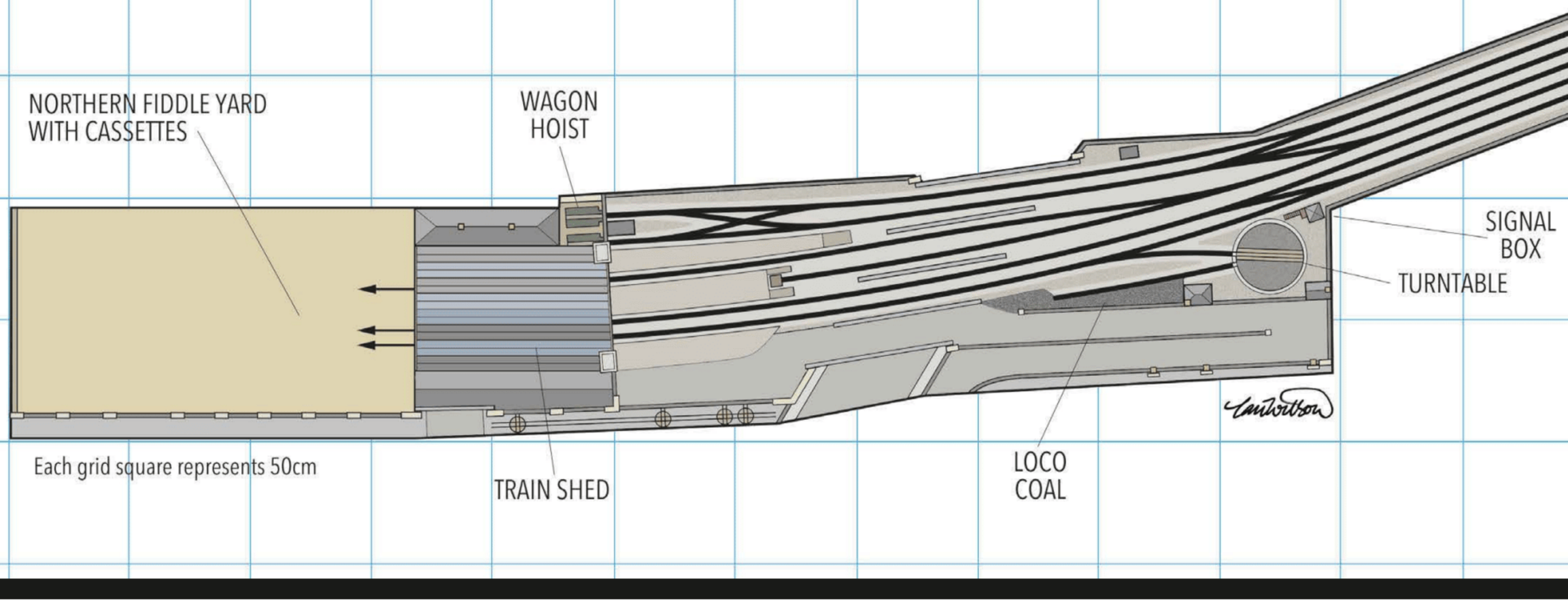
Absolute accuracy is difficult to achieve as there is so little photographic evidence, but it is hoped that the general look of the trains has been achieved. In any case, we would be interested to hear if you think you can prove we have done it wrong!

The locomotives have proved the hardest to provide as mostly they have required to be hand-built from scratch. A few are adaptations from kits, which were designed to represent the locomotive as it was in the 1910s or even later and had to be back-engineered to an 1870s-style. The locomotives are driven largely by Mashima motors with gearboxes from High Level kits. This pairing gives excellent running and has proved reliable when maintenance has perhaps not been as thorough as it should be.

Carriages were largely kit-built, but bearing in mind that we made the kits first! A great debt of gratitude goes to our etching and casting friends, without whom the carriage stock would be a poor thing to behold.

One exception to the kit-building of carriages was the Midland Railway train, the coaches of which were fabricated from styrene sheet with metal parts from various proprietary sources. When researching this train,

TRACKPLAN

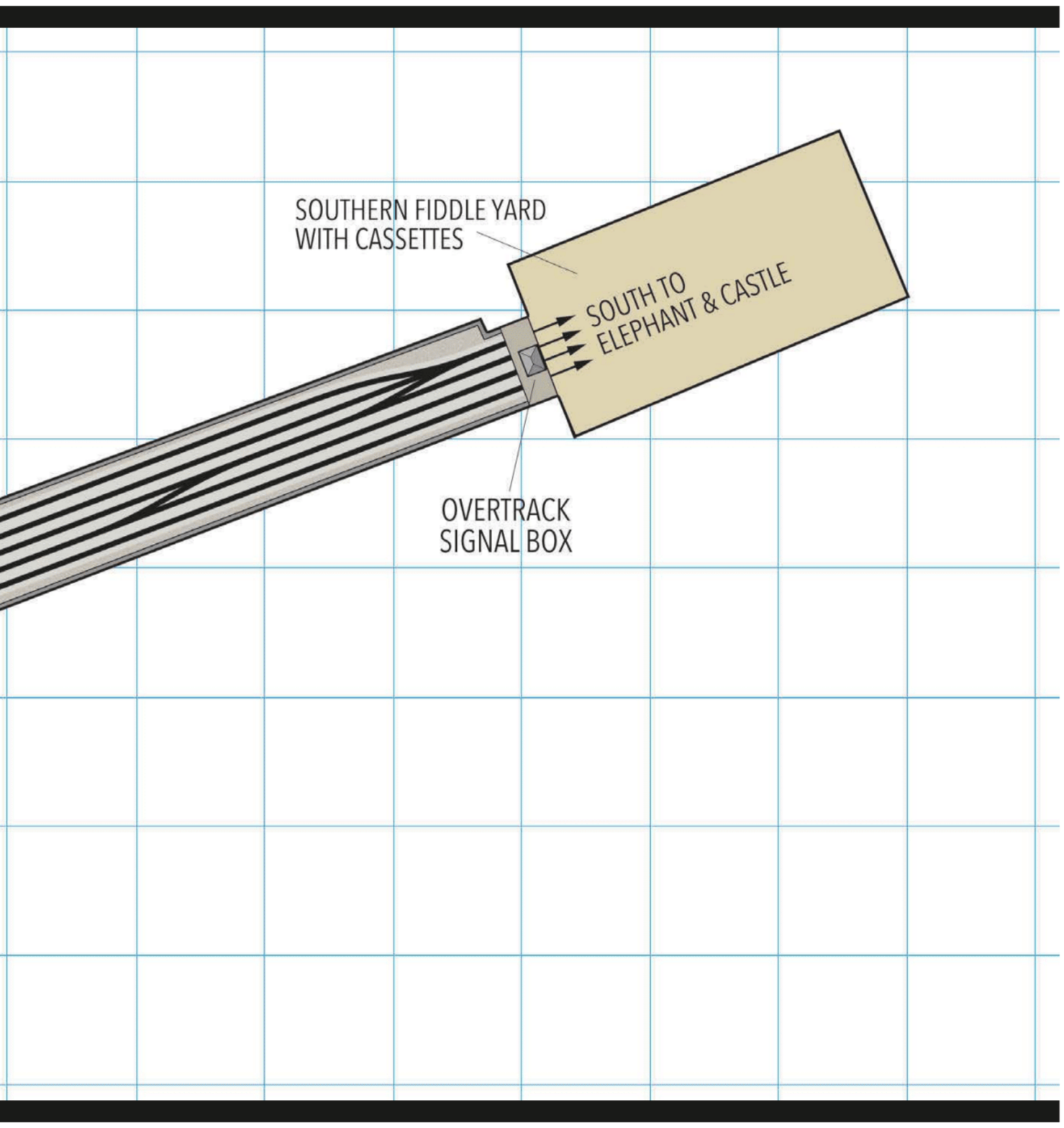


TOP RIGHT:
A view into the hydraulic wagon hoists. Inside the left arch, a wagon is descending into the stygian depths of the goods depot below, while that on the right has just risen to the daylight.

BELOW RIGHT:
Weighbridges on both tracks are used to weigh loads as they emerge from the hoists.







it became apparent that there was very little information on Midland stock from the appropriate period, luckily, the Midland Railway Centre at Butterley had managed to rescue and rebuild an example from the 1860s. A visit to the centre with a camera and tape measure provided enough information, along with that from Lacy & Dow's volume on the subject, to produce a representative train.

Wagon stock was largely hand-built, but some recourse was again made to our casting colleagues. All of the vehicles chosen are plausible visitors for the time and place represented, including the private owner stock, which has been the most difficult to research. Luckily, one of our members has spent a lifetime in pursuit of this arcane knowledge.

Coupling is achieved using the Dingham brand autocouplers, now produced by the Scalefour Society. Our experience with these has been mixed but, from the appearance point of view, they offer a good compromise between what we would have liked to use, i.e., prototypical three-link and screw-link couplings, and the rather clunky proprietary types.

One lesson we have learned from exhibition running is that the fine flange depth used on Scalefour wheels is very prone to becoming non-existent when dirt is allowed to build-up on the wheels, causing derailment on even the slightest bump in the track. It would appear that the oil used to protect the steel tyres when in store acts as a dirt magnet, and thick encrustations have to be regularly removed. It would seem that much of our head (and heart) ache from poor running has its root in this problem.

Key structures

The main focus of the layout is the huge station building. As a starting point, the drawing was scaled up to 1/72nd from the original and allowed us to cut the shell from thin ply. From there, the building was entirely hand-built (we started the project before laser-cutting and 3D-printing were viable options).

With many repeated elements, we experimented with resin casting. This was tried initially for the pillars and the window bays. Masters were made for a pillar and one of the window bays using layers of styrene sheet, both plain and with English bond brickwork. Moulds were made from these masters, using a two-part silicone rubber, and a two-part acrylic resin was then used to make the final items from those. This worked well for the pillars and enough were made for the station frontage. Try as we might, the window bays always had too many air bubbles to be used. The upshot of that was that each window bay was made individually from many styrene sheet components, as were the arches. Once produced, each segment was painted in many stages, masking different areas at a time, to achieve the multi-coloured finish.

The trainshed roof comprised trusses made individually from metal strips, and then clear and plain plastic sheet was used for the glass and zinc roofing. This was supported on cast iron pillars and parts of the station wall. The paint scheme for the metalwork was taken from research into the painting of the LCDR side of Victoria station, which looked at the different layers of paint that had been applied over the years.



ABOVE: View inside the trainshed with its hand-built canopy. A family waits for their train, while a southbound GNR goods train heads through platform 3. The forest of connecting hair grips in the fiddle yard can be seen behind.



MIDDLE RIGHT: 0-6-0ST *Hercules* sorting wagons outside the hoists.



BOTTOM RIGHT: A southbound LCDR passenger train, headed by Ruby class 2-4-0T *Onyx*, pulls out of platform 2 on its way to Bickley (or Victoria).

The other two main buildings on the layout are the signal cabins, both hand-built using mainly styrene sheet, from original designs. One is a cabin on raised wooden footings and the other is on a gantry that also had to be hand-built.

Setting the scene

Set as it is in urban London, the scenery, such as it is, represents the street and railway arch scenes with vistas typical of the period.

The road vehicles (all horse-drawn, of course) are primarily from commercially available kits, but many have been heavily adapted. The street scenes and those elsewhere around the railway have been made as a series of tableaux. For example, the crowd gathered around the organ grinder with his monkey, the bill poster and his assistant, the men bricking up one of the arches and the workers sorting out the tracks for one of the many changes that happened around this time. A lot came about from studying contemporary photographs and drawings.

Being urban London, there is no necessity for vegetation, which is a blessing as no-one had to try and produce realistic-looking trees.

Ideally, it would be nice to have a backscene to represent the vista of Southwark behind the railway arches, but none of the group is capable of creating such a thing, so for the time being it is left to the imagination of the observer.

Operating the layout

There are three through tracks connected to both fiddleyards, and the goods yard that is connected to one of the through tracks and to the southern fiddleyard. Each track has its own analogue controller as part of a four-way control box, with the facility for hand-held units for each track. The tracks are Up Metropolitan line, Down Metropolitan line (serving platforms 1 and 2 respectively), Main line (bidirectional through the station serving platform 3) and the goods yard.

There are usually three operators at a time, one running the trains on the through tracks and one each sorting out the two fiddleyards. There is an option for a fourth operator to take charge of the goods yard, usually using a hand-held controller, although at quieter times, the main operator can also manage the goods yard.

Normally, the fiddleyard operators are in control of accepting trains and setting up others ready for departure. There has to be co-operation between the fiddle yard operators and the main operator to ensure there are clear cassettes set up for arrivals, and departure cassettes are not made live until the main line is clear. The trains are driven out of the fiddleyards by the main operator, who will stop the passenger trains in the visible part of the platforms before dispatching them to the other fiddleyard. Goods trains may either be driven straight through or stopped at signals while still on view.



TOP LEFT: Horsedrawn traffic on a busy Southwark Street. In the foreground, a crowd is gathered around a hurdy gurdy man (and his monkey).

MIDDLE LEFT: An array of advertising signs, based on contemporary photographs.



BELOW: *Hercules* at work again. Most of the visible wagons belong to the LCDR, but the van at right is from the GNR.

> “The goods yard entails shunting individual wagons from incoming trains into the wagon hoists to be taken down to the goods depot below the platforms.”

ABOVE: A Midland train of coal empties train behind a Kirtley 0-4-4WT loco heads north under the gantry signal box at the southern end of the layout (in reality, this signal box was further south, beyond the point where the LCDR crosses the SER line to Waterloo East).



MIDDLE RIGHT: A wagon being horse-shunted past part of the building that still exists as Invicta Plaza next to Southwark Street.



BOTTOM RIGHT: Scaffolding is in place where work has just started to brick up an open arch. The bricked-in arch is just visible to the left and was later to become a school!

The goods yard entails shunting individual wagons from incoming trains into the wagon hoists to be taken down to the goods depot below the platforms. Other wagons, to form outgoing trains, are brought up to track level using the hoists.

Final thoughts

As it stands, it is quite a task to exhibit the layout as the group consists now of only five people, and none of us is particularly young. Some thought is being given to making transporting the layout somewhat easier, by rebuilding some sections with aluminium extrusion frames. This is both lighter and could be built in more-manoeuvrable sections. Some experience has already been gained by rebuilding both fiddleyards using this material.

The wooden-framed boards are unwieldy. No two are the same shape and size! They had been custom-made to suit the station and track layout and we wanted to avoid having pointwork running over the joints between two boards. The proposed rebuilding of some boards will partly address this issue, but the two main station boards, could not be readily tackled without a complete rebuild.

One change we have made was to replace the original heavy wooden trestle-type legs with commercially available metal ones. They are far easier to transport.

The central theme of Scalefour modelling is to get as close to reality as is practically possible. There is no doubt that within this, there has to be an element of pragmatism. We could have made all the rolling stock to museum standards, but when it crosses the layout in about 10 seconds, nobody will appreciate the effort that has been put in.

TOP RIGHT:
A southbound suburban train heads past the signal box and turntable on its way to Herne Hill. The first carriage is one of the 6-wheeled third-class with central brake compartment.

MIDDLE RIGHT:
A suburban train hauled by LCDR 0-4-2T *Jura* passes a Midland train heading into the station, hauled by 0-4-4 well tank.

BELOW: A gang of workers getting ready for realigning the tracks take a break while *Hercules* performs shunting duties.





And time is another consideration. Without the unfortunate occurrence of Covid and several months of lockdown, the rolling stock of 'Blackfriars Bridge' would have been a poor thing to behold. To take one example, the carriages, once researched, required to be drawn up to 4mm scale. They were then forwarded to the etch kit designer, who has to interpret the drawings and then produce a photo-etch tool. Once that is done, the kits can be produced.

The next stage is to turn the kit into a model. This involves all the usual bending and soldering required of an etched brass kit, plus the creation (usually in styrene) of a representation of the interior, for example, the seats.

Once this has been done, paint can be applied. For the "teak" finish used by the LCDR, there is first an undercoat, then two coats of colour. Next, a coat of varnish, after which the scumbling to represent the graining of the wood is applied. Then another coat of varnish protects this. Finally, transfers for the class designation, etc., are put on, with a protective coat of varnish over the top. So, seven coats plus the transfers, all of which have to dry before the next is applied.

This is for one carriage. The suburban trains of the LCDR were typically nine carriages long, but the size of our fiddleyards, not to mention the tractive effort of our locomotives, means that mercifully we can only run trains of six or seven vehicles.

As can be seen, time is our most precious asset. ■

"We could have made all the rolling stock to museum standards, but when it crosses the layout in about 10 seconds, nobody will appreciate the effort that has been put in."



COMMUNITY

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Happy 2026 to all our readers!

Are you planning on a new challenge this year? Maybe a change of gauge, switching to a new modelling era, or perhaps you are planning on trying out a new scenic technique, or taking the plunge with 3D printing? It's always fun to keep pushing yourself and learning, whether that be a hands-on skill or researching an area of the UK relatively new to you.

Inspiration comes from all directions, including inside the pages of this magazine, and we have some fantastic articles, layouts, prototypes, plus much more planned for the next year, so make sure you consider taking out a subscription so you don't miss a thing!

Many choose the start of the year to tackle a new layout, and the first step for many is the baseboard. The good news is that BRM is here to help on that front, with a step-by-step article from Michael Russell in this issue offering some great tips.

All three of the layouts featured in this issue showcase something different, from the early, early days of 'Blackfriars Bridge' in P4, a line rarely modelled as it lost its separate existence in 1900, to the atmospheric 'Five Mile House', a 1930s station based on an important Peterborough to Gainsborough link.

Also featured this month is 'Corsham', whose builder made a triumphant return to N gauge, his second exhibition layout, which comes packed with scenic features and entertaining train movements – maybe he started this project in January, too.

However you decide to enjoy your modelling in 2026, we'd love to hear about your latest projects, so please get in touch and share progress with us at brm@warnersgroup.co.uk.

Happy Modelling

Debbie Wood

WEEKEND PLANS...

The Model Railway Club Mini Exhibition

Held at its clubrooms near King's Cross in London, a selection of MRC and invited layouts in a variety of scales alongside its renowned pre-owned shop will be on show for visitors. Full details are available here - https://www.themodelrailwayclub.org/events/mini-exhibiton/

DATE: December 28th, 2025

Frome Model Railway Exhibition

The Wessex Association of Model Railway Clubs proudly presents its 2026 Model Railway Exhibition, held at the renowned Cheese and Grain in Frome. This year's exhibition will showcase a wide variety of scales, eras, and modelling styles—from the steam age through to the modern main line. The WAMRC AGM will be held at 17:30 on the Saturday.

DATE: January 3-4th, 2026

Maidenhead 2026 Model Railway Exhibition

The Maidenhead, Marlow & District MRC is pleased to present its 2026 Model Railway Exhibition. This one-day show will feature several layouts, demonstrators and suppliers. Held at Cox Green Community Centre, entry costs £6 per adult.

DATE: January 10th, 2026

The Southampton Model Railway Exhibition

The Southampton Model Railway Exhibition will be held at Barton Peveril College in Eastleigh and will feature over 20 layouts in various scales, along with numerous traders and societies. A free heritage bus service will connect the venue with Eastleigh and Southampton Airport Parkway stations.

DATE: January 24-25th, 2026

The Festival of British Railway Modelling 2026

We are back at the Doncaster Racecourse for a weekend of top-quality model railway entertainment! Over 25 layouts will be at the show, plus over 60 traders and this year we will also be celebrating the 150-year anniversary of Sir Nigel Gresley.

DATE: February 8-9th, 2026

K CLASS QUESTION

I have just finished reading the November edition and the good article by J.Crosse on the Southern K Class locomotives. Hopefully, next year we may well have a ready-to-run OO model available of these fine locomotives from Sonic Models.

On page 108, there is a photo of the cabside number 32348 and a question posed about the power classification.

I would very much suspect that the small "B" inserted between 5 and F is a legacy of the days when Southern Railway locomotives carried either A for Ashford, B for Brighton, or E for Eastleigh, depending on the association with the appropriate workshops. The "B" would certainly not have anything to do with the power classification.

There are many small anomalies from the steam age that often crop up.

John Cherry

BRM says; Thanks, John, some interesting details here. Glad you are enjoying the magazine!

LAYOUT CALL

The organisers of The International N Gauge Show (TINGS) are looking for new and exciting layouts to feature at the 2026 event.

With organisation underway for next year's show, the organisers would love to hear from clubs or owners of N gauge layouts who would be interested in exhibiting them at the show.

Held in mid-September, the show attracts N gauge enthusiasts from across the UK. Please contact **info@meridienneexhibitions.co.uk** for more information.

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RECORD-BREAKING WEEKEND FOR RAILS OF SHEFFIELD



Rails of Sheffield marked a major milestone in its expansion plans with the opening of a new Station Shop inside Sheffield's Grade II–listed railway station.

The shop opened on Saturday, November 29th, as part of Rails' Black Friday Weekender, and was officially unveiled by well-known railway enthusiasts Pete Waterman OBE and Jools Holland. Both drew huge attention from visitors, even giving an impromptu duet on the station's public piano.

Manufacturers including Hornby, Bachmann Europe, Accurascale, Heljan, Revolution Trains and Cavalex were also on hand, turning the station concourse into a small-scale festival of the hobby. Rails reported more than 500 passenger journeys on a vintage Leyland Tiger shuttle between the station and its flagship Chesterfield Road store throughout the day.

The result was the busiest sales weekend in the company's 55-year history, with queues forming up to two hours before opening. The Heeley store also saw record footfall across the weekend.

The new Station Shop is intended to complement the main Chesterfield Road site, offering a broad model railway range with a particular focus on beginners and families.

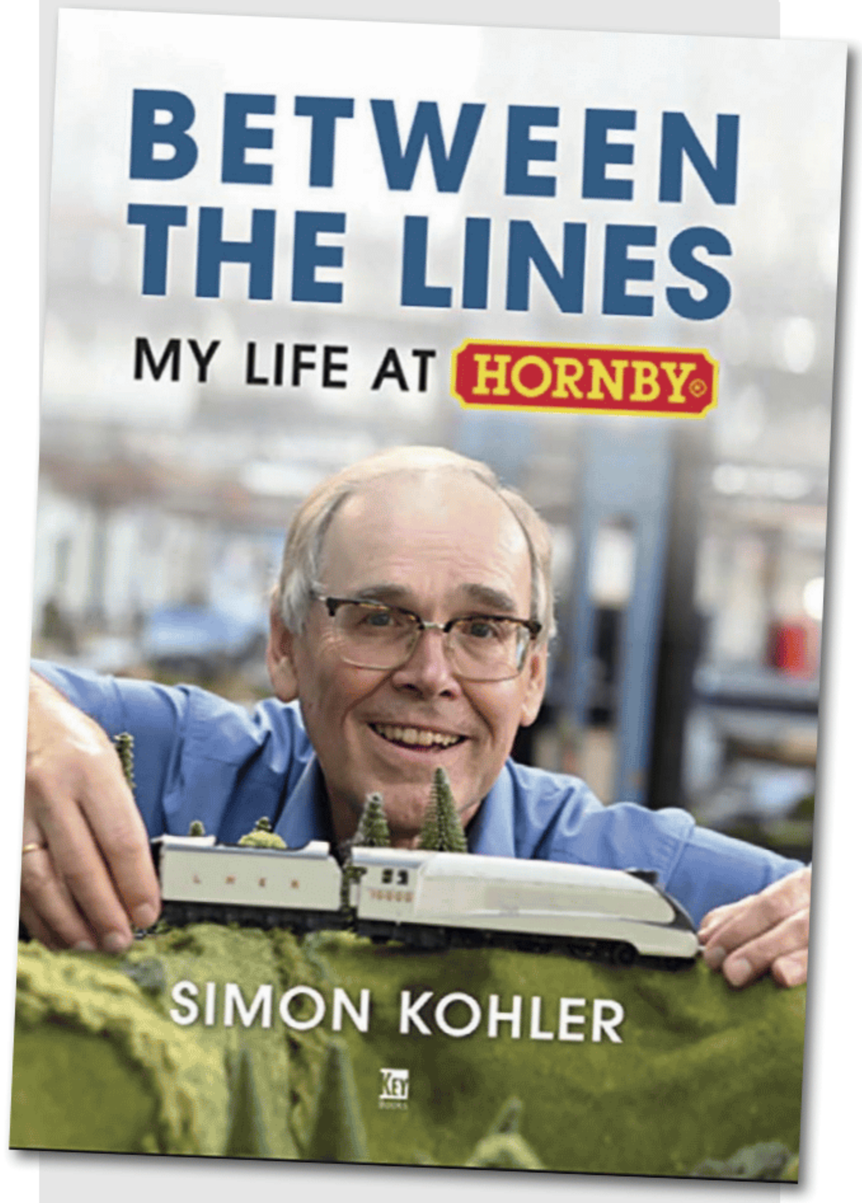




WIN A SLICE OF HISTORY

Already proving a hit, Simon Kohler's new autobiography, *Between the Lines, My Life at Hornby*, has been thrilling readers across the country.

Offering a personal perspective on his long career with Hornby, the book covers Kohler's time with the company from the 1970s through to the 21st century. During this period, he worked across various roles, becoming a well-known figure among modellers, retailers, and within the wider model railway community.

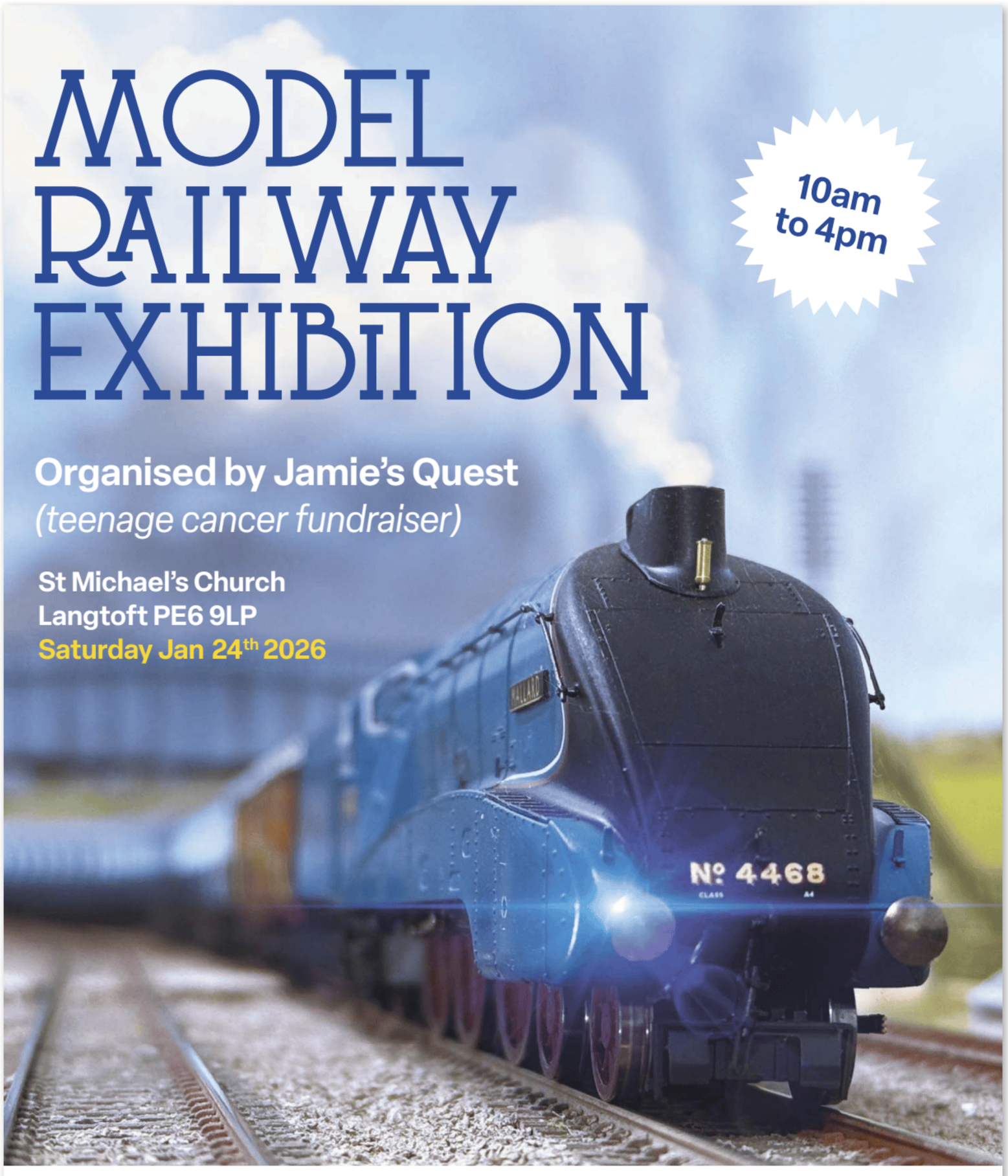


And now is your chance to win a copy of this must-read book.

To be in with a chance of winning, just answer the following question and head to **www.world-of-railways.co.uk/competitions** to enter.

In what year was the first clockwork train produced by Hornby?

A: 1900
B: 1910
C: 1920
D: 1930



NATIONAL COLLECTION GOES DIGITAL



© The Board of Trustees, Science Museum Group.

The National Railway Museum (NRM) has partnered with Google Arts & Culture to launch *Beyond the Tracks*, a major digital initiative marking 200 years since the birth of the modern railway.

The year-long project brings nearly 1,000 items from the national collection online, supported by Google's new AI-powered Metadata Enhancement Service, which has helped transcribe handwritten documents and make the archive more searchable.

Among the standout objects now available digitally are the Rastrick Notebook, an eyewitness account of the 1829 Rainhill Trial, and early locomotive icons such as *Puffing Billy*. The project also highlights lesser-known stories, including a Victorian model carriage made from timber salvaged from the wreck of the PS *Princess Alice*.

For the first time, 360° virtual tours of Locomotion in Shildon have been created, allowing online visitors to explore the vast Main Hall, the engine-shed-inspired New Hall, and even walk the historic Brusselton Incline from the world's first public railway.

Two new Pocket Gallery 3D exhibitions further expand access to the NRM's extensive art and poster collections, with immersive audio and high-resolution detail.

Craig Bentley, Director of the National Railway Museum, said the initiative broadens access to the national collection during the museum's 50th-anniversary year and deepens the Science Museum Group's long-standing partnership with Google Arts & Culture.

2HAP SET

BRM December 2025 was another varied issue, thank you. I did particularly like the piece on Kelvin Grove/Thompson Street – there are two places (pages 22 & 28) where the SR (BR) 2-car 2HAP set 6061 is clearly visible.

Reference to the images makes that clear – but it is referred to (falsely) as a 2HIL – by Bachmann (in my recollection, there were several units in service, but all were called 2 HAL units after the motor coach designation).

Stuart Hicks

BRM says; Thanks for the pointers, Stuart, we will certainly take note for future references!

Inspirational modelling with RMweb



Built decades apart, Type 3 D6700 and J15 65361 are captured together in the early '60s. **RMweb user: Boleyn Road**



Northern Ireland Railways 80 Class DEMU passes the spoil banks at Magheramorne on a Larne to Belfast service. **RMweb user: Darius43**



A couple of old pictures, but I think these are the most realistic shots I've taken of 'Hunters Lane' so far. **RMweb user: bmthtrains - David**



Heavy industry captured here. **RMweb user: Ruston**



OTD in history - 25/10/87 Class 20081 & 124 head 7V22 Barrow Hill - Dicot PS south through Charwelton cutting. **RMweb user: 43110andyb**



It's September 1930 and the Lynton & Barnstaple railway has just five years left before closure. **RMweb user: roundhouse**

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

LAYOUT | OO | FIVE MILE HOUSE

V2 locomotive *Green Arrow* heads towards Boston on the morning fish express train, which is bound for London. The local farmer from the village waits for it to go by with the local milk delivery to the signalman.

See 'Five Mile House' in action at
THE FESTIVAL OF BRITISH RAILWAY MODELLING
7th - 8th February 2026
DONCASTER
Visit www.world-of-railways.co.uk/shows today!

LINCOLNSHIRE LOOP

The Lincoln and District Model Railway Club's latest prototype project brings an atmospheric model of a 1930s station based on an important Peterborough to Gainsborough link.

Words: Sean Tyler Photography: Tony Wright

FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Five Mile House
SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm:1ft/16.5mm/OO
SIZE: 18ft x 11ft
ERA/REGION: 1930s Lincolnshire/LNER
LAYOUT TYPE: Continuous Run

TOP RIGHT: C1 locomotive 4421 heads towards Lincoln while working a local milk train, its probable destination is Lincoln.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Locals line the bank for a fishing match, which was very popular in those days. The milkman has just departed the chain ferry and waits for the gate to be opened by the signalman so he can deliver the milk.

BELOW: Locomotive J15 number 7524 is seen at the platform waiting for the signal to clear after picking up some cattle wagons from the siding. The destination could be the Newark cattle market.





The small station, called Five Mile House, sits five miles outside of Lincoln on the banks of the River Witham. The line ran from Lincoln to Boston, alongside the River Witham, and was part of the original East Coast Main Line. It is set in 1935 during the LNER period. The reason for this is due to the fact that club members have this stock already, which comprises ready-to-run or kit-built stock for this period.

We discovered the interesting history of the station and, like many others, it had its problems. It opened on October 17th, 1848, but due to the lack of traffic from freight and passengers, the station closed only two years later. The station reopened in 1865, when a local farmer asked for goods facilities so he could transport his goods and livestock to market. In 1919, most of the wooden buildings were destroyed by a fire; it's believed that a spark from a passing locomotive caused this disaster.

What you see today is in its rebuilt form after the fire. The model shows two staggered platforms, one either side of the crossing that leads to a chain ferry crossing, which was used to cross the River Witham from Fiskerton. The signal box stood on the down side of the line adjacent to the crossing controlling the access to the small goods yard, which is also sited on the down side. Although remotely sited, the station handled a full range of goods traffic, including livestock, potatoes, grain and sugar beet.

“In 1919, most of the wooden buildings were destroyed by a fire, its believed that a spark from a passing locomotive caused this disaster.”

The K3 locomotive 1304 charges past the signal box on a mixed goods, hauling a variety of wagons from grain vans to a warwell carrying a six-furrow plough. This train was common on the line, moving goods from the towns and cities to other areas of the country.

Scenic accuracy

The idea of the layout came about when the club wanted to build a new layout in 4mm and it was decided that it was to be based on somewhere in Lincolnshire, which has a fair bit of history to it, but also close to the clubhouse so members could visit the site, and a member of the club has lived in the village of Fiskerton all his life. At the beginning of the project, while members were looking for photos of the station, a start was made on the trackplan, based on an old OS map. Once the trackplan was finalised, the signals were positioned. At the time of planning, we could only find a handful of images of the station (all in the same direction, towards Lincoln!), so we were limited on reference material until a lone photograph was found in the other direction.

Planning was a long process, as we discussed all the details before a piece of track was put into place. In the end, to get the station modelled to the correct scale, we decided to make the scenic section 15ft long and the overall frontage 18ft long.

As you can see in the photos and on the trackplan, there wasn't much there; two buildings, two platforms, cattle dock and a loading dock. It was important to get these right as this makes the layout.

The signal box is made by a member who is very talented in scratch-building and he did a magnificent job by using cereal boxes, while another member painted up the signals, which are Saxby & Farmer, into the correct colours for this region.

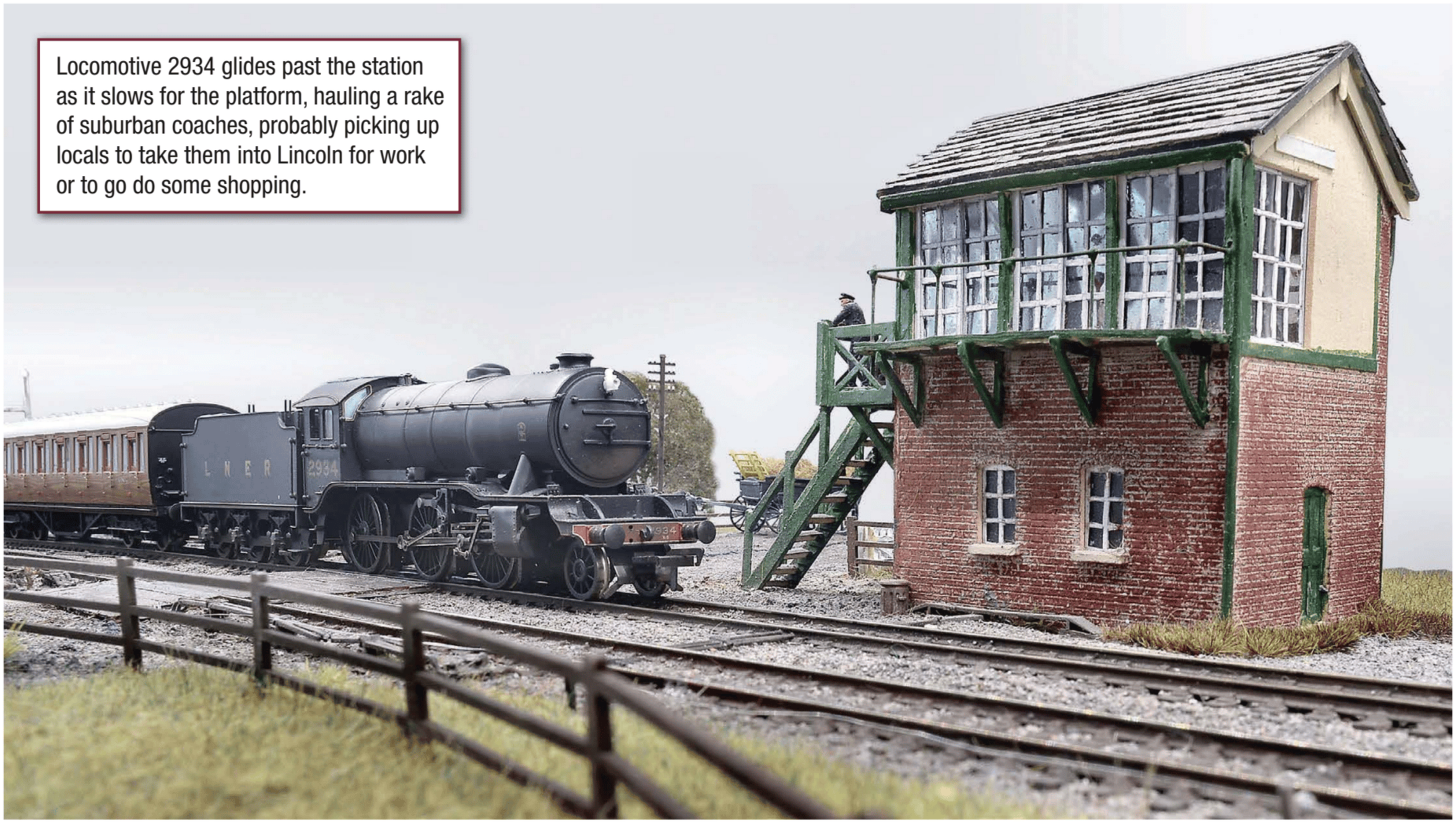




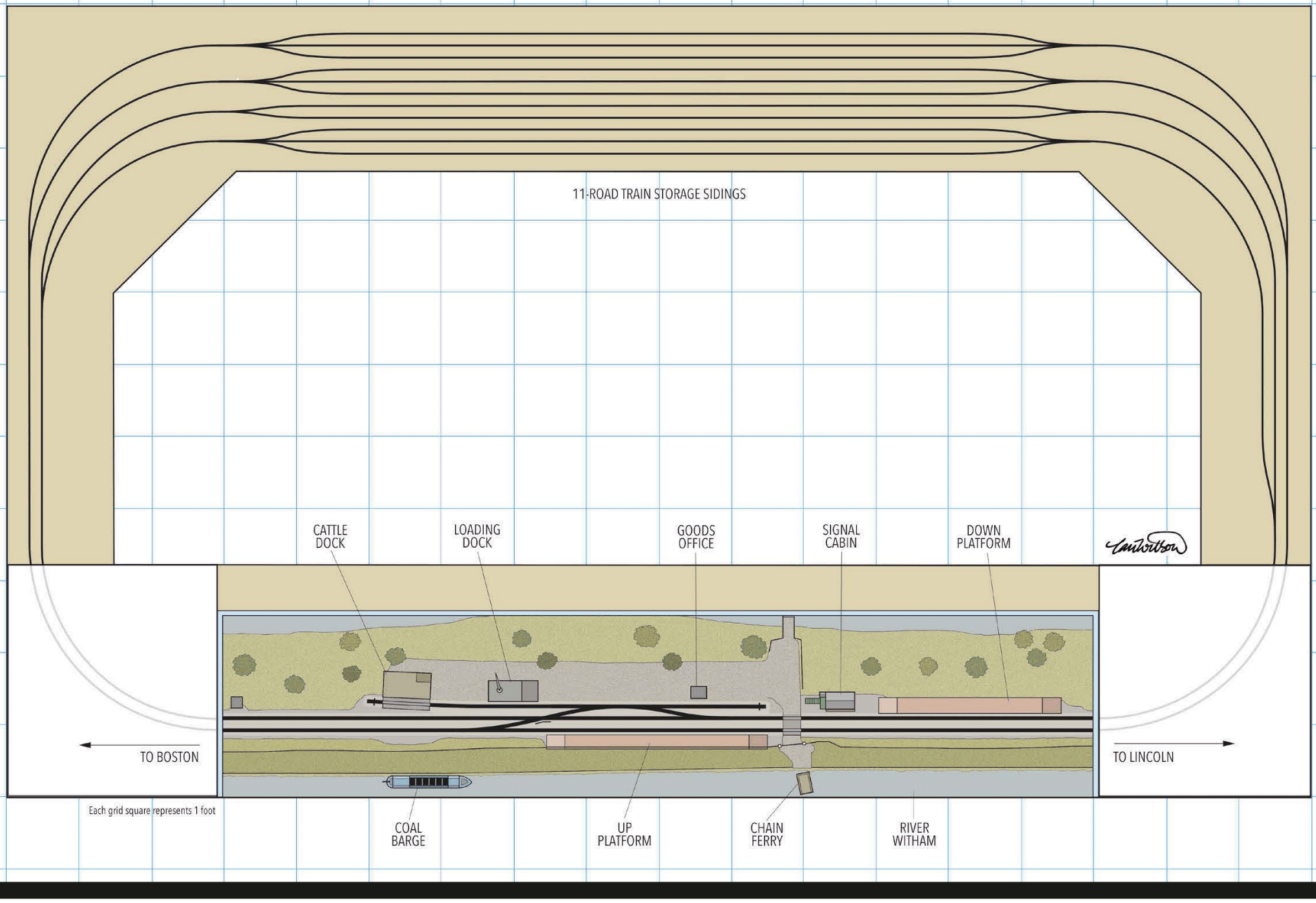
MIDDLE LEFT:
An express fish train from Hull docks, hauled by Locomotive 4471, heads north towards London. The local signalman watches it go past while having a brew and watching the world go by.

BOTTOM LEFT:
The local Lincoln-based J69 heads towards Bardney with the first stopping train of the day. The loco is hauling the Great Northern Lincoln triplet set.

Locomotive 2934 glides past the station as it slows for the platform, hauling a rake of suburban coaches, probably picking up locals to take them into Lincoln for work or to go do some shopping.



TRACKPLAN





ABOVE: Class 02 2434 heads a long empty coal train, which is made up of local private wagons. Meanwhile, a barge slowly chugs along the River Witham heading towards Lincoln.



ABOVE : 1304 works a local stopping train while hauling three Gresley suburban coaches.



About the modellers

From left to right: Sean Tyler, Clive Tebb, Allen Fullen, Martin Feneley, Pete Brinded and Paul Ransome.

The Lincoln and District Club's members are great, thriving people who love to build model railways in any scale. We meet at Aisthtope Village Hall on a Tuesday and Thursday night from 7.30pm. We have lots of projects going on and have an annual exhibition at the County Assembly Rooms, Lincoln, on February 21st and 22nd, 2026.

> "The signal box is made by a member who is very talented in scratch-building and he did a magnificent job by using cereal boxes..."

5954, a J11 locomotive, is seen shunting an agricultural train into a yard made up of farming equipment ready for the harvest season. The train is made up of a matching pair of ploughing engines, a balance plough and a thresher, which was made by Foster and Sons from Lincoln.

The subframe for the platforms was constructed from a laser-cut kit, while the wooden planking and the rail that runs along the back were scratch-built. The cattle dock was made from a Ratio kit and was very good to build.

The riverbank and the land were made of different materials. Starting with a base of Sculptamold, it was then painted brown and finally, for the grass, we used different types of static grass from WWS. The river was created by applying filler roughly over some one-inch polystyrene, which was then painted using greens and browns. We then applied a clear resin over the top to make the River Witham. The banks were then blended and bank details added.

Variety of traffic

Rolling stock for the layout shows a variety of trains from the 1930s period, whether it's RTR or kit-built. Members of the club have spent many hours researching into what trains ran on the line and the selection of trains covers from your everyday coal train to everyday passenger stoppers, and finally to an A4 locomotive racing through on a range of teaks heading for London or heading towards Doncaster. We believe that the trains do the line justice and that we have a nice variety of locomotives hauling the trains from that time period.

Although pictures were scarce, we did manage to find plenty of timetables, so we were able to pick out some





ABOVE: 7524 J15 heads towards Lincoln with the local cattle market train. The loco has been weathered by our club member, Pete Brinded.

MIDDLE LEFT: Two C1s passing each other. One hauling the Leeds quint set built from an Isinglass Kit. The other is hauling a seaside special.

BOTTOM LEFT: A J52 hauling an articulated set passes the goods yard while the local coal man loads up his wagon ready to take it into the village of Fiskerton.

TOP RIGHT: The signal box shows the skills that the club has to offer. This signal box was scratch-built by a member of the club, made from cereal boxes and working off one drawing to build it. He's really done a top job.

MIDDLE RIGHT: A kit-built C12 4503 locomotive works light engine with an 8-wheeler brake van, probably returning to his shed at Boston after having some work carried out at Doncaster works

BELOW: A kit-built 02 2434 races through the station on a long empty coal train. Wagons are all from local private companies. These were very common on this line back in the 1930s.





workings that you can see on today's layout. We have made sure that locos are lamped up correctly.

We run 11 trains on the layout and we have tried to cover all the different types of trains that ran down the line, from freight to the stopping passengers, with coal from the Yorkshire coal pits to the fish trains from Boston. We try to make sure they run at scale speed appropriate for the line and have the correct signals pulled off. We use the NEC power cab controllers while the signals and the points are operated from different control panels. We do include the daily drop-off and the pick-up freight.

Final thoughts

We as a club are very happy with the overall finish of the layout and, of course, there are some developments still to do. As they say, a layout is never finished. The team has enjoyed building the layout from day one, from just researching the station and history behind it, to adding the people onto the layout. With us doing some exhibitions already, we are pleasantly surprised by how well the public and other exhibitors like the layout. Even though it is simple, they say it's fantastic to include that much detail on the layout and how they can reference scenes from the layout to the photographs.

The team has all said how much we have learnt doing this layout and what has worked well and what we can do differently on future projects. ■

> "We run 11 trains on the layout, even though there's no sequence to this. We have tried to cover all the different types of trains that ran down the line from freight to the stopping passengers."



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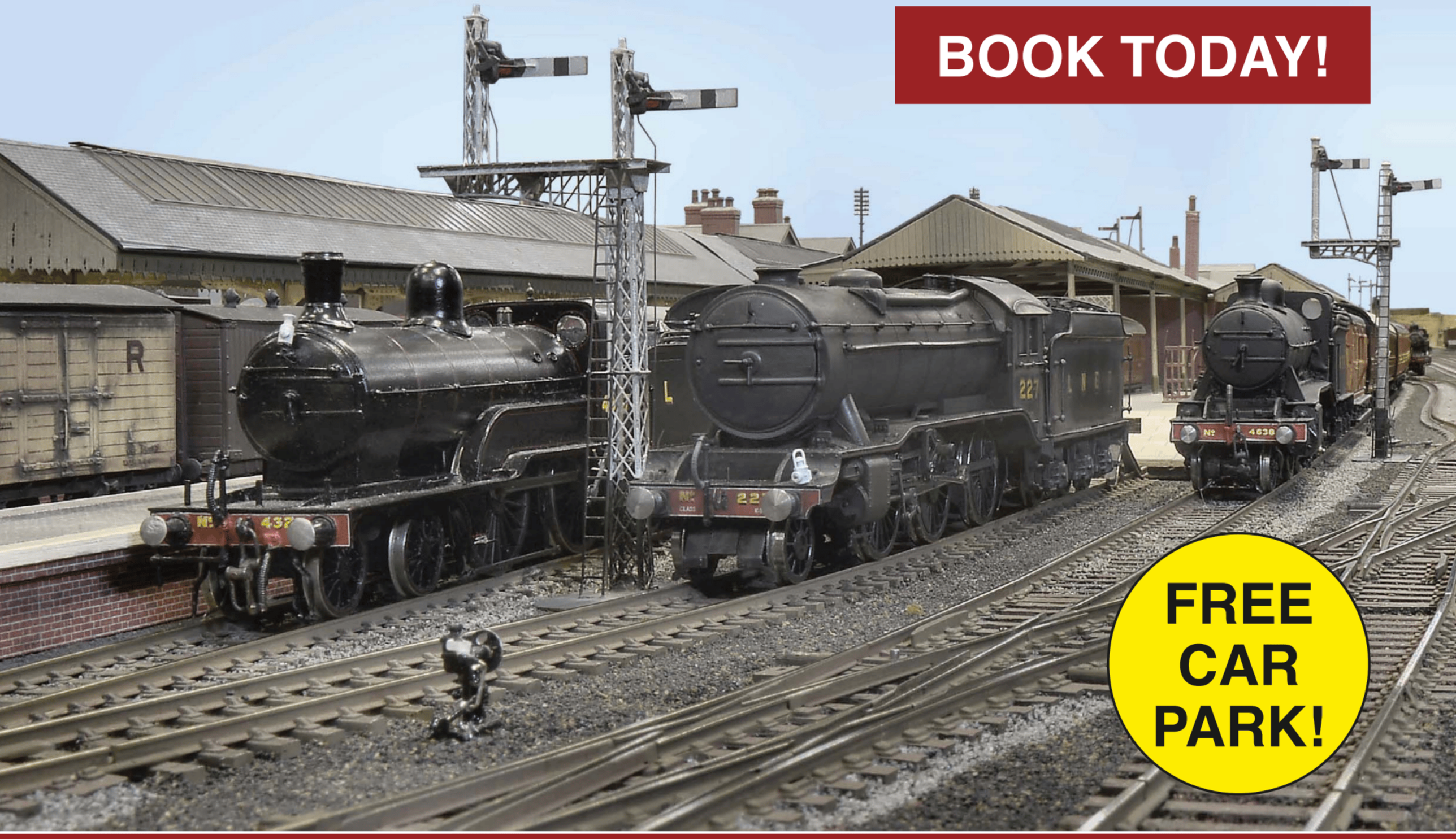

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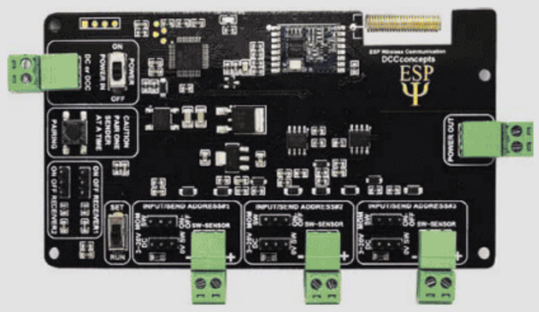

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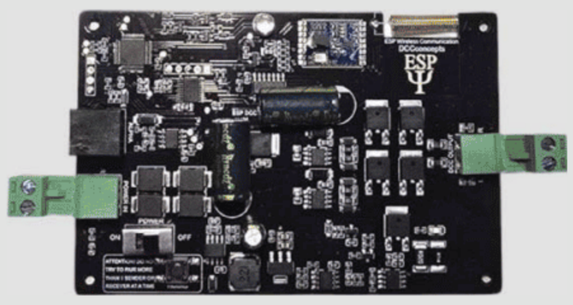

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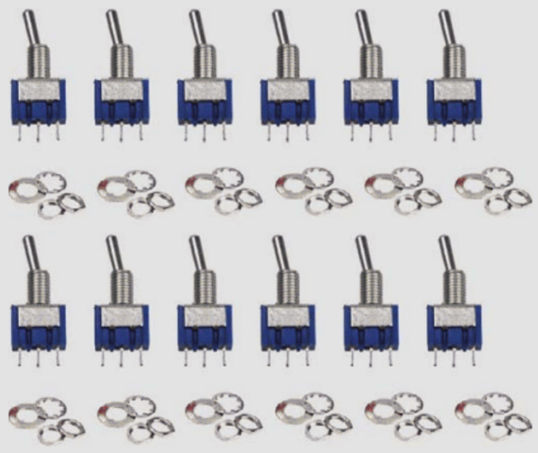

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Getting Practical with...

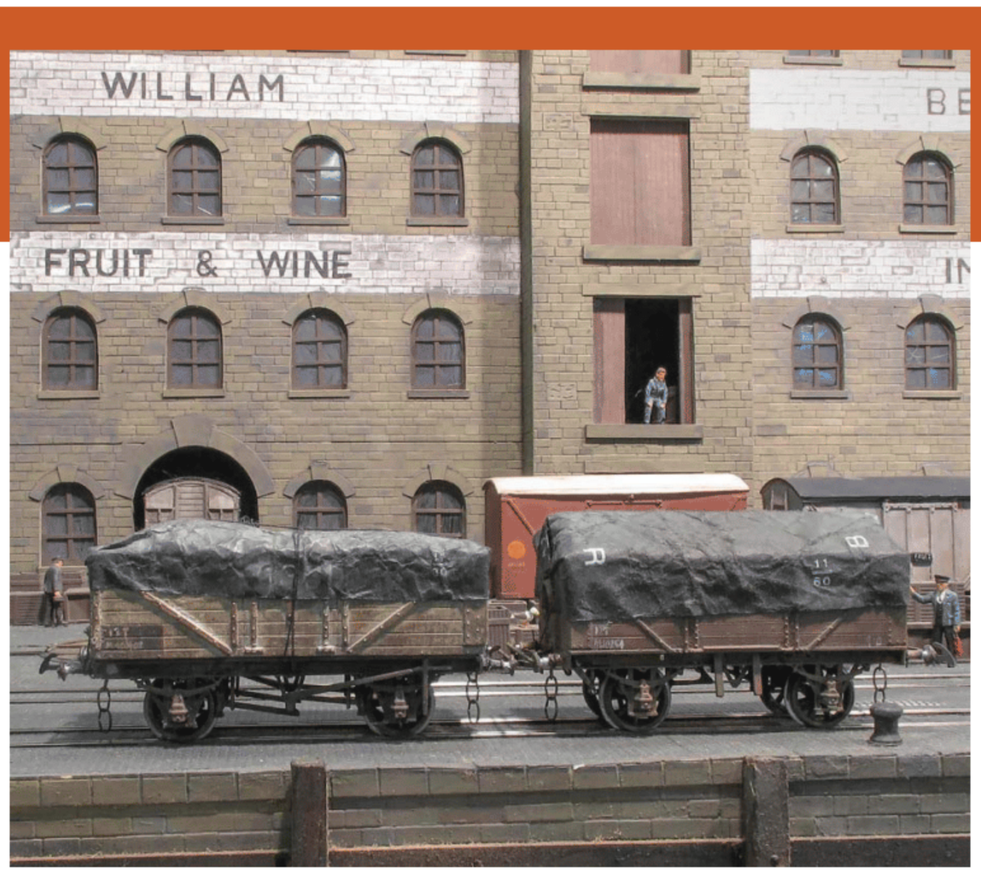
TOOL of the MONTH



Scrapers

If you fancy messing around with whitemetal kits, one problem you'll discover is that filing the soft material will clog the teeth of your tool. To clean up moulding line flash, a sharp knife or a scraper will be much better. You can make your own by filing the ends of old screwdrivers (if you know someone with a grinding wheel, have a chat with them) or buy a three-sided scraper from the trade. As a bonus, they are very handy for cleaning out the nooks and crannies on some models that have filled up with oily dirt.

Got a practical question?
Get in touch. Email: BRM@warnersgroup.co.uk



Ask Phil

I fancy building a wagon kit, but I'm no good with transfers. Any suggestions?

I'll be honest, I can't really be bothered with putting numbers on wagons. All the messing around with lining up the digits and worrying about silvering (the background going pale grey thanks to tiny air bubbles) takes the fun out of it. Instead, I paint the black patches if required, and then add number-shaped blobs using off-white paint, with a fine brush, or sharpened matchstick. If you are keen, follow Geoff Kent's example, and use a mapping pen with white ink. Whatever you do, once weathered and running on the layout, most people don't notice the fudge.

New on the workbench

VMS Clean Slate paint remover

I have a project coming up that will require me to remove the paint from some plastic parts. Finding a suitable stripper to do this isn't as easy as a trip to a DIY shop. Anything there tends to be fine for metal and wood, but lethal to plastic. VMS Clean Slate rmvr 3.0 claims to be able to take the paint off without damaging plastic parts, even clear ones. It can be filtered and recycled, too, which should make it economical to use. I'll let you know how I get on, but this looks promising.




Chris Ford


Michael Russell

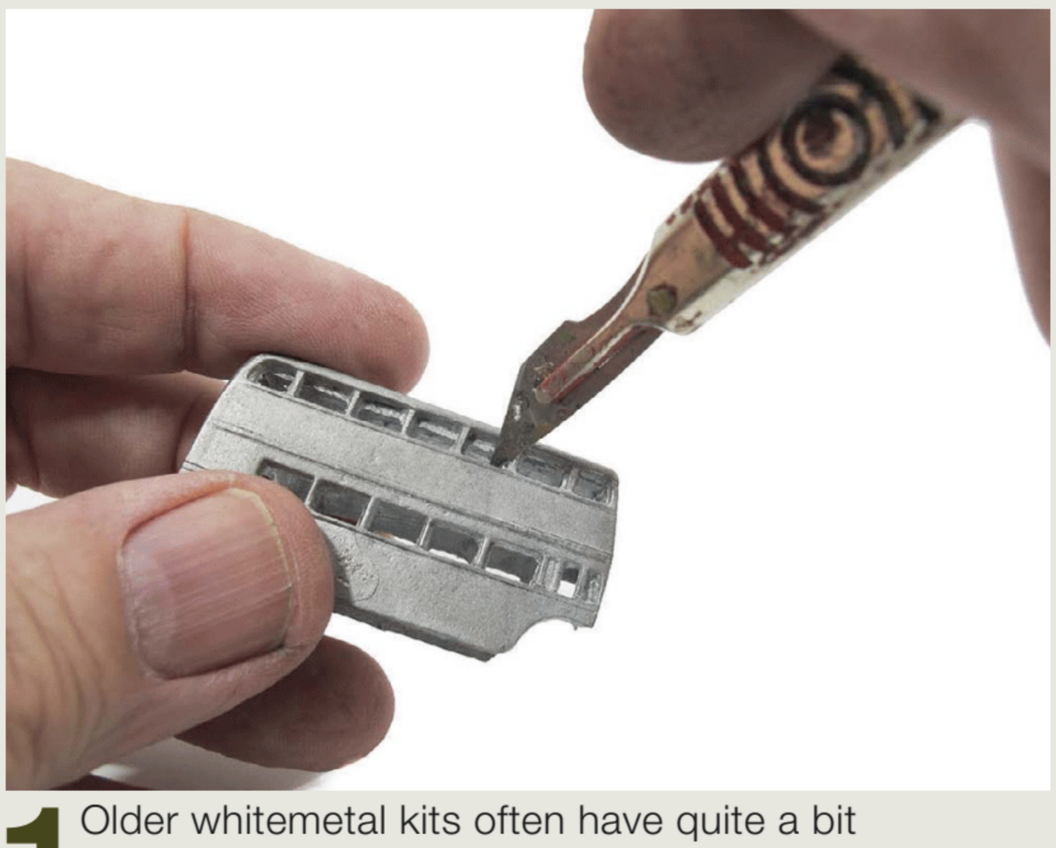

Phil Parker


Steven Draper


Tony Wright

Build an N gauge bus

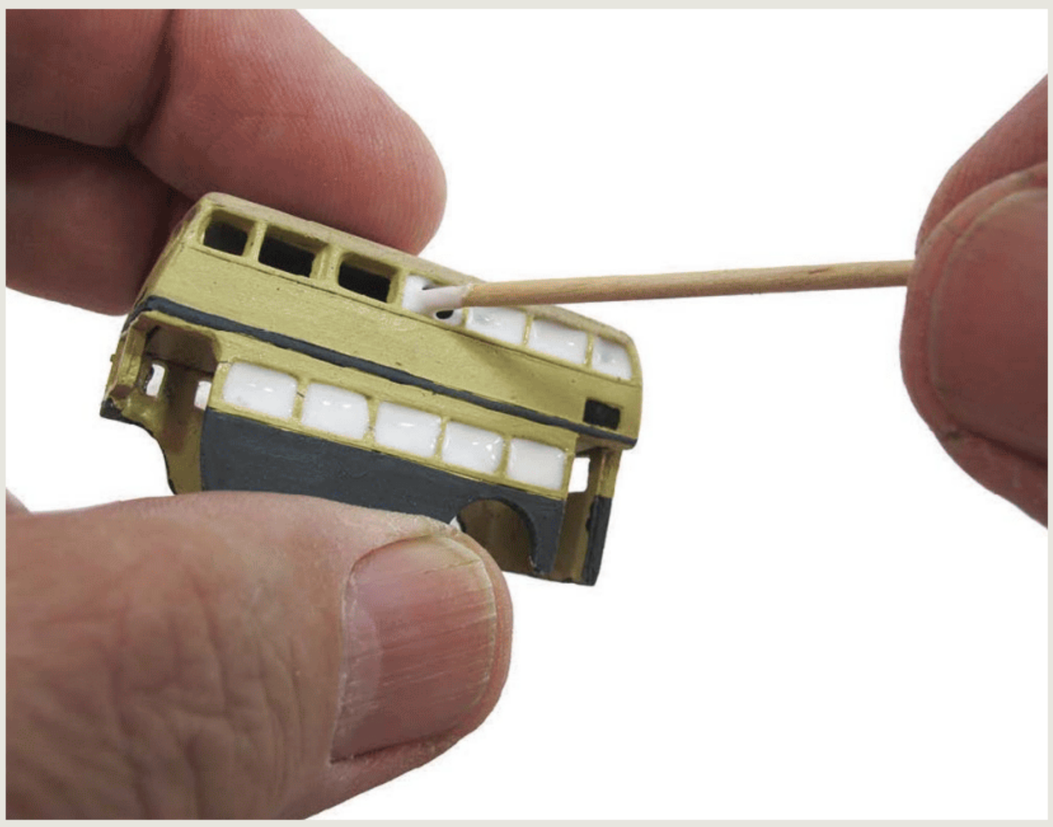
Modelling doesn't have to be expensive. I picked up this TTK transport kit for a Guy Arab bus at The International N Gauge Show for £3. OK, it's an old whitemetal model, but there's some fun to be had and a useful vehicle at the end of the job.



1 Older whitemetal kits often have quite a bit of flash (excess metal from the moulding process) visible. The first job is to carve this away with a sharp knife and abrasive sticks. Be careful if you use files, as the soft metal will clog them up.



2 Gently wash the model in soapy water, followed by a thorough rinse. Let it dry, and lightly spray with car primer. This will show up any areas that need extra smoothing or perhaps a bit of filler. Now is a good time for a test assembly. I had to cut 3mm off the top of the stairs to fit them!



3 Paint all the sub-assemblies; you can't do the seats when the body is stuck on the chassis. The whitemetal sides are pretty thick, but glazing the windows with Deluxe Materials Glue'n'Glaze disguises this, at least a little.



4 My painting is a little wobbly, but the advert, printed off the computer, makes things look better. Maybe this isn't as fine a model as a modern diecast, but it is a third of the price, and will look perfectly good towards the back of the layout. Maybe, balanced on a bridge...



Build Our House Kit!



Steven Draper

LIKE MANY readers, I've put together a number of card and plastic kits over the years, but never created something unique. A significant part of this is not feeling confident in building something completely from scratch, which is why WWS has created some very basic building 'shells' to give modellers a helping hand.

The rest is over to the modeller, and to complete, you'll need some imagination or ideally a real 'base' building in mind. These half-relief terrace cottages reminded me of the old rendered stone miners' dwellings that are scattered around the lanes and villages close to where I live.

And so, a few hours of construction began, with a loose script and a few ideas – the end result wasn't just a rather pleasing building, but that sense of joy from creating and modelling something personal, something unique and something I'm rather proud of.

The cottages fit into a small winter cameo diorama perfectly, using various bits from the spares and props box and basic modelling techniques. What will you create for your layout?

WHAT YOU NEED

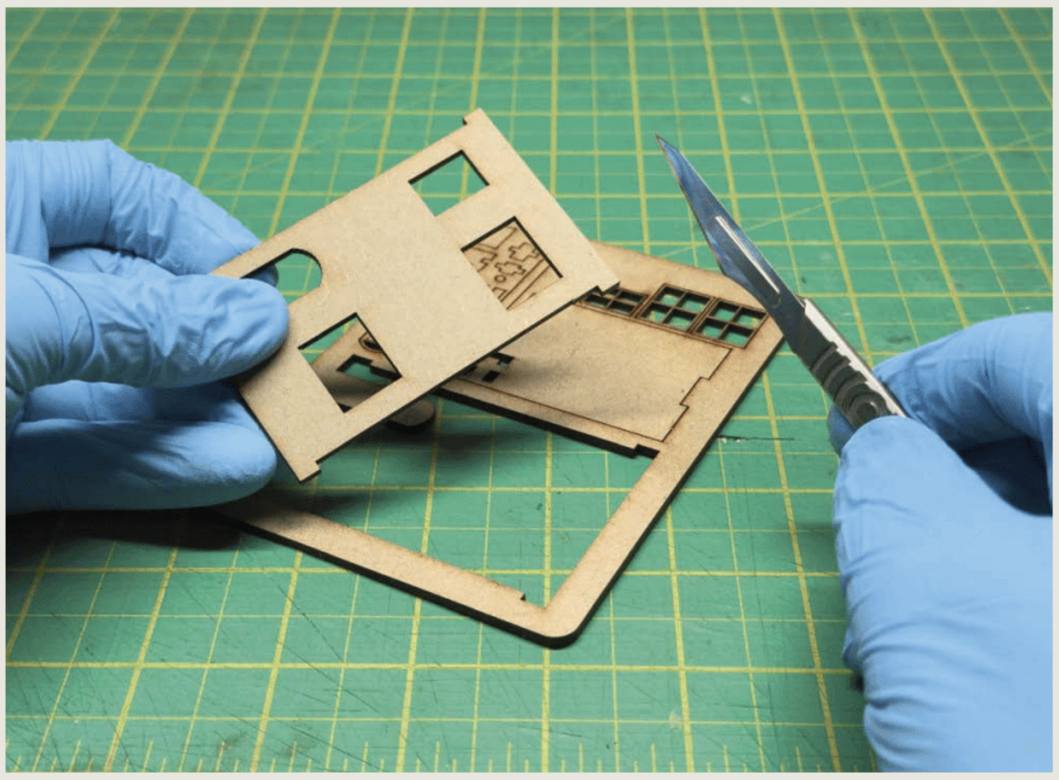
Deluxe Materials
Scenic snowflakes
Icy Sparkles

WWScenics
Scratch Aid laser-cut Single House kit, Dressing kit

Other
Modelling knife, sanding block, superglue, various acrylic paints, various weathering powders, primer, clear plastic from packaging, off-cuts of plastic strip.



1 The instructions offer a basic guide to construction; the rest is over to your imagination, experience, or how-to guides.



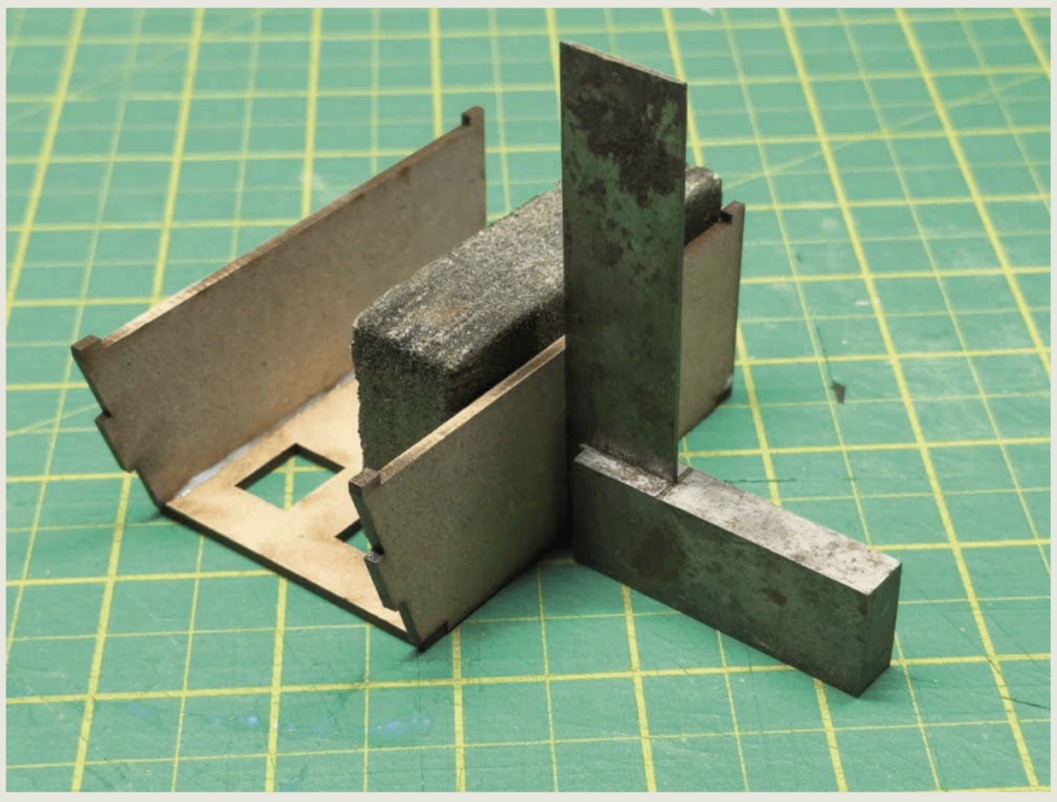
2 Carefully remove the pieces; some pop out with a little twist of the fingers, but others might require the contact point with the frame cutting with a sharp knife.



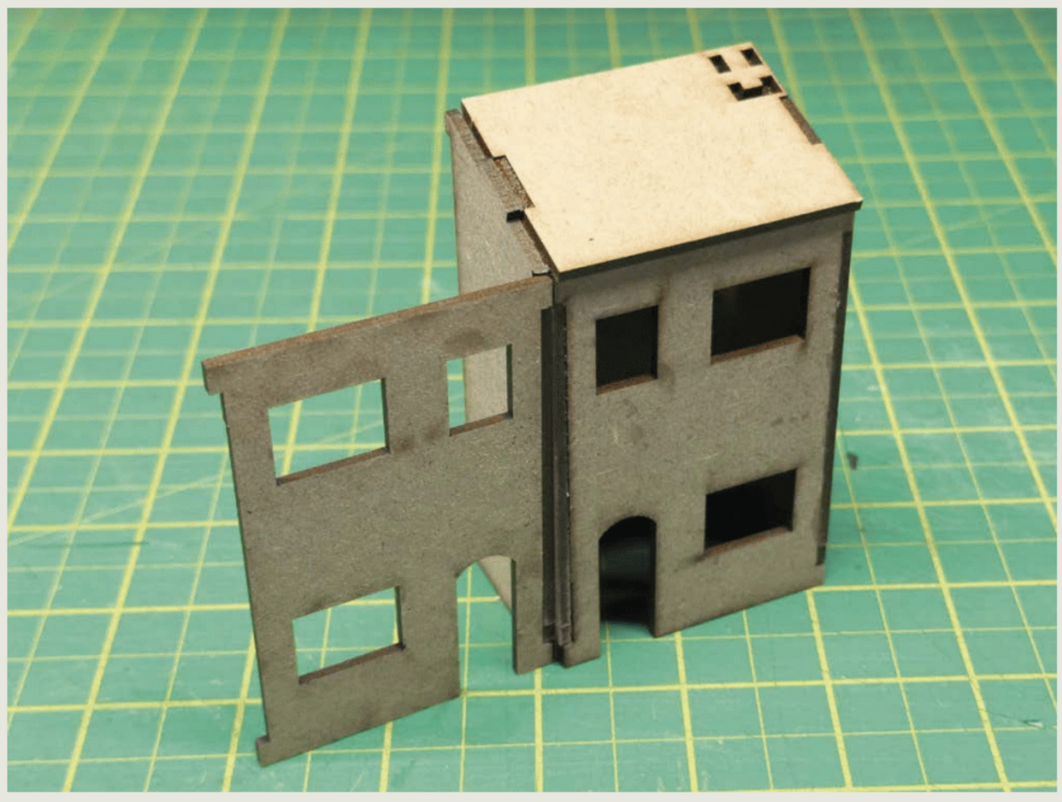
3 Ensure all the pieces are free from any evidence of contact with the frame. A purpose sander, nail file, or sheet of fine sandpaper quickly does the job.



4 Wood glue is fine, but takes a while to dry. Laser-cut glue is much quicker; however, care is needed to keep the fine applicator tube clean – packs of spares are available!

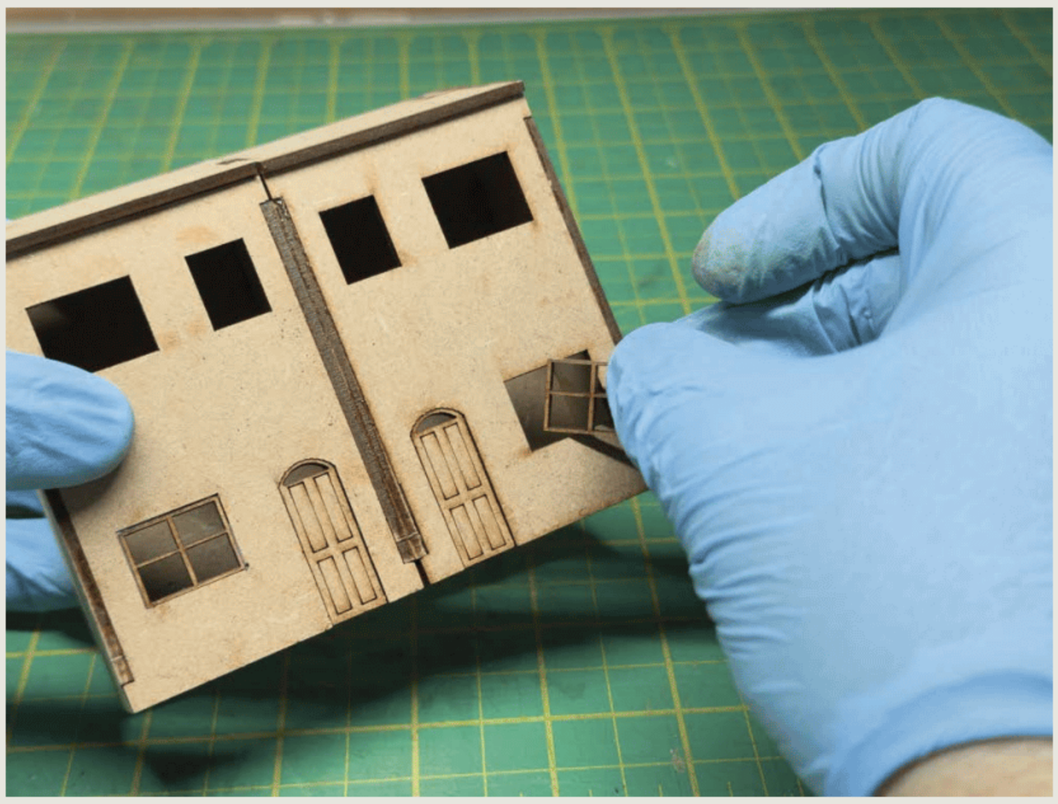


5 Ensure the building is square as you go along and while the glue sets. If you don't have a square, use the kit's roof to check as it has right-angled corners.



6 Very quickly, we have the basis of a building. The models can be arranged to form a terrace and I decided to flip the front to replicate the local cottages I had in mind.

Getting Practical



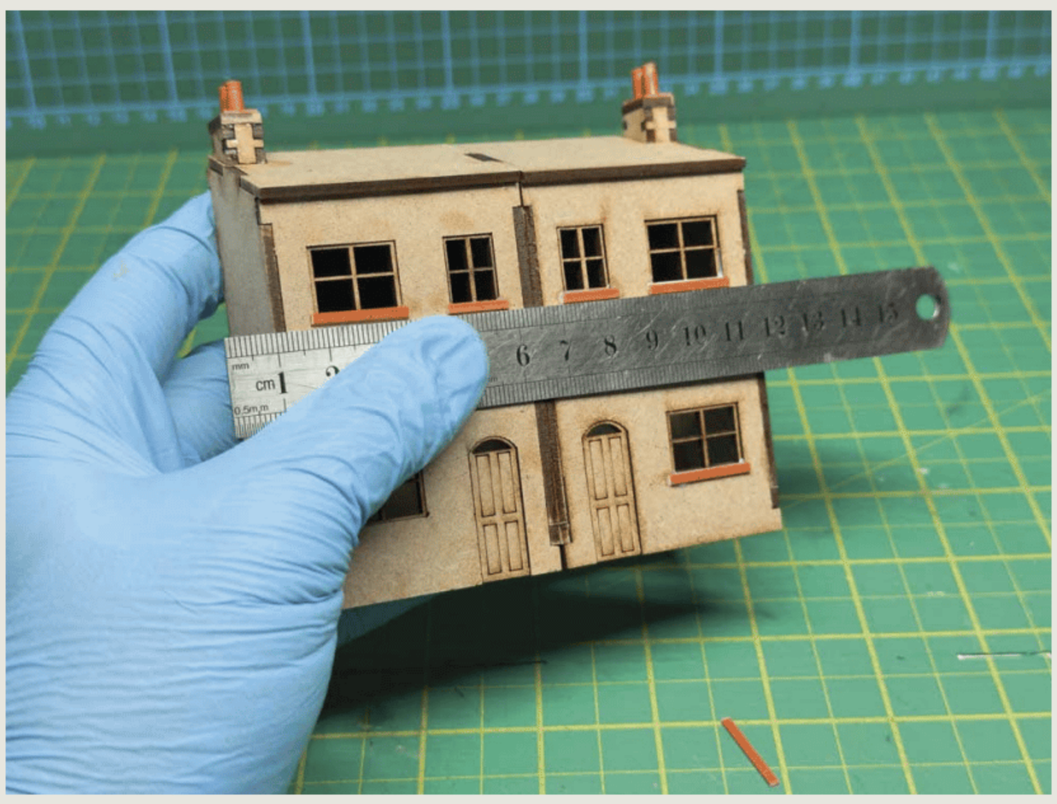
7 Doors and windows come next. In hindsight, I'd have left the doors until after I 'rendered.' Take time to ensure everything lines up, it will make a difference later.



8 At this point, I wanted to see how the buildings might fit into some kind of scene. An old table mat, coffee stirrers and a tree from the project box look promising.



9 I found some chimney pots in the spares box, although a number of suppliers offer such items. You can also use a piece of coloured paper rolled into a tube.



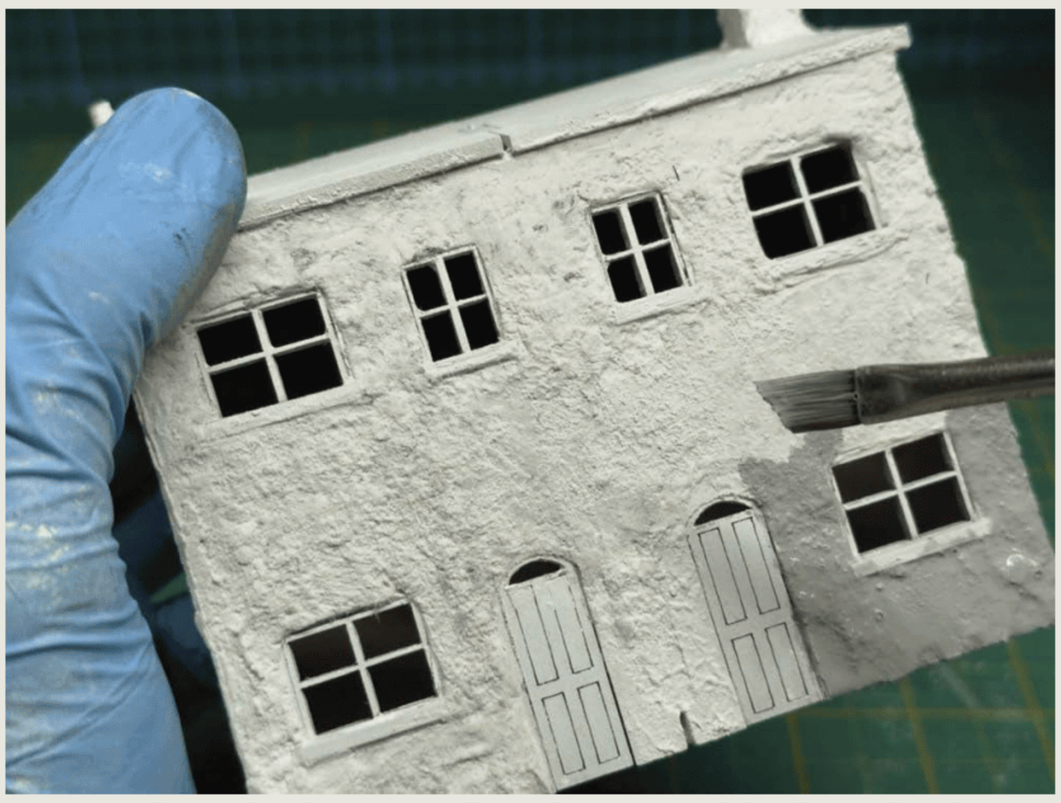
10 The real buildings I had in mind had window sills. I cut some thin strips of plastic for these and used a rule to make sure they were horizontal and lined up.



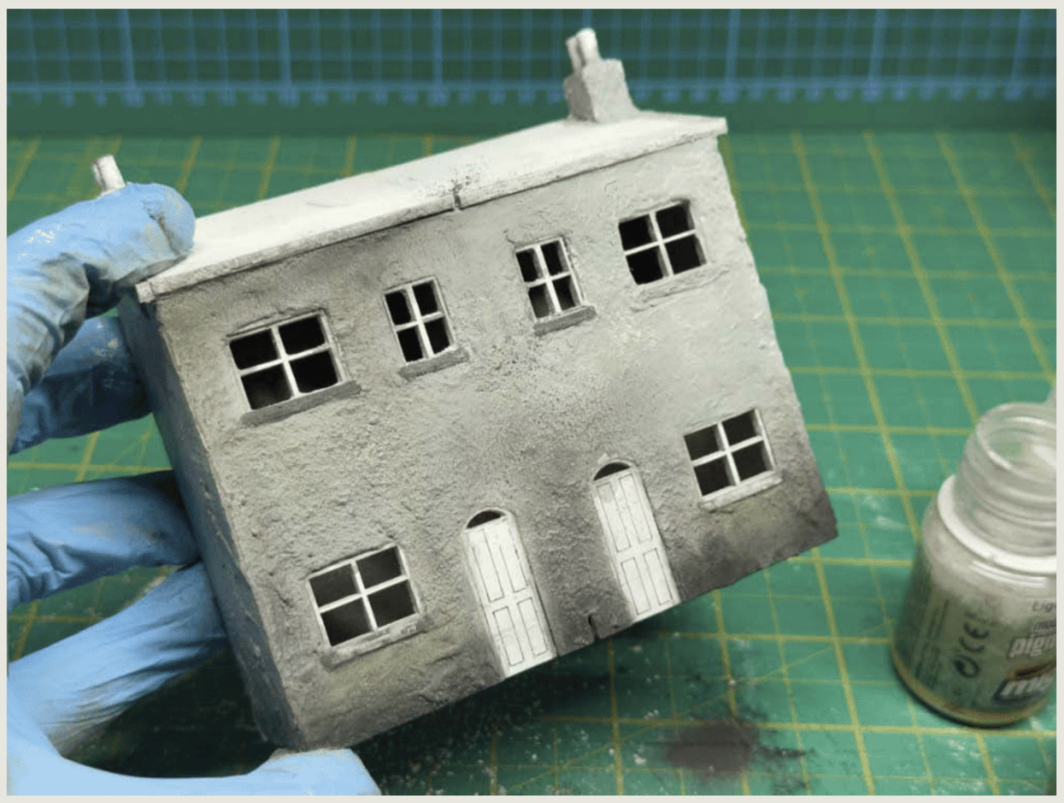
11 Most laser-cut buildings benefit from a coat of primer to seal the surface. A rattle can, in a well-ventilated area, was used to apply a couple of thin coats and left to dry.



12 All sorts of papers, or sheets could be used, but there was some plaster in the dressing kit, so I decided to render the buildings. Once committed, there was no going back!



13 A wash of grey acrylic paint created the base for the decoration of the cottage. Further washes and dry-brushing could be the next step, but I had another idea.



14 With the building still slightly damp, I worked weathering pigments into the surface, blending to the appropriate tones of a well-weathered cottage – plenty of green!



15 Carefully painting the doors, windows and sills brings the building to life and, just as in real life, draws the eye away from the rough stone construction of workers' cottages.



16 Glazing makes a big difference and clear plastic packaging was upcycled using a sharp knife into appropriate pieces. Take care to avoid getting glue on the plastic.



17 It's wintertime, and the bonus of a small scene is the chance to try new ideas like snow effects. It saved me tiling the roof. I used matt varnish and sprinkled it on.



18 The final touch was to add some snow-covered props to the model, again using the same technique as before.



Modelling a scruffy corner



Phil Parker

THIS PROJECT is rubbish. Or at least, it's about modelling modern rubbish.

Spotting a couple of modern skip castings on the Skytrex stand at a show, I thought they would make an interesting space filler for a modern layout. Skip experts will doubtless be able to date this design accurately, and please write in to BRM if you can, but to me, they are a relatively recent innovation. I normally see this design in industrial areas. Presumably, the ability to lock the doors and stop others dumping stuff in there is useful.

I've set my skips on the edge of a car park, which means modelling tarmac. The important thing to understand is how smooth it should be on a OO gauge layout. We might think real roads are lumpy, but reduce that to 1:76 and hardly any texture is needed. I've used card for the pavements, and that has plenty. Don't overdo this – subtlety wins out in looks.

Finally, skips seem to attract rubbish, so I dug through my stock of detail parts and found some wheeled cages that can be assembled either battered or missing a door. Then there is a pack of office desks, from which I pinched a single chair. Made up to look broken, it's a common sight, but how often do you see this modelled? We need some litter, too, which is printed and cut out, then screwed up a little before pushing into place with tweezers. Well, OO scale crisp packets are too small for my fingers!

This scene is perfect corner filler material for a layout. The actual size and shape can be modified to fit the space available, but it's eye-catching enough to be worth spending a bit of time assembling.

WHAT YOU NEED

Scalemodelscenery
LX077-OO Old wooden fencing
LX263-OO Pallet cages/trolleys
LX284-OO Office desks

Skytrex
OO skips

Other
Craft knife, card glue, tweezers, static grass and applicator, wall filler, palette knife, 1.5mm drill, grey emulsion match pots, Daler board, sponges, talcum powder, car primer, mapping pen, white ink.



1 My baseboard is a piece of MDF, which is very smooth. Along the back, there's a layer of 2mm-thick cardboard (Daler board from an art shop), along the edge of which I've scribed some kerbstones 2mm wide and 10mm long. I know they should be 9mm, but 10 is easier to mark out.



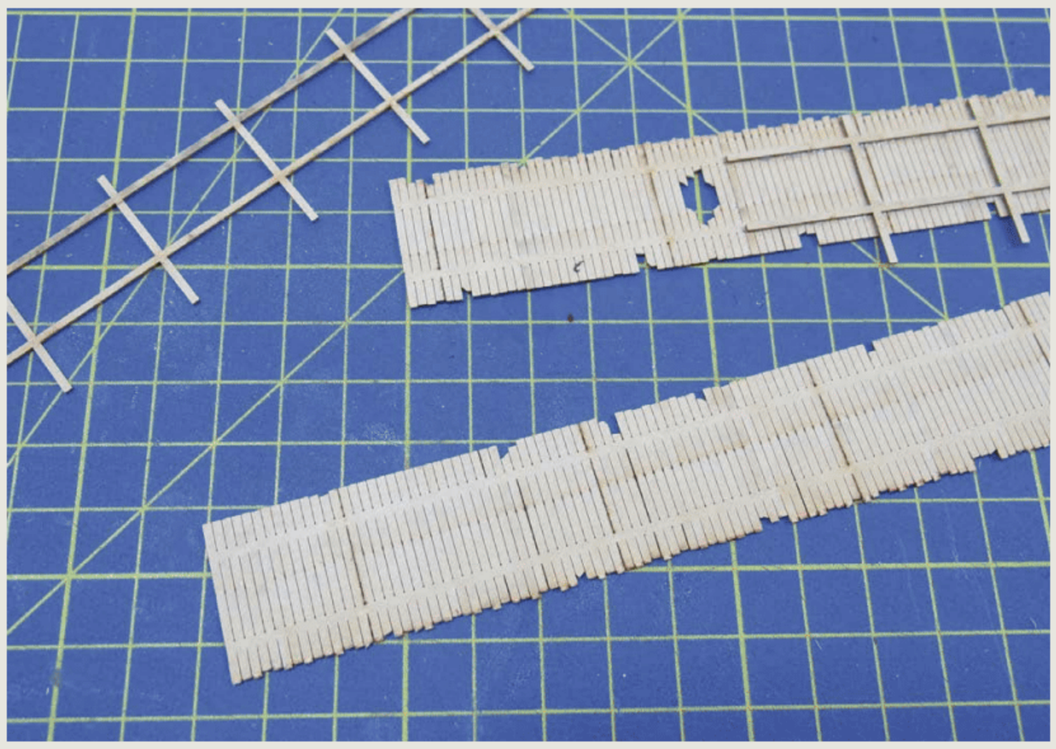
2 I want some scruffy ground, and this looks wrong if it's too flat. Some DIY store wall filler smoothed in place with a wet palette knife will be perfect. The masking tape along the back edge of the board will provide a reasonably crisp edge to the diorama.



3 Now the messy stage. Gather as many grey colour emulsion match pots as you can, and dab different shades all over the tarmac areas. Try to blend the colours, so work while the paint is wet, and use darker shades where there is less traffic.



4 For texture, I dab talcum powder on the surface with a sponge. This lightens and weathers the grey a bit, so where it's gone too pale, I add more paint. Basically, keep working the paint and talc steps until you are happy with the look.



5 Scalemodelscenery.com fencing is made up of two layers, the planked face and rear supports. For strength, I like to make sure they overlap, so the ends don't coincide with each other. Here, the uncut back is attached to the short strip of planks required for the diorama length.

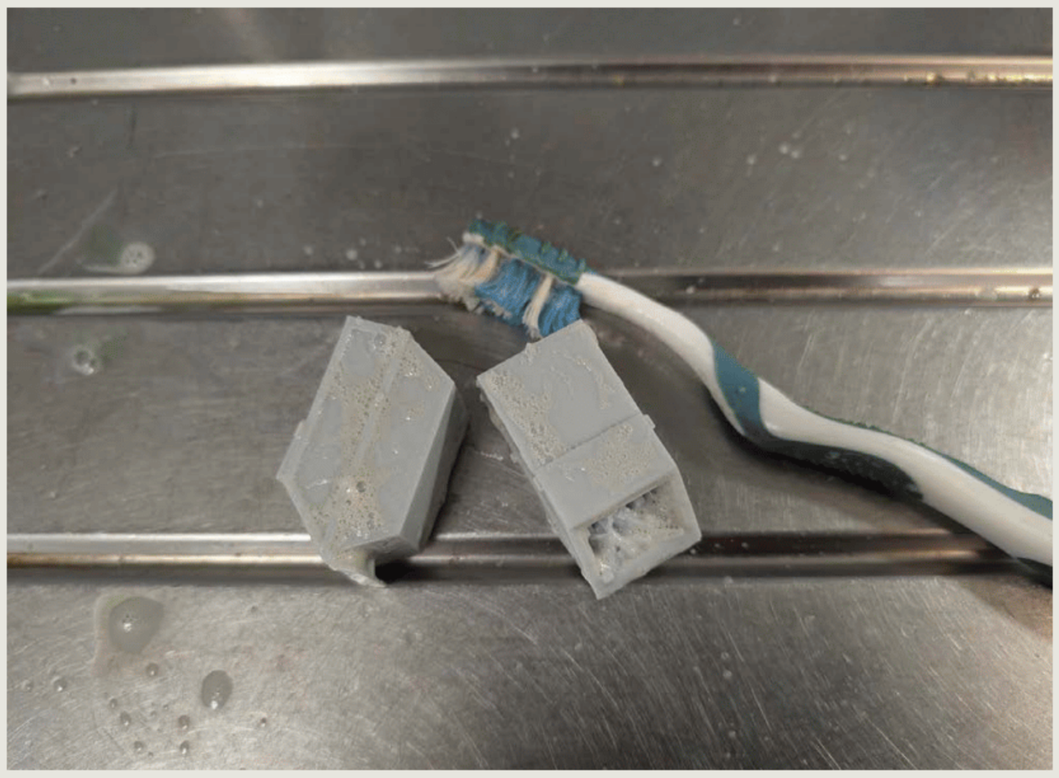


6 I don't like fences wagging around in mid-air, either on the end of dioramas, or baseboard edges, so the fence posts are adjusted so they end at the end of the board, and are firmly glued into a 1.5mm diameter hole drilled in the ground. Hide the post with a bit of greenery if it offends you.

Getting Practical



7 For a little job like this, a puffer bottle is ideal for applying some static grass. You can really blast it into the corner along the bottom edge of the fence. Electronic applicators can easily miss this bit, leaving a bare patch on the ground.



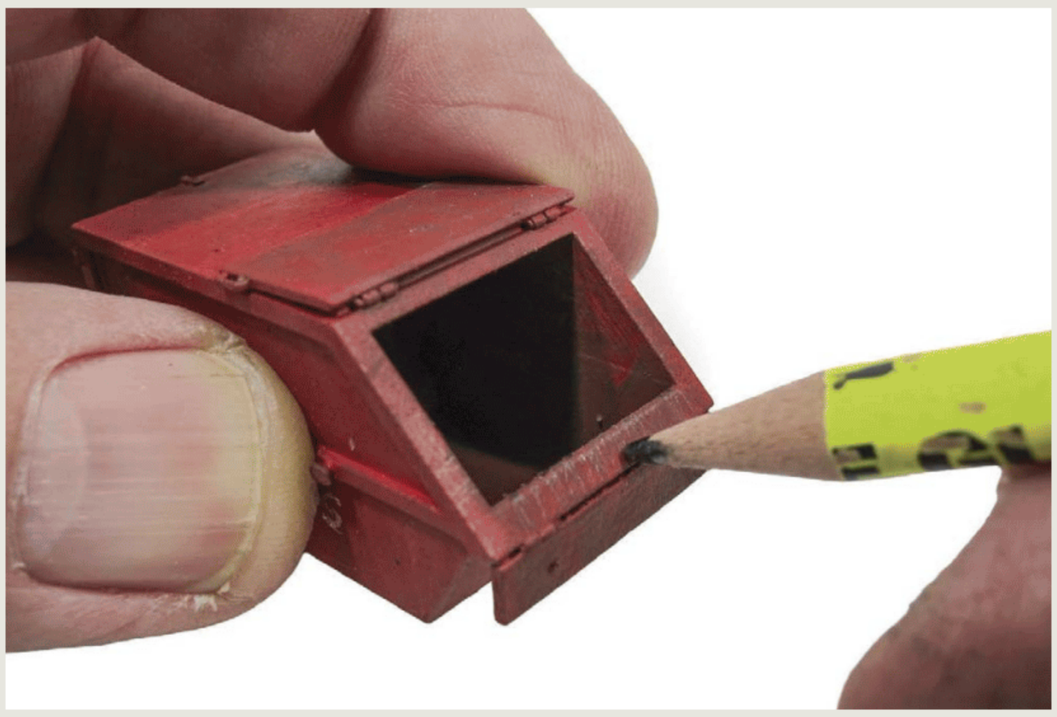
8 The skips are resin casting from Skytrex. Like all resin items, they benefit from a gentle scrub with washing-up liquid to remove any grease, followed by a rinse, dry and light spray coat of red oxide car primer.



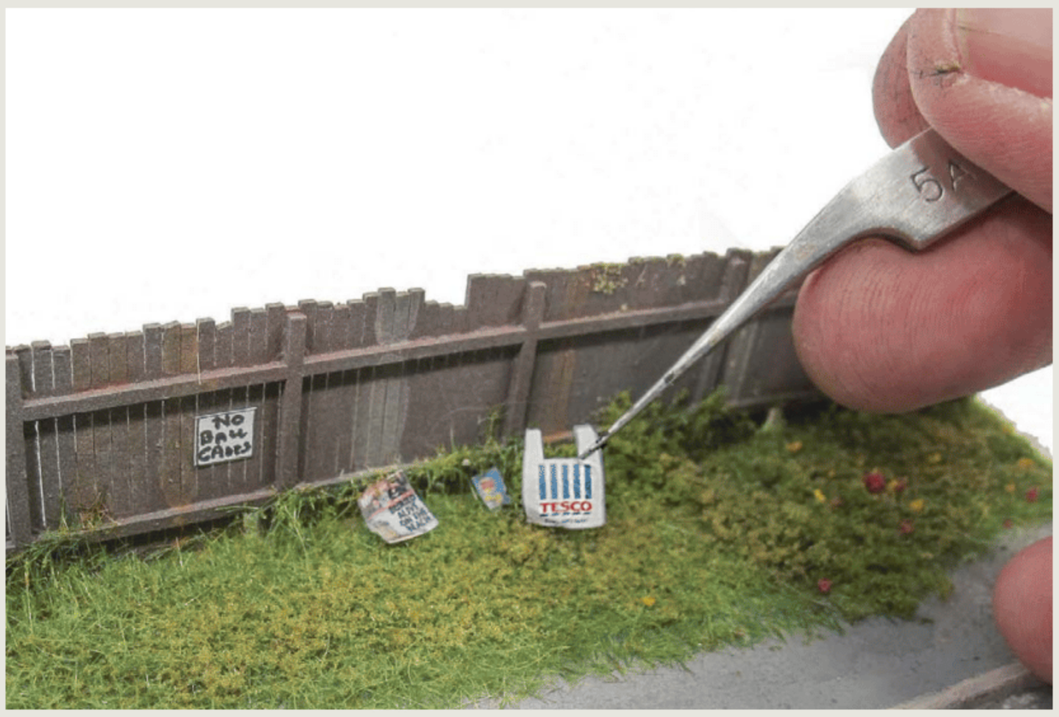
9 I paint both skips with enamels. The base colour is then mixed with a little pale grey (Humbrol 64) and dry-brushed to highlight all the edges and detail on the model. Extra brushing in the top surfaces replicates the paint fading.



10 Using a mapping pen and white ink, I add a suitable owner's name to the sides. It looks a bit hand-painted, but that's not out of keeping with real skips. A piece of masking tape helps keep things in line, but I wish I had sign-writer skills!



11 Where junk is thrown into the skip, the paint will chip away, exposing the metal underneath. Modelling this is simplicity itself – just use a pencil. This shiny graphite looks like worn metal. This works on loco footplates and other spots where paint has worn away.



12 Finally, we need litter, and fortunately, it's possible to download a sheet full of items to be cut out and placed on the model. This came from Paperbrick Miniature Architecture, but Scalemodelscenery also produces a pre-printed sheet for those without printers.

ALL SKILL LEVELS



Build a baseboard for a stay-at-home layout



Michael Russell

IF YOUR layout is never going to leave home, and you only have space in a working room, then it makes sense to use the walls for support. In this way, it is no more intrusive than a shelf. I decided to support mine using London brackets, usually employed for shelving. Although these aren't quite as square as I expected, I did find that they tend to give a bit once carrying a load, so that, although not perfect, they are acceptable.

My primary consideration was to have a loop layout running around the outside of the room so that I could admire trains passing by. It also makes things easier when taking video. Second, I wanted a layout with as generous curves as possible, albeit within the confines of having to turn through 90 degrees at the room corners. By forward planning, my curves are about radius 5, which means long-wheelbase vehicles won't look too bad on the corners.

One thing to determine before starting is whether you need a datum point to build from. I needed a lifting section over the door and so the pivot location for this was my starting point. The adding of the lifting section will be covered in a future article.

Things never go quite according to plan, so be prepared to adapt 'on the fly'. For example, you will probably find that your house walls aren't quite as square as they should be and the plaster is not as flat. Take your time and don't rush the job is the best advice I can give - do it right and do it once.

WHAT YOU NEED

350mm x 300mm London brackets, 2in x 1in planed timber, corrugated cardboard, wood screws and matching wall plugs, plywood for baseboard top, marker pen, spirit level, wood saw, screwdriver/electric screwdriver with pozi drive head, set square, wire/pipe detection tool, stud finder, pencil, bradawl, hammer drill, tape measure, masonry drill set, universal drill set.

TOP TIPS

- Screw and wall plug manufacturers are very helpful and often provide lots of information on the product or box to guide you. For example, drill sizes, screw sizes, etc.
- The best material to make your layout baseboard from is plywood. For the layout top, 5.5mm material is the minimal viable thickness and if the layout is to be transported, then 9mm or 12mm may be better. You need to achieve a balance between strength and weight. Plywood needs supporting every 18in to prevent sag.
- Choose a wood yard where they will pre-cut your timber for you.

Getting Practical



1 Visualising your creation is important and you can do this digitally, although I prefer to make a full-size physical mock-up out of corrugated cardboard. Cut this to shape or staple pieces together, then hold it up in difficult places such as windows and chimney breasts and sketch in the curves so that the radius can be ascertained.



2 Establish what your walls are made from. Outer walls are likely to be solid brick, breezeblock, or stone. Internal walls vary depending on whether they are supporting walls or not. If you suspect a wall is just effectively a partition, then try knocking on it in various places to see if it sounds hollow.



3 It is important that you know what is behind wherever you are drilling. Check both sides of the internal walls for clues. Power socket wires are likely to go down to the floor and light switch wires upwards. The use of a wire/pipe detection tool is the safest and the recommended option.



4 Drill an exploratory hole with a small drill. The resistance you experience when drilling will allow you to ascertain the depth of the material. When the drill is withdrawn, it can be used like a core sample to see what materials the wall is made from.



5 If your wall is a partition wall, then you need to find where the studs are located as the area between these is likely to be plasterboard or laths and plaster, neither of which has much strength. Use a stud finder tool or one of the many techniques, such as knocking, bent wire, signs of screw heads, or even using iron wool filings.



6 Decide what height the layout will be fitted. My layout is going into a working room and needs to clear all the furniture. I have cut the latter down, joining sections back together where necessary. Layouts around shoulder height are great for viewing, but may be more tiring to work on as you will need to stand on a stool.



7 I found these asymmetric brackets extremely useful as they can bridge gaps and give a choice of screw hole locations. It pays to shop around and find exactly what you need and what is available rather than accept compromises that you will regret later.



8 Carefully mark the wall where the support brackets will go. Use a pencil to mark the wall through the screw holes. Push a bradawl into the plaster to form the starting point of the drill hole.



9 Start with a small masonry bit and the drill set in hammer mode. To prevent the drill from wandering, use hardly any pressure at all on the plaster and just a little more on the surface behind. Work up to the drill size needed for your wall plugs. If it is a partition wall, then you can simply screw straight into the wood of the stud.



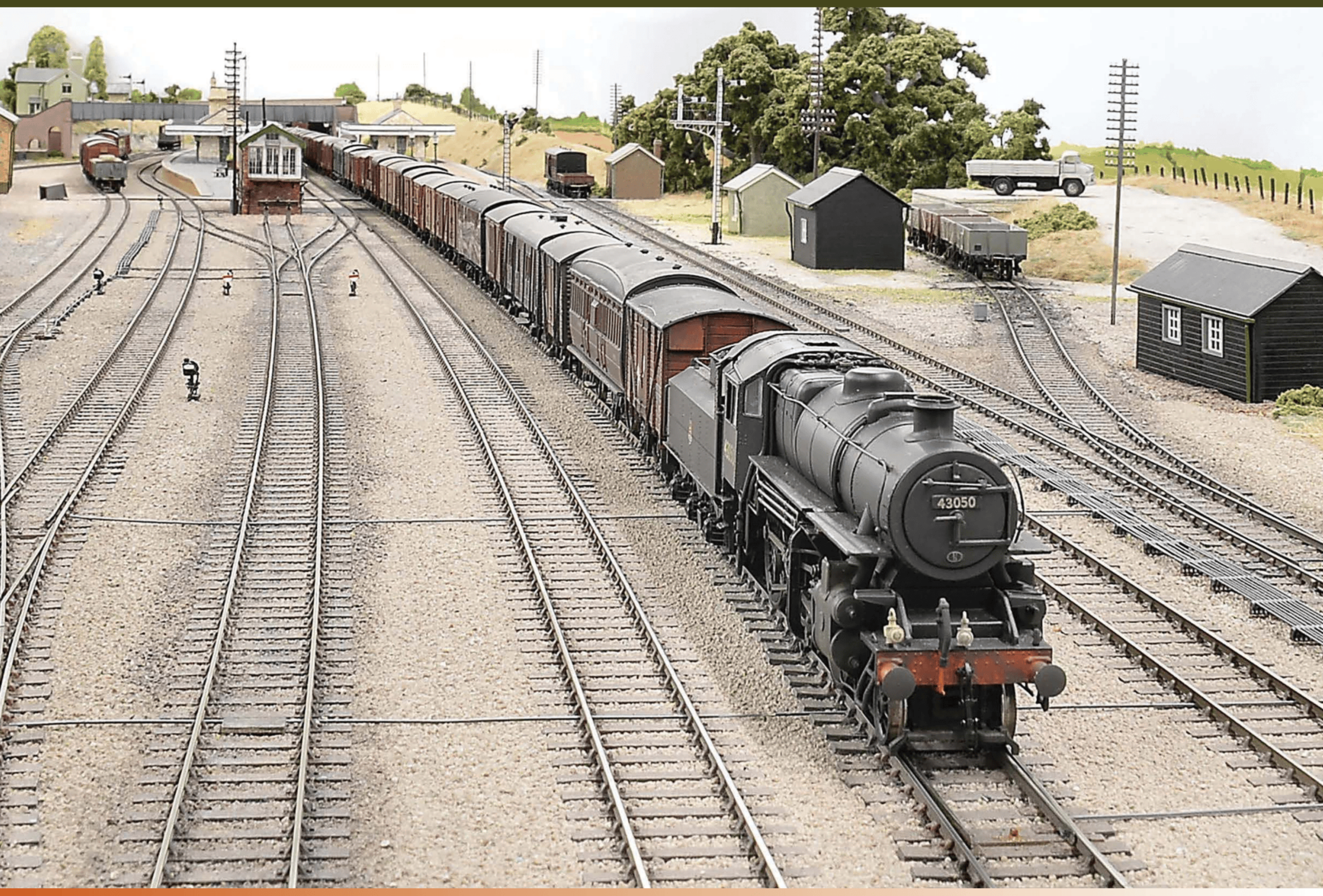
10 It is essential to keep everything as square as you can, so take your time marking out and use a woodworker's square. Check all measurements twice before committing yourself. Use a spirit level as you progress to each bracket to ensure that the top will be level.



11 Push your wall plugs into place and use an electric screwdriver to attach the bracket. Once home, ensure that the screws don't move if you apply pressure to the bracket. Use wider-diameter wall plugs or wider-diameter screws rather than leaving them loose.



12 Finally, attach the top using small wood screws, ¾ inch will probably suffice. Drill a pilot hole first and then use a countersink drill so that the screw head is below or level with the baseboard top. Your baseboard should now be rigid and secure.



Budget Modelling Part 5: Bachmann Ivatt 4MT



Tony Wright

CONTINUING WITH the theme of modelling on a (restricted) budget, I'm turning my attention now to the Bachmann Ivatt 4MT, a loco which has been available for some time now. It really is an excellent model at source – accurate, well-finished and a lovely runner. Provision was also made in the tooling suite for the representation of the tablet-catching apparatus, inset in the front of the tender tank, both sides. This was a feature of the class allocated to the M&GNR system, though after those lines were closed, the 4MTs were dispersed across the regions. The one I acquired at a very good price was a limited edition for members of The Bachmann Collectors' Club, which means any 'fiddling' I've subsequently done to it will have ruined its value! Anyway, let's see how I got on.

WHAT YOU NEED

Bachmann
Ivatt 4MT (second-hand)
Scale front shackle from LNWR carriages

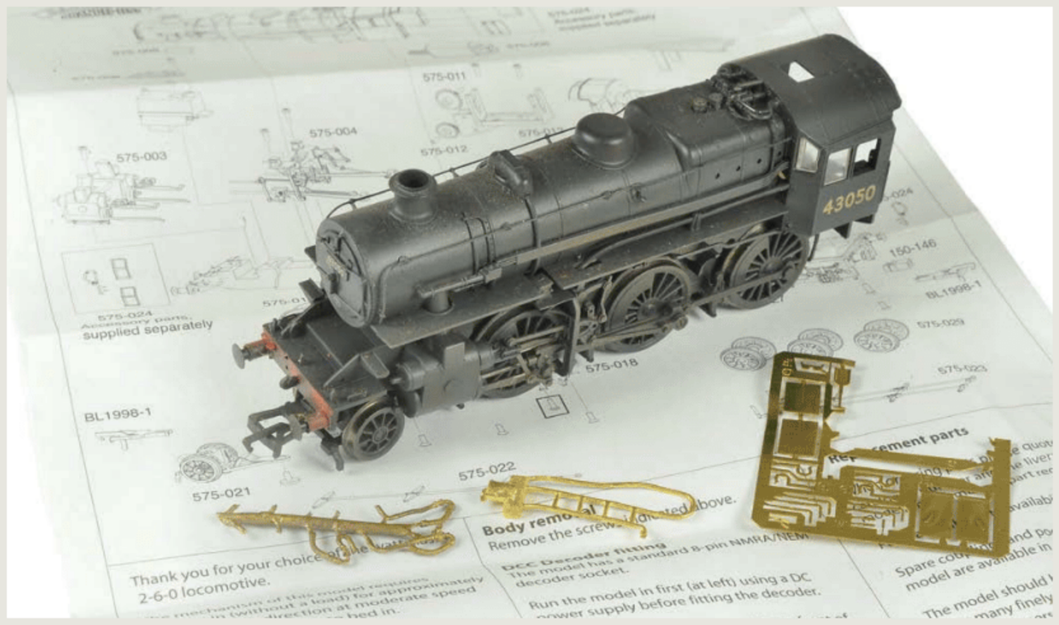
Comet
The cab doors from a brass fret of loco detailing parts

London Road Models
Vacuum standpipes

Other
Brass ladder, 15Amp fusewire, code 75 rail, superglue, 30Amp fusewire, coal, xurons, various weathering powders, brushes, lamps and crew.



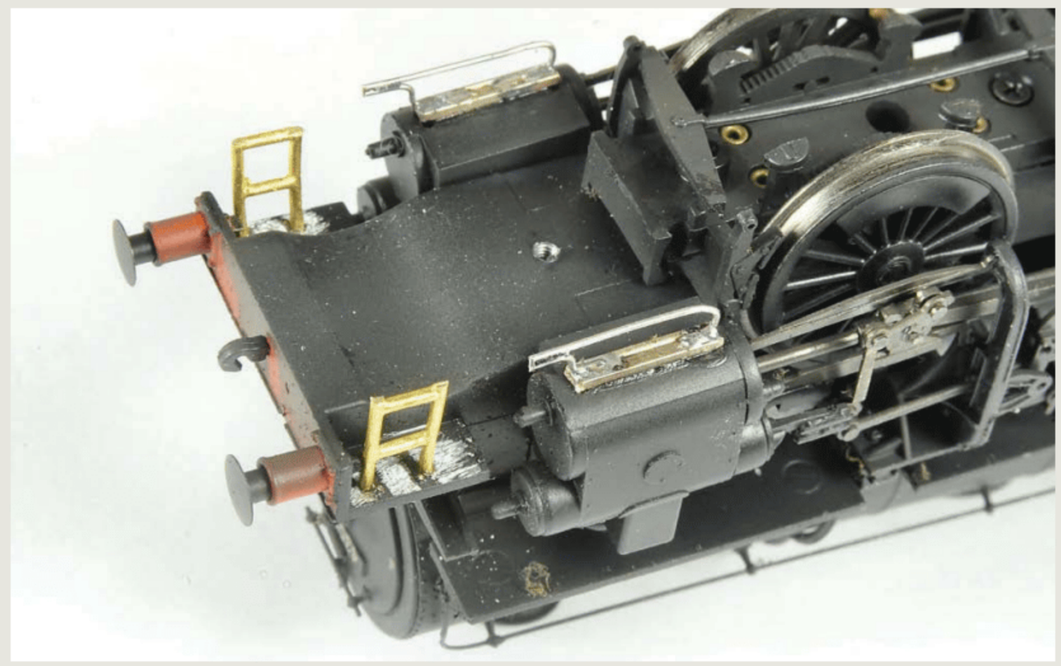
1 This is how I acquired the model; a little dusty and another Bachmann 'Returned Stock Checked and Tested: Sold as Seen' item. Why it was returned in the first place, I don't know, because it wasn't damaged and ran really well. Could it be because the little bag of extra bits was missing – front steps, cylinder drain cocks, vacuum standpipes and cab doors? A not uncommon occurrence.



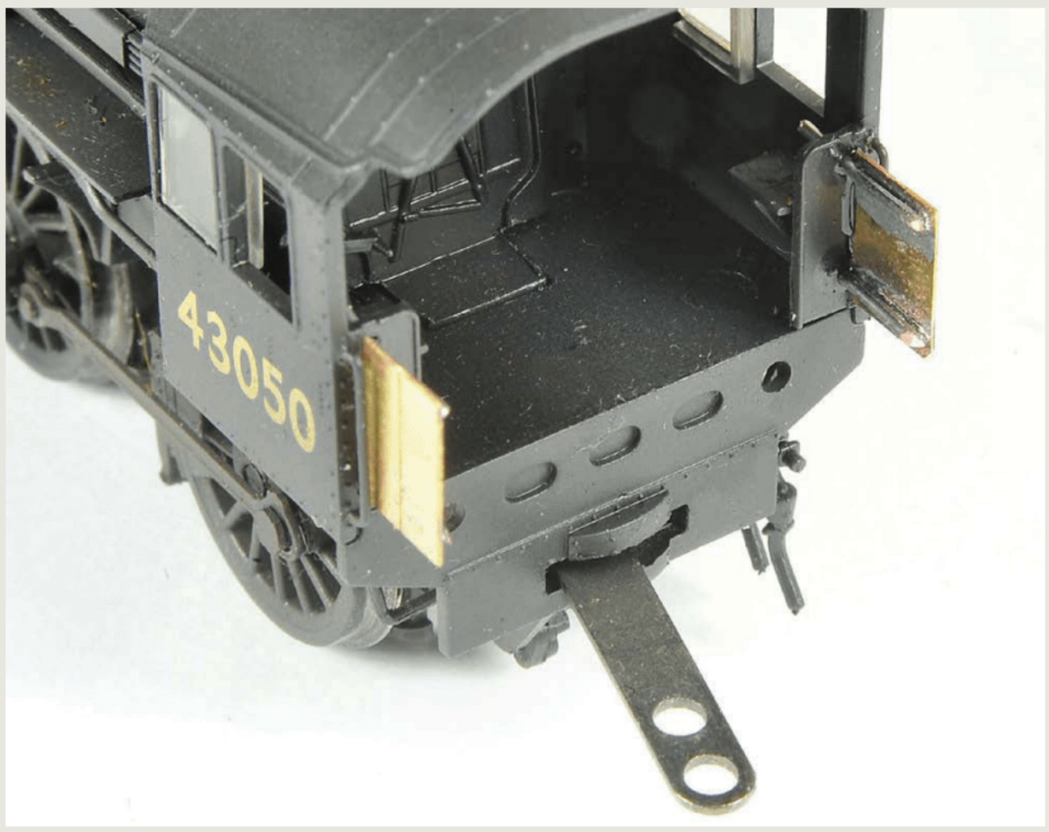
2 I'm conscious whenever I present these 'simple fixes' that not everyone will have access to the enormous number of spare bits and pieces I've accumulated over the years. However, most items are still available. The vacuum standpipes came from London Road Models and the cab doors from a brass fret of loco detailing parts now available from Comet. I admit I've forgotten where the ladder (which made the steps) came from.



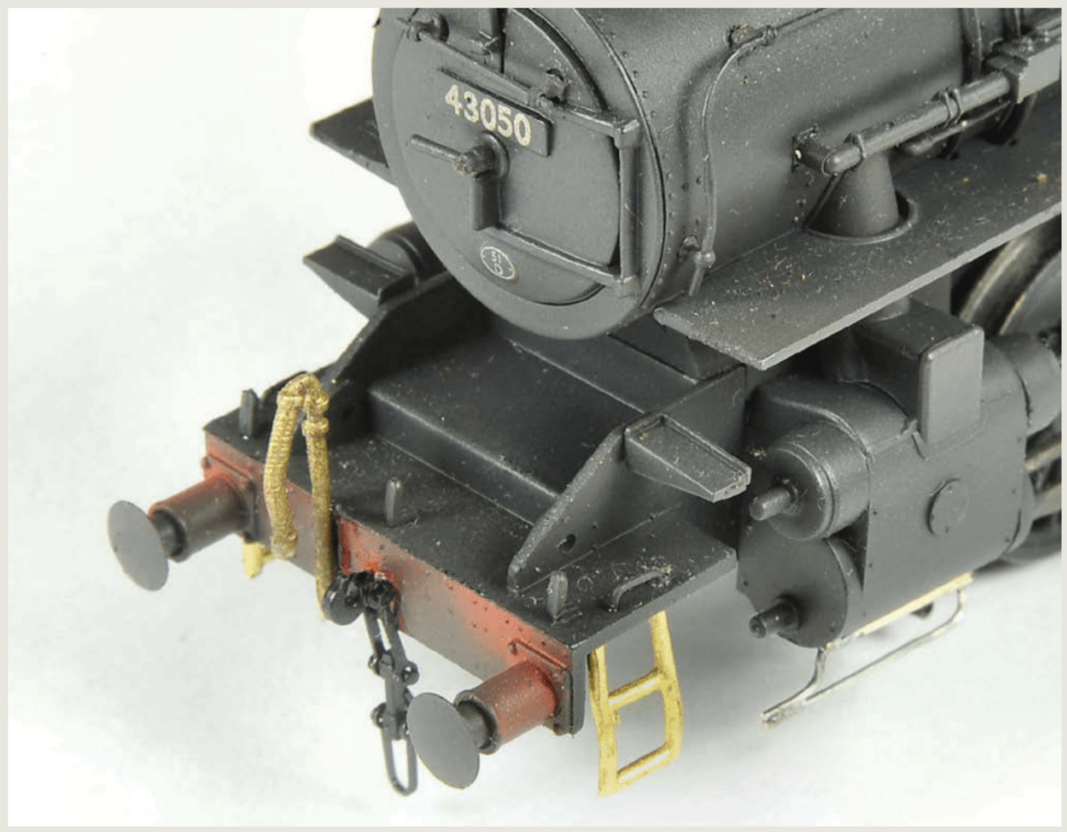
3 I must have a pathological hatred of tension-lock couplings – yes, I know they're the industry standard, but they are visually awful. Thus, once the front coupling had been removed from its pony-mounted pocket, that same pocket was lopped off it a trice with the trusty Xurons!



4 I formed the front steps from the lost wax ladder. They were superglued into the existing holes in the base of the die-cast footplate. The cylinder drain cocks were made from 15Amp fusewire and a section of code 75 rail, superglued to the base of the cylinders.



5 To secure the cab doors, I soldered two lengths of 30Amp fusewire to their rears and fixed them into the holes in the cabsides provided for the original (missing) doors. If necessary, they could be bent inwards for clearance.



6 Front-end detail now in place, all fixed with superglue. The scale front shackle came from Bachmann's latest LNWR carriages – a beautiful thing, and I wonder if Bachmann will be selling them as separate items. They work as well.

Getting Practical



7 The rear tension-lock went the way of all flesh, and was replaced by a simple wire ‘goalpost’. Yes, I know this isn’t realistic, either, but when painted, it’s far more discreet. It can be easily adjusted for height, if necessary, to couple with tension-locks on stock. Nothing looks more like real coal in a tender than, err, real coal! Let a little naturally over-spill.



8 Complete and ready for action. Regarding that ‘layout action’, then lamps and a crew are essential. The lamps are those provided with Hornby’s latest J52, and they fit the Bachmann lamp irons perfectly. Will Hornby sell these as spares? They should. All I’ve done is weather them slightly. I also added a little extra weathering to the loco’s motion.



9 Whenever a model is contemplated, then prototype source material is essential. As for the 4MTs, one can do no better than consult the Irwell volume on the class. In this respect, this is rather poignant, because the model shown used to belong to the late Chris Hawkins, writing as Ian Sixsmith, the author of the book. Mo, my wife, and I were tasked by Wendy, his widow, to find new homes for his model railway items, so I bought this loco.



10 It says a lot for the capabilities of this modest-sized 2-6-0 that it easily whirled this 40-van fully-fitted fast goods round Little Bytham. I don’t know whether Bachmann still sells ‘Returned Goods’ at shows, but they used to; principally during the Warley Show at the NEC. As the doors opened, Dennis Lovett described what happened as ‘the greatest pensioners’ scrum in history!’ That said, one doesn’t have to be a pensioner to buy a budget ‘Flying Pig’ (one of the several, less-than-complimentary nicknames given to the Ivatt 4MTs).



INTERMEDIATE



Weathering in O gauge



Michael Russell

THIS LOVELY O gauge Vanwide model from Dapol is really crying out for some weathering. Just a few simple steps are required to get there. Take your time, as these things can't be rushed. Work in good light and don't forget to filter your paint to stop your airbrush clogging up.

I removed the wheels before I started, as this makes it easier to weather them, and I prefer to mask the wheel treads rather than clean them afterwards. I also removed the roof (it pulls off) as the inside of the body makes a great handle. I used a double-action airbrush and acrylic paints throughout, but enamel will work just as well. You could make the masks from cardboard and make the holes with a sharp knife if you don't have a 3D printer.

If you have trouble getting your paints to the correct consistency for spraying, and suffer with the fear of putting too much paint on that you cannot then get off, then try using a varnish as a carrier. I used Humbrol Clear Matt on this project in exactly this way. Add multiple coats for stronger effects.

WHAT YOU NEED

Dapol
7F-049-001 VEA 12t goods van (Vanwide)
Freight Brown from Dapol dealers

Hobby Craft
POSCA white pen

Humbrol
Steel Metal Cote, Clear Matt, brown, black, white, rust, Pale Stone and thinners

Other
FDM 3D printer with PLA filament (optional), rag, double-action airbrush, cereal packet cardboard, scissors, old toothbrush, small paintbrushes

Getting Practical



1 Tone down the whole model with a little Pale Stone added to matt varnish. If the first coat isn't strong enough, add a second. Better to take a cautious approach to avoid overdoing the effect.



2 Use a white POSCA pen to add writing. It is safest to add markings from contemporary photographs. Unless you are sure what they mean, it is best to copy a source of evidence.



3 Mix a shade of brown similar to the body colour before you tone it down. Add random marks on the bodyside. I used masks that I designed in Tinkercad and 3D-printed them using a FDM printer.



4 Using the same mix, spray the rivet heads, around strapping, on the ends and on the doors around recesses. Blend this in with the marks you made on the previous step.



5 Add a darker brown to the paint cup and give the chassis an even coat. Use the mix on the rivet heads, van ends and around strapping. This is similar to the previous step, but you will not cover the same areas exactly, leading to variety.



6 Now add a lighter rust to the cup and spray this on the chassis. Concentrate on the brake shoes and the spring hangers. Mix up a dark brown, almost black mix, and spray this on the springs and axle ends.



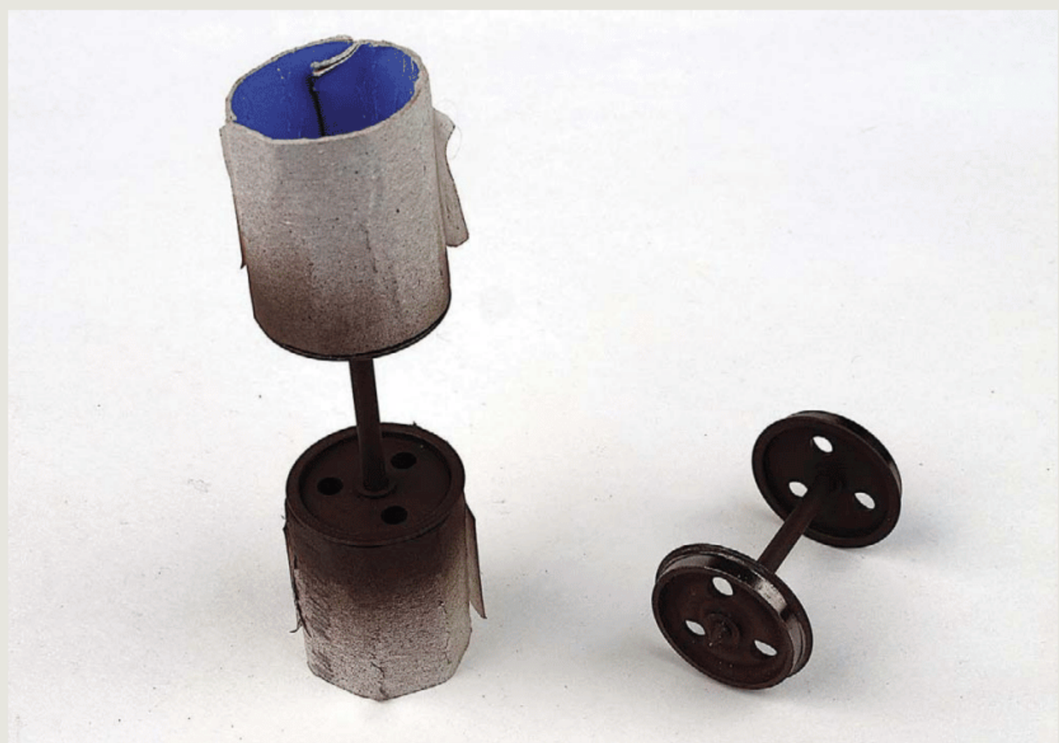
7 Using another 3D-printed mask, add white label marks and random white patches on the doors. Using black, add oil to the top and bottom door locking mechanisms and on the ends of the brake cross shafts.



8 Reveal over-sprayed white areas with a piece of rag wetted with thinners (handles and lamp brackets). Use a piece of cardboard to ensure you don't touch other surrounding areas. For the bottom lever, I added a touch of white as it is difficult to mask.



9 Spray the roof with an even coat of dark grey. Add a little light grey to the same mix and add random cross streaks to the roof. Add random spots of dark and light grey spattered on with a toothbrush.



10 Spray the wheel faces with the chassis mix made earlier. Use cardboard rolls as masks to spray the rear of the wheels and axles with a dark brown colour. It is surprising how noticeable the axles are on these vans, so it is worth doing.



11 Spray the buffer faces and the rear of the faces with a rust colour. The buffers rotate to make this an easy task. Now add a smear of dark grey to each face. Paint the buffer shanks Humbrol steel Metalcote and polish when dry.

CONCLUSION

Weathering really brings models to life and is probably more important for realism than detail, although this is a moot point. A contemporary model such as this, which bristles with fine detail, looks stunning once finished. Have a go, or use one of the many weathering services available if you prefer. It is time and money well spent.





Building an overbridge



Chris Ford

I DIDN'T mean to build this, well, not to begin with. I'd put one of the Embankment Arch kits together earlier, as an experiment to see it would be possible to replicate an urban scene previously built using plastic kits, but in card.

That experiment is still ongoing and when this kit came my way, I fully intended to build the kit in the same way again.

That was until I spotted on page four of the instruction sheet, Option 2: the open arch variant. Would this work as an overbridge? Only one way to find out. Some preliminary measurements suggested that this was possible, so onward and upward.

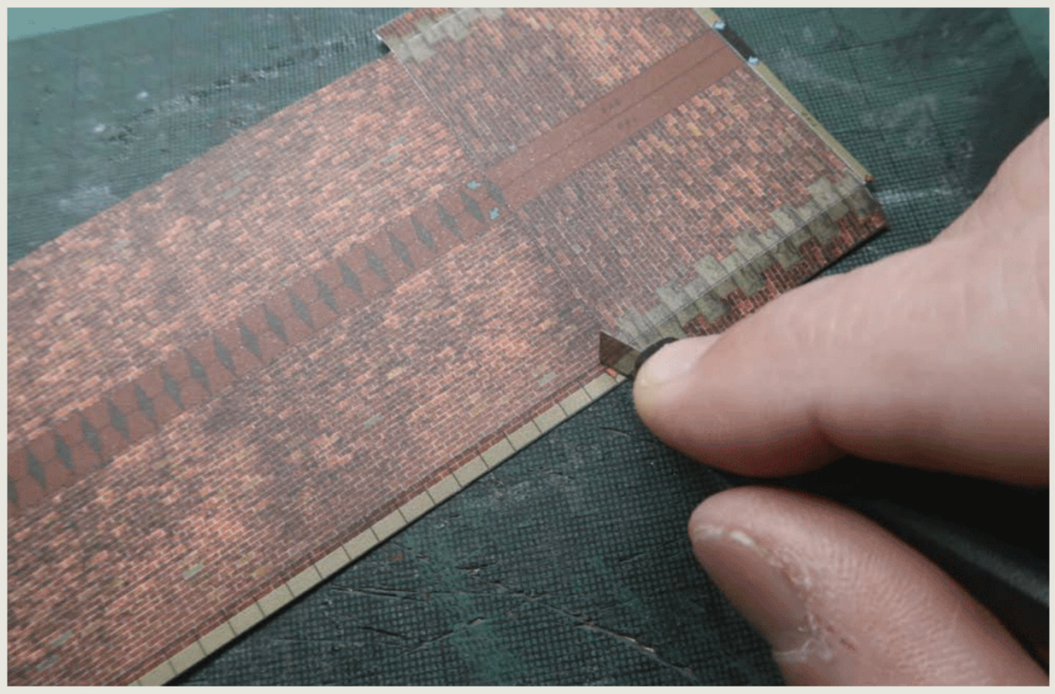
The instructions for this option jump around a little: the lower part of the structure on page four, where you are then directed back into the previous pages to finish the top sections.

There are a couple of inconsistencies (and a couple of typos), but nothing that isn't easily worked around. The fit of the parts is good, though there were a couple of hairy moments early on before the structure gained stability. The big plus here is the ability to mix and match this arrangement with the arches version.

WHAT YOU NEED

Superquick
A08.0 Embankment Arches kit

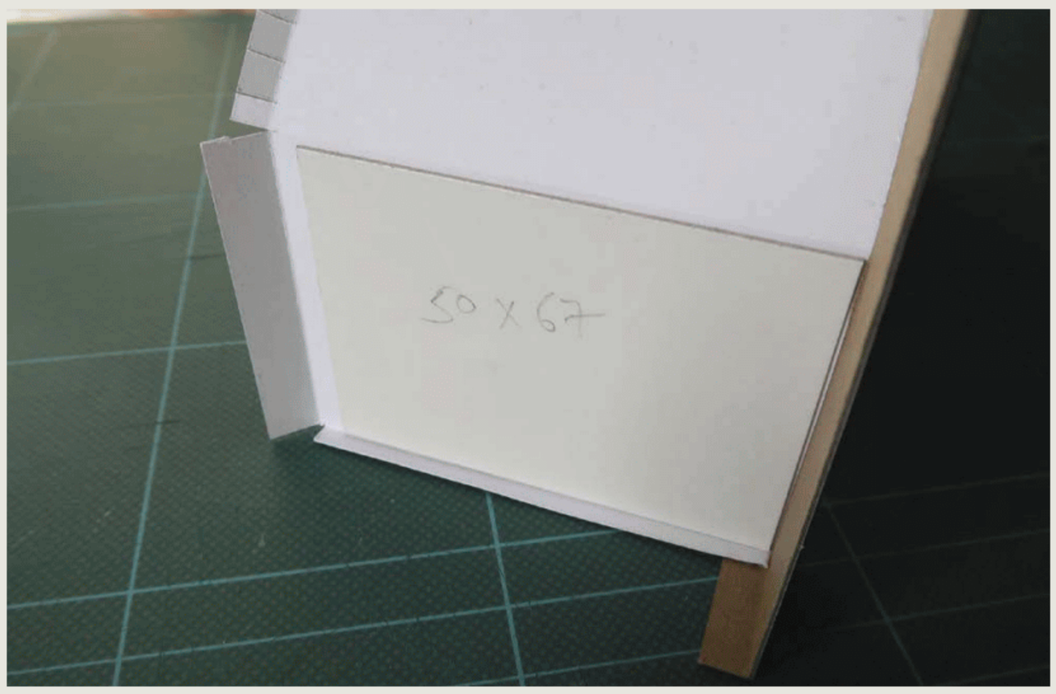
Other
Craft knife, sanding stick (the finger nail type) UHU or similar, a rule, small engineer's square, a few paint colours.



1 The first proper job was to prepare the paper liner section. The fold-back wall joints were lightly scored and bent. What is absent from the instructions is a note telling you to cut the fold-backs for the arch. Without this, it won't bend around the arch!



2 The liner was then added to one arch wall. This was a bit of a fiddle. I first glued the left-hand vertical wall piece and let it go off, then worked my way around the arch section, making sure that the paper sat hard against the curve.



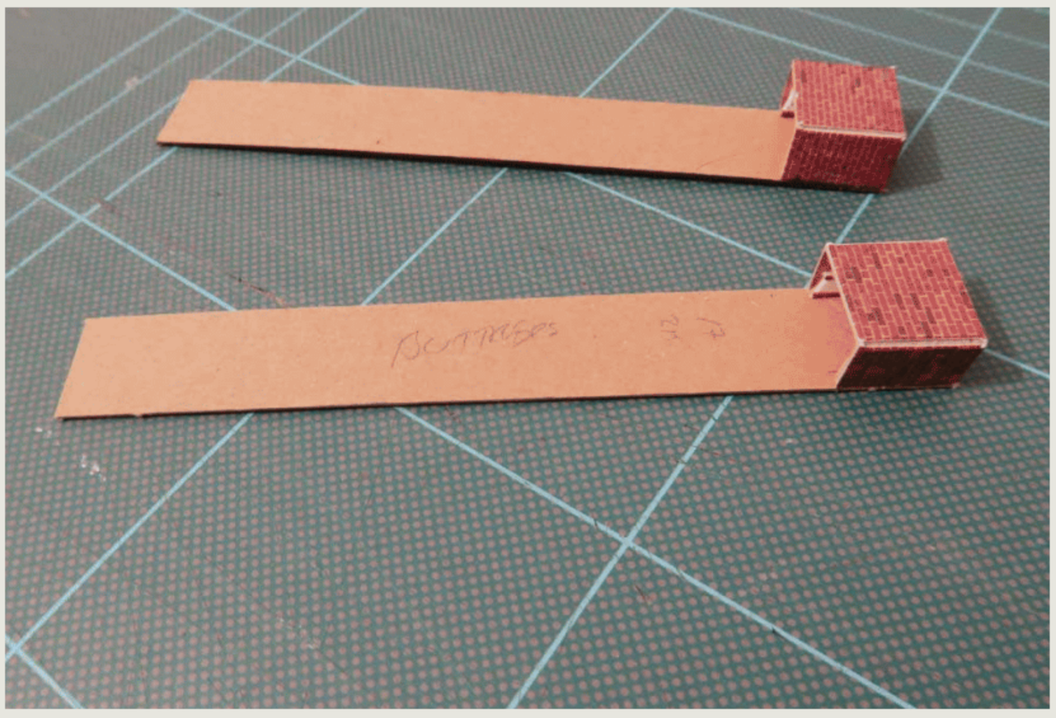
3 As usual, I had to add extra bits. In this instance, I thought that the inner part of the liner wasn't rigid enough, so a section of card approximately 50mm x 80mm was stuck to the rear of each side to firm them up.



4 With the second arch piece attached to the liner, it started taking shape. I cut a length of the included cobbled roadway 155mm long and stuck it to one side of the pavement fold-back part, let it set, and then folded it down to attach to the other side.

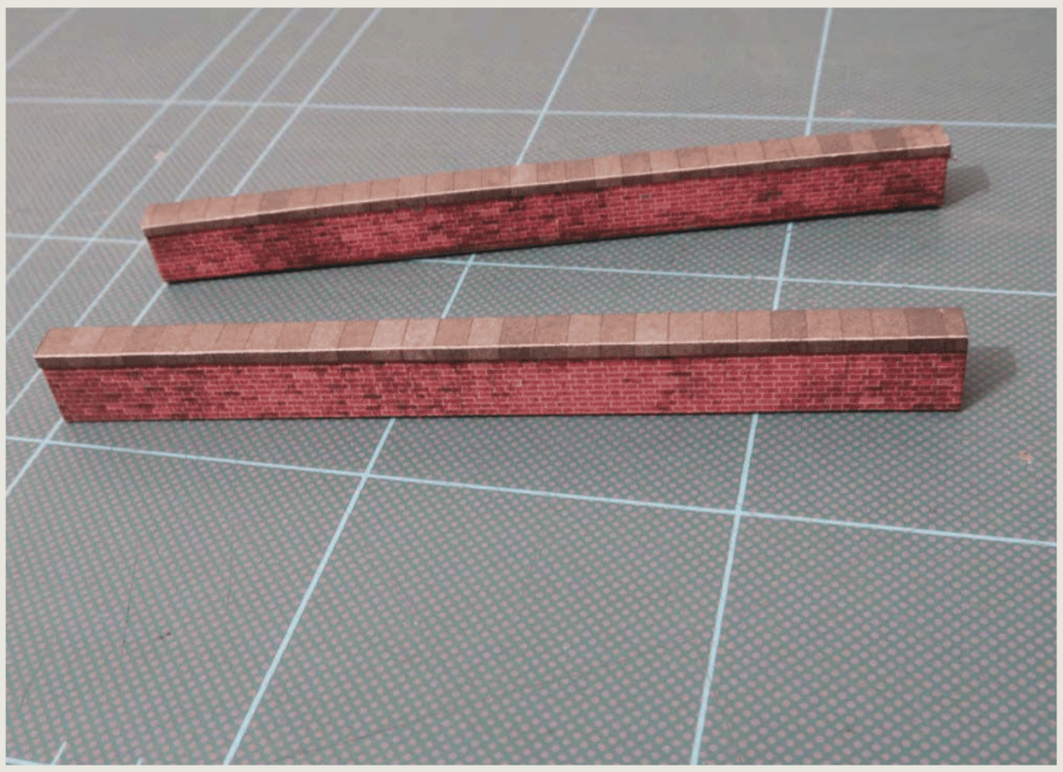


5 Once the roadway and pavements were set, the reinforcement pieces were added. It would be possible to run some track over the bridge by replacing the surface with thin ply or hardboard, creating a firmer base than here. However, you might just get away with extra card underneath.

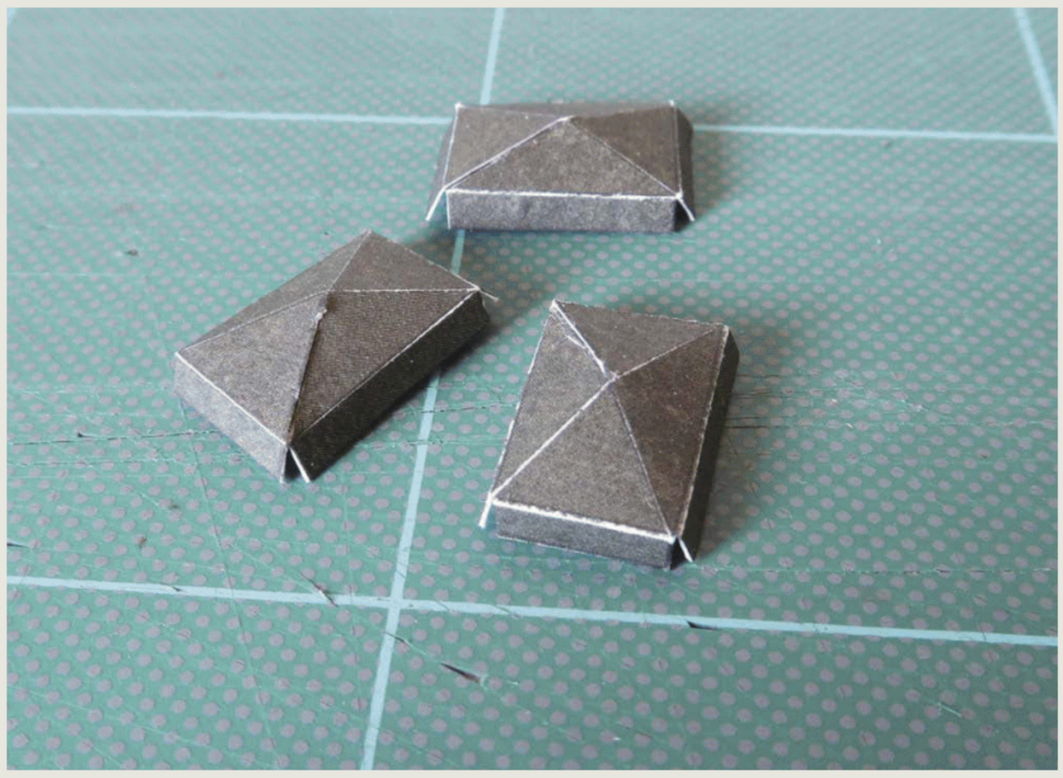


6 The four buttresses were made up as shown, with the top sections that face the road stuck to the plain face of the card. Admission time: Bizarrely, I mislaid one of the long pieces and had to bodge one up from the spare brick sections. Did you not notice? Good.

Getting Practical



7 The two parapet walls were folded up, noting to put the attached string course to one side. These were stuck to the main section using the still visible printed fold arrows to centralise them. It was safer to add the buttresses to the walls rather than risk leaving a gap.



8 The last pieces to be made up were the caps. I took the harder route and went for the 'cut stone' set. These were scored along the fold lines before cutting out. I just stuck the tab to shape them, using the buttress tops to fix the square shape.



9 Finally, the string course was stuck over the wall/arch wall joint and all was done. Some touching up has been carried out with a charcoal pencil and a small amount of brick orange paint. Note that the paper arch overlay was added immediately after the lower arch parts were assembled.



10 At this point, it was too tempting not to mock-up the bridge with the arches mentioned in the preamble. Again, this arrangement is not suggested in the instructions, but is an entirely logical use for this version of the kit.

CONCLUSION

If I were reviewing this, I would give the kit a solid 10. It goes together well and requires the minimum of tidying up and finishing.

I do think that Superquick has missed a trick by not including this option on any of the pack art or the brochure. It works beautifully with the arches and the practical uses are many. A single track is where I started, but it will take a double track, providing there are no curves involved.

If you were planning a Minories-type urban layout, then this could work very well as the exit point. There is enough spare brickwork included to add side extensions to fill any gaps.

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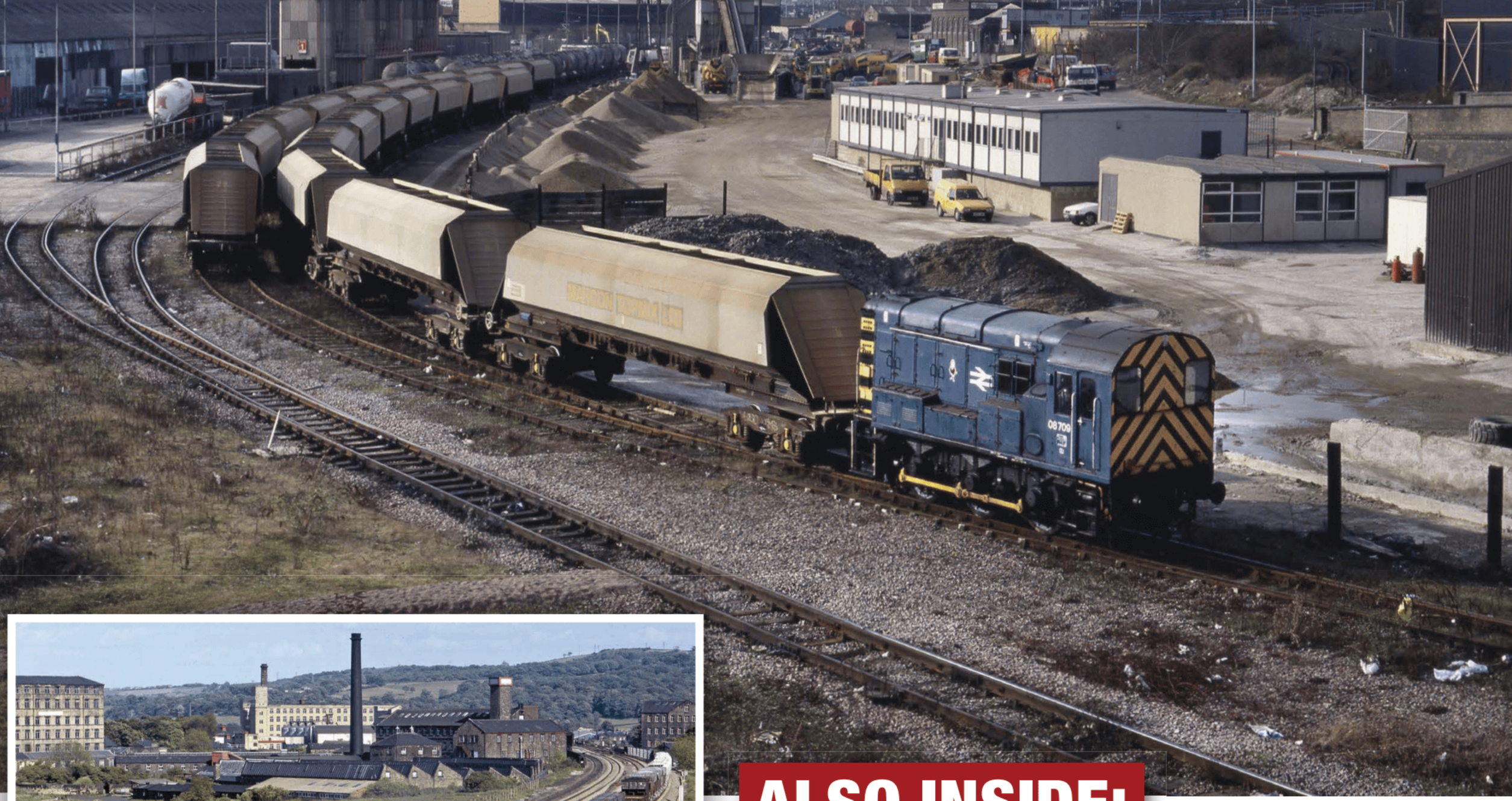
TRACTION

ISSUE 305 I FEBRUARY 2026

UK AGGREGATES UNLOADING POINTS





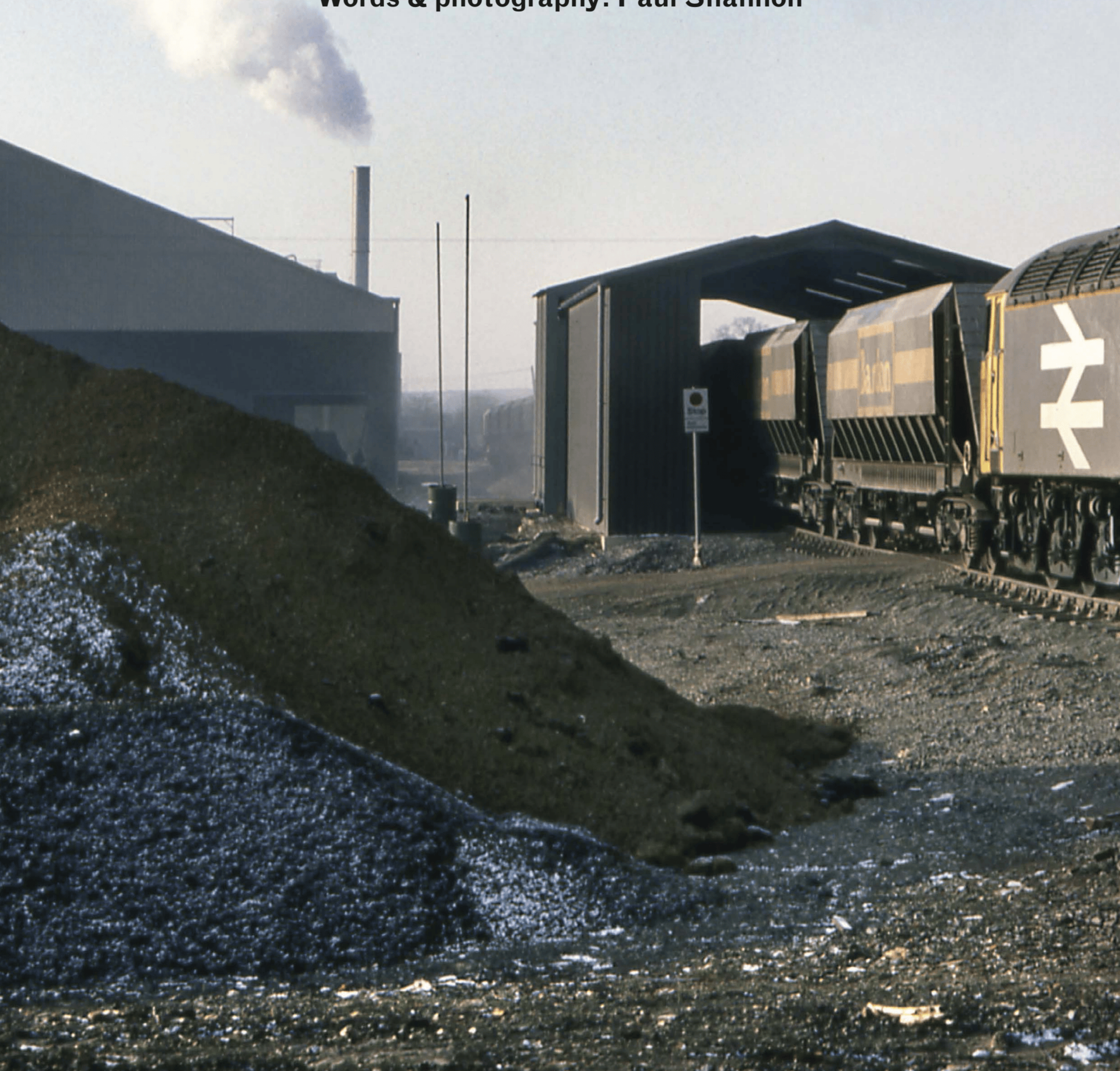
ALSO INSIDE:

- The Wharfedale Line
- DC Detours
- Trans-Pennine Class 40s

AGGREGATES TERMINALS - UNLOADING POINTS

In this second feature on aggregates terminals, the destination end of the journey for trainloads of stone, gravel and sand is explored.

Words & photography: Paul Shannon



Aggregates traffic is arguably the biggest growth area for UK rail freight today, bucking the trend of decline, which has affected almost every other part of the business. Destination railheads come in different shapes and sizes, depending on factors such as the available space and the volume of traffic handled.

When aggregates traffic first began to grow in the 1970s, a number of specialised terminals were built with hopper discharge, enabling the main-line locomotive to draw its train forward one wagon at a time for emptying. Usually, the track layout included a run-round loop, and sometimes a short siding for faulty wagons. At some locations, former coal concentration depots were repurposed for aggregates traffic, examples being Wolverton, Tolworth and Bishops Stortford. The former coal drops at Mile End were used to discharge sand trains until 1990.

The Government Section 8 Grant scheme contributed funds for a number of hopper discharge terminals in the 1970s and 1980s, including several across South East England and East Anglia that were served from Redland's Mountsorrel quarry. A unique case was Radlett, where the terminal comprised a continuous loop similar to those for handling merry-go-round coal deliveries at power stations.

That operation continues today: the locomotive hauls its train around the loop, pausing as each wagon discharges its load onto the under-track conveyor in turn, then uncouples from the train and runs around the loop a second time before reattaching to the other end of the train, ready for departure.

The capital costs of installing a hopper discharge facility are obviously high. Some terminals are either not busy enough or are not expected to last long enough to justify the expense. Planning constraints may also be a factor.

MAIN PICTURE: The stone terminal at Thorney Mill on the Colnbrook branch gained a new service from Bardon Hill using air-braked hoppers in 1986. The terminal also received trains from Frome (later Merehead), as well as occasional deliveries from Jersey Marine in South Wales. 56051 edges forward through the hopper house at Thorney Mill with a delivery from Frome on February 19th, 1987.

TRACTION COVER: Pilot loco 08709 shunts empty Marcon Topmix hoppers at King's Cross Goods on February 17th, 1992, ready for their return to Angerstein Wharf for reloading with sea-dredged aggregates. The photograph shows the unusual wagon design with space for a mobile conveyor to be inserted under the wagon body.



The compact Tarmac Topmix terminal at Paddington, with its mobile unloader, is pictured on February 17th, 1993, after 60039 has arrived with sea-dredged aggregates from Angerstein Wharf. The train has been split into two because of the short siding length and the other half can just be seen waiting in the distance. 60039 will swap the portions over at the appropriate time and the empties will later depart via the Greenford loop to avoid a reversal at Acton.



Located alongside the East Coast Main Line just south of Stevenage station, Langley Junction was a regular destination for the Redland self-discharge train (SDT). For many years, this working ran only on Sundays when the passenger timetable was less intense. 66060 has just backed into the Langley Junction siding after arriving from Mountsorrel on June 7th, 2015; the boom has already begun its work. After the SDT was withdrawn, Langley Junction received a few deliveries in conventional wagons, the last of which took place in September 2024.

In recent years, the railway has often preferred to use flat-bottomed wagons for discharge by mechanical grab, requiring nothing more than a siding with adjacent hard standing. If the hard-standing stretches the whole length of the siding, then the train can be left without a locomotive for emptying; however, that is rarely possible and the usual procedure is for the locomotive to draw its train forward a few wagons at a time.

Three further ways of discharging aggregates trains are worthy of mention. One is the mobile under-wagon conveyor system, which enabled specially designed hopper wagons to be discharged at locations with no fixed hopper discharge facility.

This system was introduced at a number of depots in the London area from the late-1960s onwards, including Paddington, Park Royal and King's Cross. The wagons had their bogies carried on short sub-frames so that there was enough room for the mobile conveyor to be inserted under the hopper doors.

Unique side-tipping wagons were the chosen solution for the short-distance flow from Lavant to Drayton near Chichester, which ran from 1971 until 1991. This system allowed the whole train to be discharged in one go, reducing the turnaround time to about 45 minutes.

Undoubtedly, the most innovative aggregates operation was the Redland self-discharge train (SDT), introduced in 1988.

Boston Docks became a destination for the Redland self-discharge train in 2002 after the awarding of a Section 8 Grant. Former BR locomotives D2112 and D3871 propel the third and final portion of the day's train over the Grade II listed swing bridge into the docks for unloading on June 7th, 2005. D2112 was withdrawn from BR stock in 1987 and spent a few years on the Nene Valley Railway before going on hire to the Port of Boston and eventually being sold to the Harry Needle Railroad Company.





In its later years, Aylesbury coal depot became a destination for aggregate trains, including a regular flow from the Redland Quarry at Mountsorrel. 56015 shunts half its trainload of two-axle hoppers at Aylesbury on August 19th, 1989, before forming the 16:46 departure to Mountsorrel. The terminal closed in the 1990s.

The SDT comprised up to four units of 10 permanently-coupled hopper wagons, with each unit having a continuous conveyor belt at solebar level onto which the wagons discharged their load. This conveyor belt was connected to an adjustable boom conveyor mounted on a special bogie wagon at one end of the train. The use of the boom conveyor meant that there was no need for the terminal to have any kind of fixed equipment and the SDT could remain stationary during discharge. By 1990, the SDT was serving about half a dozen terminals, including Banbury, Cricklewood, Langley Junction, Chesterton Junction, Broxbourne and Chelmsford. Unfortunately, an accident with the boom conveyor at Mountsorrel brought the SDT innovation to an abrupt and ignominious end in 2016.

The geographical spread of rail-served aggregates terminals is very uneven today, just as it always has been. At one end of the scale, numerous terminals are spread across South East England, where demand from the construction industry has long outstripped the capacity of local sources of stone, gravel and sand. At the other end of the scale, there is little potential in Scotland, Wales and South West England for the kind of regular, long-distance traffic that justifies the use of rail.

The growth of aggregates railheads in the South East accelerated in the 1980s. For example, a new terminal at Theale attracted a Section 8 Grant of £1.8 million, which was the largest such grant yet awarded. Another major new terminal was Purfleet, which replaced smaller railheads at Pitsea and Chadwell Heath. Further terminals came on stream across the region to cope with demand.

The Mendip quarry firms Foster Yeoman and ARC responded to the growth by introducing 'jumbo trains' from Merehead and Whatley respectively to Acton yard, where each train was divided into two or three final destinations. Direct single-portion trains ran direct from Merehead and Whatley to terminals in Hampshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The table on the next page gives a snapshot of traffic patterns in the late-1990s, after Foster Yeoman and ARC had combined their operations under the umbrella of Mendip Rail. Some of those terminals also received trains from quarries in Leicestershire and elsewhere.



The former goods yard at Harlow Mill became an aggregates terminal for Foster Yeoman in the 1980s, receiving trains from Merehead. 59005 *Kenneth J. Painter* had only been in service for four weeks when photographed at the head of a rake of bogie box wagons at Harlow Mill on July 14th, 1989.



Tolworth coal depot began to receive aggregates in 1986 alongside its existing deliveries of household coal. The traffic came from Newhaven and Whatley. 37248 leaves Tolworth with the 12:10 empties to Westbury on August 27th, 1987. Resting inside the hopper house is pilot locomotive D2310, a former Class 04 shunter that was withdrawn from British Rail stock in 1969. It was later preserved and has been based on the Battlefield Line since 2001.



In the 1980s, Acton Yard became a busy splitting and joining point for jumbo trains from the Mendips to terminals in London and the South East. The yard also had its own aggregates discharge terminal, as well as acting as a staging point for other flows as necessary. With a wide assortment of active and stored stock filling the yard, 66161 shunts box wagons for an afternoon departure to Bow on April 1st, 2019.

Terminals in South East England receiving aggregates from Merehead and Whatley in 1998

Terminal	Operator	Train service	Hopper discharge
Wootton Bassett	Foster Yeo- man	direct	yes
Eastleigh	Foster Yeo- man	direct	yes
Botley	Foster Yeo- man	direct	yes
Fareham	ARC	direct	no
Theale	Foster Yeo- man	direct	yes
Theale	ARC	direct	yes
Appleford	ARC	direct	no
Woking	Foster Yeoman	direct / via Acton	no
West Drayton	ARC	via Acton	yes
Hayes	Tarmac	via Acton	yes
Brentford	Day Aggregates	via Acton	yes
Acton	Foster Yeoman	via Acton	yes
Harlow Mill	Foster Yeoman	via Acton	no
Dagenham	ARC	via Acton	yes
Purfleet	Foster Yeoman	via Acton	no
Angerstein Wharf	Bardon	via Acton	yes
Allington	ARC	via Acton	yes
Hothfield	Tarmac	via Acton	yes
Purley	Day Aggregates	via Acton	no
Crawley	Foster Yeoman	via Acton	no
Crawley	RMC	via Acton	yes
Ardingly	ARC	via Acton	yes

Other terminals in the South East catered for non-Mendip traffic, such as Radlett and Elstow, which received granite from Mountsorrel, and Bow and Bishops Stortford that received granite from Croft. The congested road network in London made short-distance flows viable from Cliffe and Angerstein Wharf to locations such as King's Cross, Paddington and Battersea. The King's Cross terminal, which also received cement from Ketton and, until 1992, sand from Fen Drayton, was relocated as a result of HS1 works in 2005 to a new siding on the approach to St Pancras. The Paddington terminal was closed in 2010 because of Elizabeth Line works and later restored on a slightly different site.



Woking joined the list of South East aggregates railheads in the late-1980s, with deliveries from both Merehead and Whatley. A busy moment is captured at Woking Down Yard on July 4th, 1988, as 56052 sets back with loaded bogie box wagons, and 56070 awaits departure with empty two-axle wagons.



While most of the newer aggregates terminals comprise simply a lineside pad for unloading by mechanical grab, the terminal at Washwood Heath that Tarmac opened in 2021 is equipped for hopper discharge and serves an asphalt plant and a concrete plant on the same site. 66726 draws forward through the terminal on June 23rd, 2021, after forming the previous day's 21:47 departure from Tunstead. The site was previously occupied by Washwood Heath Up Yard, which became redundant after the loss of coal and automotive traffic.



Network Rail's predecessor, Railtrack, reorganised its distribution network for ballast by setting up a number of virtual quarries, which received material from designated sources and stockpiled it ready for use in engineering possessions. The virtual quarry at Crewe Basford Hall is pictured on August 30th, 2000, with a rake of Seahare and Sea Urchin wagons present. At that time, Basford Hall received its ballast mainly from Mountsorrel, but there were also deliveries from Penmaenmawr and Stud Farm.

In recent decades, some aggregates terminals in the South East have opened and others have closed, but the overall trend has been continued growth. The new locations have included Chessington South - a former coal depot that DC Rail took over in 2021 - as well as the DB Cargo railhead at Cricklewood and an aggregates terminal on the former oil depot site at Langley. GB Railfreight has established an aggregates hub at Wellingborough, which includes a discharge facility. Among the losses have been Salfords, Bishops Stortford and Broxbourne.

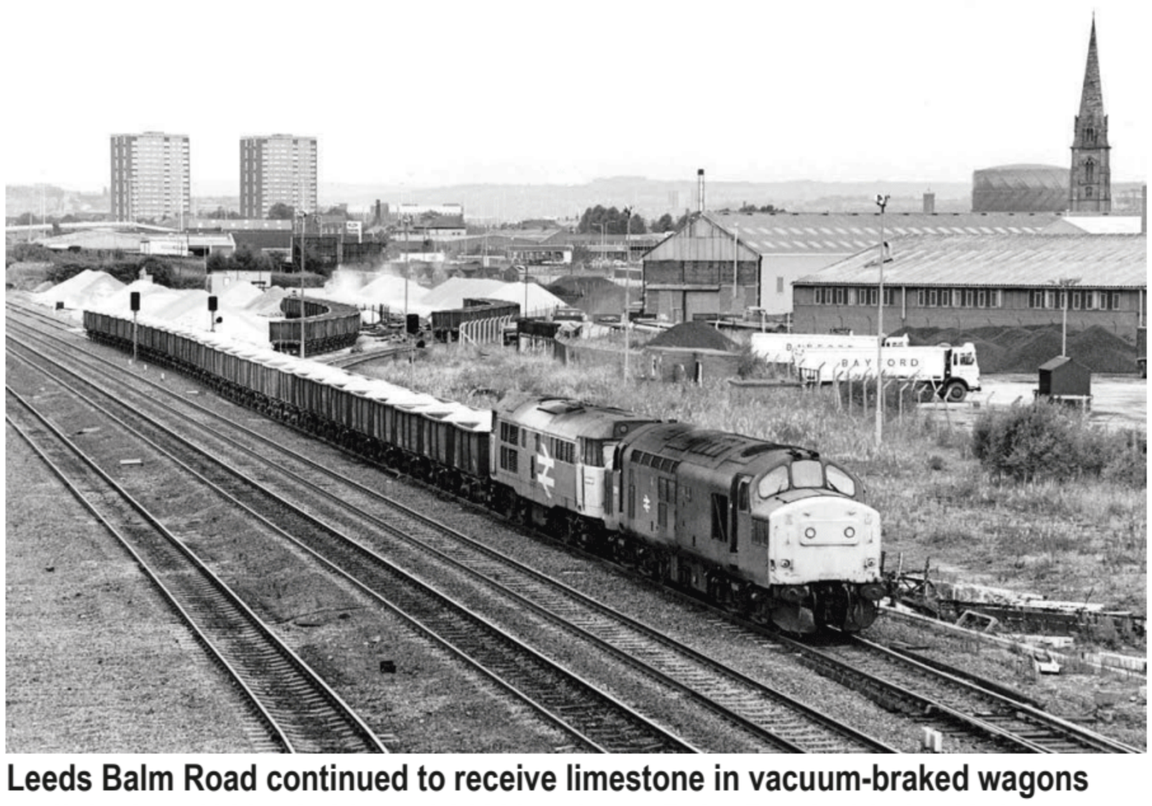
Another trend has been diversification of supply, with more short-term and occasional flows running alongside the established traffic. For example, St Pancras gained a regular flow of limestone from Whatley in 2006 in addition to its sea-dredged aggregates, while trains have run from Tunstead to Park Royal and from Moreton-on-Lugg to various locations, including Elstow, Luton and Radlett, carrying high-polished surface value (PSV) stone.

Britain's newest aggregates receiving terminal is Agecroft Eurofreight, built on the site of Agecroft colliery, which was once earmarked as a Channel Tunnel intermodal railhead. 60026 is pictured in charge of the first arrival at the terminal, the 12:37 departure from Horton-in-Ribblesdale, on July 24th, 2025.

The railway carried high-grade limestone from Tunstead to soda ash plants in the Northwich area from the late-19th century until the early-21st century. The old hopper discharge terminal at Winnington is pictured on January 3rd, 2001, shortly after it was taken out of use and replaced by a faster, more efficient facility. The production of soda ash at Winnington ceased in February 2014, leaving no further use for the new Winnington terminal and its connection via Oakleigh sidings. Limestone trains continued to run from Tunstead to the nearby Lostock works until January 2025.

Specific construction projects can generate either extra business at existing terminals or the setting up of new terminals. For example, Sevington near Ashford was a new railhead for the building of the Channel Tunnel in the late-1980s, and a new terminal at Colnbrook first handled aggregates for the building of Heathrow Airport Terminal 5 in the 1990s before becoming established as a permanent railhead. More recently, the construction of HS2 has generated huge amounts of extra traffic, including the use of a temporary offloading point at Quainton, effectively at the end of a long siding from Aylesbury.

Although East Anglia has relatively few large population centres, the lack of local quarries means that there is enough long-distance aggregates traffic for the railway to compete. Long-standing terminals at Norwich, Barham, Kennett, Ely and Chesterton Junction were joined by Brandon and Eccles Road by the early-2000s, partly prompted by specific projects such as the A11 road upgrade at Thetford and runway resurfacing at RAF Lakenheath. One loss was Bury St Edmunds, which received its last aggregates train in early 2019.



Leeds Balm Road continued to receive limestone in vacuum-braked wagons until the late-1980s. 37215 and 31299 arrive at Balm Road with the 13:45 departure from Peak Forest on August 29th, 1986. This facility was later replaced by a hopper discharge terminal at Stourton and its site is now occupied by Freightliner's Midland Road maintenance depot.



Located at the west end of the former hump marshalling yard site, Tinsley aggregates terminal opened in 2013 for trains from Bardon Hill and Shrewsbury Coton Hill. 66605 draws its train forward through the hopper house after working the 03:19 departure from Bardon Hill on August 13th, 2014.



English, Welsh and Scottish Railway (EWS) earned a reputation for using innovative methods to gain new traffic, especially when it came to setting up low-cost terminals. A good example was Dewsbury, where EWS effectively created a new terminal on the run-round loop for Dewsbury cement depot by reaching over the boundary fence with a mechanical shovel. This is the scene at Dewsbury on April 9th, 1999, with 56106 in charge of the 08:51 departure from Rylstone.

South West England lost its last receiving terminal for aggregates when Heidelberg withdrew from Exeter in 2025. In the past, there has been a small amount of traffic to Burngullow, using the same terminal that forwarded clay sand for a time, and a contract with Flexer Construction in 1999 led to pop-up terminals being established at various sites, including Crediton, Taunton, Newton Abbot, Exmouth Junction, Goodrington, Plymouth Friary and Keyham. Today's reduced infrastructure would not be able to cater for that kind of opportunistic business.

In the Midlands, aggregates terminals have traditionally been few because much of the construction industry's needs can be met locally. The busiest terminal for many years was Washwood Heath, where RMC opened a hopper discharge facility with Government Section 8 assistance in the 1980s. That terminal was swept away by HS2 construction works but replaced by a new terminal on the site of Washwood Heath marshalling yard in 2019, serving a Tarmac asphalt and concrete plant. Meanwhile, the building of HS2 has brought an increased demand for aggregates in the region as a whole. Regular stone trains now run to Walsall and to two terminals at Small Heath, while the intermodal terminals at Hams Hall and Birmingham Lawley Street have received trainloads of aggregates specifically for HS2 work.

In North West England, the map of aggregates terminals has changed a lot in the last 40 years. The railheads at Stockport Portwood, Collyhurst Street, Thorpes Bridge Junction and Widnes Carterhouse Junction have all closed, but a larger number of terminals has opened. Today's list includes hopper discharge facilities at Salford Hope Street, Pendleton and Bredbury, and sidings for discharge by mechanical grab at Ashburys, Agecroft, Warrington Dallam, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Tuebrook and Leyland. The chemical industry around Northwich was also a consumer of rail-borne limestone until the beginning of 2025.

In Yorkshire, the Tarmac (formerly Tilcon) terminals at Leeds Hunslet and Hull Dairycoates have been a constant feature of the Rylstone train plan since the 1970s. They were joined for a time in the late-1990s by a makeshift terminal at Dewsbury. The former goods depot at Leeds Balm Road became a destination for limestone from the Peak District in the 1980s, to be replaced by a hopper discharge facility at Stourton in 1998. Part of the former Tinsley yard site gained an aggregates terminal with hopper discharge in 2013. Other aggregates terminals in Yorkshire are Attercliffe, which also handles scrap metal traffic, and the Potter Group railhead at Selby, which used to handle a range of flows by rail but is now mainly road-served. A very recent addition to the aggregates network is Grimsby Moody Lane, reached by the Grimsby District Light Railway.

The short era of flue gas desulphurisation plants required substantial movements of limestone to coal-fired power stations such as Drax, Ratcliffe, West Burton and Fiddlers Ferry. The Drax flow was a pioneer private rail freight operation, with National Power providing both the locomotive and the wagons. 59201 Vale of York is pictured at Drax on August 26th, 1994, having worked the 06:37 departure from Tunstead.

ALL CHANGE ON THE WHARFEDALE LINE

Words & photography: Rockley Battye

As a 'fresher' at the University of Leeds, it was only natural that I should join the University Railway Society. Under the presidency of the genial Dr Youell, we were soon put to justifying our existence. Steam-hauled services on the suburban routes connecting Leeds, Bradford, Skipton and Ilkley were soon to be replaced by diesel multiple units (DMUs), and we were set to record performances of the passenger services on these lines during the last winter that steam was operating. The DMUs went into service on January 5th, 1959, and, having allowed time for bedding in, we repeated the operation the following winter. As you can imagine, we had little time to explore our destinations, and it was some while before I could visit Ilkley socially.



Menston, with another Metro-Cammell 2-car DMU calling with a service for Leeds. August 2nd, 1983.

Guiseley, with passengers waiting to board a Metro-Cammell 2-car DMU for Leeds. August 2nd, 1983.

Ilkley was found to be a pleasant town. Within easy commuting distance of Leeds and Bradford, it is a good shopping centre, with splendid hotels and restaurants. It is the hometown of a certain TV gardening personality. And, if that is not sufficient, it has the countryside and moors on its doorstep. Unsurprisingly, I have been a frequent visitor over the years (usually b'aht 'at, though without any ill effects). But on only two occasions have I been to Ilkley with photographic intent. And what a contrast those two occasions proved.

The Wharfedale Line

First, a little about the line. Built by the Midland Railway, the Wharfedale line leaves that company's Leeds to Carlisle line at Apperley Junction. It then runs 'up the hill' to Guiseley, the line from Bradford coming in on the left just before reaching the station. This short section of line between Shipley and Guiseley has a station at Baildon and was single-track by this time. From Guiseley, the line continues to Menston. The (now closed) line to Otley peeled off to the right, and at this point, the North Eastern Railway had a finger in the pie, having joint running powers with the Midland Railway on through Burley-in-Wharfedale and Ben Rhydding to Ilkley, some 16 and a half miles in total.

My first visit was in 1983. The legacy of the Midland Railway was very much in evidence: station buildings, many of the footbridges and the easily recognised signal boxes. There was no freight traffic by this time, and the passenger services were largely in the hands of Class 101s built by Metropolitan Cammell, and the Derby-built Class 108s. Ilkley station had two bay platforms, but Platform 3 on the former through line to Skipton was also in use at peak periods.



Almost hidden by the greenery, a Derby-built 2-car DMU on its way to Leeds hurries down the hill to join the main Leeds to Skipton line at Apperley Junction. August 26th, 1983.



Burley in Wharfedale, with a Derby-built DMU arriving. August 26th, 1983.

Ilkley, with the DMU at Platform 1. Platform 3 is visible to the right. The line originally continued through the gap in the wall and over Brook Street and on to Skipton. The platform was still in use at peak times, but demolition was imminent. August 26th, 1983.



A Bradford-bound Class 144 arrives at Baildon on the single line between Guiseley and Shipley. August 14th, 1987.



Ben Rhydding sees a 2-car Derby-built DMU at the platform. August 26th, 1983.



A Class 144 in red and cream has arrived from Bradford and been coupled to a Class 142, which has developed mechanical problems. The cavalcade waits to move off from Platform 1, framed by the gas lamps. August 17th, 1987.



It's 1993, and the wires are up but not yet live, so there is still work for the 'Pacers'. Work done to accommodate the new supermarket is in evidence and ongoing improvements to Platform 2 can be seen.

A Class 144 heads for Platform 2. Ilkley signal box has had a repaint and been re-equipped to handle the colour-light signals. It will survive a few more years before control of the Wharfedale lines passed initially to Leeds Power Box and later to York Regional Operations Centre. August 13th, 1990.



The electric era has arrived as a Class 308 EMU heads for Bradford. July 4th, 1997.

Notable Changes

Four years later, I returned to find a new pattern of services operating. Sections of the line had become single track. With the introduction of the new railbuses ('Pacers' of Classes 142 and 144), units from Bradford generally terminated at Guiseley, connecting with units from Leeds, which ran through to Ilkley. What passengers from Bradford made of the arrangement, one can only imagine.

It increased journey times, and there was inevitable anxiety about making the connection. But work was underway to improve Ilkley station, and rail access to Platform 3 had been removed, causing capacity to be reduced.

There was an old-fashioned air about Ilkley station at this time. Gas lighting was still in use and was to remain so until the following May, making it the last station in the country to make the change. The main station buildings were to become a supermarket, necessitating shortening of the platforms and removal of the buffer stops by some 40 yards.

Key Modernization

The line was electrified in 1995. The area previously occupied by Platforms 3 and 4 became a car park. In 2011, the station received a major refurbishment, including a new station building with all the expected facilities.

Initially, services were operated by refurbished Class 308 electric multiple units before the Class 333s replaced them. The services are now provided by Northern Trains, using Classes 333 and 331.

DC DETOURS

Words & photography: Andrew K Overton

In early 1985, I found myself on secondment as a 'taster' for the BR management trainee programme, being attached to a unit whose job it was to survey for future re-signalling schemes. This once again provided lineside opportunities, and this article features some of the shots taken of Southern Region electric multiple unit (EMU) stock, mostly away from the usual station settings. EMUs south of London were so ubiquitous as to be generally ignored by most photographers, and, if truth be told, I only photographed them in this period out of Hobson's Choice – it was either that or no photos at all in the locations I was at. However, the passage of time has proved this to be fortuitous, photographically capturing this neglected stock for posterity.

A familiar sight while working in Kent was the humble HAP unit, later TOPS-designated Class 414. Built for the Kent Coast Electrification from 1957, they were based on the BR-designed EPB units, with which they often worked in multiple, and the designation denoted HAlf lavatory and electro-Pneumatic braking. The system of electro-pneumatic brakes initiates braking throughout the train by electrical signal, making application almost instantaneous even at the rear of the formation, something not so with simple braking systems, where pressure variations have to propagate along the brake pipe.

One of the second batch of CIGs built for the Portsmouth line, 7353 leads a 4 BIG set through Petersfield with the 14:48 Waterloo to Portsmouth Harbour fast service on February 18th, 1985. Incredibly, in view of the fact that I was there in connection with a survey to close the signal box seen here, at the time of writing, it still remains open 40 years later.



On an intensively-worked suburban railway with lengthy peak formations, the consequent improvement in braking performance could shave off valuable time between signal sections and increase line capacity. Unlike EPB stock, as well as lavatories, HAP units also provided first-class accommodation, and gearing was more appropriate for faster running than that provided on suburban units. Passenger accommodation was a mixture of compartments joined by a corridor and small saloons. Aesthetically uninspiring, they dated from a period before attractive design was starting to make a significant impact on BR.

The other stock provided for the Kent Coast Electrification consisted of corridor units for fast and semi-fast services. Designated 4 CEP/BEP, later TOPS Class 411/412, this denoted Corridor Electro-Pneumatic / Buffet Electro-Pneumatic in accordance with the braking system provided. The Southern Region EMUs from the 1950s onwards were designed to be compatible in multiple by using a common braking control system, also used with Class 33/1 and 73 locomotives. Buckeye couplers and high-level brake hoses speeded up joining and splitting of sets, a feature of Southern Region working. Based on a standard BR Mk. 1 coach the CEP/BEP front ends were basically an EPB unit but with a corridor connection in the middle.





4 CIG 7313, one of the original batch, speeds non-stop through Balcombe Station with the 15:29 Brighton to London Victoria via Redhill semi-fast at 15:56 on April 20th, 1985. The formation is Driving Trailer Composite, Trailer Second, Motor Brake Second, Driving Trailer Composite.



A train of empty stock led by an unidentified 2 HAP unit, heads towards Ashford under the Charing Heath Road bridge near Charing, Kent at 13:23 on April 3rd, 1985. The central lavatory section, containing separate toilets for both first and second class, can be seen clearly on the leading Driving Trailer Composite.



Later on 18th February 1985, 4 VEP 7735 is seen on another leg of its diagram leading a 4 BIG and another 4 VEP at Sheet, north of Petersfield, with the 13:55 Portsmouth Harbour to Waterloo fast service. Snow still clings on in the shade of the cutting.

Passenger accommodation consisted of compartments in the trailer coaches and saloons in the motor coaches, with the interiors designed by architect Trevor Dannatt of the BTC Design Panel. Wooden veneers (in first class) and plastic laminates (in second class) were used internally, creating a modern look, and the 'Trojan' moquette on the second class upholstery, consisting of red, white, blue and yellow squares on a grey background, will bring back memories for readers of a certain age. Unfortunately, the engineering was not in quite the same league and the Mk. 3 and Mk. 4 trailer bogies caused very poor riding until replaced with those of the Commonwealth type. By the 1980s, these EMUs had been refurbished as part of the asbestos removal programme and only trailer composite coaches retained compartments.

British Rail's original replacement for the Brighton Line EMUs entered service from 1965, replacing the PUL and PAN units. Designated 4 CIG/BIG, later TOPS 421/422, denoting Corridor IG / Buffet IG (IG being the railway telegraphic code for Brighton, although some sources claim it denoted Intermediate Guard owing to the location of the brake compartment), these were, for the first time, constructed off the Southern Region at BREL York Works. Based on a standard BR Mk. 1 coach, the lessons with the poor riding of CEP/BEP stock had been learned and they were outshopped with the trailer coaches on a new Mk. 5 bogie, the motor coaches continuing to use the Mk. 4 design, which did not seem to be affected.

British Rail's design panel was starting to gain ground within the organisation by this time and the front ends of the new units were redesigned by Kenneth Sadler of Wilkes & Ashmore to a smoother and more rounded profile, with hoses and multiple working jumpers mounted in recesses, either side of the gangway connection. While this was a good idea stylistically, the recesses were difficult to keep clean, something that became apparent once yellow ends were applied. Redesign on the Southern was not, however, so radical as that seen on AC EMUs of the period, or the BR-built Trans-Pennine and Inter-City DMUs of Classes 123/124.

Refurbished 4CEP 1533 leads the 11:25 London Victoria to Ramsgate service under Hook Lane overbridge and approaches Charing Station at 12:44 on April 3rd, 1985.

Another second batch 4 VEP 7738 heading the 11:55 Portsmouth Harbour to Waterloo fast service crosses the River Rother near Stodham Park, between Liss and Petersfield on February 18th, 1985.

Electro-pneumatic brakes and buckeye couplers, along with compatible control systems, enabled interoperability with post-1951 Southern Region EMUs. Passenger accommodation consisted of compartments (first class) and open saloons (second class – with the exception of one compartment), but the fitting out was considerably less attractive in first class than that found on the CEP/BEP stock, consisting as it did of plastic laminates throughout. Trojan moquette was used again, set off against rather migraine-inducing orange curtains, which tended to stain against the windows. CIGs from 7337 and BIGs from 7049 constituted a later order delivered 1970-72 for the Portsmouth Direct and Reading routes. In these units, the upholstery moquette was changed to one designed by Marianne Straub, which was a rather dull blue and green called Bournemouth Blue, and introduced on the VEP stock described below.

The final EMU type to be reviewed, the 4 VEP, later TOPS Class 423, denoting Vestibule Electro-Pneumatic, was introduced into service from 1967 for the Bournemouth electrification. These units were for the slower stopping services on the route and built for the electrified lines, as opposed to the 4 REP/TC combinations on the faster services through to Weymouth, which were Class 33/1-hauled beyond Bournemouth. The design was based heavily on the CIG/BIG units and construction was also undertaken at BREL York, with some additionally at BREL Derby. Trailer coaches used the Mk. 5 bogie with motor coaches on a new Mk. 6 design, which was also used on the later CIGs and BIGs. Passenger accommodation consisted of high-density 3+2 seating in the second class saloons, rather than the 2+2 of the CIG/BIGs, with additional external doors to each bay and each first class compartment. Subsequent batches of units were ordered for other lines, and deliveries continued right through to 1974, eventually numbering 194 units and making them ubiquitous on all Southern Region Divisions, leading to the abolition of a considerable number of older Southern Railway EMU Classes.



A detailed study of the second batch 4 VEP 7735 as it heads the 11:18 London Waterloo to Portsmouth Harbour semi-fast between Liss and Petersfield on February 18th, 1985.



4 VEP 7798, from the third batch delivered in 1969 and 1970, leads a 4 BIG on the 13:59 Brighton – London Victoria via Quarry semi-fast service into Balcombe Tunnel at 14:30 on April 20th, 1985.

In the days when there were four tracks on the Calder Valley line between Mytholmroyd and Luddendenfoot, D347 is seen coupling up to a rake of empty 16T coal wagons that appear to have been left on the slow lines before being taken forwards, probably to Healey Mills yard. The train's guard appears to be coupling the locomotive and the first wagon. The locomotive's headcode shows a light engine working in the Wakefield district. April 20th, 1968.

CLASS 40s ACROSS THE PENNINES

Photography by Gavin Morrison

40169 is seen from the bridge near to where Mirfield locomotive shed used to be. It is heading west with 8M13, the 16:05 Healey Mills to Middleton Junction on May 29th, 1974.

Having crossed the Pennines, 40039 has brought its empty coal train down the Calder Valley Line through Hebden Bridge and is now crossing over onto the slow lines of the line from Huddersfield at Heaton Lodge Junction. In the background, the relatively new link line that opened in 1970, carrying the fast lines to Huddersfield, can be seen. These passed under the Calder Valley Line just to the left of the train. The date is May 14th, 1974.



40055 is heading east near Mirfield with a tanker train, probably from Stanlow to Hunslet, on March 20th, 1975.



On July 23rd, 1983, 40074 has just passed through Marsden station and is beginning the descent towards Huddersfield with an empty coal train.



On May 14th, 1974, green-liveried 40183 is heading west at Heaton Lodge Junction with 8M59, the 16:59 Healey Mills to Partington, which was booked to pass Mirfield at 17:14 and ran via Huddersfield and Diggle. Note the bogie bolster wagon loaded with steel and its accompanying barrier wagon. As well as coal and what appear to be sheeted hopper wagons, there is also a tracked military vehicle on a Warflat wagon. The coal was possibly bound for loading onto ships on the Manchester Ship Canal.

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HOMECOMING

A triumphant return to N gauge and a fictitious take on a town in Wiltshire, Martin Reynolds describes his second exhibition layout, which comes packed with scenic features and entertaining train movements.

Words: Martin Reynolds Photography: Phil Parker

FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Corsham
SCALE/GAUGE: 2mm:1ft/9mm/N
SIZE: 16ft x 2ft 5in
ERA/REGION: 1970s Western Region
LAYOUT TYPE: Continuous Run

CORSHAM | N | LAYOUT

Graham Farish Warship class 812 *The Royal Naval Reserve* pulls away from Corsham on the down main with a Paddington to Penzance service.

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TOP RIGHT: A funeral cortege, entering the outskirts of Corsham, while a Revolution Trains Class 128 Parcels unit waits in the down loop platform to allow faster passing traffic on the down main.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Part of the military road convoy rumbles past Corsham Power signal box while a signalman prepares to enter the building to start another shift.

BELOW: Corsham Power signal box was two Bachmann low-relief models, joined together to give me a full 3D model! The HV electricity pylon, which dominates the goods yard skyline, is an etched brass kit from Severn Models.





I re-entered our wonderful hobby of railway modelling back in 2016 as I was approaching retirement and looking for something to keep me occupied and out of mischief. At this point, I had decided that, with no longer having the eyesight and manual dexterity of a teenager, it would be safer if I went for a OO gauge layout. The result was 'Witham', which was completed in 2020, featured in BRM March 2022 and has subsequently appeared on the exhibition circuit.

I wanted the ability to run prototypical long train formations, so decided to take the plunge and challenge of constructing an N gauge exhibition layout. I worked out that if I went diagonally across my garage, a 16ft (4.8m) long layout would be possible. Building my usual 4ft x 2ft (1.2m x 0.6m) baseboards would result in some tight radius curves, so the decision to go with a 2ft 6in (0.75m) width was made. Having four baseboards that could be bolted together with transit end boards would produce two cubes for transportation. I also decided that the layout would be a representation of the British Railways Western Region, my favourite region, set in the early-1970s, an era of my childhood trainspotting days.

Early planning

At this point, I started throwing ideas together on the PC using AnyRail software. The beauty of using planning software is that you can quickly design your layout and it's easy to edit or even start afresh if needed. The layout would comprise a roundy-roundy double track main line

"I wanted the ability to run prototypical long train formations, so decided to take the plunge and challenge of constructing an N gauge exhibition layout."

with passing loops, a goods yard area with exchange sidings and a Traction Maintenance Depot (TMD) with refuelling point; these additional areas would allow a degree of shunting activity to be performed. The back 300mm would incorporate a 10-lane fiddle yard, with the front 450mm dedicated to scenic viewing.

Another advantage of using the software is it allows you to superimpose baseboard ends and any cross members, so you can place points and point motors away from these areas. After several hours on the PC, plans for a layout started to formulate; all I needed now was a name! I wanted the layout to be somewhere between Swindon and Bristol, so using the same method I used to name my 'Witham' layout (putting a pin in a map), the pin landed on Corsham.

I worked out all the sizes of the various baseboard components and, with a completed "chop list", approached my local timber merchant to supply a sheet of quality 9mm beech plywood and cut it with their CNC saw to ensure accurate and square cuts. The baseboard construction then started in earnest with sash clamps used to hold the complete glued and pinned structure, together with constant checking to ensure everything was square. Accuracy and squareness are the secret to successful baseboard construction and the use of cabinet makers' dowels would ensure consistent baseboard joining with the assistance of over-centre locking catches. With the baseboard structures complete, a 6mm plywood top was attached for where the fiddle yard area would be and for the trackbed on the scenic area, with everywhere else left as an open baseboard format.





ABOVE: A Dapol Class 41 HST Prototype approaching Corsham from the west on the Up main. With a 10-car unit, it's lovely to watch this snaking along the layout. A Class 08 shunter pauses in the background following a move of the breakdown train.

MIDDLE LEFT: A Dapol diesel-hydraulic Class 35 Hymek is refuelled following the latest delivery by the 14T tank wagons sitting in the fuel delivery siding.

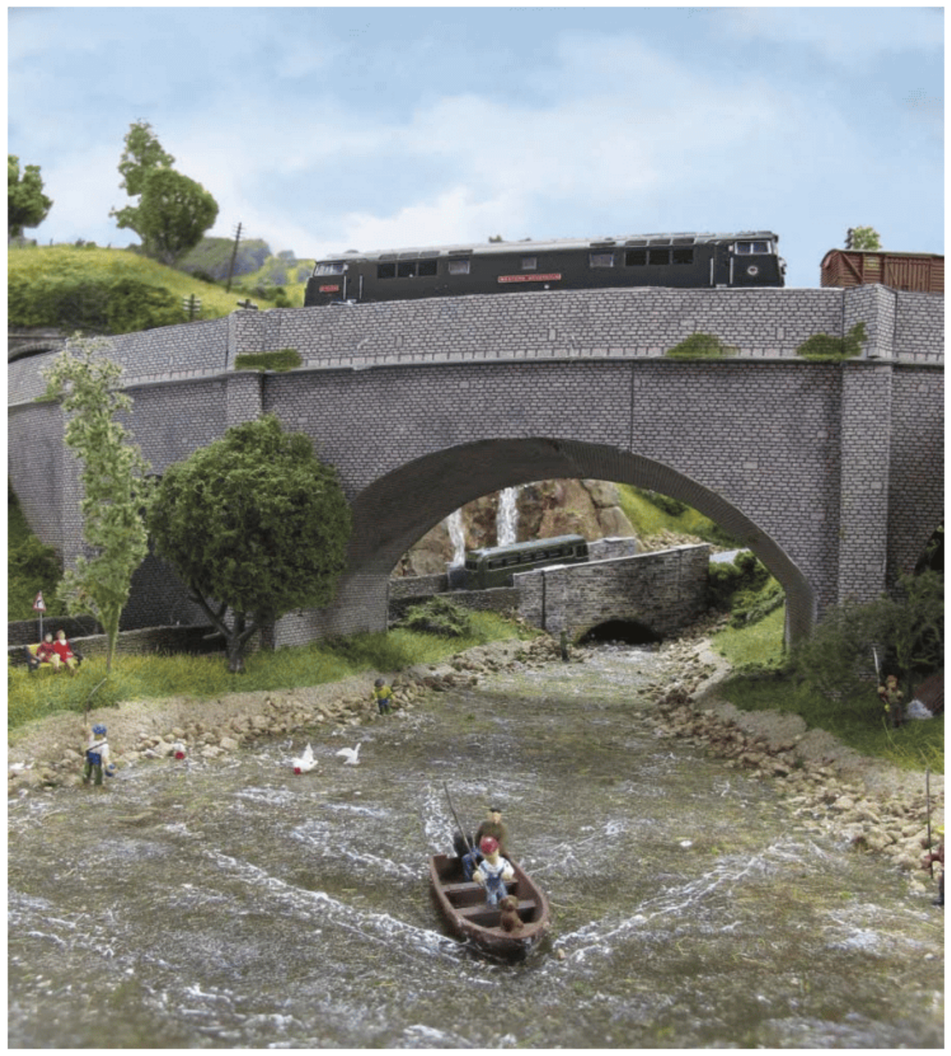
BOTTOM LEFT: A local Bristol to Reading DMU service waits "for the road" at the up loop platform starter signal. This shows the importance of getting the right shades of static grass to match the photo backscene shades!

Track was laid on top of 1.5mm cork, with droppers added to every rail to ensure electrical continuity for DCC operation. I'd trial-fit points and mark to the side of the tiebar, remove the point and then drill a 3 mm hole, before permanently fitting the point. These holes would allow the operating piano wire from the servo below to engage with the tiebar. All frogs were connected to frog juicers to look after frog polarity switching.

For crossing baseboard joins, the baseboards were connected using the catches. I'd trial fit the piece of flexitrack over the joint and then, using some side cutters, snip three sleepers either side of the joint. With the track piece removed to the workbench, those six marked sleepers would be removed and copper-clad replacements soldered in their place. The track would then be refitted with the copper-clad sleepers glued and pinned to the trackbed. Once every single piece of track that crossed that particular join was installed, I then cut through every rail with a razor saw. This ensured that everything at that joint was cut under the same temperature/humidity conditions, ensuring 100% track alignment every time those baseboards are joined together, which in N gauge is critical.

Operations

With the track laid, the droppers were connected to the DCC track busbar and servos installed below each point, with the operating 0.6mm piano wire passed up through the baseboard hole and through the hole in the tiebar end. For servo control, I opted for the Megapoints system, which would be controlled by a separate DCC system. With both Digitrax DCC systems connected, test running of trains began to ensure everything was good before the scenic work started.



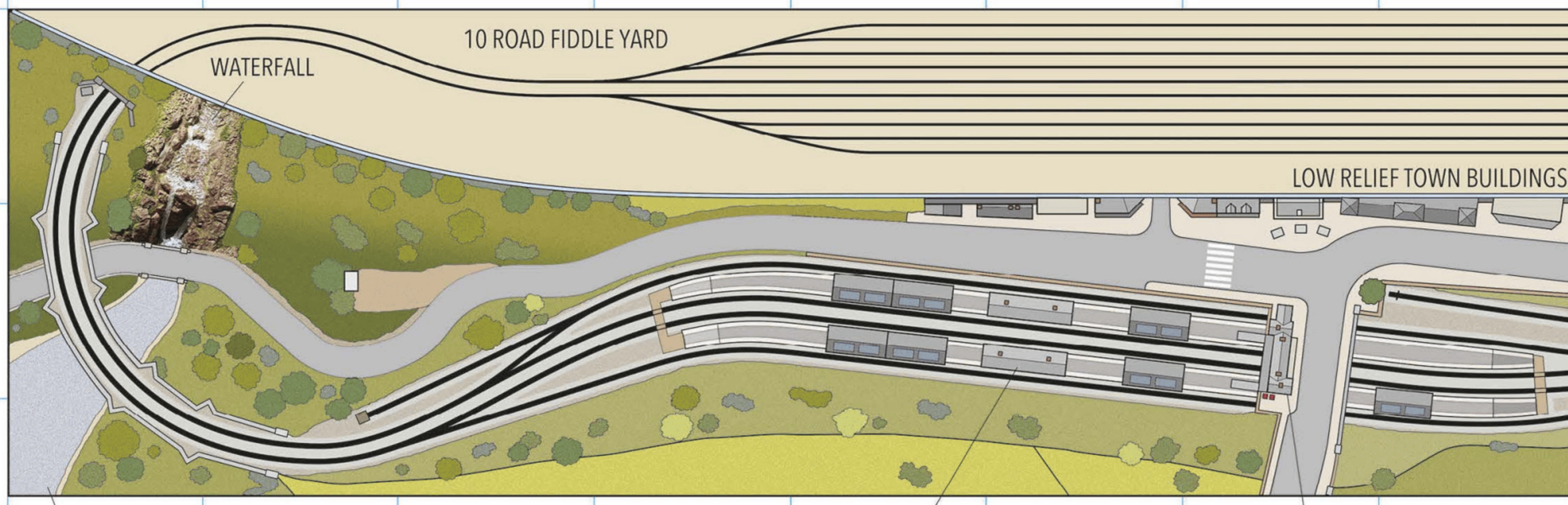
TOP LEFT: I'm pleased with my first attempt at modelling moving water using the Woodland Scenics range of products. I used paint shading to create the impression of different depths and dry-brushing to highlight wave crests.

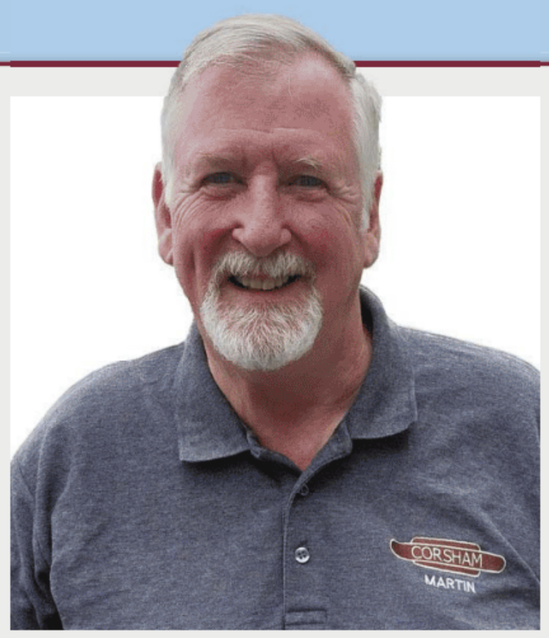


BELOW LEFT: Graham Farish Class 03 Shunter D2289 sits in a headshunt with the breakdown train. In the background, the military road convoy starts to make its way up the hill into Corsham.

RIGHT: Passing a busy TMD scene is a Rapido Trains Class 44 D5 Cross Fell heading a rake of china clay empties back to the West Country on the down main. The quality and volume of sound from this model is impressive.

TRACKPLAN





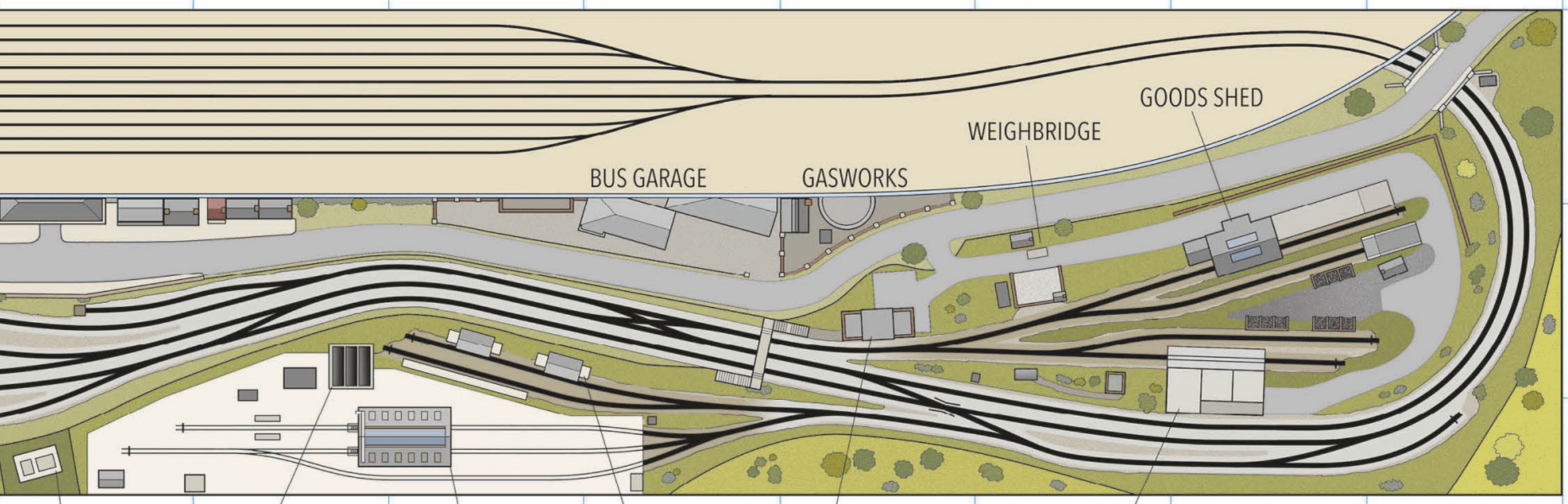
About the modeller

Name: Martin Reynolds
Age: 65
Number of years modelling: Seven years in childhood and nine years as an adult since re-engaging with the hobby
Name of your first layout: Childhood 'Bala', Adult 'Witham'
Favourite era/region: Steam to Diesel Transition – Western Region
Favourite locomotive: Class 52 Westerns

I live in Bourne, Lincolnshire, and am a member and Chairman of the Market Deeping Model Railway Club. I exhibit both 'Corsham' and 'Witham' on the exhibition circuit and enjoy the camaraderie amongst the exhibitors. I also enjoy visiting Heritage Railways and the odd spot of casual trainspotting if I'm on a train journey!

My last foray into the world of N gauge was almost 50 years ago. As an early teenager, I'd changed from OO gauge to N to get more layout miles. It was with a touch of sadness that, at 17, I sold everything to raise funds for my first motorcycle.





To facilitate shunting operations, small permanent magnets were fitted below the track at strategic locations within the goods yard, head shunts and refuelling point, working with some wagons fitted with the Peco "Kadee"-style magnetic couplings to enable hands-free uncoupling.

The final part of operational testing was the installation of working 4-aspect colour LED signals. The signals are a mix of CR Signals and Absolute Aspect products, all controlled using Heathcote Electronics IR sensor boards. With the length of the layout, it is possible, in each direction, to watch three signals that go through the 4-aspect sequence as a train works its way down the layout. Some signals have directional "feathers" fitted, which are switched by the relevant point movement using microswitches operated by the servo control arm.

The scenic side

I like to create 3D scenic effects, and for this I layered foam sheet to the contours of the landscape and then smoothed out with a hot wire cutter. Once the landscape is formed, it's covered with plaster bandage to provide strength and rigidity. There then follows the use of several shades and lengths of static grass, followed by additional foliage and trees.

For 'Corsham', I wanted to try and learn a new scenic skill; the modelling of moving water! From my forming of the landscape, I had constructed the course for a





TOP LEFT: Another busy scene on the layout with a Class 44 with a rake of 100T TEA oil wagons on the up main passing a Warship and Western in the Corsham TMD. In the background, the breakdown Train is parked in a siding.

MIDDLE LEFT: A nice overview of the junction of the B3353 with the main A4 London to Bath Road next to Corsham station. It's always important to ensure that the vehicles you place on your layout tie in with the era you are modelling.

BELOW: A Graham Farish ex-GWR Castle Class 5080 *Defiant* passes Corsham working a steam special from Paddington down to Paignton on the down main, much to the excitement of the local train spotters on Platform 3.

> "I am pleased with the curved viaduct, road bridges and cattle dock, all of which I had to scratch-build using card and textured papers."



ABOVE: A local DMU service to Swindon awaits in the up loop platform while a Graham Farish 251 Western Pullman passes on the up main with a Bristol to Paddington service.

MIDDLE RIGHT: The fast-food caravan is doing a roaring trade with visitors to the "Twin Streams Waterfall", a local beauty spot and tourist attraction. The making of a waterfall was a first for me and I'm happy with the outcome!

BELOW RIGHT: A Graham Farish Class 08 Shunter 08818 moves some loaded N Gauge Society ferry vans from the goods siding. To the right of the goods shed is a couple of the Society's Warwell kits taking on armoured cars from the loading ramp.





waterfall that would then run into a river, which would pass under the road bridge and railway viaduct before running into the edge of a lake. The river bed and lake were sealed with primer and then painted with acrylic paint using dark shades to simulate deeper water, progressing to lighter shades towards the shallows. Small rocks were glued in the shallows with PVA. Once everything was fully dried, the edge of the baseboard was dammed up and the first pour of Woodland Scenics Realistic Water was poured to a depth of 2mm. I had mixed in some acrylic paint, so instead of being totally clear, there was a degree of murkiness to the "water". After a few days and once cured, a second similar pour was completed. Once this second coat was cured, a boat was glued in place and Woodland Scenics Water Effects was stippled on the surface with a paintbrush to provide some waves and also the wake from the boat. Once this was fully dried, some white paint was dry-brushed across the surface to highlight any crests.

I used the same procedure to produce the river at the top of the waterfall. For the actual "falling water", I poured out lengths of Water Effect onto tin foil to correspond to the required drop and then stippled this with a brush. Once fully dried, I dry-brushed to highlight the "moving" water and peeled away from the foil. The strips are very flexible and can be positioned in place and then affixed using Water Effects as an adhesive and, adding more movement, to be dry-brushed once dried.



'Corsham' has a photo-realistic background to which a multi-layer of low-relief cutouts has been added in the main town. The buildings are a mix of Metcalfe and Petite Properties kits, along with some modified Skaledale and Farish ready-to-plant buildings. These are lightly weathered to help tone them down. I am pleased with the curved viaduct, road bridges and cattle dock, all of which I had to scratch-build using card and textured papers. To add some lighting effects to the layout, there are working street and platform lights, a Belisha beacon crossing and the goods shed, TMD building and inspection pits, along with associated yard lamps; all are lit.

To the street network, I added the relevant surface road markings and traffic signs before gluing the vehicles in place. Some vehicles are removable, so they can be strategically placed to mask across baseboard joins.

One feature of 'Corsham' is the large military road convoy with police escort working its way up the High Street. The tanks are all 3D-printed kits, which I had initially intended to fit on warwell wagons to form a military train. However, research showed that these tanks could never be carried on the British rail network due to gauging issues. So, as not to waste the investment of building and painting these kits, I decided to modify and repaint some Oxford Diecast low loaders to act as Tank Transporters and form a military road convoy instead!





ABOVE: While work continues on a pair of Class 52 Westerns at the TMD, in the background, the military road convoy passes the Western National bus garage based at Corsham.

MIDDLE LEFT: While the PW gang works on tidying up some recent rail replacements, a Dapol Class 22 6330 pulls a rake of empty Revolution Trains Cartic wagons on the up main.

BOTTOM LEFT: A pair of weathered Class 52 Westerns receive attention at the Corsham TMD. Eventually, as time permits, all the rolling stock on Corsham will receive some weathering treatment.

TOP RIGHT: A good overview of the Corsham TMD and the adjacent mainline. A Class 44 diesel-electric locomotive with a full rake of china clay wagons on the down main heading for the West Country.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Having received a recent delivery of coal by rail, the local coal merchants is a hive of activity. The local coal merchant was still a common scene in the '70s.

BELOW: It must be market day in Corsham as the cattle dock is full of newly unloaded cattle. While on the up main, Rapido Trains Class 44 *3 Skiddaw* works a train of TEA tank wagons.





Reflections

In my youth, N gauge stock was predominantly Grafar, Lima and Minitrix, with a fairly limited range and by today's standards fairly crude modelling. So, having re-entered the world of N gauge, it's refreshing to see such a range and quality of models with new companies like Revolution and Rapido producing some excellent models. There are certainly plenty of items I can use to replicate the early-1970s on BR(W). All the locomotives are DCC with about a quarter sound-fitted. This proportion will increase as time and funds permit. I just need to spend several hours with my airbrush and turntable to carry on and get everything suitably weathered.

'Corsham' has, over the last four years, been a challenging but rewarding build. It was probably not helped that, on several occasions, work had to stop, and baseboards taken down so that 'Witham' could be erected in the garage for testing prior to exhibition commitments. This tended to interrupt modelling and my creative juices! That being said, I've learnt many new modelling skills and look forward to presenting the results of my efforts to the viewing public. I sincerely hope the residents of the real Corsham will be happy with my fictitious take of their town!

Many thanks to my modelling friends for their encouragement in getting 'Corsham' to where it is and, despite their rumours, I'm not planning on doing an O gauge layout next…well, not for a few years! ■

> "With the length of the layout, it is possible, in each direction, to watch three signals which go through the 4-aspect sequence as a train works its way down the layout."

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PROTOTYPE

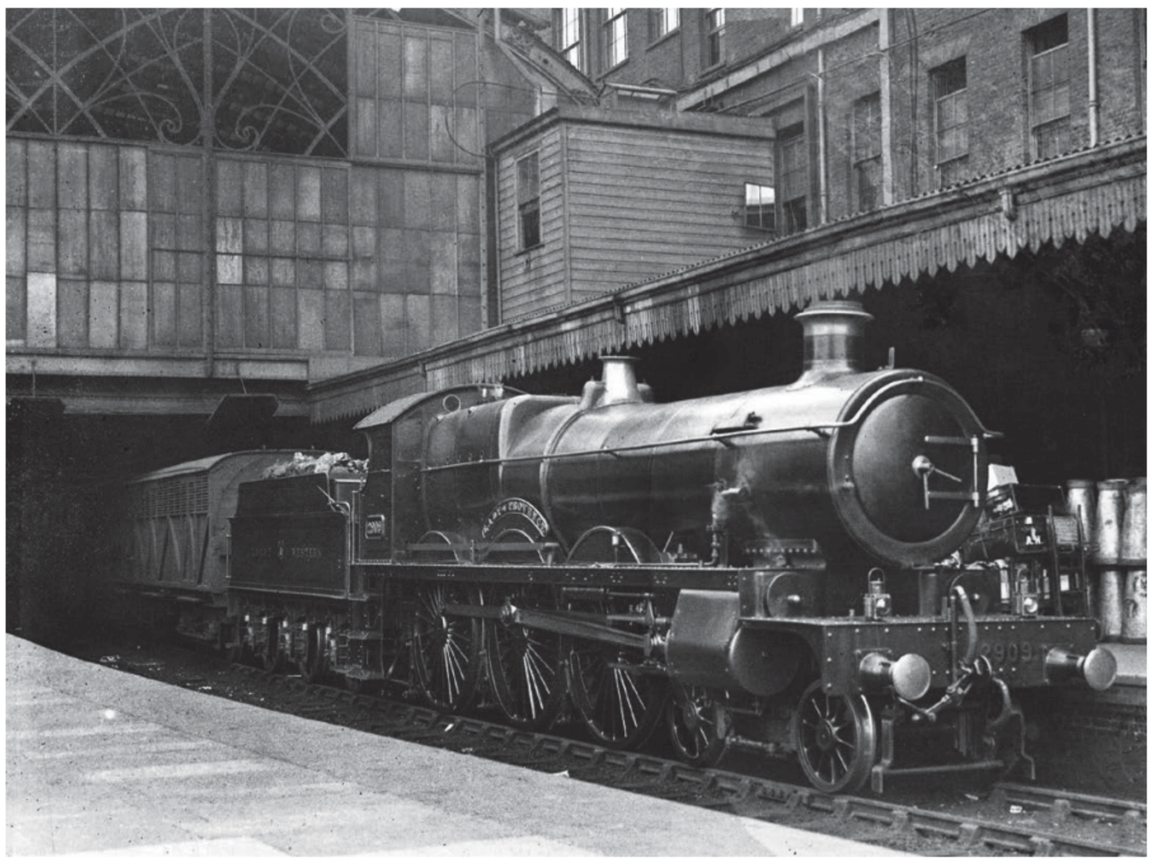
The first Modified Hall appeared in 1944 and the type was chosen to represent Great Western motive power in the 1948 Exchange Trials, with 6990 *Witherslack Hall* being the selected machine. It is seen here on those duties, location not identified, but has to be between Marylebone and Manchester on the ex-Great Central network, as that was the only route on which it was allowed to work. **P Hughes/Colour-Rail.com**

HALLS OF FAME

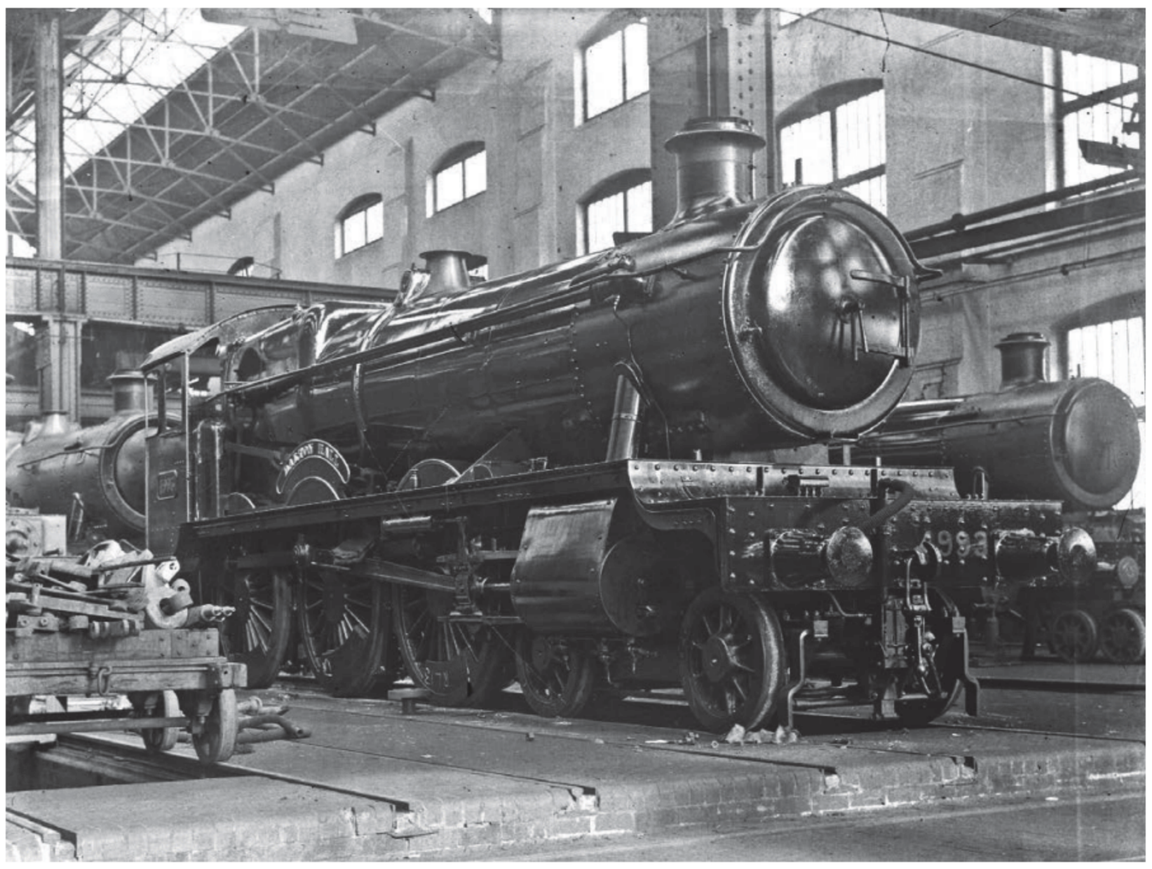
By J Crosse

With what appeared to be an insatiable demand for 5MT classified 4-6-0s from three of the 'Big Four' Railways, we might have been able to enjoy 7930 *Another Hall* from the Great Western stable if nationalisation had not intervened, not that that event immediately stopped the production of the type. Indeed, more Modified Halls were built after January 1948 than before. However, as it was, we had to make do with just 330 of the type in original and modified varieties, making them by far the largest fully-named class in the country. However, both the LNER and LMS primary 4-6-0s, the B1 and the Stanier 5MTs, outnumbered them, the Stanier total being well over double that found on the Western, although the Granges and Manors could be added to the GW tally.

The lineage of the Halls went back to the early-1900s, and construction ran for the best part of a quarter of a century and commenced at a time when the GWR appeared to be the only railway having a need for such a machine. The starting point came in 1902 with Churchward influence, when No. 100 emerged from Swindon Works and was later numbered 2900. This machine had 6ft 8½in driving wheels matched with a 200psi boiler, along with its two cylinders of 18in diameter and 30in stroke. The following year, another version appeared as 98 (later 2998). The latter was of similar dimensions to 100, but the valve gear and cylinders were of a different design, and on the latter were cast with their half saddles, which were then bolted together. It was this second machine that was the basis for the famous Saint Class. Although known as Saints, both 'Ladies' and 'Courts' were used to



The origins of the Halls could be directly traced to the Saint 4-6-0s, where the story started as early as 1902, with two prototypes numbered 98 and 100, which later became 2998 and 2900 respectively. One of the first of the production series was 2909 *Lady of Provence,* seen at Paddington on May 31st, 1913. **Colour-Rail.com**

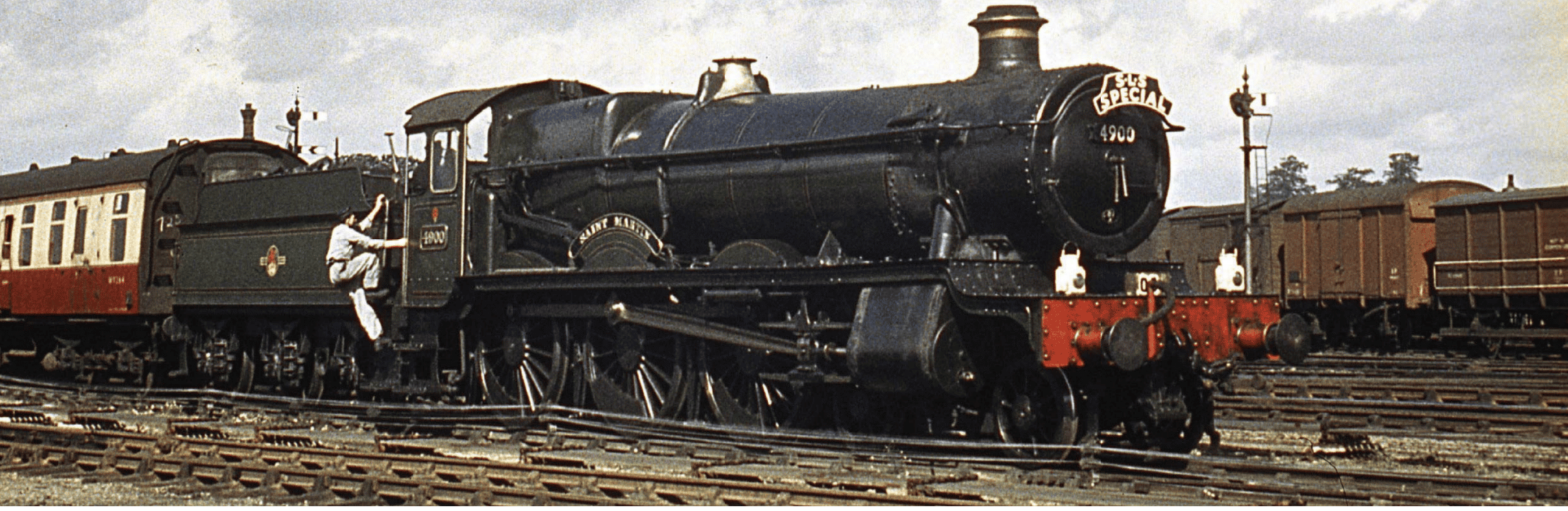


The proliferation of the Hall design was rapid and over 100 were constructed in the first three years of production. In February 1931, it was the turn of 4993 *Dalton Hall* to be completed and is seen here just about ready to leave Swindon A shop. **Colour-Rail.com**

provide names for what became a class totalling 99. There were many variations, including some being built as 4-4-2s rather than 4-6-0s, while different boiler types and even chimney designs were a feature of a class having many variations. While clearly the Saints were intended for express passenger work with their large diameter driving wheels, at some point, Collett, then Chief Mechanical Engineer of the GWR, had a light bulb moment in identifying that a mixed traffic variant of the class might prove useful, and 1907-built 2925 *Saint Martin* was selected to have its driving wheels replaced by ones of 6ft diameter. The thinking was influenced by the performance of the 43XX 2-6-0s, but the traffic department thought that a 4-6-0 version might reduce 'nosing' and thus provide a better ride. They also wanted that paired with a No. 1 boiler rated at 225lb/sq in. Once converted, 2925 retained its number and mingled amongst the genuine Saints until 1928, when an order was placed for 80 'similar' 4-6-0s, the most noticeable difference being that the new engines had outside steam pipes, and for most of its life, the rebuild did not. It remained with its 3500-gallon tender, and the same design was assigned to the new engines. 2925 was renumbered 4900, and the Halls were born as a class name with the appearance of 4901 *Adderley Hall.* Here we can note a foible of the GWR concerning naming. For many years, names allocated ran in alphabetical order within a Lot or order, so spotting where a new batch started was quite easy, but the system was not universally applied in later years. A good quiz question is 'Other than 4900, which Hall had a name out of alphabetical sequence?' with the answer being 7900 *St Peter's Hall.*

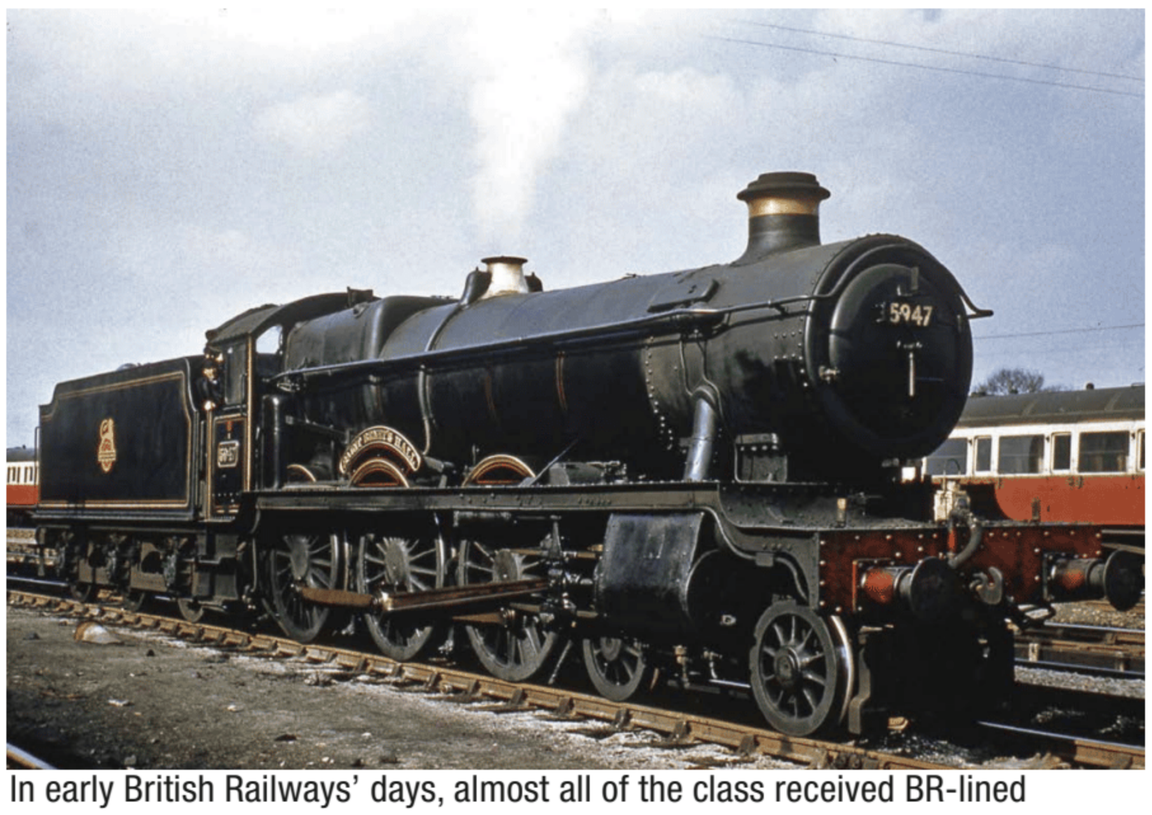
At this point, it is perhaps worth mentioning the reversal of the rebuild of 2925, used to create 2999 *Lady of Legend,* the latest addition to stock at the Great Western Trust, Didcot, with many of the parts coming directly from 4942 *Maindy Hall.*

2925 *Saint Martin* was selected in 1924 to be the machine to be used for an experimental fitting of 6' diameter driving wheels instead of the 6' 8 ½" diameter ones fitted to the Saints. Some other minor changes were also made, but when production of the Halls began, there were few major changes. However, until 1948 2925, which became 4900 in 1928, was readily identifiable from the rest of the class as it had inside steam pipes. New cylinders were fitted in 1948 and the outside steam pipes duly appeared. The locomotive became a target to haul railtours and is seen on such duty at Cheltenham Lansdown on April 5th, 1957.
R Shepperson/Colour-Rail

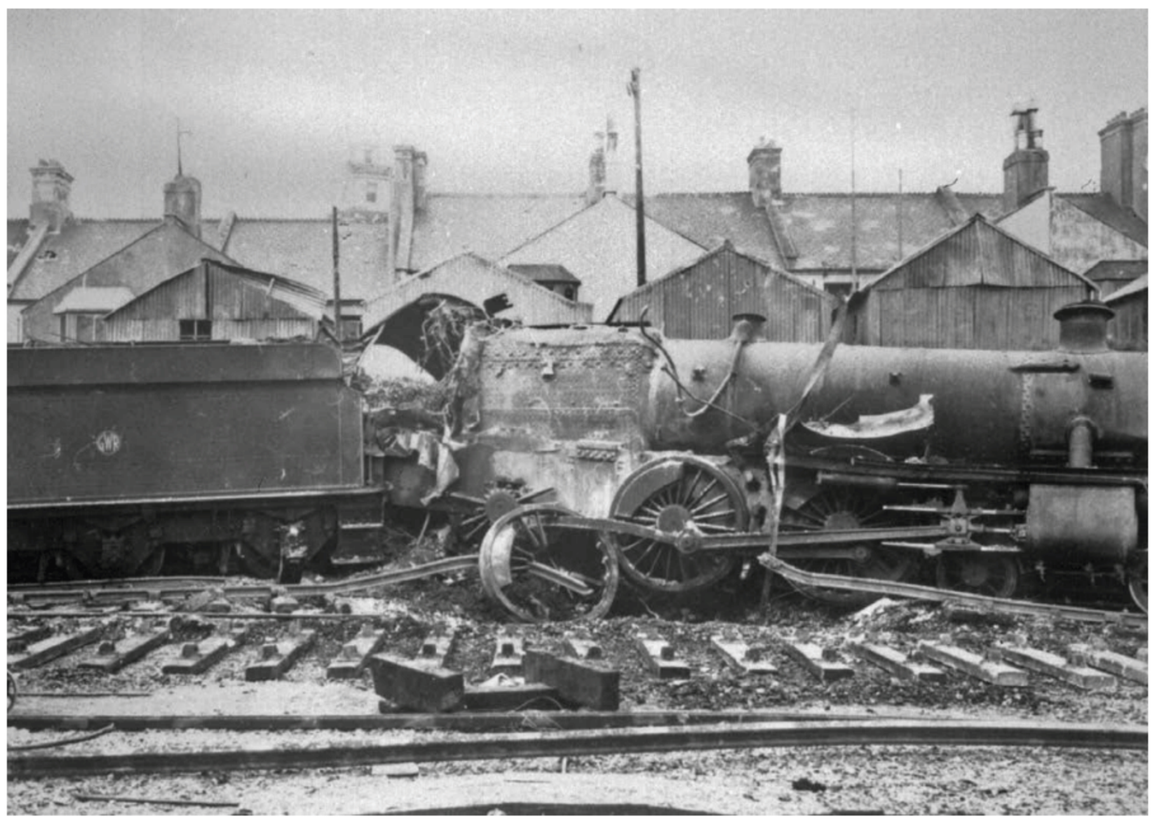


The new Halls had the afore-said 6ft diameter driving wheels with bogie wheels of 3ft 2in diameter, a 225lb/sq in Belpaire fire-boxed taper boiler and 18½in diameter by 30in stroke cylinders, with a total weight of 75 tons compared to 2925 at 72 tons. The boiler was pitched 4½in higher than on a Saint. The first five Halls left Swindon in December 1928, with 4980 being just over a year behind in February 1930. As mentioned, the 3500-gallon tender was the order of the day and 4901-42 utilised the Churchward pattern while 4943-57 had the Collett version, but from 4954 upwards, what was to become the standard, the 4000 gallon Collett type, was paired with the class. In due course 4901-57 gained the 4000-gallon type, but the waters were much later muddied by the use of the Hawksworth welded design, while four engines were paired for short periods with the one eight wheel tender, but note that for reasons now lost in the mists of time, 5900 from the next order was also briefly paired with a 3500-gallon tender when new.

Such was the success of the new design that further orders soon followed. 40 engines in two Lots, 268 and 275, were built in 1931, taking the class up to 5920. 5921-40 (Lot 281) followed in 1933, with just 10 in Lot 290 (5941-50) two years later. In the same year, 5951-65 commenced delivery under Lot 297, which was completed in 1936. Five more batches of 10 took the class up to 6915 from 1937 to 1941, while Lot 340 brought up the rear for the strange total of 43 locos, which were completed over three years up to 1943.



In early British Railways' days, almost all of the class received BR-lined black, and that is seen on 5947 *Saint Benet's Hall* at Wolverhampton in March 1958. Note that the loco has, on this occasion, been paired with the flat-sided Hawksworth tender. **K Cooper/Colour-Rail.com**



The Halls were never a complete class as 4911 *Bowden Hall* sustained terminal damage in a bombing raid on Keyham, Plymouth, the results of which are seen in this view dated August 29th, 1941. **M Dart/Colour-Rail.com**



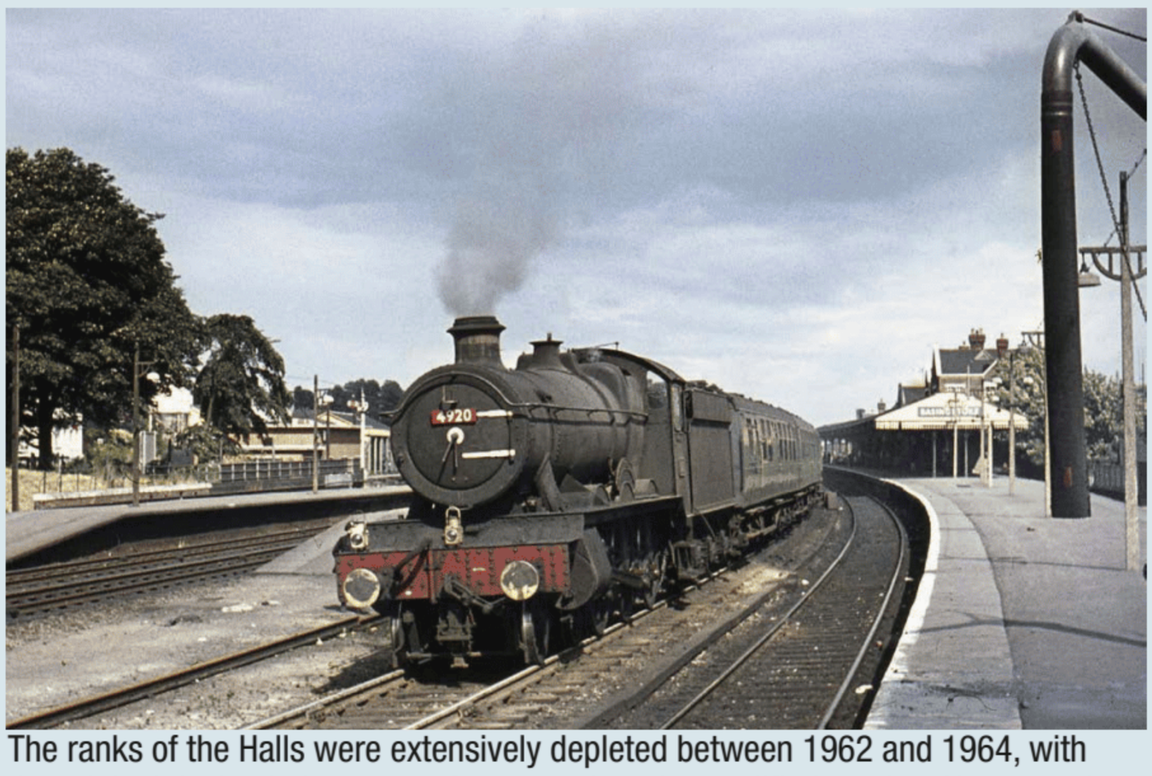
With no 'bush telegraph' in those days, the first that most enthusiasts knew about engine moves was when the official lists appeared in the very few magazines of the day. Thus, it was a surprise to many when the first Hall withdrawal, other than the war casualty 4911 and 4900, was notified, this being of 4940 *Ludford Hall* in December 1959. It looks fit here when seen at Newton Abbot. **Colour-Rail.com**

A total of 239 engines saw relatively few changes until the start of World War 2, with just the top lamp bracket being relocated to be mounted on the smokebox door rather than on the smokebox rim from 5922, and 4901- 5921 were later modified. As mentioned for the Saints, a slightly shorter chimney, at first actually seen on the Granges, started to appear in some numbers but moved around the class as boilers were swapped. In the wartime years, 6906-70 were built without cab side windows and many earlier engines had those plated over. Fitting/reinstatement of windows started in 1945, with most done by 1948. 6916-70 ran unnamed with just 'Hall Class' stencilled on the splashers, names being applied between 1946 and 1948. Following the war, 11 of the class were temporarily converted to oil burning, the first being 5955 in June 1946. Four months later, it was renumbered 3950. The other 10 conversions took place in April and May 1947, with each engine being renumbered when the conversion was done. 3900-4 were carried by former 49XX engines and 3951-5 by the others. The experiment did not last long, with the first reversion to coal being of 3902/53 in September 1948, and all were completed by March 1950, regaining their original identities. The class was never complete, as 4911 suffered a direct hit in a bombing raid at Keyham on April 29th, 1941, and was condemned in June of that year. 4900 had been listed for withdrawal in 1948, but instead was fitted with new cylinders and gained outside steam pipes to match the rest of the class.

The original Halls went through the range of Great Western liveries, starting with 'Great Western' combined with the garter crest. The garter was replaced early in the life of the class by the shields of London and Bristol, both on dark green. From the ornate to the plain, 1934 saw the arrival of the small 'shirt button' roundel, which lasted into the war years, until in 1942, even the Great Western had to resort to unlined black with G, the crest and W lettering. This morphed into unlined green in 1945, which lasted until the BR era.

1944 saw the emergence of the revised design forever to be called a Modified Hall, although officially it was the 6959 Class. The major difference on these engines was the use of 'one piece' frames, as the original Halls had a front extension frame.

The new frames protruded through to the front running plate. The 6959s were easily identified from the front as they had plate frame bogies, which included a deep and prominent front plate.



The ranks of the Halls were extensively depleted between 1962 and 1964, with the original design being more of a target than the modified version. However, the earliest-built one to survive into 1965 was 4920 *Dumbleton Hall*, then a resident of Bristol Barrow Road, where it seems to have become their celebrity engine as it attracted some activity with the paintbrush, with white paint added to the front end along with a red-backed numberplate, and it is seen here at Basingstoke so adorned. **J R Newman/Colour-Rail.com**



The curtain came down on the BR era for the Halls on January 3rd, 1966, when a specially-cleaned 6998 *Burton Agnes Hall* worked the Oxford Banbury leg of the Bournemouth-York service, and is seen getting the train underway at Oxford. **R Dennison/Colour-Rail.com**

The outside steam pipe covers were also longer than on the original engines, and with some engines being bestowed slimmer chimneys, the front end of a Modified Hall seemed to look more imposing than that of its forebears. Three-row superheaters were fitted, but subsequent boiler swaps saw the old two-row version come to the 6959s, and the engine weighed in at 16cwt more than a 49XX. Just 12 engines were authorised under Lot 350 and were built in 1944 as 6959-70. Construction resumed in 1947, with Lot 366 for 6971-90, of which just 10 were completed by the GW with 6981-90 being of British Railways heritage. Unusually, these did not quite appear in numerical order, making 6982 *Melmerby Hall* the first completed BR-built Hall in January 1948. More were to follow as orders were accepted for Lot 368 for 6991-9 and 7900-19, while bringing up the rear was Lot 376 for 7920-9, with 7929 *Wyke Hall* being completed in November 1950, some 22 years after the first new build of the type.

The 6959s built up to 1947 followed the same path as the earlier machines concerning liveries, namings and cab windows, except that the new engines carried lined GW green from 6974. Welded tenders appeared from 6974. Taking up the livery story for the whole class from 1948, the then Western Region applied 'British Railways' to some tenders post-1948 that was in the Great Western serif lettering, and 4946 was the first to be dealt with on January 16th, 1948. 6910 was the first Hall to receive the new BR-lined black, which was to become the officially adopted livery, although initial repaints ran without the crest, and it was 1949 before that was generally applied. The first new locomotive to get a smokebox numberplate was 6981. 1956 brought the change to lined green for the class, and a few engines ran with this and the lion and wheel crest, but most repaints received the second crest applied from 1957. 6990 had two claims to fame. It represented the Great Western types in the exchange trials of 1948, although only allowed to work from Marylebone to Manchester, and it also never carried black, being new in green and surviving thus painted for seven years into the second green era.

Enjoying a gentle run out, apparently as part of running-in duties following overhaul, 6982 *Melmerby Hall* is seen near Goring on November 4th, 1961. 6982 was the first of the class to be completed in the BR era. **T Owen/Colour-Rail.com**



While many Halls were broken up by British Railways, a goodly number were dealt with by scrap merchants. A number were sent to Dai Woodham at Barry, where some exited relatively quickly. One that lingered was 6984 *Owsden Hall.* Seen here on October 5th, 1983, it has subsequently spent many years under restoration but has yet to appear in service. **Colour-Rail.com**



The later Modified Halls were all nominally built by British Railways and so never carried GW liveries. One such was 7903 *Foremark Hall,* which, after carrying lined black, would gain lined green with the lion and wheel emblem. It powers through Winchcombe on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway on March 28th, 2006. **P Chancellor/Colour-Rail**

The Halls were always 'red route' engines and as such were restricted to the main lines, but other than that they could turn up anywhere in Great Western territory and often beyond, for instance working to Leicester on the Great Central and in later years through to Bournemouth on the Southern. As long as they remained front line motive power, they were allocated in large numbers to Old Oak Common, and many Modified Halls were still there as steam declined generally. The class was perhaps least represented in South Wales, but 1950s and '60s spotters living in England would always point to the gaps in the Hall numbers underlined, which usually indicated machines allocated to Neyland, or in particular Goodwick. When one from that shed went to Swindon for repair, the word soon got around, even in those days. Weymouth shed was part of the GW empire and had nothing larger than Halls on its books, so had no choice but to roster them to its duties on London-bound expresses, but this was generally not a problem as Halls were capable of a good turn of speed and very occasional instances of 100mph running have been claimed.

It was on summer Saturdays that Halls came into their own, especially on West Country extras, and illustrated the joy of trainspotting in those days. Because the Halls could tackle almost anything, they were frequently 'borrowed' by shedmasters to work away from, rather than towards, their home shed, and so there were almost always sightings of 'rare machines' at say Newton Abbot where a Worcester Hall would always cause a stir. As ever some were immaculate and others covered in grime. It tended to be the smaller sheds with just a handful allocated that took a pride in their care, such as Taunton, which typically only had three or four on its books. Other than 4911, the class remained intact until 1959 and while the demise of 4900 might have been 'noted', when 4940 was condemned in the same year, there were a few raised eyebrows, and when this was followed by the demise of 5915 in January 1960, things were not looking good. However, the situation did not deteriorate rapidly until the summer of 1962. By this time, most Warships were in service, but possibly the final nail in the coffin was the arrival of many of the Hymeks, a type intended to directly replace the Halls. January 1963 saw the condemnation of the first Modified Hall, 6962 *Soughton Hall,* a permanent resident of Old Oak Common, but generally the 6959s hung on much better than the original Halls.

As the numbers diminished, so the condition of the remainder deteriorated, with most relieved of their name and numberplates, with often a crudely added cabside number painted on the rusty patch where the cabside plate had been. The pride of the Great Western did not look so good then, and the region had declared that it would be steam-free by the end of 1965. Had it not been for the failure to close the Somerset & Dorset Railway on the planned date of January 3rd, 1966, that target would have been met, but for the Halls, it was the end. There were some unexpected survivors until late-1965 such as 4920 *Dumbleton Hall* in its 37th year working from Bristol Barrow Road, complete with white-painted smokebox door hinges, but appropriately, the very last true Western Region steam-hauled service was diagrammed for a Hall, when a specially cleaned 6998 *Burton Agnes Hall* worked from Oxford to Banbury on January 3rd, 1966.

While most Halls were broken up by British Railways, the later withdrawals were dealt with by scrap merchants, and with Dai Woodham having collected together a number of the class, they were destined to rise again in the preservation era. Whilst 6998 was bought for the Great Western Society straight from British Railways, the remainder all enjoyed an away day, or in some cases several years, at Barry. Thus, on occasions, we can hope to enjoy 4920/30/6/42/53/65/79, 5900/52/67/72 and Modified Halls 6960/84/89/90 and 7903. However, 4920, 5972 and 6989 have been consumed by Hogwarts, while 4979, 5952/67 and 6984 have yet to return to steam. 4965 is not all that it seems to be, or rather wasn't, as it was rescued as 4983, but much swapping of parts appeared to have taken place, and going on the frame identity, it was said to be more correctly 4965, while 4942 now hides its identity as Saint 2999. ■



Several of the original Halls have returned to steam, and looking quite 'Great Western' in this view is 4936 *Kinlet Hall* at the West Somerset Railway in March 2005. **P Chancellor/Colour-Rail**

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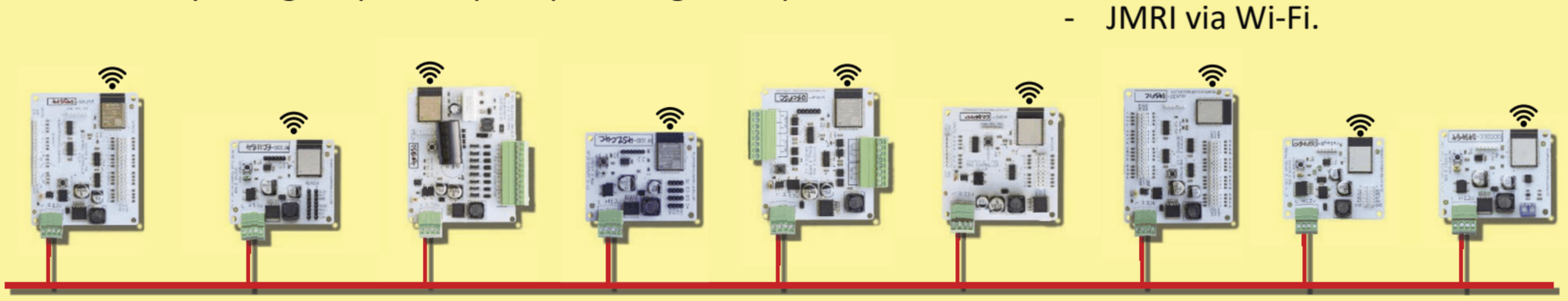

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THE LATEST HEADLINES

Accurascale announces new “Accuragronk” family





Accurascale has revealed a comprehensive new family of OO shunting locomotives under the banner “Accuragronk”. Its range will cover the long-serving BR Class 08, the less common Class 10, and the distinctive low-height Class 08/9 conversions.

Accurascale plans to release the standard Class 08 in a broad selection of liveries representing multiple eras of British Rail and later privatisation.

The Class 10, a variant often overlooked in ready-to-run form, will also feature its Blackstone engine and GEC electrical equipment.

In addition, the Class 08/9 low-profile shunters will be produced, which carried noticeably modified cab and bonnet profiles to suit operation on restricted-clearance lines.

The models will share a common mechanical platform built around a large-diameter coreless motor and helical gearbox, intended to support slow-speed running and controllability during shunting operations. All versions will include a factory-fitted stay-alive capacitor.

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Lighting provision will include directional lighting with fibre-optic arrangements, marker lights and high-intensity headlights, along with selectable cab-lighting functions.

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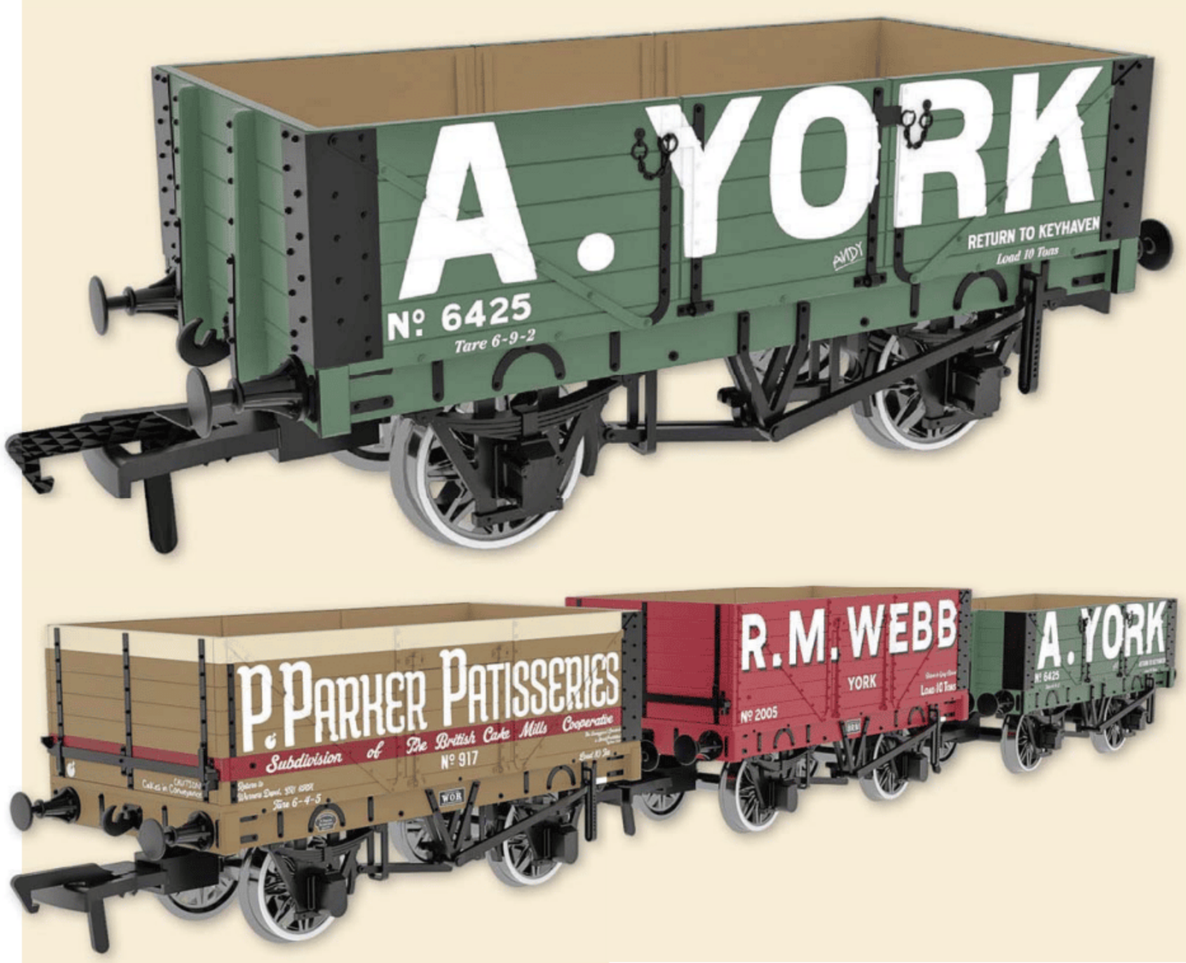
The first production run is expected to arrive in Q1 2027. Pre-orders are open directly through Accurascale and via participating retailers, with no deposit required for direct orders.

World of Railways unveils exclusive wagons



World of Railways reveals its latest exclusive; three OO gauge wagons celebrating Britain’s biggest railway modelling forum, RMweb; with a tribute to its founder, the late Andy York, and a nod to Phil Parker’s enjoyment of cakes.

Available individually or as a triple pack from the World of Railways online store, the limited-edition wagons (only 90 of each) are being manufactured by Rapido and are expected to be popular with railway modellers, RMweb users, and collectors. In addition, all profits from the A York 5-Plank wagon will go to charity, The Royal British Legion.

Private owner wagons were a major part of the UK’s railway scene from the very early days and could be seen just about anywhere in the country from the pre-grouping era and even beyond nationalisation, with over half a million of various types being inherited by British Railways in 1948.

Available to pre-order and expected to arrive by the end of next year, individual wagons are priced at £32.95 and the triple pack at £94.99.

Head to **https://worldofrailways.hooluh.co.uk/wagons** to order yours today!



Rapido reveals its first Atlantic

The LNER C12 4-4-2T Atlantic tank marks the manufacturer's first venture into the Atlantic wheel arrangement. The model will expand Rapido's growing line-up of Great Northern Railway designs, bringing a long-serving suburban tank engine to 4mm scale.

Designed by Henry Ivatt for the Great Northern Railway, the C12 handled local and suburban passenger work for more than half a century, becoming a familiar sight across much of the Eastern Region.

12 versions are available to pre-order, covering the GNR, LNER, and BR periods. Each model will incorporate tooling changes to reflect batch differences within the class, including variations in chimneys, domes, tank corners, bunkers, coal rails, and condensing pipes.

For the condensing-fitted London-based locomotives, brass destination plates are included in the detailing pack to fit the destination board brackets. Only two of the 12 models share identical combinations of detail parts, reflecting the diversity of the prototypes.

The C12 model will combine die-cast metal and injection-moulded components for strength and fine details, along with a smooth-running mechanism, factory-fitted speaker, MoPower stay-alive, and an ESU E24 DCC decoder socket.

Additional features will include a firebox flicker with dynamic fire-draw effect, era-specific detailing, and NEM coupler pockets (NEM 363 at the front and 362 at the rear).

12 versions are available:

- SKU 99001: GNR C2 Tank - No.1020 GNR Lined Green
- SKU 989002: GNR C2 Tank - No.1528 GNR Lined Green
- SKU 989003: GNR C2 Tank - No.1511 GNR Grey
- SKU 989004: LNER C12 Tank - No.1517N L&NER Black
- SKU 989005: LNER C12 Tank - No.1519 L&NER Lined Black
- SKU 989006: LNER C12 Tank - No.4502 LNER Lined Black
- SKU 989007: LNER C12 Tank - No.4009A LNER Plain Black
- SKU 989008: LNER C12 Tank - No.4010 LNER Wartime Black
- SKU 989009: LNER C12 Tank - No.67356 British Railways Black
- SKU 989010: LNER C12 Tank - No.67380 BR Lined Black (early crest)
- SKU 989011: LNER C12 Tank - No.67391 BR Lined Black (early crest)
- SKU 989012: LNER C12 Tank - No.67352 BR Lined Black (late crest)

The model is currently at the design phase and available to pre-order now from **rapidotrains.co.uk** and through its official retailers.

Prices:

- DCC Ready - £189.95
- DCC Sound Fitted - £294.95



Heljan surprises with DB-inspired Warship

Developed from Heljan's successful O gauge model, the first wave of releases announced in October 2024 is now set to feature six models with the surprise addition of V200 021 *Windhund* in a striking DB-inspired livery. This was applied to the full-size D821 *Greyhound* in preservation during the late-1980s at the North Yorkshire Railway in homage to the outwardly similar German DB V200 diesel-hydraulics.

Liveries available:
In addition, previously announced liveries are.

- Class 42 Warship D826 *Jupiter* BR Green
- Class 42 Warship D808 *Centaur* BR Green with Full Yellow Ends. (DCC-Ready & DCC-Sound)
- Class 42 Warship D831 *Monarch* BR Blue Small Yellow Panels
- Class 42 Warship D868 *Zephyr* BR Blue Full Yellow Ends with the "Twin Arrows" livery.
- Class 42 Warship D832 *Onslaught* BR Maroon Small Yellow Panels - (DCC-Ready & DCC-Sound)

Rails of Sheffield has cooperated with Heljan to develop models of the first prototype 'Warships', a variant never previously offered in ready-to-run form. The exclusive models will feature a set of magnetic train reporting number plates and will also feature original short (D800-D802) or standard nose handrails and original-style underframe skirts between the bogies.





Liveries available:

- Class 42 Warship V1 D804 *Avenger* BR Green Small Yellow Panels
- Class 42 Warship V1 D812 *The Royal Naval Reserve 1859-1959* BR Green
- Class 42 Warship V1 D802 *Formidable* BR Green Small Yellow Panels
- Class 42 Warship V1 D800 *Sir Brian Robertson* BR Green

Featuring six separately-switchable lighting functions in DCC model, a cab interior and engine room lights, illuminated head-code blinds, factory-fitted twin speakers on all models, interior engine room detail, interchangeable buffer-beam skirts (full and partial) and all-wheel pick-up. The new models also offer original short-type or standard nose-end handrails, magnetic GWR-style train reporting numbers (exclusive to Rails D800-D812) and separately-fitted lamp brackets, wire handrails, sandpipes and roof hatches to name a few.

All models will be offered DCC-Ready with a 21-pin decoder interface or with factory-fitted DCC and sound.

Prices:

- £219.00 DCC-Ready
- £319.00 DCC-Sound

Ellis Clark reveals WD10 decorated samples



Clark Railworks has unveiled the first decorated samples of its OO Gauge WD "Austerity" 2-10-0 locomotives—No. 600 *Gordon* and No. 90774 *North British* (the latter exclusive to Rails of Sheffield).

After months of behind-the-scenes work, the models now showcase their finished liveries, with a matt smokebox finish and highly detailed cab backheads. Only minor tweaks remain.

A key engineering decision earlier this year led to a refined motor and gearbox, which should allow exceptionally smooth, slow running—true to the character of the real locomotives. Approval of this revision by the Clarks Railworks team is close, meaning production is expected to begin early next year, with deliveries planned for late spring.

All versions can be pre-ordered from Clark Railworks. They feature die-cast construction, brass axle bearings, firebox glow, and extensive cab and pipework detail. Despite their large size, they can still handle 2nd-radius curves, aided by an alternate set of smaller front bogie wheels included in the accessories.

Rails announces exclusive EMR Class 180 *Adelante*

Revealed during the opening of its new store at Sheffield Railway Station, which is also a flagship hub for the East Midlands Railway, the OO gauge models will be produced as part of Revolution Trains' main production run.

Highlights include working directional lights and user switchable lighting functions, kinematic close coupling with electrical connectors between cars, a fully detailed and decorated interior and twin speakers pre-fitted - one in each driving car.

Expected Q3 2026 and pre-orders can be made through the Rails of Sheffield website.



Prices:

- Class 180 East Midlands Railway 180109 5-Car DMU - £449.95
- Class 180 East Midlands Railway 180109 5-Car DMU - DCC Sound - £544.95
- Class 180 East Midlands Railway 180113 5-Car DMU - £449.95
- Class 180 East Midlands Railway 180113 5-Car DMU - DCC Sound - £544.95

Heljan and TMC unlock TT:120 rolling stock gap

A major announcement by Heljan and TMC reveals early Mk. 2 coaches that will complement currently available locomotive models.

The range will bring accurate representations of Mk. 2, Mk. 2A and Mk. 2Z vehicles into a scale that has so far lacked comprehensive coaching stock. The new models will span eras from the 1960s through to recent heritage main line operations, and be produced in a series of livery-matched four-coach presentation packs, supplemented by individual vehicles for railway modellers and collectors wishing to tailor formations.

Five liveries have been selected to reflect the most requested periods of operation from the late-1960s to the present day:

- BR Blue/Grey (LMR Mk. 2Z) – representing the earliest period of service with vacuum braking, dual heating and wooden end doors.
- Inter-City Blue/Grey (WR and ER Mk. 2A) – covering 1970s and 1980s express work in both Western and Eastern Regions.
- Network SouthEast (Mk. 2A) – matched to late-1980s and early-1990s formations common on the Waterloo–Exeter route.
- Regional Railways (Mk. 2A) – for 1990s secondary services.
- West Coast Railways (Mk. 2Z) – representing railtour and charter operations from the 2000s onwards.

In addition to the main packs, several single vehicles are planned, including a micro-buffet BSO(T) and an early Mk. 2 FK in BR maroon.

Design work for the four core variants - FK, TSO, BSO and BFK - is already well advanced. These cover virtually every configuration of the Mk. 2/Mk. 2A/Mk. 2Z fleet, allowing modellers to assemble authentic train formations across a wide span of operating eras.

Each coach will incorporate detailed exterior tooling with removable roofs for straightforward interior access, factory-fitted underframe components replicating either vacuum-braked Mk. 2Z or air-braked Mk. 2A equipment, representations of wooden sliding doors or GRP folding doors according to prototype and fully-moulded interior seating and tables.

Provision for a new drop-in, battery-powered LED lighting bar (sold separately) will also be available.

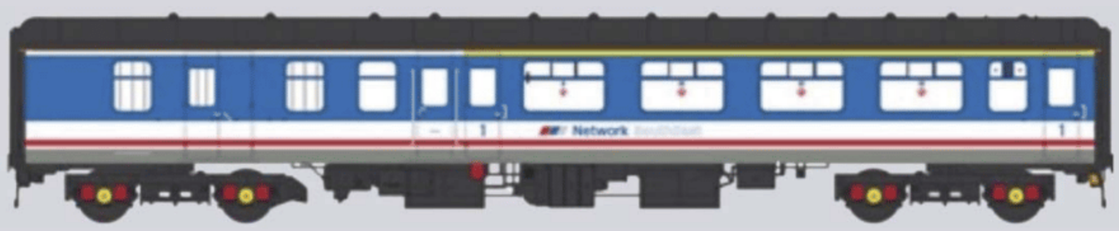
The coaches are researched from original formations, and each pack carries region-appropriate running numbers.

Available to pre-order, first releases are scheduled for early 2027, with engineering samples expected for review in mid-2026.

Prices:

- £179.00 per four-coach pack
- £44.50 per individual coach
- Pricing for the optional interior lighting bars will be confirmed at a later date







Dapol shares Class 323 EP images

The OO gauge model announced by Dapol in November 2023 is making progress towards production.

The EP is currently being evaluated for running characteristics as well as aesthetic qualities.

Specification highlights:

- 14-Pin electrical connection between cars – just one DCC Chip needed
- Speaker fitted in each driving car as standard
- Low-profile motor in centre car driving all wheels
- DCC Controllable lighting, including Door Open lights when in stations
- DC switchable tail-lights as standard
- Bodyside display indicators on 4D-323-001 and 4D-323-002
- Alternative destination labels
- Interior and cab lighting
- Working BSI coupling on front ends to allow 6- or 9-car operation
- Original and refurbished internal layout in centre car
- Fully painted interior, with correct colour schemes for each version
- Poseable dummy pantograph and full roof detail

Proposed liveries:

- 4D-323-001 - Class 323 323203 Regional Railways Centro
- 4D-323-002 - Class 323 323227 Regional Railways Greater Manchester PTE
- 4D-323-003 - Class 323 323213 London Midland
- 4D-323-004 - Class 323 First North Western *Barbie* with Northern branding
- 4D-323-005 - Class 323 323241 West Midlands Trains
- 4D-323-006 - Class 323 323225 Northern New – White/Blue
- 4D-323-007 - Class 323 323221 Regional Railways Centro Heritage Repaint

Available in DC, DCC and DCC-Sound versions, the model is available to pre-order and is anticipated to be available during 2026.

Pricing has been revised from October 2025, pre-orders made beforehand will be honoured.

- DCC-Ready - £361.55
- DCC-Fitted - £397.71
- DCC-Sound - £485.51

Heljan reveals Class 122 details

The Class 122 is a complete train within a single vehicle, ideal for small layouts and branch lines and continues the momentum TT:120 is gaining with modellers.

The model promises many separately fitted details and will feature factory-fitted lighting and speakers. It will also include the new E24 DCC decoder interface, allowing up to 32 functions. Priced at £189.95, the new models are expected to arrive early next year.



Exclusive OO Gauge Wagon in Memory of Len Young

The 2874 Trust is saddened to report that, earlier this year, it lost one of its earliest and most steadfast supporters, Len Young. In recognition of Len's contribution, both to the Trust and to the wider steam-heritage movement, the 2874 Trust has commissioned an exclusive OO gauge wagon.

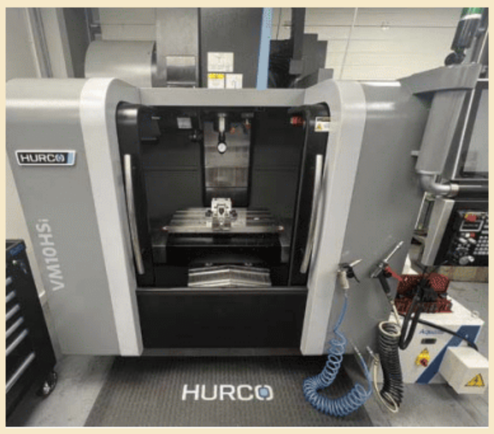
These wagons are being offered in two finish options: clean and lightly weathered. They are available exclusively via the Trust's website on the Get Involved page: **www.2874trust.org**



Dapol's UK production capability grows

Dapol is delighted to receive its very own Hurco VM10HSi three-axis machining centre.

Over the past decade, Dapol's commitment to becoming more self-sufficient has expanded in both scale and ambition, with many of its manufacturing and assembly processes taking place here in Britain. Investment in this new machine marks a significant boost to Dapol's tool room's potential and follows on from previous investment in its UK-based manufacturing capabilities.



Decorated samples of upcoming OO gauge models unveiled by Rapido

Decorated samples of upcoming OO gauge models, the S160, Evolution Coaches in GWR and GCR liveries and LMS Iron Ore Hoppers have been unveiled by Rapido.





USATC S160 Class

The USATC S160 Class was a fleet of rugged 2-8-0 steam locomotives built by the United States Army Transportation Corps during World War II for use in Europe and other overseas theatres.

Designed for quick mass production and operation on lightly built or damaged railways, they featured simple, durable construction and easy maintenance. Over 2,000 were built, serving in countries such as the UK, Italy, France, Poland, and Greece, with many remaining in service for decades after the war.

Eight locos have been repatriated to the UK in preservation and all of them are different from their counterparts, some more subtly than others.

Each model will be fitted with two factory-fitted speakers (one in the loco and another in the tender), dual LED firebox glow with dynamic fire draw effect, a large motor with twin flywheels, pick-ups on driving wheels and tender and a 21-pin DCC decoder socket mounted in the tender.

Evolution Coaches

Evolution 48’ bogie coaches are a diverse collection of pre-grouping carriages capturing the characteristics of pre-grouping bogie stock.

LMS 20T Hoppers

Constructed between the early-1920s and mid-1930s the LMS produced numerous iron ore hoppers using a variety of diagram numbers; however, for the most part, they looked identical. With a carrying capacity of 20 tons, the iron ore wagons were used for carrying a plethora of raw materials throughout their lifetime and received numerous extensions, additions and alterations in their later lives to accommodate their new owners.



Metcalfe covers roofing projects

Expanding Metcalfe’s existing range of builder packs, which include paving sheets, brickwork and individual stone pavers, the new multipack features a selection of five different roof tile designs, ideal for all kinds of modelling projects, creating variation with existing Metcalfe kits, or to help modellers with scratch-builds.

The materials pack will be available in both OO and N gauge from December and will be priced at £7.50 and £6.50 respectively.



New hut from Atkitz

Atkitz has revealed a duel-colour weigh hut in O gauge, based on its Cambusnethan Weigh Hut model.

Enhancing its growing range of Victorian buildings, ideally suited to small O Gauge layouts and dioramas, the plastic kit features decorative buff brickwork on the base, corners and around the windows. Priced at £30.00, the new model is available from the Atkitz website with brown or green doors, windows and gable ends.



WIN PRIZES TO KICK-START YOUR MODELLING

Looking for a new project or a shiny new locomotive to inspire your next modelling adventure? Two great prizes are up for grabs from Hornby this month, both reviewed in this issue!

WIN the Hornby Class A4 4466 *Sir Ralph Wedgwood!*

One of four special edition locomotives to commemorate the defeat of Nazi Germany 80 years ago, this fantastic model has only been produced in limited numbers. For your chance to win, head to World of Railways and answer the question below to enter the prize draw.

Worth £217.99!

Completed at Darlington Works and entering traffic on January 26th, 1938, what was the locomotive originally named?

A: *Bittern*

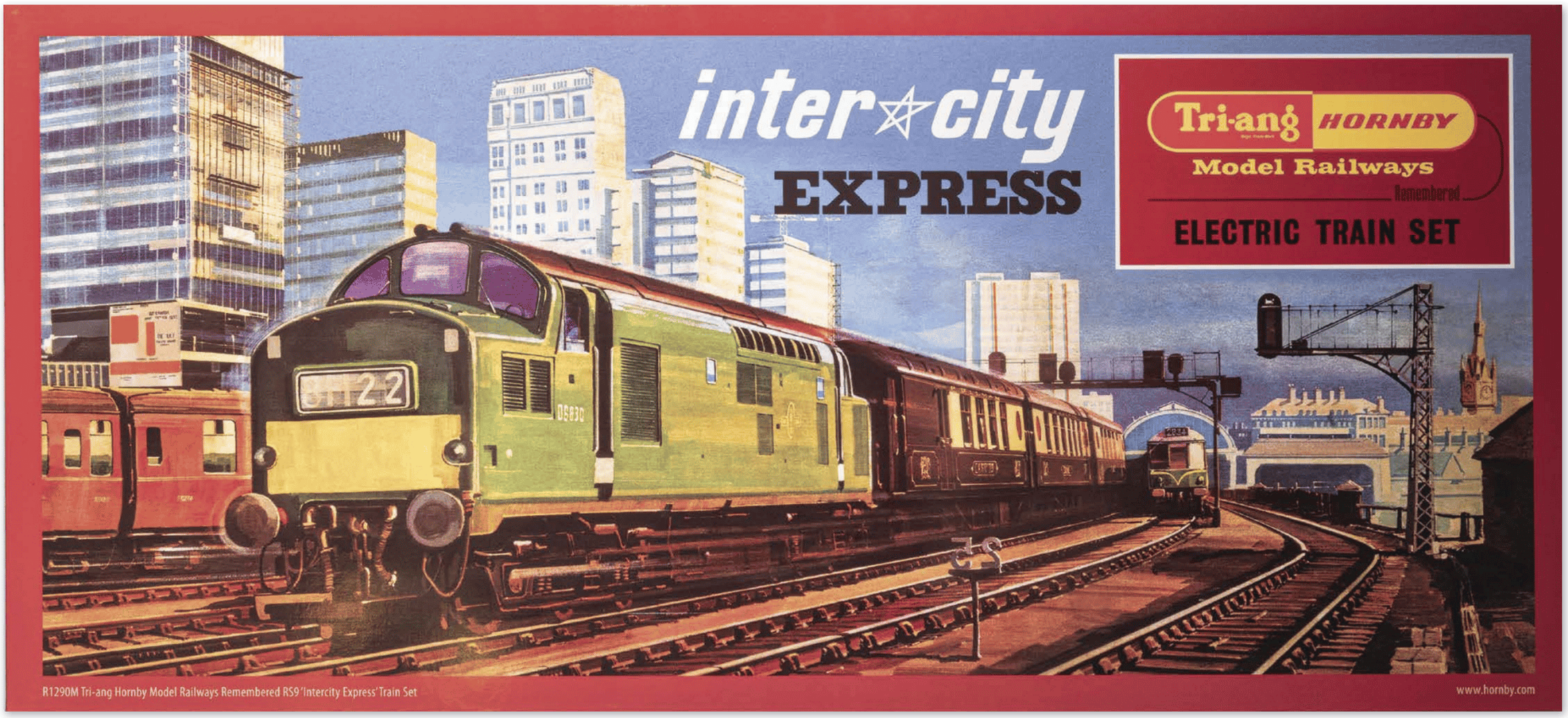
B: *Commonwealth of Australia*

C: *Herring Gull*

D: *City of Liverpool*







WIN a Tri-ang Railways Remembered: RS9 'Intercity Express' Train Set!

Is there a better way to help kick-start your modelling than with a train set? And this one comes fully loaded with nostalgia. Inside the pack includes;

- 1x Model Diesel Locomotive
- 3x Coaches (Pullman Cars *Jane* and *Ruth*, and Pullman brake *No.7*)
- 1x 2nd Radius Starter Oval
- 1x power Clip (no controller included)
- 1x Uncoupling Ramp



Worth £179.99!

For your chance to win, answer the question below to enter the prize draw.
What is the locomotive number inside the pack?
A: D6666
B: D6380
C: D9990
D: D1960



For your chance to win head to: world-of-railways.co.uk/Competitions

Both competitions will close on February 28th, 2026.

TT:120 | 1870s-1960s | £££ 159.99

Hornby Terrier A1/A1X



Steven Draper



Bright, colourful and featuring impressive detailing differences.

The Hornby TT:120 Terrier is tiny. But don't be fooled, it carries itself with charm and no shortage of dogged character.

Originally built in the 1870s for the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway, the Terrier was the railway's faithful workhorse. Small, nimble, and extraordinarily reliable, it thrived on tight Victorian suburban branches and curves that would make bigger locomotives panic. Its working life stretches from the age of top hats to modern preservation, and its colourful, often flamboyant liveries helped cement its legendary status.

From announcement to having two review samples on the desk took about six months - long enough to build anticipation, but short enough to keep the interest sharp. Packaging is consistent with the rest of Hornby's TT:120 range, and a small bag of accessories appears with the later version. That said, everything was already factory-fitted, so they are essentially spares for the future.

Thanks to the aligned scale and gauge, the proportions look right, the pose is confident, and the detail level impressive. There are multiple tooling differences between the two samples, both above and below the running plate, which pushes this model firmly into "serious modeller" territory. Anyone wondering whether TT:120 has depth beyond train-set basics now has a clear answer.

The cab interior - tiny though it is - gives a nod to a working back-head and leaves space for a crew. Metal buffers appear fine while being robust, and both liveries are applied with precision, enhancing the overall impression of detail.

A couple of compromises exist: the absence of a gap beneath the boiler and a fixed coal load. But these are minor quibbles. In the hand, the diecast body has a pleasing weight; detailing is crisp; rivets are sharp. Underneath, standard couplings, brake gear, sanding pipes, and wiper pick-ups on all wheels complete the picture.



4-wheel coaches and small wagons create ideal trains.



Excellent livery application, note the cab details.



Remove three screws to gently wiggle apart.



The tidy DCC-ready interior takes a small 6-pin chip.



Confident looks, full of collectable charm and character

FACTFILE

Models (review items in bold):
TT3038M - SR Terrier – W14 *Bembridge*
TT3039M – LB&SCR Terrier – 40 *Brighton*
TT3040M – BR Terrier No.32655
Construction: Mostly diecast with separate plastic and metal details
Weight: 50g
Era: 1870s-1960s
Price: £159.99
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: Buffer beam hoses (only on Southern version.)

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ High levels of detail
- ✓ Excellent haulage
- ✓ Beautiful livery application

Removing three screws – note they are different lengths - enables the snug-fitting body to be wiggled free, exposing a tidy interior and a 6-pin DCC socket. Sound would require careful planning and probably some soldering experience.

Hornby has fitted a coreless motor, and performance from the box was good under household conditions using the track and controller from a TT:120 train set. One sample was slightly lumpy until the body was removed - likely stiffened lubricant - but improved steadily with running-in and a tiny drop of oil on the gears.

With several coaches in tow, it handled Hornby points and TT:120 curves with just the occasional nudge. Shunting is certainly possible, though dedicated operators may want to explore alternative coupling systems, and slow running would almost certainly benefit from uni-frog points.

Crucially, the Terrier pairs beautifully with Hornby's newly released 4-wheel coaches, finally giving TT:120 a cohesive, ready-to-run branch-line train straight out of the box.

Small, confident, detailed and lively, the Hornby TT:120 Terrier does just about everything right. Technically sound, satisfying to watch, and impossible not to enjoy, it's a brilliantly executed little locomotive that's hard not to smile at every time it moves.

Hornby VE Day 80th Anniversary Celebratory Locomotives



A splendid trio indeed, recalling a day of great rejoicing.

Tony Wright

To commemorate the defeat of Nazi Germany, 80 years ago, Hornby has released established locos with the numbers and livery they would have been carrying at that memorable time. I've received for review two Gresley Pacifics and one of Stanier's streamlined Princess Coronations. Full reviews of the first releases of these types will have been conducted at the time, so this is more of a general overview of this trio, the biggest change being that the A10 (and the most-recent Gresley A1s and A3s from Hornby) now has a cast metal footplate to aid adhesion. All three are very accurate models at source.

Starting with the A10, though Hornby has produced models of many variations of *Flying Scotsman*, this is the first time it's been offered in this guise – as an A10 (earlier in 1945 it would have been an A1, until Edward Thompson took that designation for his prototype 6' 8" Pacific) with a streamlined non-corridor tender in wartime black with just the abbreviated 'NE' on the tender. It would remain an A10 until BR days, finally becoming an A3, its drive changed to the left-hand side and ultimately be fitted with a double Kylchap chimney and German deflectors (more or less as it is today in preservation, though now with a corridor tender). The valve gear still slightly disappoints, with its too-long expansion links. Oddly, unlike earlier manifestations, which had the smokebox pipework on both sides, there is none present on this model; a detail omission.

The A4 represents the second *Sir Ralph Wedgwood*, after the name was transferred to the previously-named *Herring Gull.*

The first Sir Ralph had been bombed to destruction in York depot during an air raid earlier in the War. As with all the previous Hornby A4s, this is the best representation of the class RTR in OO in my opinion. Hornby has produced many iterations of the classic streamliner down the years (the tender-drive versions being rather poor) until the firm finally got it dead right at the beginning of the century, thanks to the insistence on accuracy by Simon Kohler. Correctly, this current model has a single chimney and streamlined non-corridor tender.

The Princess Coronation represents a streamliner in its final complete condition before parts of the casings on tenders began to be removed for ease of access/maintenance. Indeed, by 1945, the tender raves were starting to be flame-cut off, though *City of Liverpool* still had them at the end of the war. As with the others in the trio, a firebox glow is present, a flanged pony wheel is supplied and, in this loco's case, there's a spare bogie with nearer-scale wheels for those with more-generous curves. The usual bag of extra bits (containing brake rigging, pipework – though the A10 has its vacuum standpipes fitted already – steps



A4s were no strangers to fast fitted freight haulage.



This *Sir Ralph Wedgwood* survived the War.



Still with full streamlining, but not for much longer.



Is this the first Hornby model of an A10?



A typical immediate post-War scene on the ECML.

where appropriate and scale couplings, etc., is present for all three.

The improved loco-to-tender drawbar is standard on these three models, providing excellent mechanical and electrical integrity, with no need to fiddle with fragile plug and socket arrangements when separating the two units, provision for DCC being inside the tender bodies. All three performed faultlessly on straight DC, though the A4 (being the lightest) struggled on a lengthy Bytham goods, so much so that I had to lighten the load to 30 vans (subscribers can observe this on the latest episode of World of Railways TV). Both the A10 and the Princess Coronation just played with their passenger trains, though neither was as heavy as a typical Little Bytham BR rake.

Livery application is perfect, though by the end of the hostilities in Europe, I very much doubt if any of these full-sized locomotives would be as pristine as presented here. Still, they'd make interesting weathering subjects, but don't mention that to collectors! Speaking of collectors, these models will probably be more attractive to that type of 'modeller' because wartime layouts are greatly outnumbered by pre-War representations and, certainly, BR steam depictions. Because of that relative rarity, I can see them all being sought after in the future.

I thoroughly recommend all three and congratulate Hornby on having the foresight to think about producing commemorative models.

FACTFILE

Models

R30453 LMS - Streamlined Coronation Class - 6247 *City of Liverpool*

R30454 LNER - Class A10 - 4472 *Flying Scotsman*

R30452 LNER - Class A4 - 4466 *Sir Ralph Wedgwood*

(Coming soon) R30455 SR - Merchant Navy Class - 21C9 *Shaw Savill*

Construction: Diecast chassis and plastic components

Weight: A4 330g, A10: 390g, Princess Coronation: 450g, Merchant: 700g

Era: 1938-1965

Price: £189.99-279.99

Minimum curves: Radius 2

Accessories: Each model contains some of the following; fireman and driver figures, drain cocks, flanged rear pony tuck wheelset, vacuum pipes, steps, coupling bars and hooks, brake rods, buffer lamps and front ladder

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Overall accuracy
- ✓ Standard of running
- ✓ Quality of finish

Stanier's Princess Coronations have run on the ECML, but never in streamlined form. Still, it looks impressive!



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Rapido Class J52



Tony Wright



68846's driver waves to the 'bobby' in Bytham's 'box as his steed heads north to Doncaster and preservation.

Having already reviewed the Hornby model of a J52 in BRM last year, it's now my pleasure to cast my eye (and camera) over Rapido's equivalent. I'll not be making any comparisons, other than to state that both are exceptional models. The Hornby example represented a loco in LNER condition, while this Rapido one represents a J52/2 in a very specific condition – that is 68846, uniquely in BR lined black, for exhibition at Noel Park, Wood Green in September 1958 (interestingly, along with *Mallard*, 40 years her junior!).

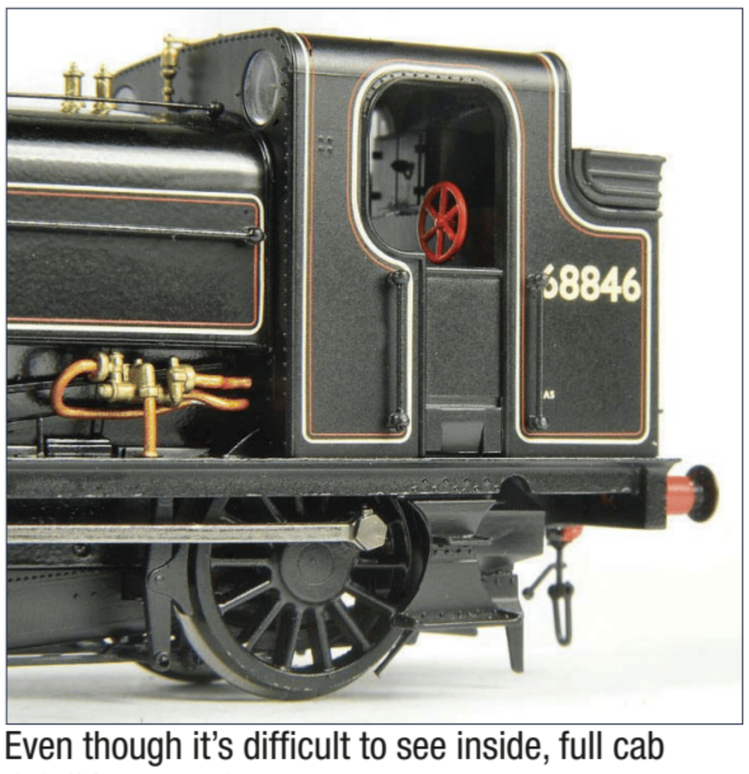
The prototype Class started life as a Stirling design for the GNR in 1894. Ivatt improved the type, fitting a larger (domed) boiler and detail differences. It was not until 1961 that the last of the J52s were withdrawn, meaning a very successful, long-lived shunting tank. Thus, we have a prototype that ticks all the relevant boxes for producing a model representation – pre-Grouping, Grouping and BR, plus the added advantage of one being preserved – the model I'm reviewing.

In preservation, the prototype has been restored back to GNR condition, and the model in BR lined black guise represents the loco for a very short timescale – the autumn of 1958 until the spring of 1959. To celebrate the granting of a Royal Charter to the borough of Wood Green in north London, an exhibition was staged by BR in the goods yard at adjacent Noel Park. To include GNR locos in the exhibition, an old C12 was found at Grantham, cleaned up and repainted in BR lined black, along with J52, 68846. The big difference in historical livery was that many C12s had received BR lined black, but 68846 was uniquely painted in lined black (by Frank Rayner of Top Shed), just for the celebrations. No other J52 was so adorned, and she stayed that way until being bought by Captain Bill Smith in the spring of 1959. She was then restored to GNR guise. Thus, she became the first privately-owned loco bought off BR!

The model represents that short time period prior to preservation, and represents it brilliantly. Checking out all the information at my disposal, other than being 'narrow gauge' (OO rather than P4), this model is as fine a representation ready-to-run of any steam-outline loco I've ever seen.

All the main dimensions are spot-on, and there is a finery of separate detail applied, which only the best kit-builders could equal (it's more than anything I've ever achieved!). Correctly, parallel-shanked buffers are fitted and single-tread forward steps. Other J52s have plate-backed front steps, as well as tapered shank buffers, plus Ramsbottom safety valves in earlier periods. So, if considering altering the model's identity (though why would you?), take great care. Also note that, correctly, the brake rigging is inside the wheels – some J52s had theirs outside. The wheels, coupling rods and brakes are accurate representations of the full-sized loco, and in running there is no wobbling, waddling, or jerking. Indeed, 'silky-smooth' might be the best description, through Peco and hand-built pointwork, all aided by a powerful motor. Plenty of weight ensures excellent haulage capacity and there's provision for a 'plug & play' Next18 DCC decoder inside the body.

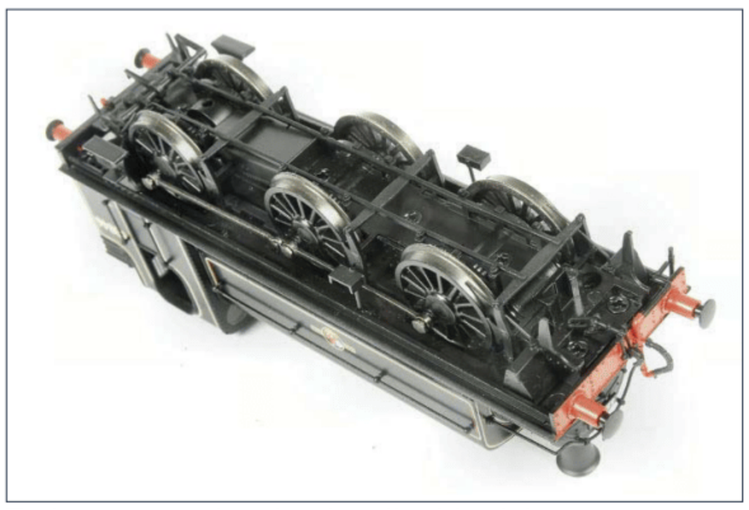




Even though it's difficult to see inside, full cab detail is present.



I needed a powerful camera to be able to read the Sharp, Stewart worksplate.



Truly-concentric wheels, all with pick-ups ensure smooth running.



I've never seen crisper livery application.



FACTFILE

Models (Review item in bold):
GNR J13 No.1210 GNR Green
GNR J13 No.1234 GNR Grey
LNER J52/2 No.1228 L&NER Black with Red Lining
LNER J52/2 No.4226 LNER Black with Red Lining
LNER J52/2 No.4217 LNER Plain Black with Shaded Lettering
LNER J52/2 No.68817 British Railways Lettering
LNER J52/2 No.68838 BR Unlined Black Early Crest
LNER J52/2 No.68832 BR Unlined Black Early Crest
LNER J52/2 No.2 BR Unlined Black Early Crest (Departmental Use)
LNER J52/2 No.8832 NE Plain Black
LNER J52/2 No.68846 BR Lined Black Late Crest
GNR J13 No.1247 GNR Green 1960s Railtour Condition
Construction: Diecast chassis/footplate, plastic body
Weight: 220g
Era: 1894-1961
Price: £164.95 – £279.95
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: Couplings, loco tools

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Overall accuracy
- ✓ Excellent performance
- ✓ Exquisite livery application

I didn't bother taking the body off – recently struggling separating bodies from chassis on RTR locos has meant I'm wary, though the instructions suggest it should be easy here.

It's the livery application that has impressed me most. To say it is perfect is an understatement. It's as good (and in many, many cases better) than most professionally-painted equivalents I've seen, and way, way superior to anything I've ever managed with transfer lining. I can find only one fault – the lion on the BR emblem on the offside faces rearwards, rather than forwards. This is 'correct' according to the College of Heralds, but 'incorrect' here. Why? Because BR, in its ignorance, produced a forward-facing lion on its crest, both sides, and this loco should have this transgression.

There's the usual little bag of extras to fit, should the owner desire. This includes proper couplings and loco tools.

In conclusion, superlative overall. I suggest one buys one quickly, because they're sure to sell out.

00 | 1840-1922 | £££ 29.70

Bryngaer, Cambrian Railways 2-Plank Wagon



Steven Draper



The wagons have presence on the layout.

It's not every day a brand-new manufacturer rolls up and drops something genuinely interesting on the modelling world. But that's exactly what Wales-based Bryngaer (pronounced "Brin Guy R") has just done with its debut ready-to-run Cambrian Railways 2-plank wagon, offered in both the wonderfully elegant CAM RYS livery and the later, obligatory Great Western grey.

The business has grown out of its founder's love of Welsh ready-to-run rolling stock from the independent era (1840–1922), and the recognition that not everyone has the time, space, or confidence for kit-building. Its choice of wagon certainly makes sense. Straightforward design? Yes. A reasonable service life? Absolutely. And a wagon that roamed across Britain carrying slate and assorted loads in both Cambrian and GW days? Ideal.

Once released from its packaging, the care and attention to detail is immediately apparent. This doesn't feel like a tentative first outing and the wagons sit confidently beside recent offerings from established names. The decoration is neatly applied, with correctly shaped builder's plates on the early livery that are legible despite their size. I especially liked the highlighted "Cambrian Railways" lettering on the grease boxes.

The single-sided brake gear is very fine, with the shoes positioned close to and aligned with the metal-spoked wheels. At 24g, the wagon feels heavier than it looks, thanks to a hidden steel weight, and even without brass bearings, it rolled freely through a series of Peco pointwork with no wobble or derailment.

The moulding is carefully executed, covering both fixed-side and drop-side variations. The exterior planks have proper chamfered edges, the interior is fully detailed, and the sides appear close to scale thickness. The NEM coupling pocket is neatly integrated underneath, and the separate drawbar makes it straightforward for the brave to add link couplings for operation or display.

Like someone who manages to command attention without raising their voice, these wagons - particularly the pre-grouping versions - have genuine presence on a layout.



Decoration is neat and tidy with all lettering readable.



Internal detail is moulded, perfect for weathering and loading.



The exterior planks have proper chamfered edges.

With narrow-gauge layouts, including exchange-sidings, very popular at the moment, it's quite possible the modest production run won't hang about long at Rails of Sheffield, currently the sole retailer.

Bryngaer has set out to prove there's room in the market for high-quality ready-to-run Welsh rolling stock. With these charming little wagons (and more designs already in development), we may soon have the answer.



Brake shoes align closely with metal wheels.



Drop-side and fixed-side variations are tooled.

FACTFILE

Models:
WMB001 2-Plank Drop Side Wagon - CAM RYS
WMB002 2-Plank Fixed Side Wagon – CAM RYS
WMB003 2-Plank Drop Side Wagon – GW
WMB004 2-Plank Fixed Side Wagon - GW
Construction: Diecast chassis and plastic body
Weight: 24g
Eras: 1840–1922
Price: £29.70
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: n/a

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Tidy livery application
- ✓ Free-rolling wheels
- ✓ Attention to detail
- ✓ Efficient packaging

The packaging is refreshingly efficient, and includes a short prototype history card in both English and Welsh.



00 | 1962 – 1968 | £££ 179.99

Tri-ang Railways Remembered: RS9 'Intercity Express' Train Set



Steven Draper



Head back to your memories or unwrap a gift that never was.

Rewind to Christmas '66: Hornby's Intercity Lets Childhood Run Again.

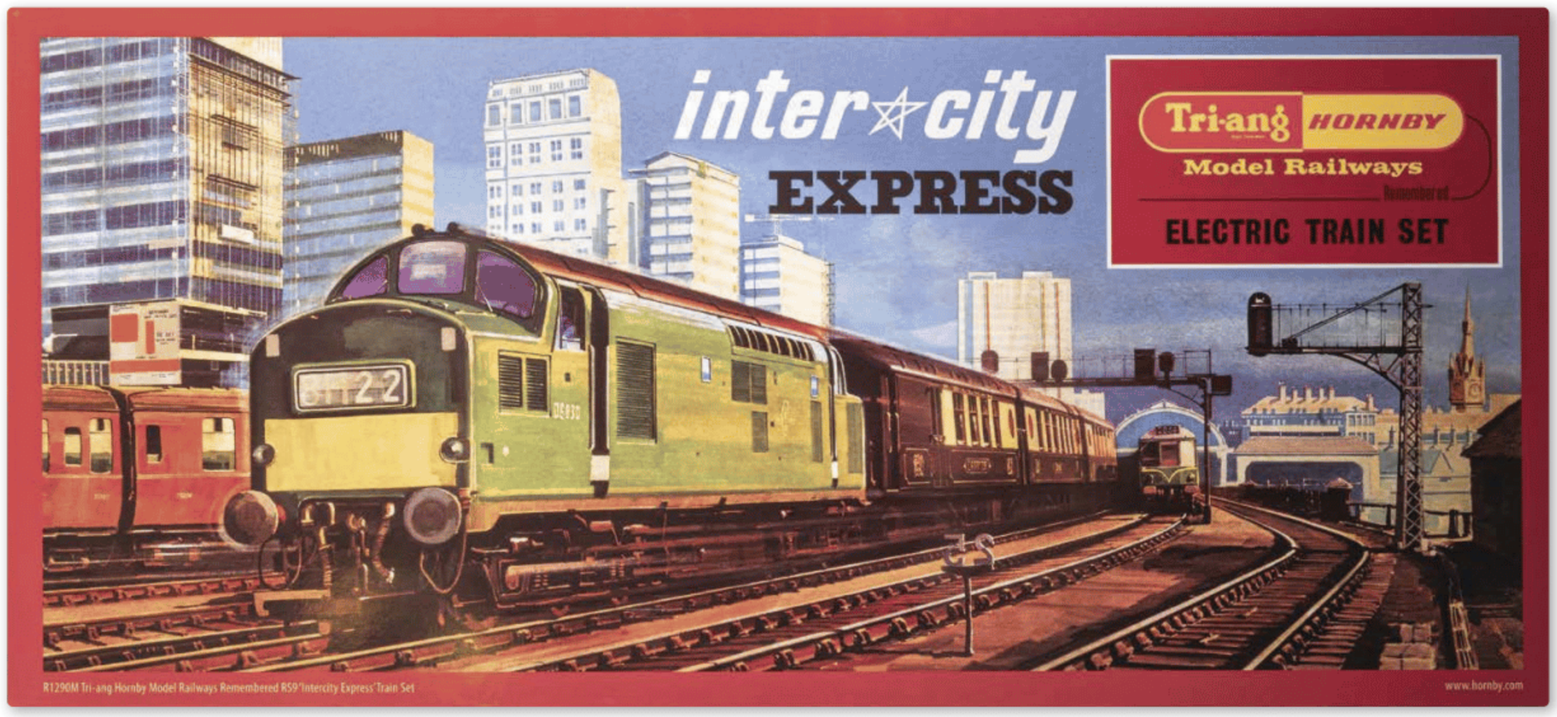
As the heat of the summer of '66 faded into the mellow orange of autumn, schoolboys hungrily flicked between the pages of *The Eagle* comic and the freshly printed 12th edition of the Tri-ang/Hornby catalogue. Those few, glorious pages were stuffed with Battlespace, ultra-modern buildings and, spread triumphantly across pages 3 and 4, a set that felt like the future wrapped in cardboard: The Intercity Express. A green Co-Co Class 37, three plush Pullmans, and a looping circuit of track promising chaos, adventure, and endless laps around the living-room floor.

Come Christmas morning, thousands tore into that box with the enthusiasm of astronauts unwrapping a moon mission, while countless others politely pretended that Meccano or Dinky toys were exactly what they wanted instead.

Nearly 60 years later, Hornby's *Triang Railways Remembered* range lets us relive that moment almost bolt for bolt. The box art is a loving reproduction and inside waits something rarer than a fashionable Christmas jumper: the opportunity to relive a moment you once dreamed of but never had the chance to unwrap.

The Class 37 is perfectly chunky, delightfully lightweight, and numbered just like its ancestor. I grinned at the accessories, an old-style coupling - carefully redesigned to slot into modern NEM pockets - quietly smuggling nostalgia into the 21st century. The motor, while basic, runs better than the original ever dreamed of: smooth, reliable, and ready to do laps straight from the box. And unlike the original, there's no tiny bottle of Shell oil - because this Class 37 runs happily without constant tinkering from the living-room depot.

One note for gift-givers: there's no controller included, though anything sensible will do. The Pullmans capture the spirit of



The box art captures the original identically.



Inside, the presentation accurately captures the feel of the '66 set.



Despite being fairly basic, the moulding is crisp and decoration well applied.



The Pullman coaches capture the spirit of those in the original set.



The model has one power bogie and pick-ups at the opposite end.

the originals, with white roofs and just-enough detailing to keep your imagination interested. The track layout fills a small living-room battlefield of wrapping paper and pine needles perfectly.

For the review, we went full Christmas '66. My son styled his hair, found a suitably vintage jumper, and my wife lit the fire. After posing for the obligatory family photo, we clicked together the track and dug out an old H&M Powermaster, which quite possibly powered original sets decades ago.

As the train circled the floor and Tom Jones crooned "Green, Green Grass of Home" - the UK Christmas No. 1 that year, something quietly magical happened. In an age of mobile screens, TikTok loops, AI assistants and railway models boasting thrash-effect sound and laser-etched perfection, you could assume this set exists simply to cash in on nostalgia.

But it isn't that. It's more. Much more.



The set captures the imagination circling the living room floor.

It forces you to enjoy toy trains differently, in a simpler, purer way. Whether it takes you back to a moment with family, offers a second chance at the Christmas that never was, or just reminds you of the spark that first pulled you into the hobby, this set taps straight into the original magic of model railways.

For me, it became an evening with my son in a truly happy space - one we'll never forget. And that, frankly, takes some beating.

FACTFILE

Construction: Plastic
Weight: 236g
Era: 1962 – 1968
Price: £179.99
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: Original Style couplings on an NEM, circuit of OO track

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Great fun
- ✓ Retro Styling
- ✓ Smooth running of loco

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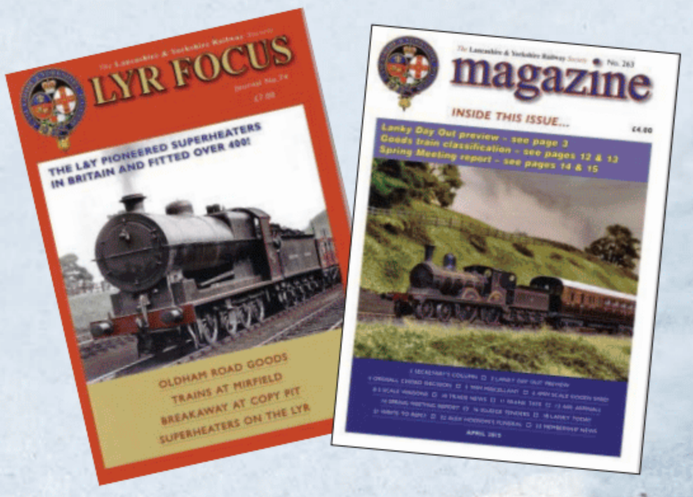

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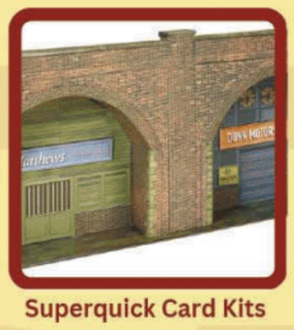
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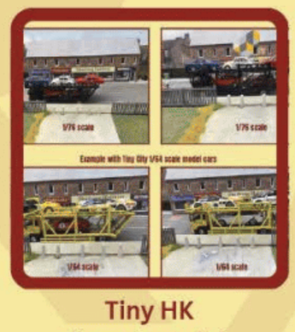
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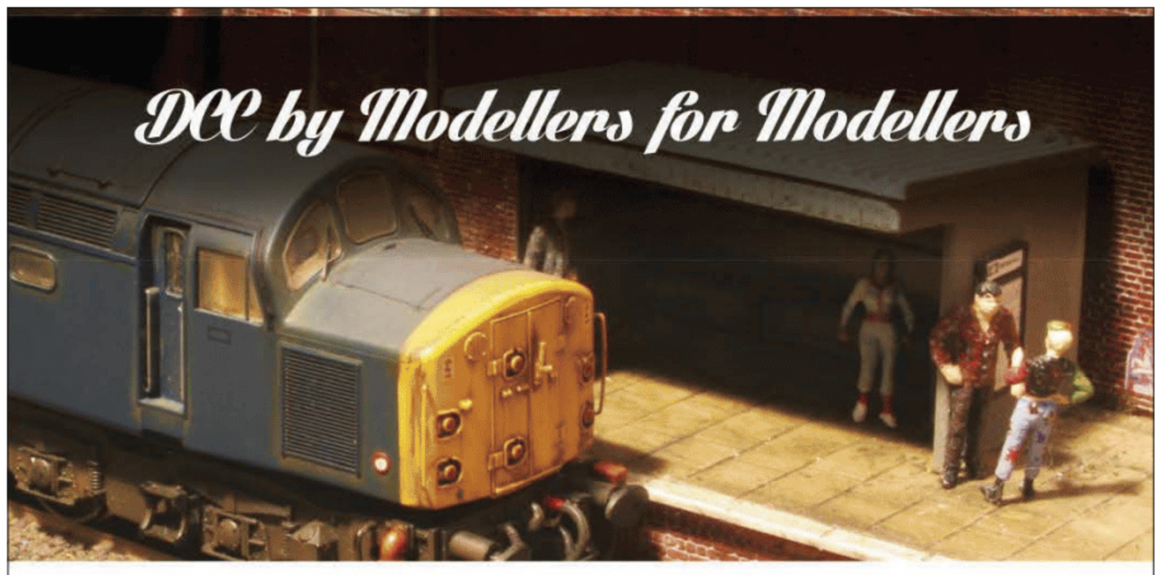

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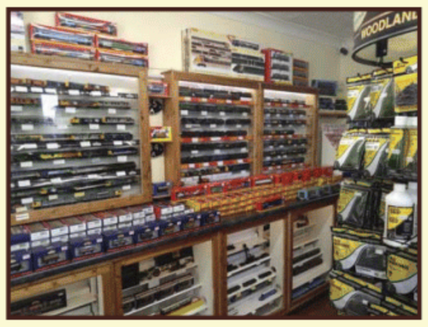
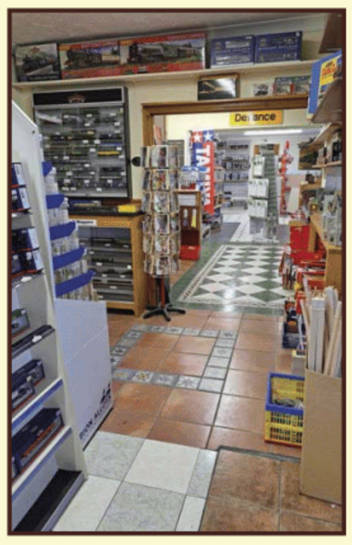

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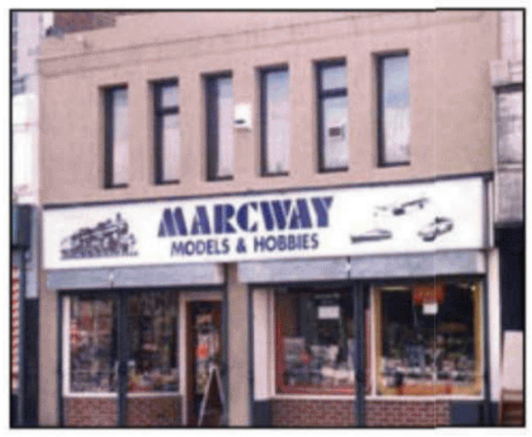



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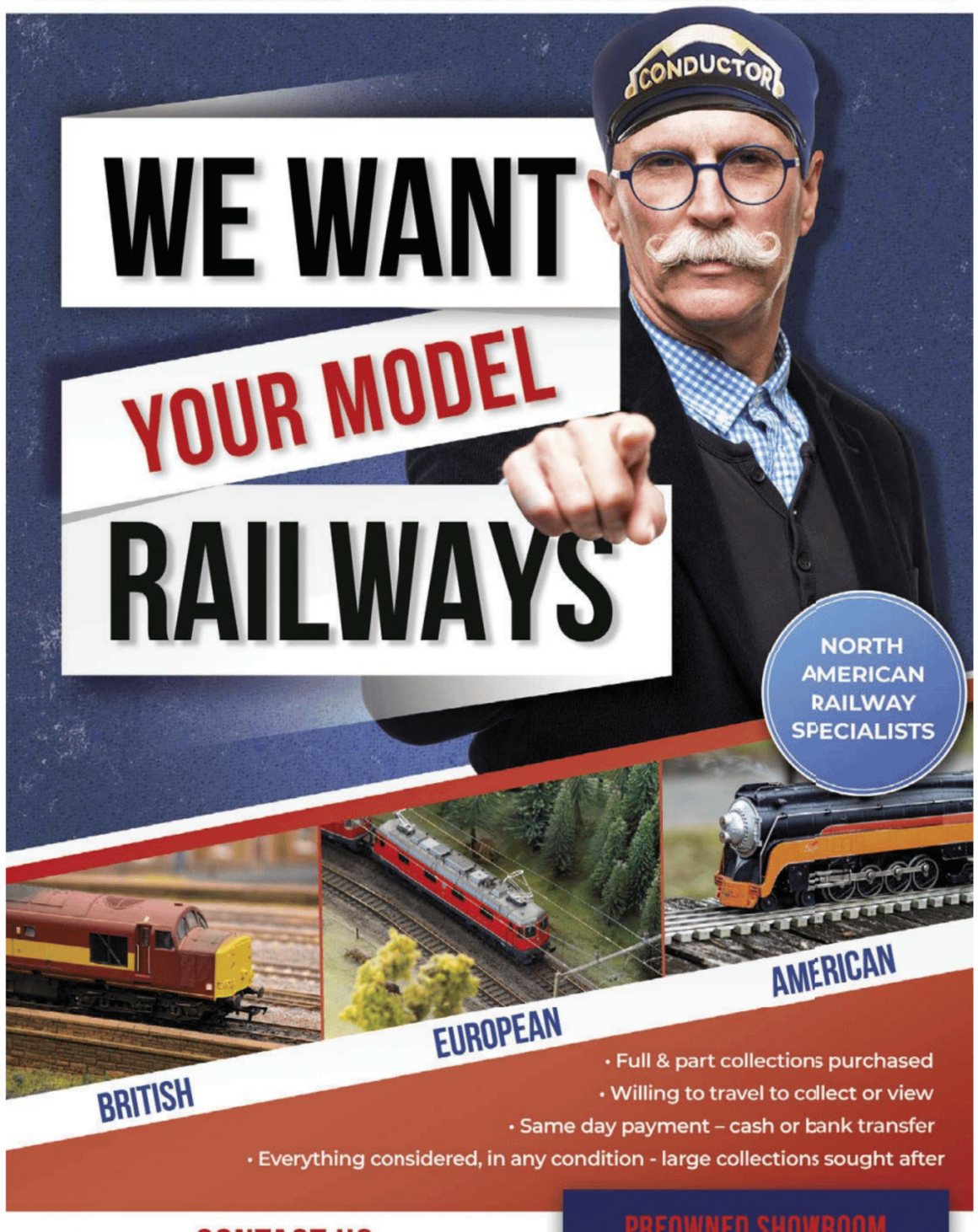









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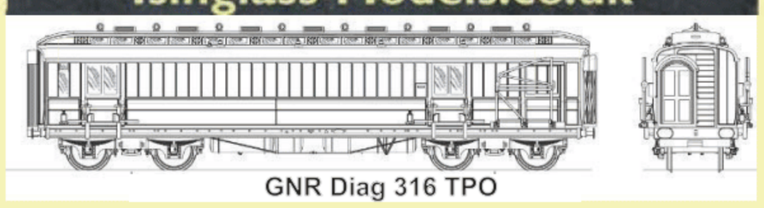

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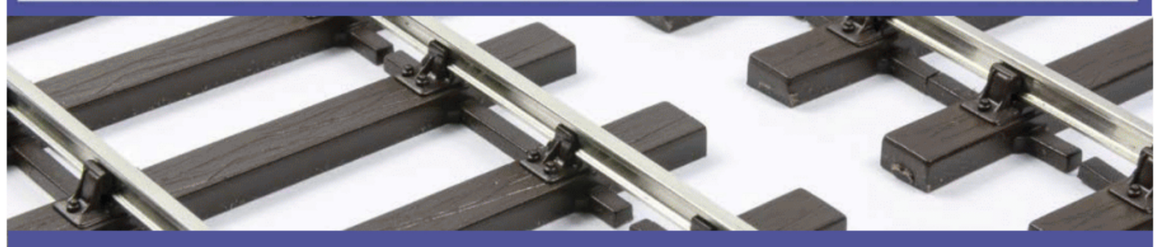

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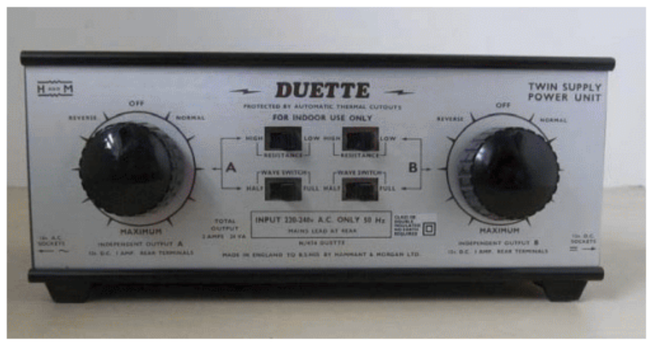

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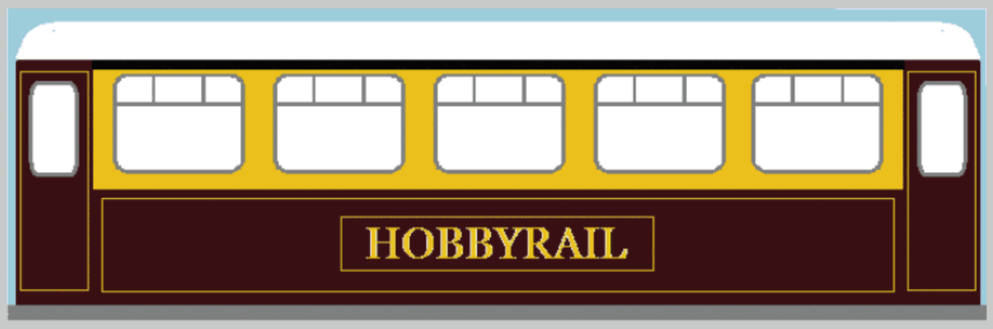

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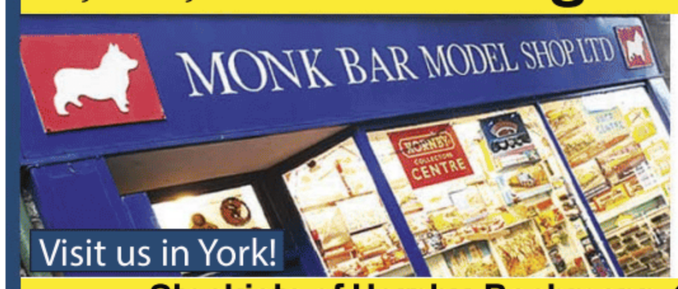

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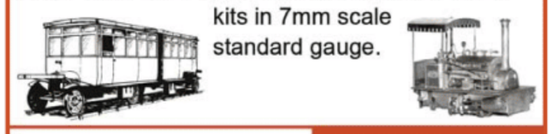

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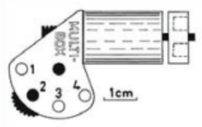

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Buffer Stop

National Festival of Railway Modelling special



Winner of the first Andy York Layout of the Show Award was the stunning 'James Street', much extended since we featured it back in February 2020. Debbie presented the trophy on the Sunday. The judges said it was a difficult choice – the competition was stiff.



The theatre was packed all weekend. Phil hosted a couple of panels made up of popular model railway YouTubers.



New to the show was our Marble Express game. Simon Kohler tries to land a ball in one of the wagons, watched by Tony Wright and master of ceremonies, Lawrence Robbins, who kept the crowds amused all weekend.



Smallest layout of the weekend has to be this model, built in a mustard tin, and brought in by a visitor. It worked, too!



Steven talked us through weathering wagons, using pigments.



Chris Mead covered 3D printing for beginners. His demonstration stand was two to three people deep for much of the show.

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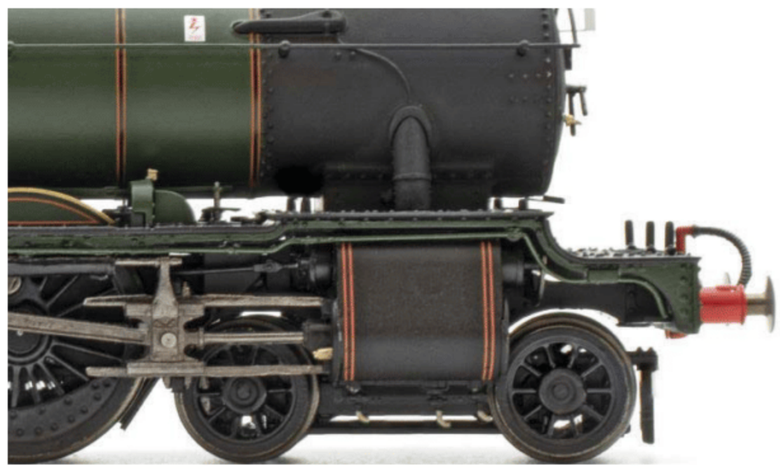







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