

GARDEN

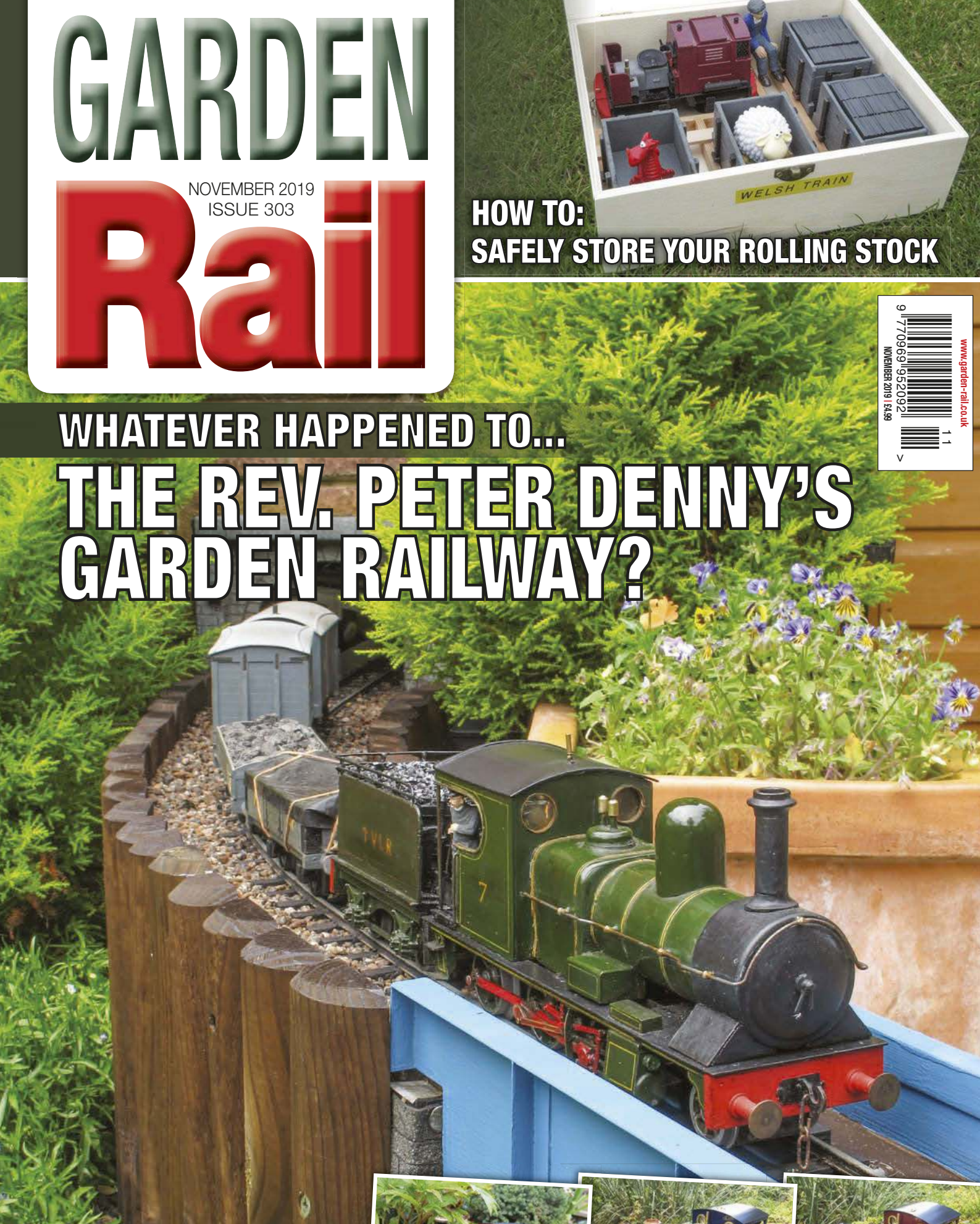
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ISSUE 303

Rail

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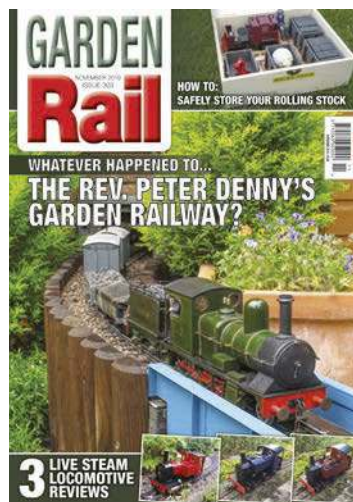
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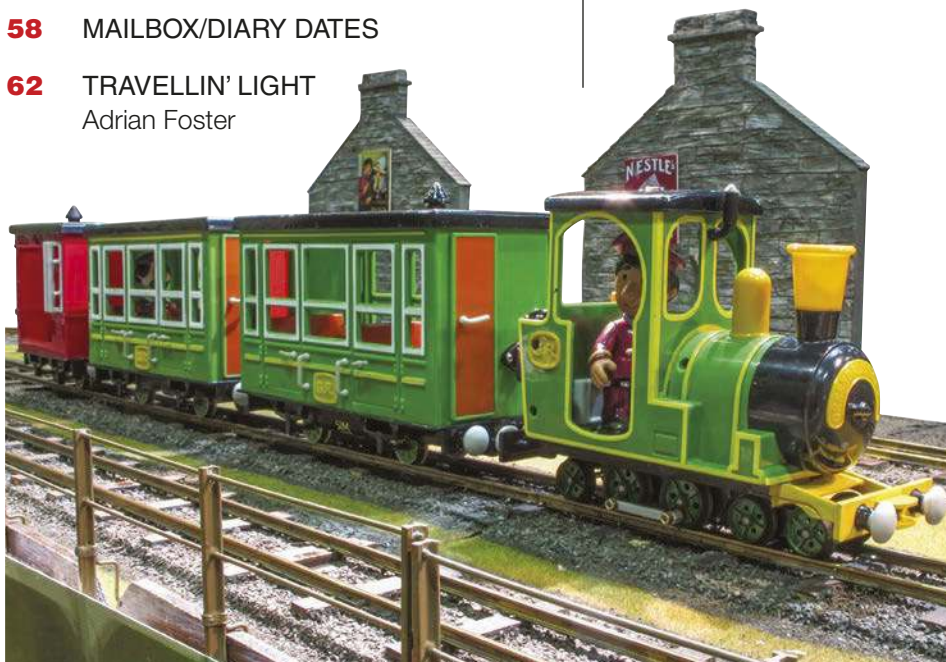
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Next Month: Tony Bird demonstrates how he motorised the "Glendale Rocket" for Postman Pat simply and cheaply. Just the thing for a young modeller's Christmas present perhaps?



VIEW FROM THE END OF THE PLATFORM



Looking backwards

This issue has a bit of a heritage theme thanks to a chance encounter leading to the opportunity to photograph rolling stock from Rev. Peter Denny's TVLR garden railway. Tag visited the line before the turn of the century and provides us with a look at it in operation and his son, Stephen, brings the story up to date.

Both Dave Skertchly and Mark Thatcher are looking back to the earlier days of our hobby as it's pleasant to see how things have changed, and dare I say it, improved.

Nothing sums this up better than a stroll around any garden rail show where you find a multitude of traders looking to tempt you with ever more sophisticated wares that make it much easier to build an outdoor layout.

One area where there have been huge improvements is ready-to-run live steam. We review three different locomotives this time and all would provide trouble-free, reliable motive power. Contrast this with the days of pot boiler firing using methylated spirits (although I do miss the smell of meths in the air at a show) blacking the paintwork on models that were relatively expensive if you adjust for inflation. Some of the builders could be "entertaining" to deal with too I'm told.

On my workbench are a couple of kits that show just how much things have moved on.

Does anyone remember Malletts Models?

I recently picked up a building kit for a L&B signal cabin. If I'm honest, it was cheap and peaked my curiosity.



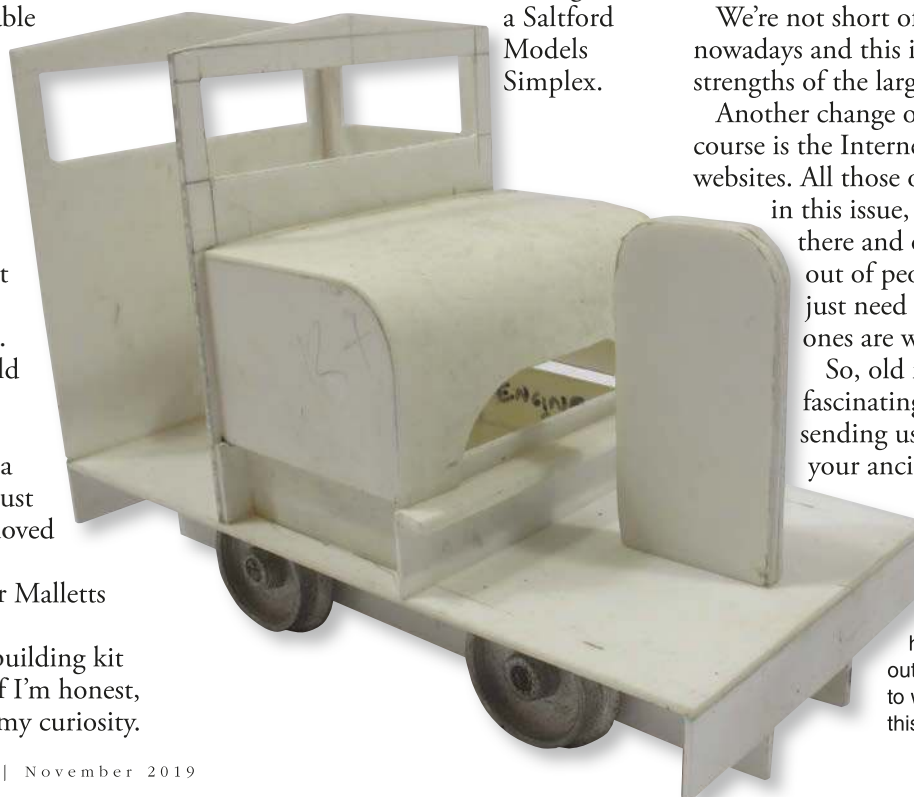
Does anyone remember Malletts models? This is a signal box apparently.

Opening the box, I find a collection of pieces of wood. None of your fancy laser-cutting here, the modeller is still expected to fashion many of the components themselves!

Old hands will sup their beer and say this is "proper modelling" and people are mollicoddled nowadays. They remember when you'd have to whittle a steam locomotive out of an old biscuit tin using nothing more than a penknife and a poker warmed on the fire for soldering.

While this might be true, the entry level for beginner is a lot lower than it used to be and hopefully, this will encourage more people to have a go.

Another model I have on the go is a Saltford Models Simplex.



Brian Clarke's range is sorely missed by me. Years ago, I built a Ruston and some of his wooden wagons, and dreamed of working my way through the rest of his kits when my pocket money was up to it.

Each bag of castings and mechanical parts was accompanied by plans and a cutting list for the builder to make up the rest of the model from Plastikard pieces. The instructions were charismatic and accompanied by beautiful hand-drawn illustrations.

Brian was (is, he's still around even if not making garden railway bits) an incredibly helpful chap. I still have a diagram showing how one of his kits featured 4-wheel drive and there are plenty of other stories I've heard along the same lines.

We're not short of helpful characters nowadays and this is one of the strengths of the large scale hobby.

Another change over the years of course is the Internet and auction websites. All those old kits we mention in this issue, they are still out there and occasionally come out of people's cupboards. You just need to know which ones are worth a look.

So, old models are fascinating, how about sending us some photos of your ancient projects? ■

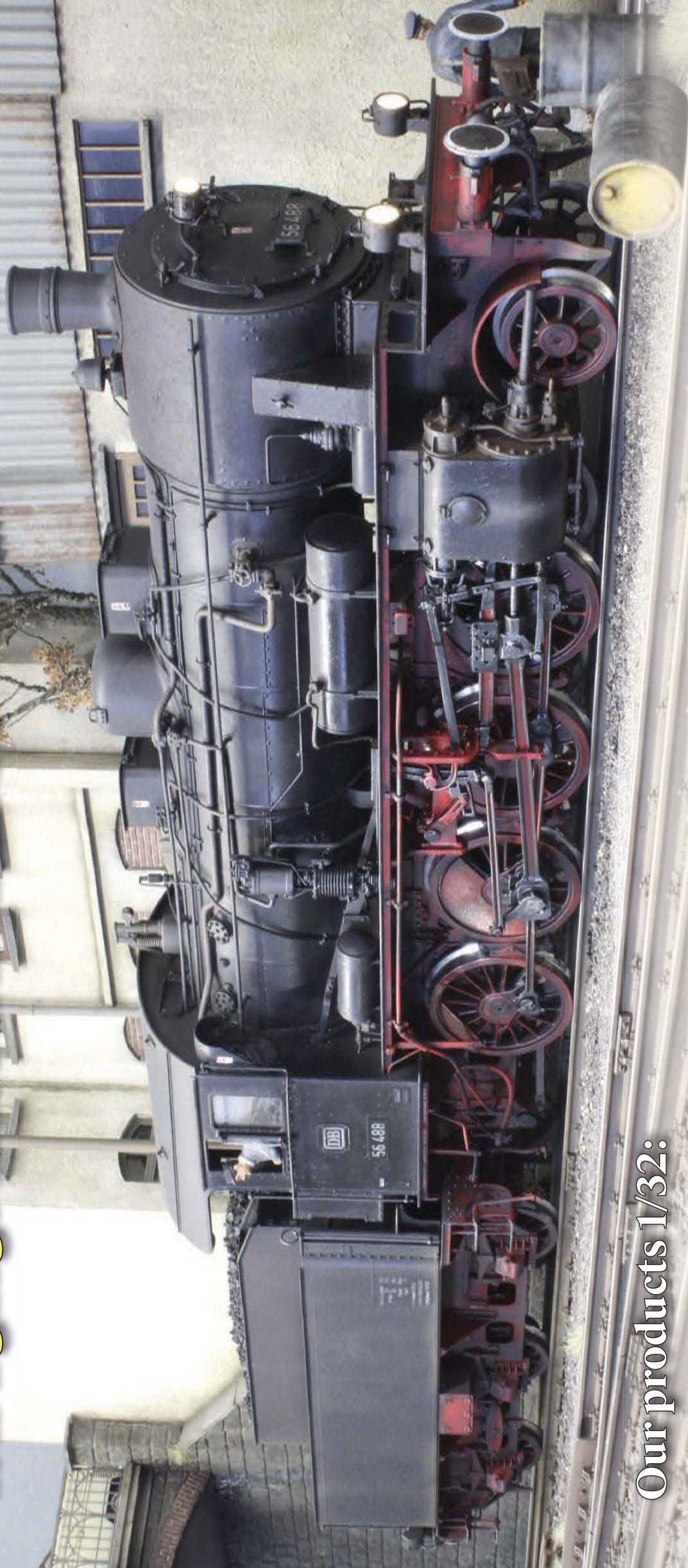
The Simplex is coming together, but I forgot how long it takes to cut out all the parts. You'll have to wait a bit to read about this retro build.

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Narrow gauge vanguard in the garden



Over two decades ago, Tag Gorton visited the Rev. Peter Denny and his TVLR

It was ostensibly just another enjoyable excursion into deepest Cornwall in 1997 to visit a garden railway, but this time I had to confess to a certain amount of trepidation while journeying to the headquarters of the

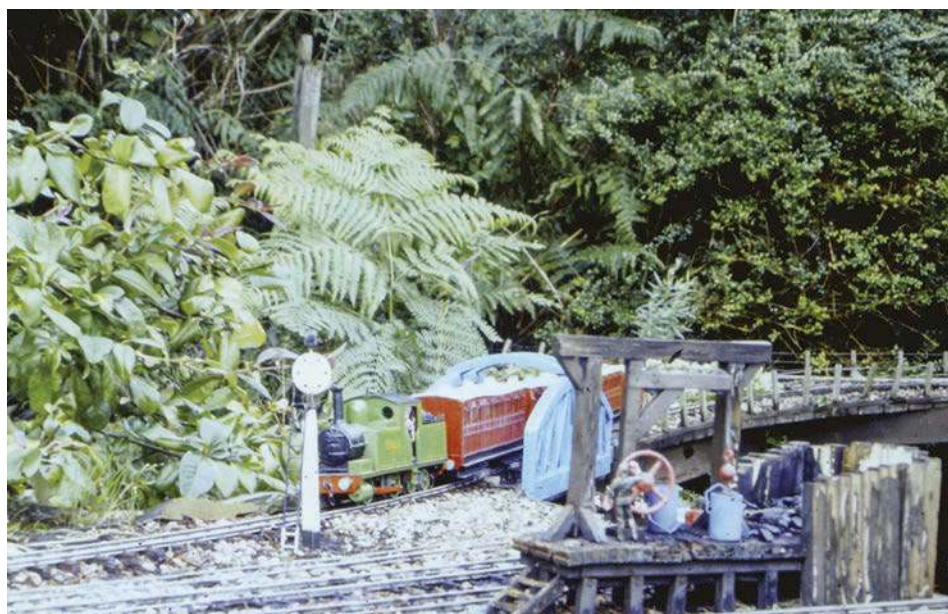
Tralee Valley Light Railway to write an article for the now defunct *Model Railway Enthusiast*.

Now, the TVLR may itself ring no particular bells – however, were I to mention Buckingham Great Central,

The Reverend Peter Denny is seen here at Lawnton.

Grandborough Junction or Leighton Buzzard (Linslade), then those of us of a certain age will remember with much pleasure the writings of the Reverend Peter Denny, doyen of post-war 4mm modellers and builder of the superlative and atmospheric Buckingham Great Central. At this time, the Peter Denny was approaching ninety years of age and, while still actively modelling, it would be unlikely that I would have the chance to see this line again...

This trip, you see, had a particular significance for me because I was visiting someone whom I can only describe as a model railway icon from my young days. The books and articles



After leaving Trepolpen (in the garden shed) TVLR No 3 is seen here crossing the lifting iron bridge before entering the impressive station at Lawnton. Note the ancient disk signal formed from an item of Meccano.



The surviving slides do not allow for proper continuity I am afraid, but here TVLR No 5 draws into the island platform at the junction station at Lawnton.

describing Peter Denny's fictitious Buckingham section of the Great Central Railway were a regular feature of my early reading about model railways – and I could never have imagined that I would one day meet the creator of this legendary *tour de force*.

It was however, Peter Denny's garden railway that was the object of this particular journey, because the TVLR was something of a precursor to the modern garden railway. The Tralee Valley Light Railway was situated in the garden of a house within easy strolling distance of the Cornish main line. Sadly, the prototype, by this time,

rarely provided the sight and sound of steam operation, but at least it afforded a certain amount of background railway atmosphere whilst operating the garden line.

It was unfortunate that, on that particular weekend, the weather had not been kind, therefore the trees and associated shrubbery were heavy with the wet. Certainly, it was not suitable weather for the complicated and prototypical operating sessions that Peter used to undertake with members of the Cornish Gauge O Guild and Shrubbriness station, hidden deep within the dripping foliage, would not

be a comfortable billet for even the most ardent of station masters.

I should say that this was probably just as well, because this archetypal train watcher would probably have got in a terrible tangle coping with the complexities of running a full service on the TVLR. You see, my own line is really little more than a live steam train set running through a series of living scenic dioramas and therefore very suitable for lazy toads such as myself – who just like to sit and watch the trains go by.

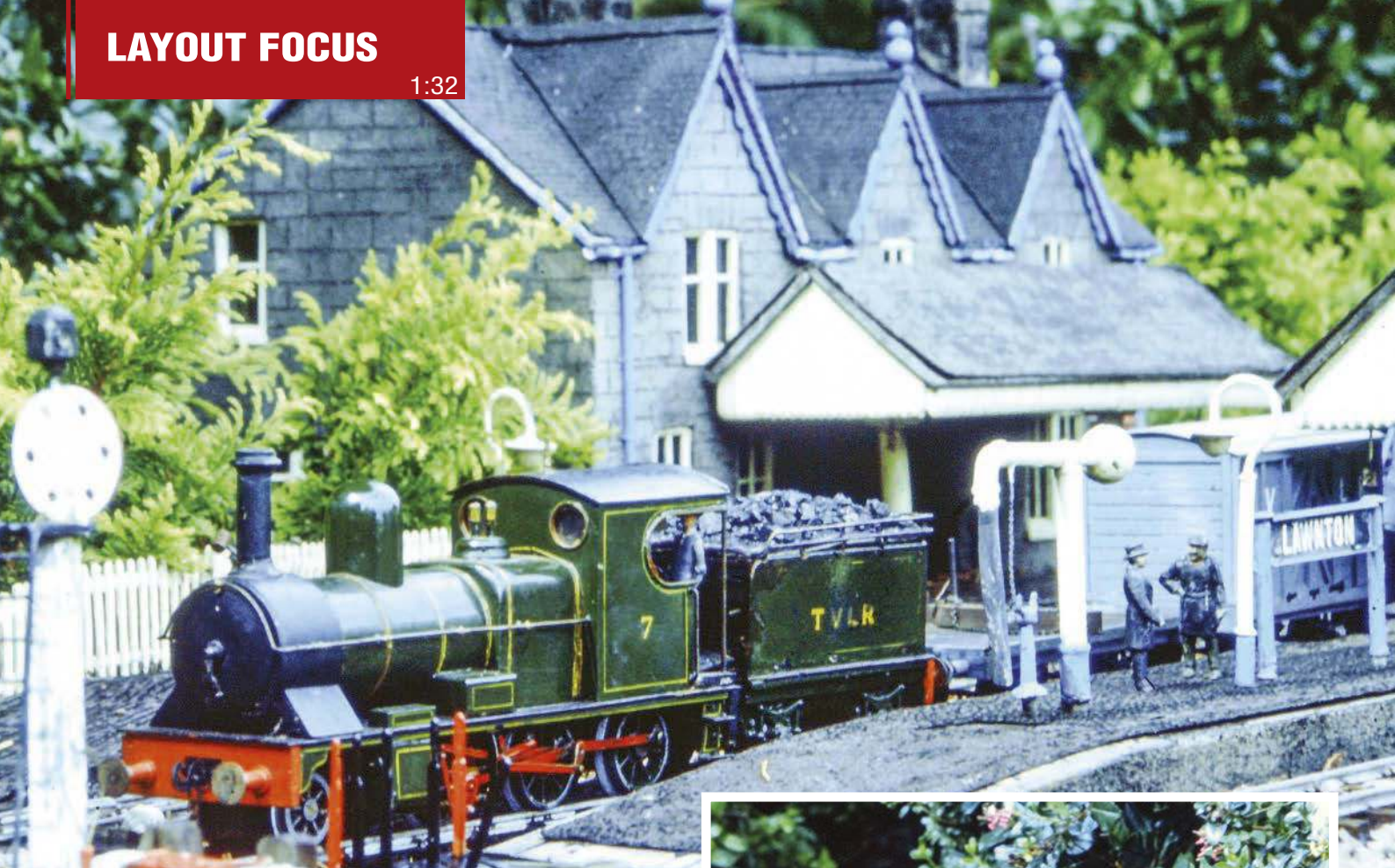
SOMEWHERE TO SOMEWHERE

This line, however, was rather more purposeful than the usual type of narrow-gauge railway more often found in today's gardens, and the fact that the TVLR is designed to be operated in a prototypical fashion is very apparent. This railway then, goes from 'somewhere to somewhere'. It is both fully signalled and has a proper working timetable that may be operated using a system of job cards for engine drivers, shunters and signalmen.

The line also had very much a 'corporate image – albeit one with



After gaining height on the loop the train passes over a large girder bridge and from this point the train will traverse another loop before running through Lawnton from the other direction.



a gentle 1930s ambience. There is a consistent approach to livery, rolling stock, colour schemes and structure design, which produced a very pleasing overall effect when set against the living scenic background and lit by ever changing natural light.

Now, the larger proportion of narrow-gauge garden lines today are built to G-scale or 16mm to the foot, however most of the components of the TVLR were constructed at a time when 16mm was unheard of and G-scale was not even a twinkle in Herr Richter's eye! The models themselves were built to around 10mm to the foot, providing a representation of a substantial Isle of Man type enterprise. The track was O gauge and the

Above: TVLR No 7 slowly draws a heavy goods train through Lawnton.



No.5 rounds the bend.

aluminium rail section, produced by Fenlow Products in the early 1950s, sat on timber sleepers, while the pointwork was further strengthened by battens set in the ballast.

The trackbed itself consisted of 5/8in slats over timber framing. Plastic

bags formed a base for the ballast and provided some protection for the timber construction. The whole of the timbering is creosoted twice a year and, since this incarnation of the railway had been in place for at least 14 years, appeared to stand up to our damp Cornish climate very well indeed.

There were certain little wrinkles that have been taken up by other garden railfarers over the years. For instance, the TVLR changes levels throughout its length, due to both gradient and topography, and this has meant that Shrubbriness Station was perhaps rather too close to the ground for comfortable operating – even for the lithe and super-fit members of the Cornish Gauge O Guild, who were the backbone of TVLR operating sessions. Peter's obvious answer to this problem was that if one cannot raise the railway – then one needs must lower the ground. In the



Returning from Shrubbriness...



The layout was set above ground level on 5/8in wooden slats over timber framing.

tree lined bower that is Shrubbriness Station, there is a neat, well drained operating pit, providing an ergonomic – if somewhat isolated – working position for the Station Master.

BATTERY POWERED STEAM

Battery powered steam outline locomotives worked this railway. These locos (themselves still extant) have reversing and brake controls in the cab, harking back to a clockwork ancestry and in fact, on some of these engines, the site of a winding hole can still be discerned. Powered by old laboratory electric motors driving through worm gears, the locomotives are largely built from wood on Meccano chassis, while dowelling is used to form chimneys and cylinders.

In fact, the only significant commercial items employed by Peter (on any of his railways) were wheels and rail section. Today, when so much is available from trade sources, it is fascinating to see what a fertile

imagination can produce from everyday objects. For instance, Peter pointed out that the buffers were actually roofing tacks while, on one locomotive, the smokebox is fashioned from a cotton reel.

Most of the passenger and goods stock were built through the 1950s, during the railways previous incarnation as the Tamar Valley Light Railway, just a fifteen minute ride from my own Longlands & Western, but pre-dating it by many years. Based on home-built plywood body shells, the earliest examples, constructed in 1953, run on original Hornby wheels costing three old pence each and are still eminently presentable. The principle of building from scratch was carried through the infrastructure of the railway and it was noted that working period disk signals were perfectly represented by old Meccano wheels, while the lattice footbridge at Lawnton was constructed most effectively from spare OO gauge rail section.

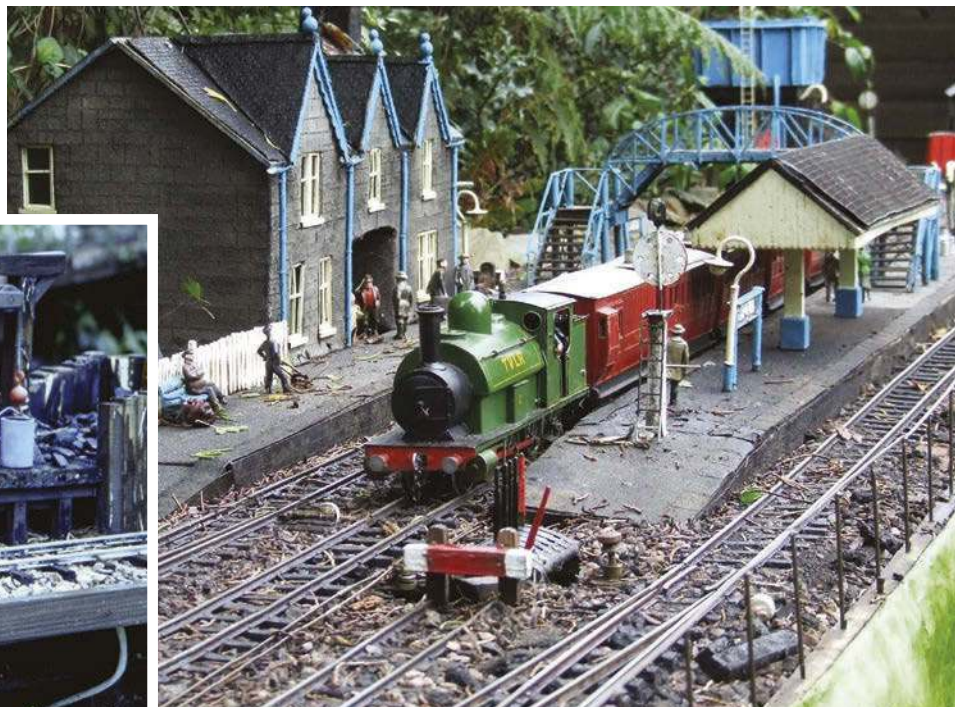
JOURNEY FROM TREPOLPEN

Perhaps it would be a good idea to explore the railway by following a train down the line on its journey from Trepolpen to the end of the line at Shrubbriness, via Lawnton and Tralee Halt. Trepolpen was the principle station on the line and was constructed in a garden shed, where all the rolling stock was stored in 'made up' rakes and therefore always ready for an operating session.

TVLR No 5, an 0-6-0 saddle tank, is waiting with a rake of panelled and lined four wheelers, their 'drop in' oil lamp holders prominent on the carriage tops. This is not a full operating session, merely a photographic essay down the line, so the train pulls away from Trepolpen and passes the triangular junction en route to Lawnton, the locomotive settles to the collar at around 15mph. As the ensemble negotiates the lifting bridge across the path, the expansive station layout at Lawnton swings into view and our train curves into the station alongside the island platform. This station is very reminiscent of the larger stations on the Irish narrow gauge or perhaps a minor railway passing place on the standard gauge railway. Certainly the substantial station buildings, goods shed and locomotive servicing facilities denote a place of some importance

Below: Although primarily an operating railway, the TVLR had some scenery such as this coaling stage.

Right: An overall view of Trepolpen station. (Photo: Stephen Denny)





The good shed. A fence made from nails and wire prevented any trains taking a dive from the baseboard. (Photo: Stephen Denny)

and the lattice footbridge, shows that a busy service was expected. Hidden in the station building is a working block bell which comes into its own during prototypical operating sessions. We are working 'one engine in steam' and so today it remains silent.

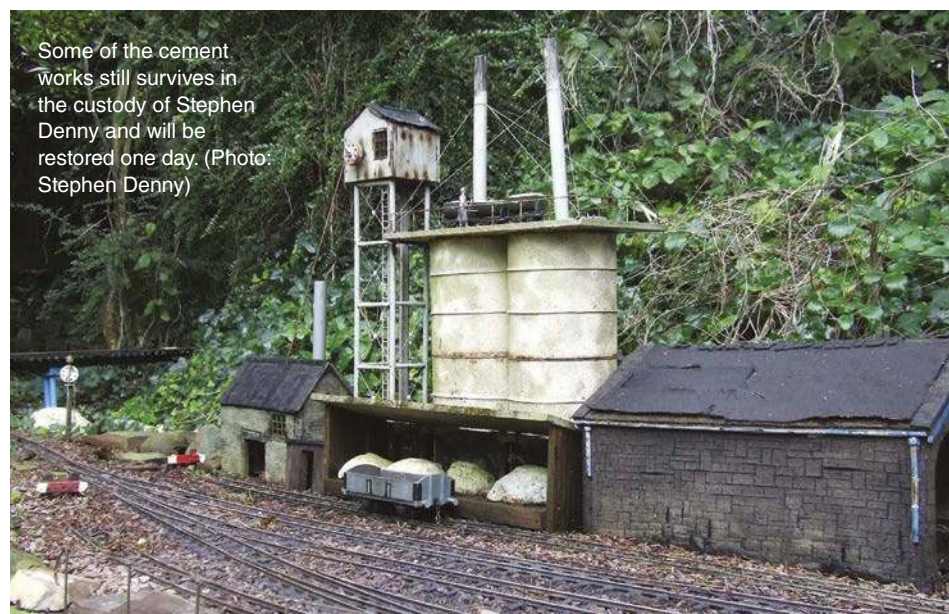
No1 moves away from the platform and its train rolls past the goods shed and water tower before disappearing beneath the girder bridge – only to cross the line after gaining height on the loop. The route of the permanent way through this verdant area of the garden allows for the train to be out of sight for significant periods, which adds a certain verisimilitude to the journey.

The next sighting, from the natural viewing area of the lawn, is when the train passes over the pond on an inverted girder bridge supported by 'cast iron' columns, before passing the simple halt at Tralee, with its single siding. From this point the trains traverse a large reverse loop through the shrubbery before running through Lawton again from the opposite direction. A pause here at platform one – then our inspection train takes another side of the triangular junction before running through the woods at the back of the garden, passing through the limeworks and running into the single platform station at Shrubbriness.

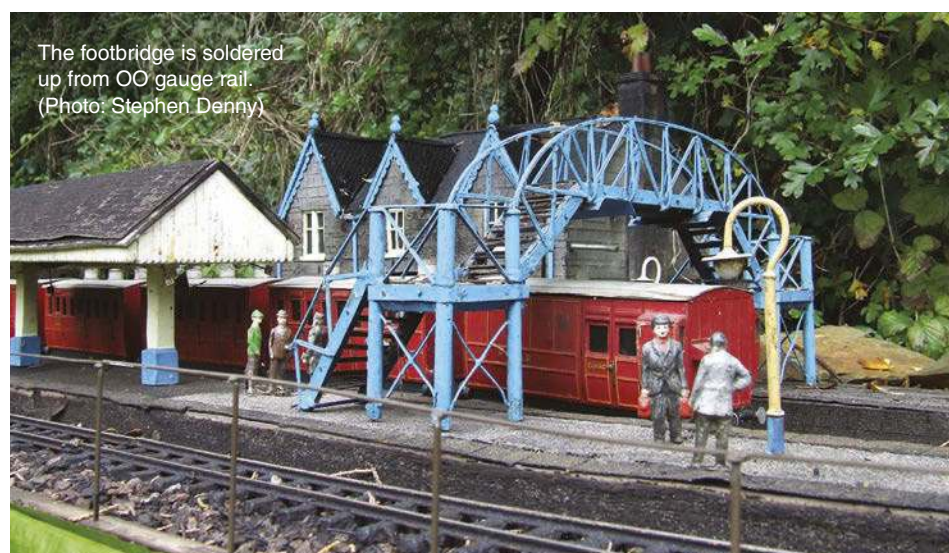
This was, for any garden railway, a comparatively long journey and with several operators, a busy narrow-gauge transport system could, for a few hours, be recreated in this quiet Cornish garden. Sadly, all has gone, but for many years this line provided much pleasure for many people and

indeed, inspired many to move out into the garden via articles in *Railway Modeller*. I should say, at this point, that my photographs were taken from

rather faded slides and were last seen in the latter end of the last century, supplemented by some by taken by Stephen Denny. ■



Some of the cement works still survives in the custody of Stephen Denny and will be restored one day. (Photo: Stephen Denny)



The footbridge is soldered up from OO gauge rail. (Photo: Stephen Denny)

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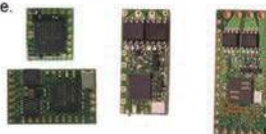
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What happened to the TVLR?

Sometimes the fate of an old layout is a mystery, but for the TVLR, Stephen Denny can bring us up to date.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TVLR

My father, Peter Denny's main model railway interest was his Buckingham Great Central EM gauge layout. He often referred to Buckingham GC as his main line and the TVLR as his side line.

Back in 1948 Buckingham GC was a portable layout that had to be erected before each running session. In 1952 Peter moved from a flat in London to a house in Cornwall. Buckingham GC was still a portable layout but he now

had a garden and his attention was drawn to the idea of a garden railway.

He initially explored the idea of building something in Gauge 1 but found the cost of components such as wheels etc. to be prohibitive. So he settled on Gauge 1 scale running on O gauge track representing a 3' narrow gauge line similar to the Isle of Man.

By 1954 there was a U shaped layout with a lawn and vegetable plot in the middle. Rolling stock included Loco No.1, 5 Isle of Man four-wheel coaches and a small collection of goods wagons.

This was the beginning of the TVLR known back then as the Tamar Valley Light Railway.

1956 brought the first move of the TVLR to a new home in Cornwall. This was a much larger house with a suitably large garden. Although the garden was larger the TVLR was reduced to a station in the greenhouse with the track passing through the wall to a second station a short distance away. On the other hand Buckingham GC had its own room and was rapidly expanding to fill it.

There was very little change to the TVLR for around 9 years. Then during an illness in 1965 Peter read some of his own articles on the TVLR and strange to say this inspired him to rebuild the TVLR as a more expansive layout with three stations, pond, tunnels, bridges etc. The greenhouse station became a storage siding/fiddle yard. This was due to the heat in summer making it unbearable to operate in. It was also at this time that most of the additional locos and rolling stock were constructed.

Some years later the TVLR went through a further rebuild with three terminus stations. Two of these stations



The indoor section of the TVLR today looking very like a conventional, if large scale, model railway.



Loco No. 1: 4-6-2 Based on the Irish L & L S R (Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway)
Constructed 1953

Constructed in brass and now looking in a bit of a sorry state. Powered by Walker-Riemsdyke speed controlled clockwork mechanism the power was somewhat restricted by the weight of the body and the loco was scrapped in 1966.

Loco No. 2: 2-6-2 Freelance design

Constructed c1957

This was always Peter's favourite loco.

This loco was built to fit around a Walker-Fenn pre-war speed controlled clockwork mechanism. The body is of an all metal construction. The Walker-Fenn mechanism was purchased second hand and proved to be powerful, slow running and reliable.

The original loco had a shorter coal bunker with a tool box on the back. The coal bunker was extended c1985 to accommodate NiCd batteries and the clockwork motor was replaced with a Marx Powerdrive Electric 6 Volt Motor (similar to the Meccano 12v Powerdrive 6 geared motor).

Originally all the rolling stock was fitted with the Isle of Man chopper style coupling. The actual chopper was only on one end of the rolling stock so they all faced the same way and were never turned around. This was important with clockwork locos as turning them resulted in the key hole being on the far side.

Peter felt that the chopper style couplings made the train too rigid and around the mid 1980s replaced them all with 3 link couplings. With the locos all battery powered the key hole was no longer an issue and turntables were included at both ends of the line.



Loco No. 3: 0-4-0 Freelance design

Constructed c1966

This rather strange looking loco resulted from Peter's youngest son Crispin insisting on running his Hornby 0-4-0 tin plate loco on the TVLR tracks. This was probably because it ran very fast compared to the other locos. However, the 7mm scale loco just didn't look right against the other 10mm scale stock, so Crispin agreed to have his loco built into a new body.

The original version of this loco was an 0-4-0 with the coal bunkers above the tanks. The back of the cab being completely flat with the somewhat oversized coal bunker being added at a later date. In view of the issues with the weight of a metal body encountered with Loco No. 1 it was decided to experiment with building this loco body predominantly from 2mm plywood.

In addition to the Hornby No. 1 clockwork mechanism the original smokebox door and chimney were also incorporated. The original chimney was cut in half and extended with a length of dowel rod. The dome is made from the end of a broom handle, cylinders from the handle of Crispin's beach spade and the buffers are roofing felt nails.

It was later fitted with a Clearbox 6v electric motor powered by a lead acid accumulator, the accumulator being housed in a Push-Pull coach. This provided reliable service for several years until the acid leaked from the accumulator destroying the coach. It was at this time that the loco was converted to an 0-4-4 with the extended rear coal bunker. The bunker accommodated NiCd batteries that at the time had just become available. The original loco crew have gone AWOL and have been replaced with a Gauge 1 loco crew from S & D Models.



Loco No. 4: 0-6-0 Loosely based on the Isle of Man Caledonia

Constructed c1966

Unfortunately this loco came to a very sad end when the spring broke on the Hornby No.2 clockwork mechanism smashing through the plywood boiler.

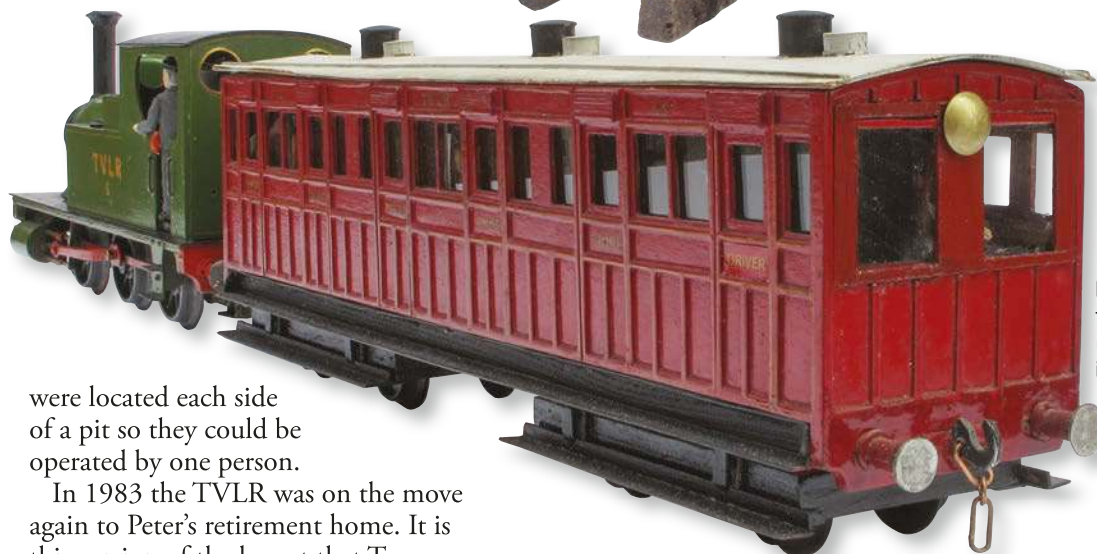


Loco No. 5: 0-6-0 Freelance

Constructed c1967

The body of this loco is constructed in plywood to accommodate the Walker-Riemsdyke clockwork mechanism removed from No 1. The theory being that the lighter wooden body construction would improve performance. However, the improvement was not significant.

Around 1990 the loco was converted to battery power and fitted with a Clearbox 6v motor. The engine driver with his arm raised had previously been a toy Bearskin Bandsman. These were a free gift in your cornflakes box back in the 1960s. From his stance I suspect he had probably been banging a drum.



Loco No. 6: 0-6-0 Freelance

Constructed c1968

The wooden body on this loco is designed to accommodate a Hornby No. 2 clockwork mechanism. It was later converted to battery power with a Clearbox 6v motor. The tanks on this loco are solid wood, leaving little space for batteries in the loco. So it now runs as a Push-Pull with the batteries in the coach. The coach is based on an Isle of Man bogie coach with the end compartment converted for the driver.

were located each side of a pit so they could be operated by one person.

In 1983 the TVLR was on the move again to Peter's retirement home. It is this version of the layout that Tag visited on the preceding pages.

THE TVLR ON THE MOVE AGAIN

In December 2009 Peter passed away. His Will detailed his wishes for the preservation of Buckingham. However, no mention was made of the TVLR.

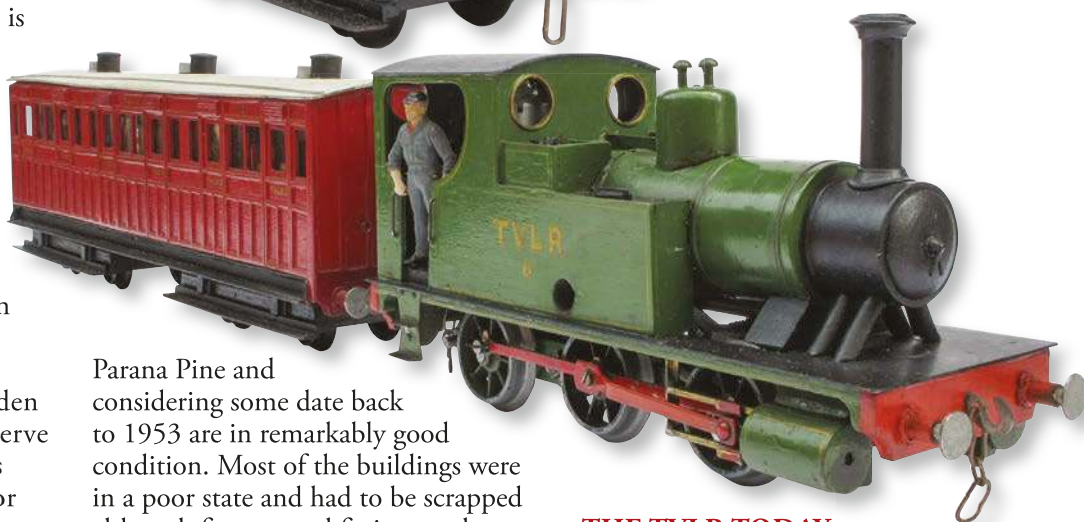
Fortunately a friend and keen railway modeller with a large garden came forward and offered to preserve it as a working layout. The tracks had been down at this location for some 27 years and during this time had been well soaked in creosote to preserve them. Some of this track dates back to 1953 and had already been moved several times.

Removing track without damage proved to be both a tricky and messy job.

The bridges largely are constructed of

Parana Pine and considering some date back to 1953 are in remarkably good condition. Most of the buildings were in a poor state and had to be scrapped although fixtures and fittings such as water cranes etc. were retained.

I decided to retain loco No. 2 and the five 4 wheeled Isle of Man coaches as a static display. The rest of the rolling stock was boxed and went with the track. Eventually it was all transported to its new home.



THE TVLR TODAY

Wind forward some eight years and for various reasons, the TVLR had mainly been in storage. I have now retired and it was mutually decided that I would set up the TVLR in my garden.

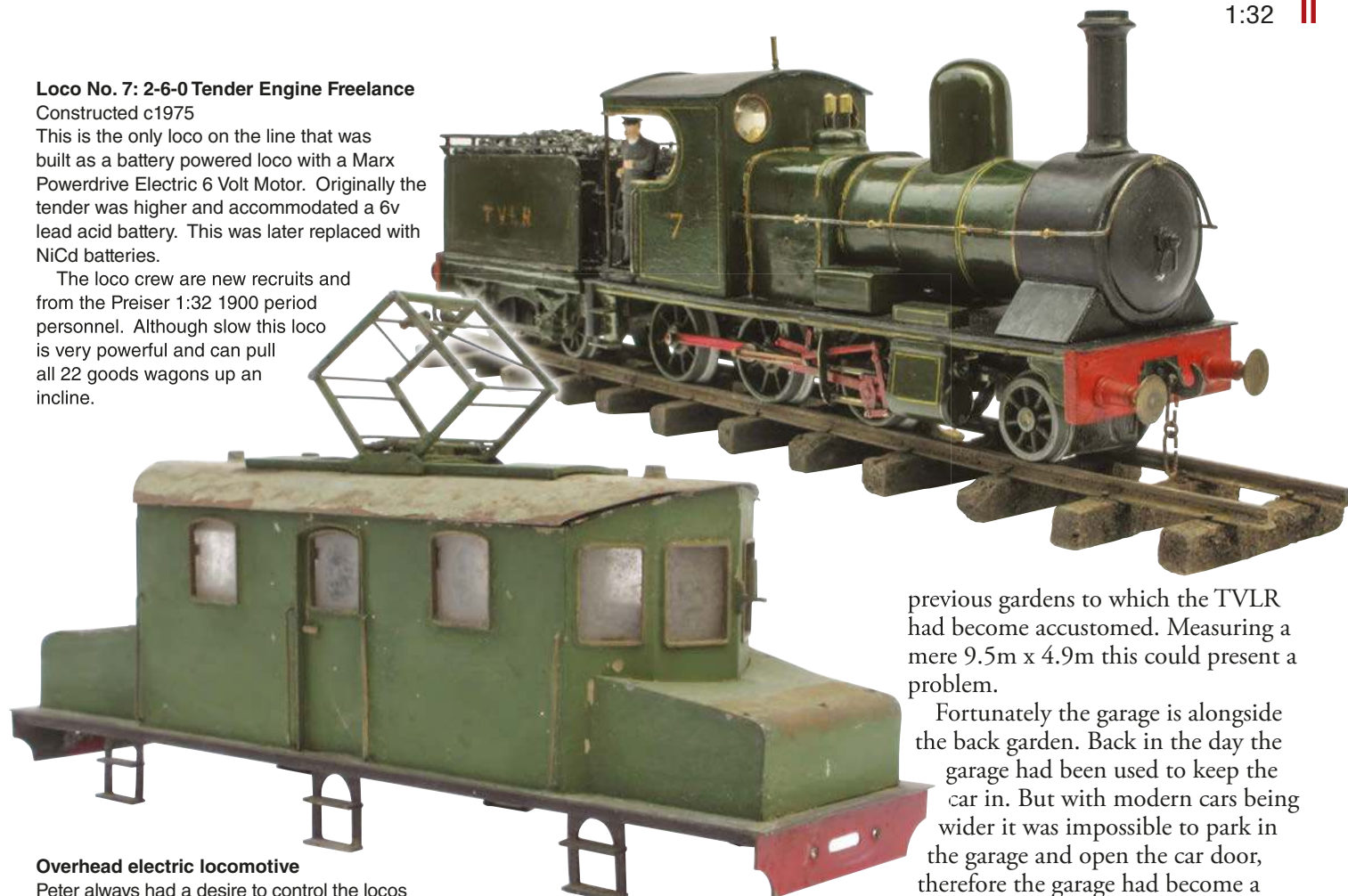
The only downside to this is my garden is considerably smaller than the

Loco No. 7: 2-6-0 Tender Engine Freelance

Constructed c1975

This is the only loco on the line that was built as a battery powered loco with a Marx Powerdrive Electric 6 Volt Motor. Originally the tender was higher and accommodated a 6v lead acid battery. This was later replaced with NiCd batteries.

The loco crew are new recruits and from the Preiser 1:32 1900 period personnel. Although slow this loco is very powerful and can pull all 22 goods wagons up an incline.

**Overhead electric locomotive**

Peter always had a desire to control the locos on the TVLR remotely in the same way that he did on his Buckingham GC layout. Clearly 2 rail pickup would not be compatible with the uninsulated axles of the clockwork locos. So he set upon the idea of power from the track and an overhead wire. To this end he built this loco with a pantograph. This is probably freelance but may have been based on something he had seen in Switzerland. It was fitted with a 24v motor.

Early test runs in the greenhouse went well, so poles and an overhead wire were set up on a length of track in the garden. However, he had not made allowance for cats and other

animals crossing the garden at night. When he looked out the next morning, the overhead wire and poles had been completely destroyed. At this point he threw his hands up in horror and abandoned the project.

Some years later toy radio controlled cars became popular. As these were relatively cheap he attempted converting the mechanism from one of these cars to control a loco. This never worked very well and he abandoned the idea. The five working locos are all now fitted with NiMH batteries and radio control from Micron Radio Control.

previous gardens to which the TVLR had become accustomed. Measuring a mere 9.5m x 4.9m this could present a problem.

Fortunately the garage is alongside the back garden. Back in the day the garage had been used to keep the car in. But with modern cars being wider it was impossible to park in the garage and open the car door, therefore the garage had become a storage area for junk.

Combining the garden with the garage would provide an area large enough for a U shaped layout similar to the layout design back in 1953. Well at least this made me clear out the garage!

In preserving the TVLR consideration not only has to be given to rolling stock etc. but also to preserving the basic concept. This is of a railway that goes from somewhere to somewhere. In this

**A pair of Isle of Man bogie coaches.**

Constructed mid 1960s

There were three coaches in this set. The middle coach has been converted to a Push-Pull coach to work with Loco No. 6

**A pair of open wagons.**

Note the difference in detail on these two wagons. The wagon on the right is an original from 1953 and has an opening door, rivets etc. The left hand model is from a later date with any detail that can't be seen from normal viewing distance omitted.

Guards Van and Box Van

Constructed 1953

The guard has been added recently and is from S & D Models.



A pair of Bolster Wagons

Constructed 1953

Note the logs are original also from 1953.



Mail Van

Constructed mid 1980s

The last wagon to be constructed and based on one of the Manx Electric Railway vans.



A Clearview motor and gearbox as used in some of the TVLR locomotives. These are sold for educational use and the gear ratio can be changed to suit the performance required.



case it will run from Trepolpen in the garage via Tralee Halt to Lawnton, that you may have guessed is on the lawn. Tre Pol and Pen each being a prefix to Cornish place names.

In 2018 the TVLR was loaded into a van and moved to my garage. The first job was to make a hole through the garage wall. The wall is brick and I had hoped I could find someone with a 6" Core Cutter. However, when I worked out the size of hole required a 6" hole would not clear the locomotives so I set about drilling a series of holes in a tunnel mouth shape. A bit of brute force and a lump hammer finished this and I surprisingly had quite a neat hole.

The outside of the hole is finished off with a tunnel mouth. None of the original tunnel mouths had been saved. I therefore constructed a new one based on the technique Peter would have used

as outlined in one of his old articles.

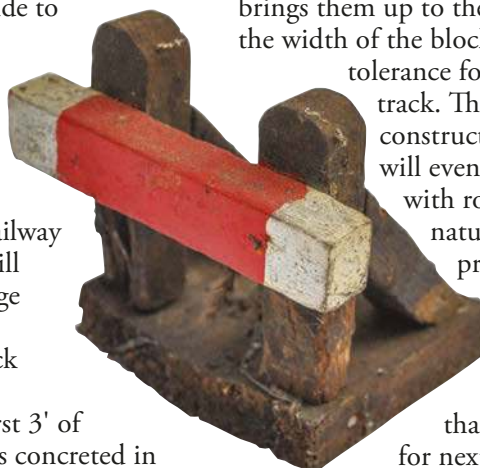
A baseboard was then constructed at around 12" above the garage floor. Laying the track sounds quite simple but proved a bit of a challenge as the sleepers are all made from varying thickness of wood and the points have battens on the underside to reinforce them.

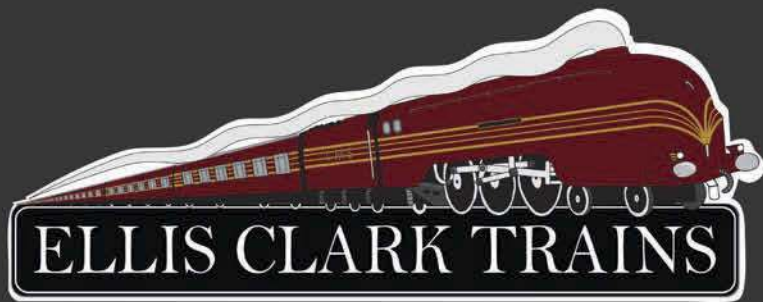
The track in the garage has now all been laid and is level. The layout in the garage is probably more like an indoor railway with a back scene. I will eventually have a bridge over the line where it passes through the back scene and garage wall.

In the garden the first 3' of track is raised on posts concreted in

the ground. The gap below the track is covered with log roll. The line then crosses a path on a removable girder bridge. After this the line runs along the front of a raised bed. The front of the bed is constructed from concrete blocks laid flat. Three blocks stacked brings them up to the correct level and the width of the blocks allows plenty of tolerance for the curved

track. This is still under construction. The blocks will eventually be faced with rocks to give a more natural look. As with previous iterations of the TVLR, I plan to have a pond for the line to cross. But that will be a project for next year. ■





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Building large scale -Trams



Last month, Mark Braine persuaded us to look at trams in the garden, this time he provides some practical construction advice that will also be of interest to coachbuilders.

As promised in the last instalment, it is proposed here to give a basic outline of the construction techniques of trams, track and overhead in 1/24th scale (or any other scale, should you so wish).

Firstly, a word about tools: these are simple and many modellers will already have them, even a “workshop” is not required, many famous tram modellers created outstanding tram models using the kitchen table!

However, we will assume that you have somewhere to work. Cutting MDF is messy, with a lot of dust (MDF dust is considered a health hazard and the wearing of a mask might be considered prudent).

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Tools are primarily a fretsaw, with fine blades obtainable from “Hobbies” (although both are often available from DIY stores), hand drill, or battery/ electric drill, screwdrivers (assorted miniature sizes), files (various) and wet and dry paper (various grades).

MDF is not really porous, but waterproofing and paint preparation

is best served by MDF sealer, a clear preparation that is brushed onto the entire tram, paying special attention to cut edges. Painted models can then be operated outside in all weathers. MDF sealer is typically available at B&Q or other outlets.

Paints: I use Halfords grey automotive primer, giving several coats, rubbing down between coats. I find that Tamiya model paint is by far the best finishing paint, spray or brush painted. Water-based, it gives a resin style coating and is quick drying. The models are finished off with Tamiya matt varnish spray. This gives a durable and realistic “in-service” appearance: having said that the Belgian trams are gloss finished by the same manufacturer.

THE BODIES

The trams are built assuming weight being built into them, rather than added later. If you are using a plan, trace the outline of the tram sides, using kitchen greaseproof paper, onto a sheet of 3mm MDF, which will have been previously cut down from a large sheet to approximate size.

Grimsby and Immingham No.1.

MDF can be a melamine coated (white shiny finish) which gives a good base for painting, but any 3mm MDF is suitable, I tend to use plain sheets personally. Remember you will be dealing with a mirror image of the plan. Go over the traced lines heavily in pencil on the board, and commence the cut windows, doors etc. Drill a small hole in each window aperture and feed through the fretsaw blade and begin to cut. Take your time! With care, follow the lines and repeat for each window aperture. These can be filed and sanded later, but try not to go outside your lines; cutting back is a lot easier than attempting to re-create “lost” material.

You will now have two sides. Repeat the process for any internal bulkheads and lay aside, whilst the roof and chassis are fabricated.

These are, according to the depth of the roof, formed from 2, 3 or 4mm MDF. These can sometimes be bought as off-cuts from DIY stores. The roof is shaped as per the plan, and two strips of



Leeds Railcar no. 602.

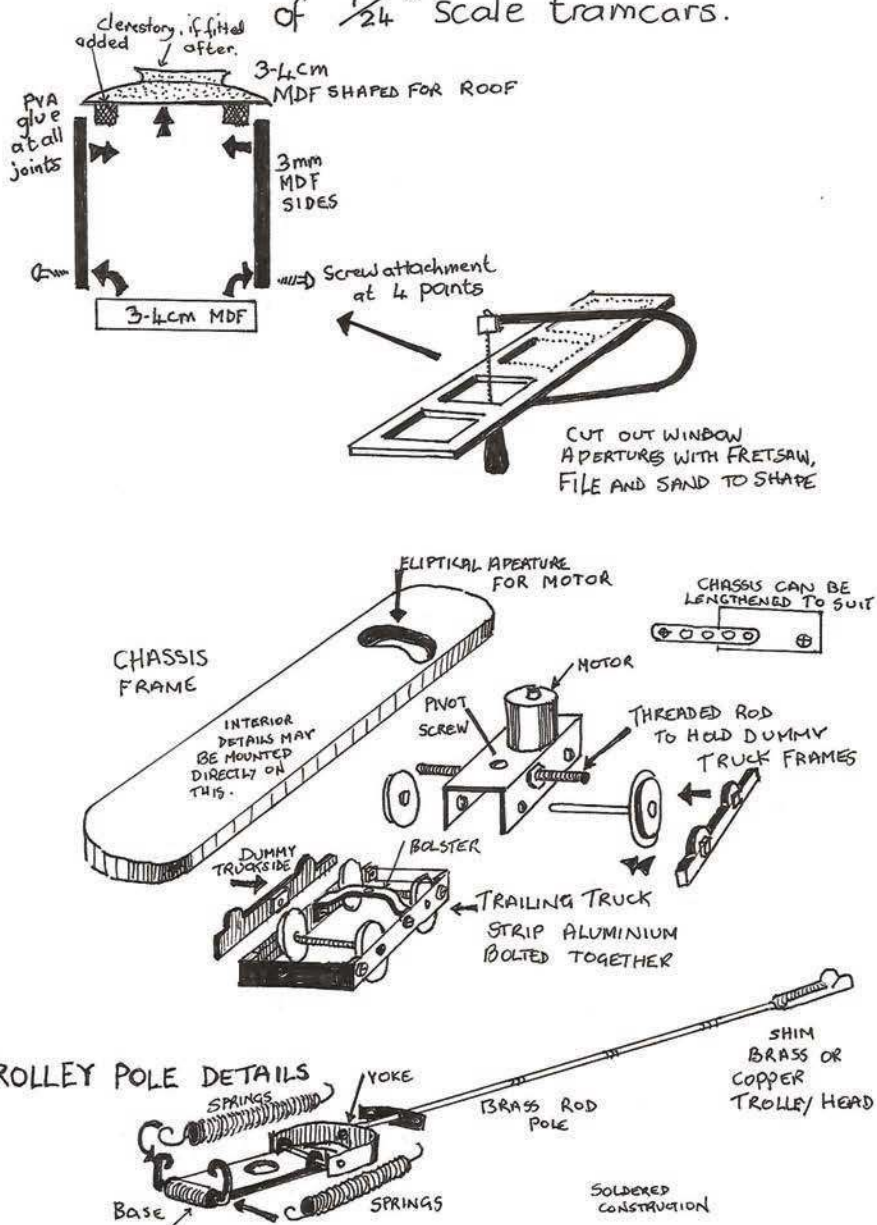


Works car 5W, a freelance water carrier based on an Australian tram.

Freelance 'Newcastle' style car no.12.



General principles for construction of 1/24th scale tramcars.



wood moulding are PVA glued to the underside, 3mm in from the edge, this is to accommodate the sides being glued on.

The chassis is cut out to the floor plan, noting where the motor bogie, or truck, will be situated, cutting out a circular hole for a single truck car, or elliptical for a bogie car – to clear the vertically mounted motor. Put this aside, as the internal fittings, seats etc. will be added to the floor, which will not be united with the body until the model is painted and glazed.

Now, make a “box” of roof, sides and bulkheads by gluing together. Superglue can be used, but stronger joins result from using PVA adhesive, which can be wiped off when wet – something not possible with superglue. Use clothes pegs or small clamps to

hold the structure together. Take your time and set aside each assembly to dry overnight.

Cabs (on modern cars) can be fabricated separately as a “box” and added to the main body later, as can be vestibule fronts. Wood filler is used to smooth all joints afterwards sanding smooth to create a “continuous panel”.

Roof and body detail is added, using brass wire, strips cut from “lolly sticks” or sheet balsa, superglue may be used for this, but use sparingly and keep away from glazing!

Take measurements of the sides (for a continuous piece of glass to be added to each side) to a glazier, which is inexpensive. Add the glazing strips after painting, using Evostick or UHU. Window bars can be simulated by the

use of “OO” scale rail separating upper and lower panes.

THE CHASSIS

I use the IP basic budget chassis which comes with a motor and gears/axles. This is a U shaped steel channel, which can be trimmed or extended to any length you need (see diagram).

Drill a hole in the centre for bogie use and line up with the elliptical opening to permit bogie swing, and secure with a pivot screw to the already prepared chassis. Four wheel chassis can be secured by self tapping screws.

To match, prepare a strip aluminium trailing truck and add wheels and axle units via the previously drilled holes in the side frames. Mount this truck at the opposite end of the car. Dummy truck



Inset: Belgian 'Vicinal' car no.10483
(Brussels area).
Blackpool Number 5, One Man
Operated rebuilds from the 1970s.

sides are cut from MDF and bolted to the metal frame.

INTERIOR

Seats etc. can be made from balsa or even mounting board, or assemble from wooden moulding strips. Lighting, if desired, is added to the ceilings, using copper clad strip or simply a length of copper wire running the length of a car. Place an on/off switch for lights, plus a PP3 size battery box under the car, wherever there is space. Use 12v bulbs to create a voltage "safety margin".

A traction battery box (2xAA batteries) is placed at the opposite end of the chassis and is controlled by a miniature DPDT switch wired to the motor. Hence the lighting, if fitted, is a separate circuit, at a different voltage.

ASSEMBLY

The chassis is attached to the body by four small brass screws at the outer end, on each side, via previously drilled holes.

Roof fittings, trolley pole, bow or pantograph can then be added. The diagram shows a simplified trolley pole.

Lifeguards, etc. can be made either by split lolly sticks glued to vertical brass rod or soldered up from strip brass (leave the lifeguard tray – it is too vulnerable on garden tracks). An alternative is to use brass rod or nickel silver Peco "OO" scale rail cut to length.

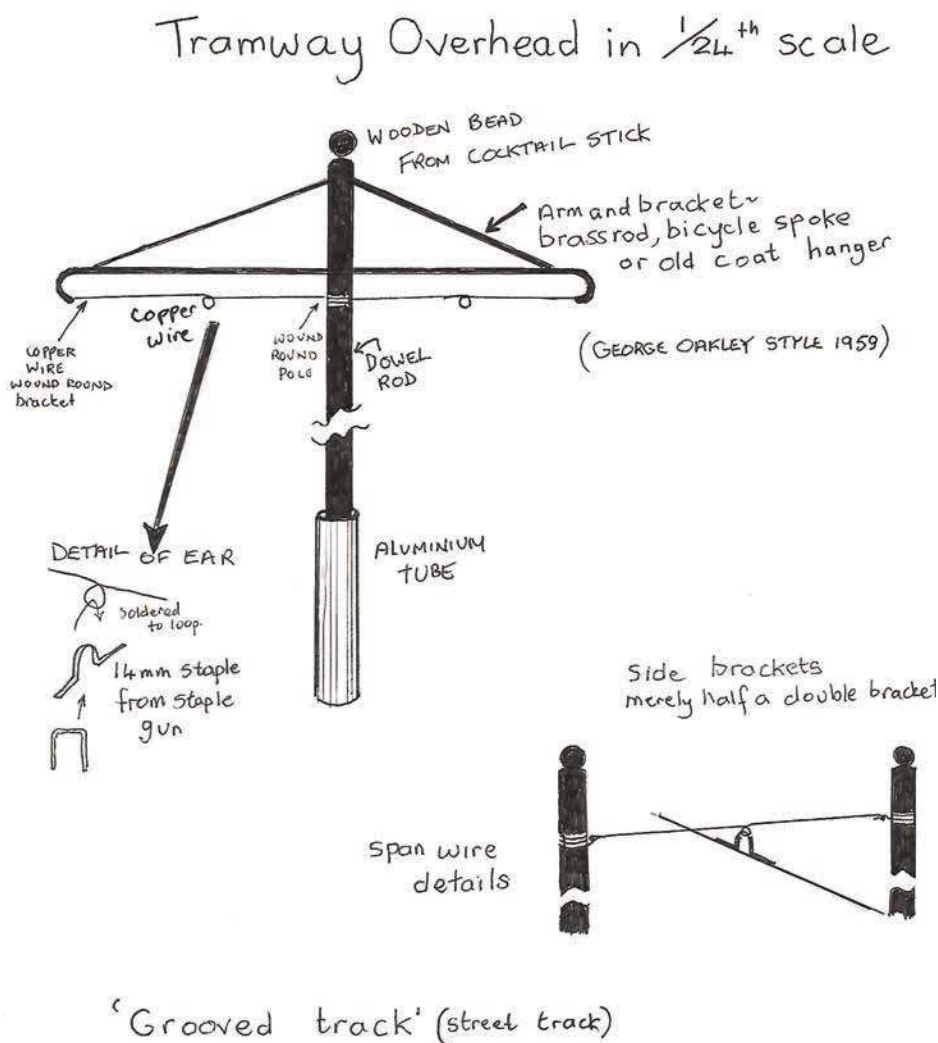
TRACK

Any standard G45 track is appropriate, radius 1 curves are quite suitable for trams, although as always a wider radius gives better running characteristics. On "street" sections on the indoor layout, I spot solder Peco G45 rail on its side against the web of the LGB (or Piko etc) brass rail. Although rather over-scale, it gives a good impression of grooved rail, the Peco rail is considerably smaller in cross section than that of LGB. Otherwise, railway track gives good, trouble free running.

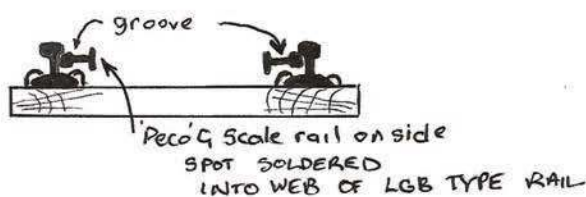
OVERHEAD

Remember, this is optional, but gives a good effect, especially on an indoor layout, free of marauding cats etc!

Many years ago, the noted tram modeller George Oakley devised the "ear" design shown in the diagram. I have refined this by using staples (from a staple gun 14mm length, usually) to create "ears" as shown. These are threaded through the wire loop and



'Grooved track' (street track)



soldered both to it and to the running wire, using electrical grade solder and flux, paste type, available in DIY shops. I do not use "frogs" (points in the overhead) but wire each track separately on a double track: this reduces de-wirements!

Although necessarily brief, I hope that this series of articles encourages a foray into the world of trams: if nothing else, a tram added to a railway "roster" can add interest and, who knows, may stimulate a whole new direction in your modelling.

SIMPLICITY IS THE KEY!

Finally, may I recommend that you join the TLRS, www.tramwayinfo.com, a society whose main focus is tram modelling. ■

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Scratch-bashing a Southwold Sharp Stewart 2-4-2T

No kit, no problem. Rik Bennett wasn't going to let anything stop him adding a Sharpie to his line.

I have always been a great fan of the Southwold Railway (my SRT membership number is 028) and even started construction of a section of it in my loft in 00n3 scale, though sadly never finished it because, well, life took over.

When I ventured out into the garden, I was determined that my 45mm line should feature at least one Southwold loco. After building a replica of the SR Manning Wardle 0-6-2T I felt it needed to be accompanied by one of the charming little Sharp Stewart tank locos. However, for a while I was thwarted

as I couldn't find a ready to run motor block which was even vaguely in the right proportions.

As you may have seen from my previous scribblings, I do not regard myself as a proper modeller – I muddle my way through modelling projects and spend almost as much time rectifying my ham-fisted attempts as I do actually creating them.

My efforts to construct reliable mechanisms (even kit-built ones) have always ended in failure and hence I prefer to buy off the shelf mechanisms wherever possible. One of the reasons

I continue to use 45mm gauge track is the preponderance of ready-made models with robust and well-engineered motor blocks.

Whilst browsing the offerings on a well-known online auction site, I came across a Playmobil track-powered motor block which seemed to be about right and so forked out the princely sum of £28 for it.

On arrival, I was delighted to find it was approximately correct in terms of wheel size and spacing for the Southwold Sharpies in 16mm scale. Although it would be slightly more complicated to construct, I opted for the line's second No.1 loco *Southwold* as it was slightly larger than its sister locos and hence would provide more room for batteries and radio control paraphernalia.

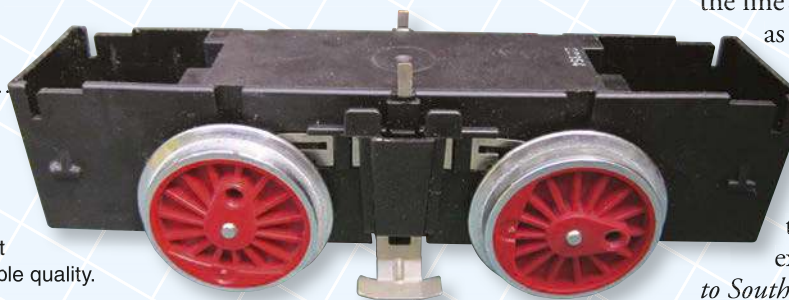
After using a photocopier to re-size the drawing from the excellent volume, *Branchline to Southwold* (Vic Mitchell and Keith Smith, Middleton Press, 1984), I once more seized my trusty razor raw and set to work.

I learnt a lot by making this model. I am quite pleased with the bodywork, though I am fully aware of the imperfections which to me are glaringly obvious.

The mechanism is very robust and, although the motor is not a

1.

The Playmobil motor block as bought second-hand on the Internet. Although intended to power a toy loco, the mechanism is quite robust and the motor of reasonable quality.



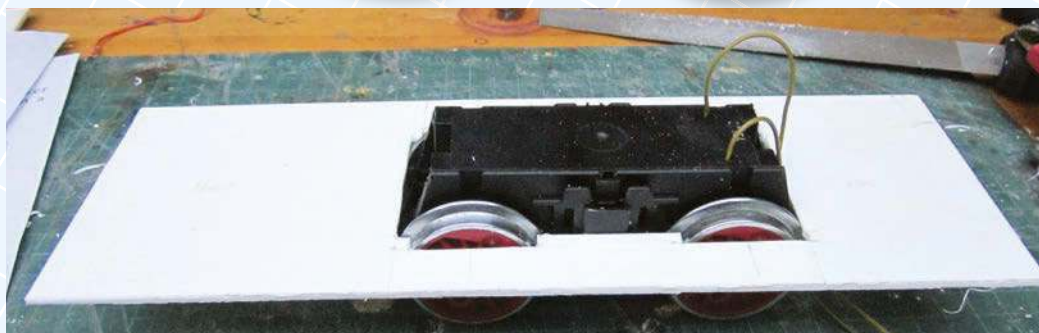
2.

The motor block was dismantled and the track pick-ups and associated wiring removed. The ends of the block were excised, wires soldered to the motor contacts and the block was reassembled.



3.

The first stage was to create the running plate for the loco. A 90mm x 259mm piece of 2mm (80 thou) Plastikard was duly cut out, with a 48mm x 112mm hole to accommodate the motor block. Subsequently, slots were cut along the sides of the hole for the wheels to allow the running plate to sit lower on the block.



4.

The cab and tank sides were cut from 1.5mm (60 thou) Plastikard. The tanks were 100mm x 44mm and the cab 70mm x 86mm with an additional 12mm x 43mm for the bunker. The tank fronts were 24mm x 44mm and the cab front and rear were 87mm x 86mm.

5.

A 160mm wide piece of 1.5mm (60 thou) Plastikard was wrapped around a piece of 40mm diameter plastic pipe, strapped down with cable ties and immersed in boiling water for around five minutes to form the boiler. Wooden coffee stirrers were wedged along the free edge of the plastic to help prevent it corrugating. This process was repeated with a 1mm (40 thou) thick piece of Plastikard and the two glued together to give an outside diameter of 42.5mm which was near enough (for me) to the 44mm diameter required for the boiler

6.

I now tackled the pony truck and trailing bogie. 12mm x 1.5mm brass strip was cut and folded into a U-shape for the wheel mounts. Tenmille spoked wheels were then threaded into 3.5mm holes drilled into the mounts. The wheels were approximately the correct diameter (30mm), but had too many spokes – another compromise with which I can live. A further two pieces of 12mm x 1.5mm strip were then soldered to the top of the brackets, 100mm in length for the pony truck and 70mm in length for the trailing bogie.

7.

The leading and trailing wheels were attached with bolts to 2mm thick Plastikard brackets glued to the front and rear of the motor block. The chassis was then tested by attaching a 6v battery pack to the motor and running it through various configurations of pointwork out in the garden.

8.

All seemed well and so the chassis and body were test-fitted to check clearances. So far, so good!

9.

The most daunting part (for me) came next. Figuring out how to construct the cylinders, crosshead, connecting rods and piston rods. Firstly, I glued a T-piece of 2mm thick Plastikard to the front pony truck bracket on which ostensibly to mount the cylinders.

10.

15mm copper pipe unions were approximately the right outside diameter (0.5mm too small) and were exactly the right length. End caps were cut and filed from 1.5mm thick brass sheet. I wasn't too worried at this stage if they were not a perfect fit as they could be filed once soldered on to the unions.

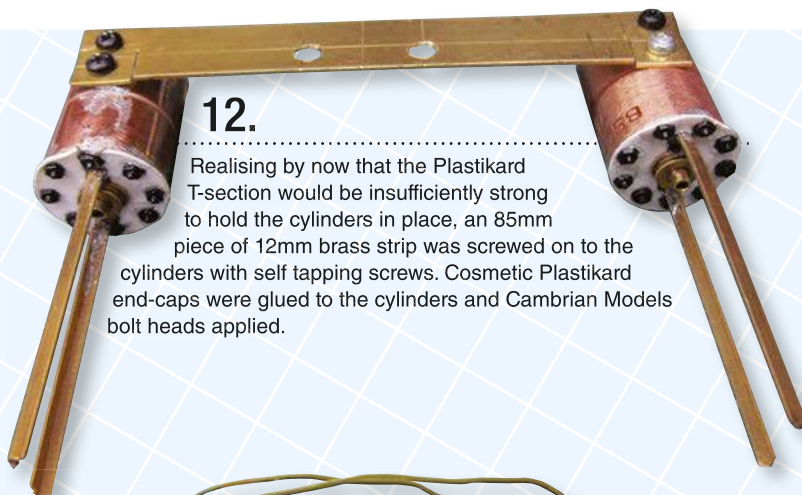
11.

2mm brass tube was soldered into holes in the centre of each end-piece and 45mm lengths of 2mm brass angle were soldered into holes 4mm each side of the central hole.



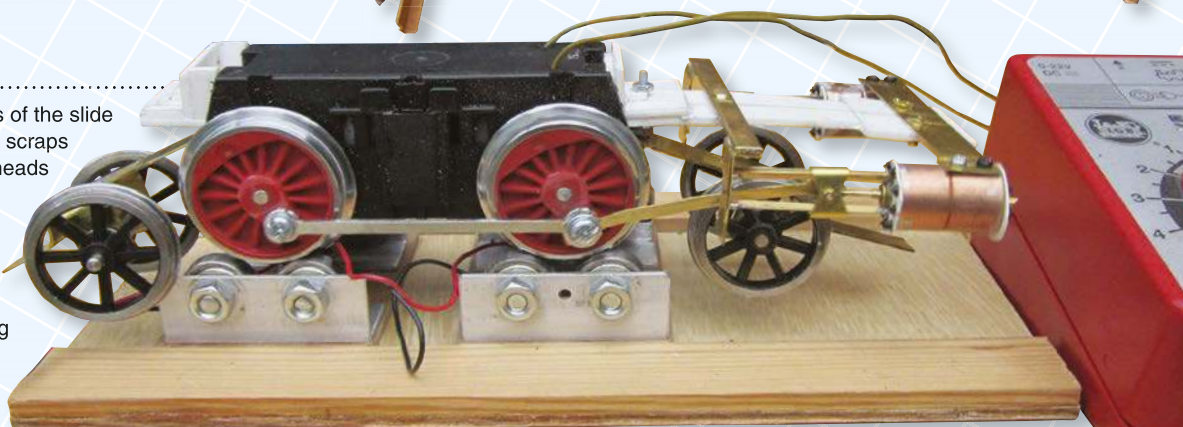
12.

Realising by now that the Plastikard T-section would be insufficiently strong to hold the cylinders in place, an 85mm piece of 12mm brass strip was screwed on to the cylinders with self tapping screws. Cosmetic Plastikard end-caps were glued to the cylinders and Cambrian Models bolt heads applied.



13.

Supports for the ends of the slide rods were made from scraps of brass strip, cross-heads were folded up from 1.5mm thick brass strip and connecting and coupling rods shaped from 1.5mm brass strip. Everything was bolted together and the motor block tested on a rolling road. Very little tweaking was required, miraculously. This is probably due more to the amount of slack which there is in the system, rather than careful construction. One day, I will improve the motion – someone has already pointed out that the piston rods do not align with the wheel centres on the leading drivers, so some adjustment is necessary.



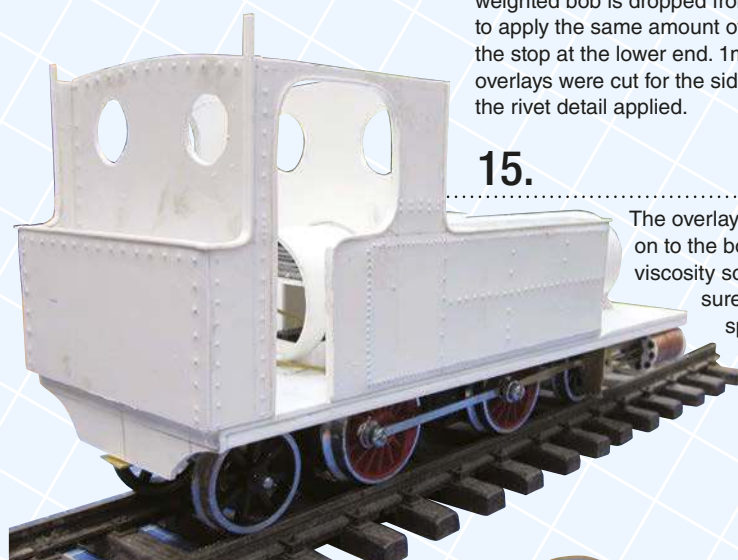
14.

Rather than applying large numbers of Cambrian Models rivet heads, I decided to make my own rivet punch from a length of brass rod, a piece of brass tube, a couple of washers, some lead strip and the point of an old ball-point pen. The lead-weighted bob is dropped from the top of the rod to apply the same amount of pressure when it hits the stop at the lower end. 1mm thick Plastikard overlays were cut for the sides and cab ends and the rivet detail applied.



15.

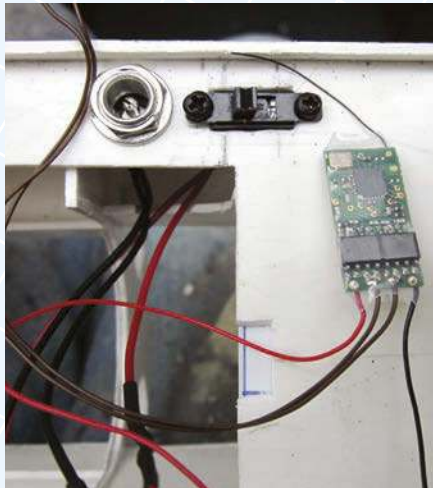
The overlays were then glued on to the body with medium viscosity solvent, making sure that it was evenly spread.



16.

Rather than making my own fittings, which I have done for subsequent loco builds, I purchased whitmetal chimney, dome, smokebox door and safety valve mouldings from Garden Railway Specialists (GRS) and glued these to the boiler. I did however, make my own backhead detail from offcuts of Plastikard and press-studs for valve wheels.



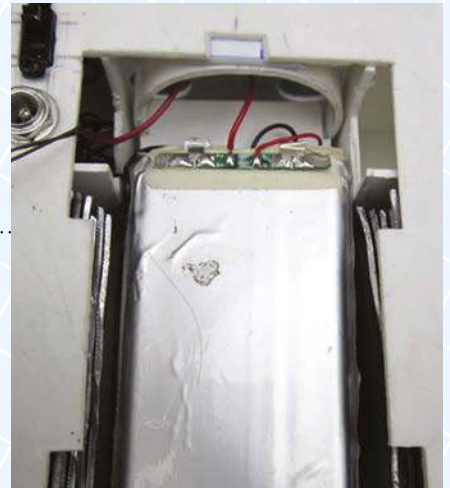


17.

The electrics were tackled next. A two-way switch, charge socket and Deltang Rx60 receiver/controller were wired-up ...

18.

... to a 12v lipo battery intended for use in CCTV cameras, bought on that well-known online auction site. These batteries include built-in protection circuitry to protect against short-circuit, overcharge and over-discharge. I now use three 18650 cylindrical li-ion cells wired in series through a 3S lithium protection board as they are generally more stable than lipo packs such as these.



19.

The loco was now assembled and test-run. A few more details were added such as steam pipes (electrical cable) and handrail knobs (GRS mouldings). The tank fillers were made from off-cuts of Plastikard with brass rod for handles.



20.

A trip to the paintshop for a couple of coats of Halfords grey primer from an aerosol rattle-can.

21.

The primer was followed by a couple of coats of Rover Brooklands Green from the same source. Further cosmetic details were then added – clack valves (from GRS) and oil filler pots made from Fimo modelling clay squigged on to brass track-pins.



smooth-running as those found in LGB mechanisms, I have since replaced the Deltang Rx60 with an Rx65b and she now runs a lot more sweetly.

I found that I needed to add some springs to the pony truck and bogie to keep them in contact with the track – these were fashioned from short lengths of phosphor bronze wire wrapped around the pivot and then extended out over the brackets.

A MyLocoSound sound card is installed in the bunker with the speaker mounted inside the cab roof.

Nameplates, *Tarporley*, and makers

plates have been acquired from Narrow Planet.

To my knowledge, no manufacturer yet produces a model of any Southwold locomotive in 16mm (or 15mm) scale which is a great pity. However, I hope I have shown that with a bit of ingenuity and tweaking it is possible to make a reasonable representation – provided nobody looks too closely at my handiwork. Let's face it, if a cack-handed scratch-bash bodgeller like me can make such a model, then I'm sure anyone can. ■

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Time flies when you're having fun!

Mark Thatcher charts the progress and improvement in kit-building since 1996

I can't believe I have nearly reached my silver jubilee in this hobby and indeed, in contributing to this magazine. I have seen a lot of changes over the years, so when our Editor asked me to write an article highlighting the changes I have witnessed, I jumped at the chance.

Whilst I have had over 500 buildings pass through my hands over this time period, and have sold many on, I did have the presence of mind to keep certain 'landmark' models that I thought illustrated well various particular moments in time for this hobby. However my memory is not what it was. I can barely remember what I built last week, let alone 20 years ago, but I think my date-stamping of the chronology is about right. However in order to corroborate some dates, I did have to catch up with some of the

1996 My first attempt and carriage building, the observation end was kit-bashed from a GRS kit.

1996 My very first station building, from an unknown maker and looking suitably dilapidated.

suppliers from the past and present, which was a pleasure in itself.

1996

This is when I became a garden railwayist. I recall my then-partner and I travelling from Derby to Martin's Models in Wales to buy our first live steam loco, a Cheddar Ivor, sadly long-since sold. Whilst we were there I spotted a diminutive station halt. Then I thought – I will have that as the sole building on my line. After all, whatever else would I need? Little did I know that twelve years later at our new railway around the pond in another house, the Dovecote Light Railway,

would be the home to close on to 100 buildings!

This first station building was made by a maker unknown, most probably cast from cement as flat aspects then glued together. I have re-painted it at least five times. The photos show it *au naturel* as the last repaint was in 2008.

I should also mention the first set of carriages that I built. These were modular kits from Garden Railway Specialists. They allow the builder to construct carriages of various lengths. I am particularly pleased with the observation end, complete with detailed interior and working lights, which I have chosen to feature here.

I use the present tense as they are still a showing as available in the GRS catalogue all these years later (*Editor: I have just bought some of the parts for a project...*) But apart from these and some wooden carriage kits from IP Engineering (who started in 1988) IMP Models and Brandbright, this was pretty much what was available unless you chose to model European or US outline, then of course you could source many RTR models from LGB and suitable plastic building kits from PIKO or POLA. But if you wanted to model British narrow gauge, invariably you had to build it yourself.

1997

Around this time, companies were catching on to the fact that there was precious little out there for the British SM32 and G45 modeller but two





1996 An original fibreglass-moulded small station building from Welshpool Potteries.



Right: **1998** Stuart Currie's chapel: a visual delight.

companies grasped the nettle and started to produce one-piece pottery buildings.

One was Tuxcraft who have sadly ceased trading. The other business also now defunct was named Welshpool Potteries, who, as the name suggests made pottery buildings. Their early pottery buildings were bespoke and superb, but they simply could not keep up with the demand. The business was eventually sold on and the new owners started to lay fibreglass into moulds to create a range of landmark buildings which were exceptional for that era and still stand the test of time to this day.

1998

I first saw the glorious range of bespoke-built buildings from Stuart Currie in 1998, although he started making them in the early nineties. He would build every model in clay and had his own

kiln to fire them. The buildings were lightly coloured and all had a weathered sand stone appearance.

I am lucky enough to have a number of these fine models, but my featured building has to be Stuart's Methodist chapel which is probably the most outstanding building I have ever owned. It just looks so prototypically right, yet has the love and passion in it that only an artisan craftsman like Stuart can create. As I said earlier, many buildings have passed through my hands but Stuart's buildings are all keepers, and when they rarely come up for sale, they fetch a premium due to their outstanding quality and rarity value.

2002

This year was the approximate time when companies were starting to mass-produce resin buildings for

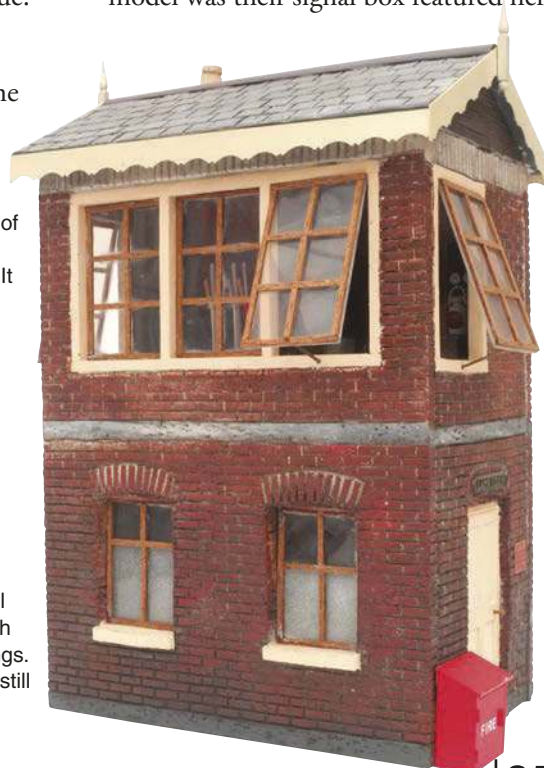
the sixteen-miller. This was really an industry game changer as we could now buy station buildings, rows of terraced houses and even pubs and windmills.

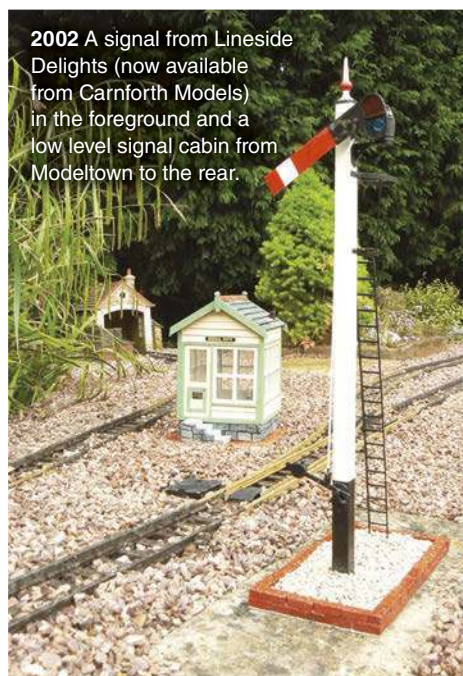
Around this time there were three major players. British Outline Buildings (BoB), then based on the Isle of Wight, who produced finely detailed G scale buildings for the British outline modeller. Latterly they produced a few 16mm scale structures too. Eventually the moulds were sold to Garden Railway Specialists (GRS) in Princes Risborough, who still carry their range. I very much enjoyed building and reviewing many models for BoB but for me the stand-out model was their signal box featured here.



1998: Another of Stuart Currie's masterpieces. It could be real!

2002 A much-modified signal box from British Outline Buildings. Their range is still available from GRS.

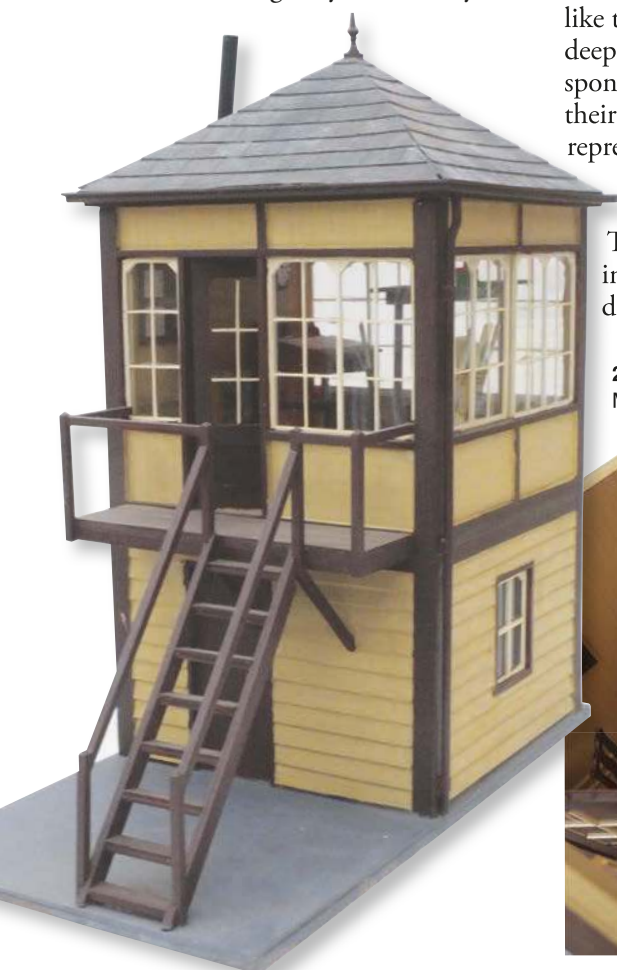




2002 A signal from Lineside Delights (now available from Carnforth Models) in the foreground and a low level signal cabin from Modeltown to the rear.

I super-detailed the interior and added opening windows too.

A mention must be also made of Lineside Delights. They made a fine range of resin modelbuildings, but in particular, some fantastic signals which adorned our own railway. Featured here is one of them. Lineside Delights moulds were bought by Pendlebury



2002

Modeltown's Corris cottage just captures the scene of this hide-away cottage perfectly.

Model Buildings in 2009, and are now sold through the company's shop, Carnforth Models. I am pleased to see this range is still going strong. They are excellent buildings indeed!

Also in 2002, Keith and Lyn Hunter launched Modeltown. Starting originally with only six buildings, this range has grown to over 100 resin-cast buildings, accessories and figures. I am a great fan of Modeltown as their buildings have a certain verité to them. I particularly like their stone-faced buildings with deep mortar lines that are very easy to sponge-paint. I have chosen to feature their Corris cottage as I think it is very representative of this range.

2004-2006

To close off the first decade of my involvement of this hobby, you can detect from the above, that now,

2004: A bespoke signal box from Kirtley Models.



with resin, fibreglass and even some laser-cut wooden kits, there was a far greater choice for the railway modeller. Also as moulding processes improved, the quality of the moulded component detail similarly improved over time. But broadly speaking there were still only three types of buildings you could buy, ready-made, built from a kit of parts or bespoke made-to-order.

One such emerging maker of bespoke buildings was Peter Kirtley of Kirtley Models. Peter took his business full-time in 2002, but I only discovered him in 2005 when I was looking for suitable buildings for a proposed Gauge 3 project that never came to fruition. Peter is still very much old-school as I discovered upon catching up with him when checking his details for this article. There is no CAD, or laser-cutting, just good old-fashioned manual dexterity, attention to detail and faithfulness to the prototype. In fact many of Peter's commissions are of real buildings that existed up and down our main lines.

Also around that period, another new player emerged with an entirely different take on the garden rail scene: Cain Howley Structures. Cain Howley was the leading exponent of creating miniature masterpieces from concrete. He also made a modular viaduct system which graces many garden railways. In fact we used around 30 of his buildings when we built our own railway in 2008. They weren't 'alf 'eavy though! His largest building was an engine shed, and I still have it to hand, albeit a little weather-worn now as it has been in the garden over a decade without a re-paint. But this serves as a reminder that even our little



2008: One of Cain Howley's one-off builds which I am very lucky still to have in my collection.



2008: More of Stuart Currie's station buildings on our own Dovecote Light railway.

miniature worlds need a lick of paint from time to time. The last mention of him however was at the 2018 Llanfair show and my efforts to track him down have drawn a blank to date.

2008

A special mention should be made here of the inauguration of our own railway, The Dovecote Light Railway, utilising station buildings, engine sheds and lineside buildings from Stuart Currie, the village scene from Cain Howley Structures, with Modeltown and Lineside Delights for the rest of the buildings, to try to stay within the bounds of a themed layout. It is worth noting that some buildings from different manufacturers do mix-and-match, but some clearly do not. It is worth giving consideration to this before you rush out and spend your hard-earned cash on a number of buildings.

Also, notably this year I reviewed my first laser cut wood kit of a diesel

railcar from IP Engineering as this new technology emerged. IP was the first adopter of this and CNC routing way back in the late eighties and use these techniques to this day.

2010

I discovered yet another different approach to modelling buildings in this year when I reviewed a station kit from Jackson's Miniatures. The company is in fact a very-well establish doll's house manufacturer, and was started by Steve's mother, Vera in 1989. Steve took the business on from 2002 and decided latterly to diversify into building MDF carcass buildings for the garden railway. They could be finished in screed or plastic brick papers. However being a glutton for punishment I decided to brick my own station building out in real brick work and tiling from Minaco. As I recall it took around 1500 individual bricks and 450 roof tiles to complete the building. I must

have been mad, but even to this day I am very pleased with the result.

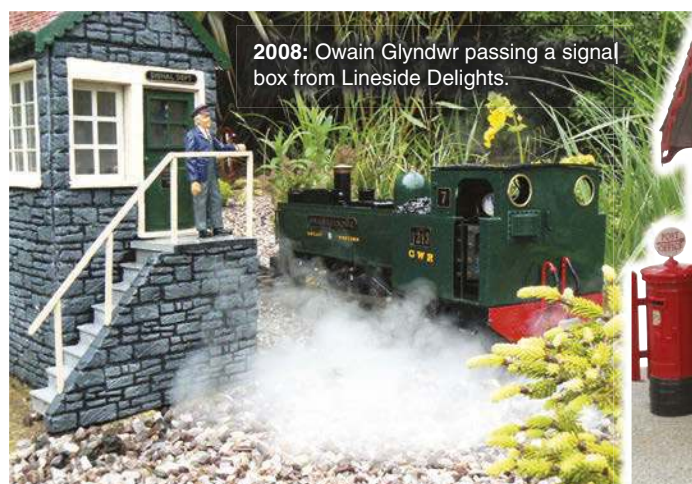
2012

In 2012 I wanted to showcase that you did not need a ton of space for a 16mm railway, so bought a part-built layout and embellished and augmented it accordingly. By this time I had taught myself a number of different modelling techniques using a mix of media, wood, real state, even Artex! I found a 'dry steam' smoke unit to fit into the mill building at 'High Force' just to add the final touch.

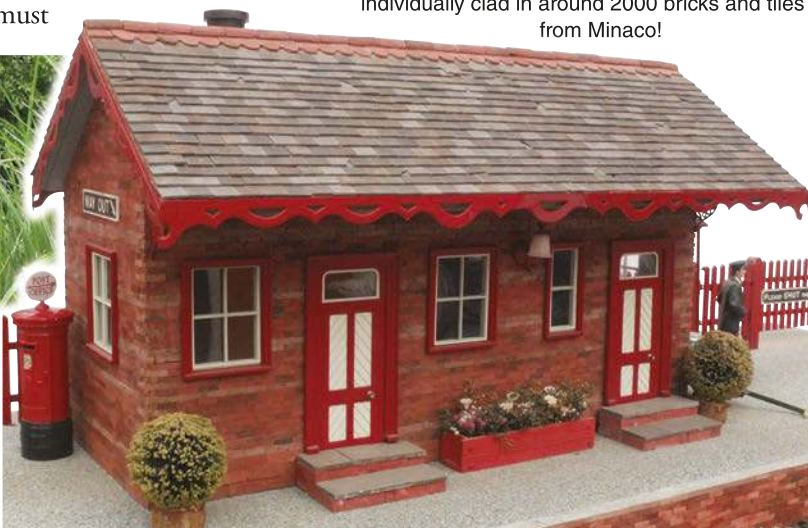
2014 TO THE PRESENT DAY

I am going to round this article off from 2014 onwards as it is fair to say that the last five years has seen more innovation in this hobby than the

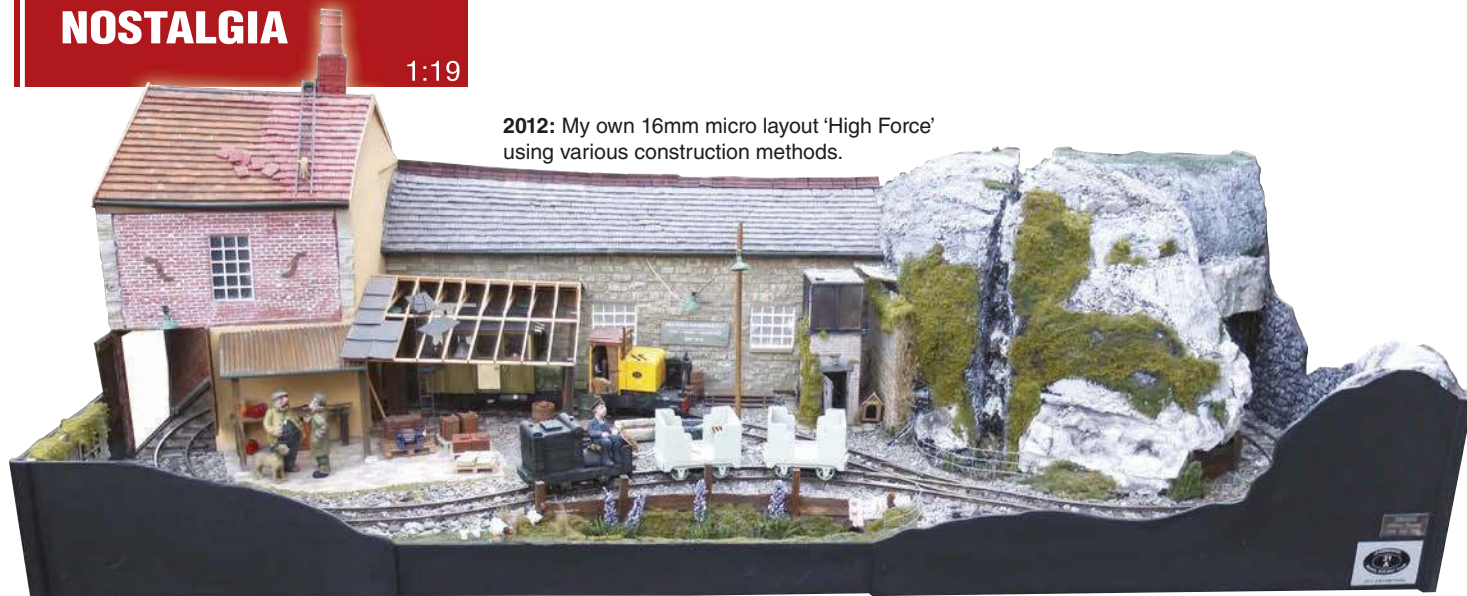
2010: Jackson's Miniatures' station building, individually clad in around 2000 bricks and tiles from Minaco!



2008: Owain Glyndwr passing a signal box from Lineside Delights.



2012: My own 16mm micro layout 'High Force' using various construction methods.



last two decades. We now have 3D printing, laser wood cutting (pioneered by Ivan Prior at IP Engineering, who many years ago was well ahead of his time) and CAD design too.

But in 2014 there was a new kid on the block that today sets a very high bench mark for others to follow. Ian Thorley of Thorley Miniatures re-invented how we construct buildings. Prior to Thorley Miniatures, most resin buildings were one-piece aspects, where the windows, doors and other details were moulded in. Ian decided to separate these components out. The result was that his engine shed kit, for example, had over 90 separate parts, and with the windows, doors and other accessories being separate, they are much easier to paint than a one-piece moulding. Only this year did I have the chance to complete my review of his 'Woodville garage', which, without doubt is the most detailed and satisfying model that I have ever built to date in this scale.

And whilst not strictly a building, I enjoyed working with a PDF Models kit to build their Bedford OB lorry with an associated container from GRS. I think this really illustrates how 3D printing has moved on since I bought my first 3D printer in 2012 that went straight in the bin.

Mention must be made of Hardy's Models too, who have taken 3D printing to an even greater level of detail and I thank them for sending me two of their 3D-printed 16mm figures for inclusion into this article. The 3D print is so good, you can barely detect the print lines on these fine models. They are printed with a resin 3D printer, which is the far more accurate than

plastic filament printers. Resin printers work using a UV curable resin, with UV light shining through an LCD screen which either blocks or allows the UV light through. Resin printers can be much more accurate, down to around 0.05mm, so now even N gauge 3D prints are possible using this new technology. Scanning technology has improved too and Hardy's tell me in the past they have scanned human beings and shrunk them down so a model of the customer can be placed on the footplate of their own model loco, although this is not a service they currently offer.

I mentioned laser-cutting earlier, and IP Engineering. Now it would take too long to list the businesses who are now offering laser-cut kits, but Bole Engineering, Wood Valley Works and Houstoun Gate Modelworks easily spring to mind. However on my visit to the 16mm annual show at Peterborough I was suckered in to buying three painted RTR Penryn quarryman's coaches from Timpdon Models as I think they set a good example as to what can be achieved with a laser cutter.

It would take an entire issue of this magazine to mention every technical advance or espouse the detail of every model I have touched, but I hope the above gives you a snapshot not only into however our hobby has advanced over the years and how this has resulted in the quantity and quality of merchandise that is now available for the garden railwayist.

As consumers, we are on a win-win road trip here. We have more choice, and more detailed projects to embark on, thanks to all this emerging technology. We now have greater flexibility if, say, we wanted just to model Isle of Man stock. But we still have the option to grab some great kits from the old timers out there, who have also refined and improved their range over the years. And if all that fails, companies like Kirtley Models or Brunel Models (do check out their Taj Mahal) are here to satisfy the need for a bespoke building service too. Today, it has never been easier to populate your own layout with quality buildings and hopefully this will attract new people to this rewarding hobby. ■



2019: Thorley Miniatures' garage. The most detailed 16mm model I have built to date.

An industrial diesel from North Pilton



Eddie Lund has built the wagons for his PW train, now it needs an engine.

My big Christmas present from my wife was the North Pilton Works SM32 industrial goods loco kit and a set of wagons. I covered the wagon build in **Garden Rail** 297, and with the confidence and experience from these, it was time to turn my attention to the motive power.

Like the wagons the model was well packed for transit and when the several packets were opened, it all looked very promising.

As the chassis is very similar to the wagons it was easily put together, remembering again that the axle frames had to be paired correctly otherwise they wouldn't sit flat on the, in my case 32mm, gauge adjustable base plate.

There are 4 sets of steps to fit, I chose to fit only 2 sets, at the cab doorways. Once fixed to the chassis, I felt they were rather prone to be accidentally knocked off, so I lessened this chance by using some off-cuts of plywood, wedged between the step supports on the inner and outer frames. Once painted black these aren't noticeable.

Supplied with the kit are two sets of front and rear LEDs, two double-pole double-throw centre off switches and a brief hint on wiring the LEDs, but no other explanation on how the

wiring should be carried out apart from a comment that the larger of the two switches should be used for loco direction.

This, I assume, is because there is more room to fit the crossover wires which cause the change of direction. As both switches have a centre off there is no need to use both, and for that matter either one could be used alone without the other. As I was fitting radio control, I omitted the larger switch, instead using the cut-out to fit a charging socket.

Following the instructions, having fitted the wired switch to the outer frame, they were fixed to the base plate. Then the axle boxes and finally the buffer beams, with my own choice of multi height couplers, rather than those supplied, were attached.

Next came the motor and it's mounting. Having put the parts together I elected to use nuts and bolts to fix the motor mounting to the base plate rather than glue. Later on, this proved to be a wise decision.

The suggested next stage is to fit all the gears on the drive shaft, mount the shaft on roller bearings which are held in place by holder plates within the main frame.

The knurled nut holds the horn on, also shown the centre clear LED cab light and the wires through to the flashing orange roof LED. The three copper conductors on the roof edge just tightly push against the bare sections of the wires in the cab to make the connections.



Additional window frame, plus the slightly altered and enhanced control panel. The bare ended wires to left and right supply the roof lights.

Once again, the instructions were lacking. There is no mention of fitting the wheel axles and their gears, the obvious next step. I found that the axle

gears were so tight on the drive shaft gears nothing would turn. I had to pare off a sliver from the bottom of each of the drive shaft holder plates to allow the shaft to sit up a bit.

The alternative perhaps, if the axle boxes hadn't been glued in, would have been to move them down. As it was having moved the drive shaft up, I then had to raise the motor mounting up off the floor to allow its gears to turn.

My advice would be to glue together as little as possible until you are sure it all fits properly. Even after all this work, a quick powered test showed a lot of rough running, although this improved a bit later with more use.

A start was now made on the engine compartment and cab, the seven parts of the former going together easily without any bother. As the bonnet itself is quite easily removable, and bearing in mind my desire for R/C, I did not glue it to the rest of the body, allowing for easy access to the wiring and any battery changes.

The instruction sheet mentions a floor for the cab, but mine was missing so I just did without, constructing only the front and side walls onto the back of the engine area. One addition was made to the cab, a front window frame to allow for glazing to be fitted.

Next, I made the cab roof up, but did not glue it or the back sheet to the rest. I wanted to fit a ceiling light within the cab and a flashing orange roof light, and as the back sheet had two LEDs to be fitted and wired, this too would be easier done before fixing.

Fitting the LEDs to the back panel and test fitting the chair, it was obvious that any driver would have a pain in



The cover that hides the cables and the added rear window frame.

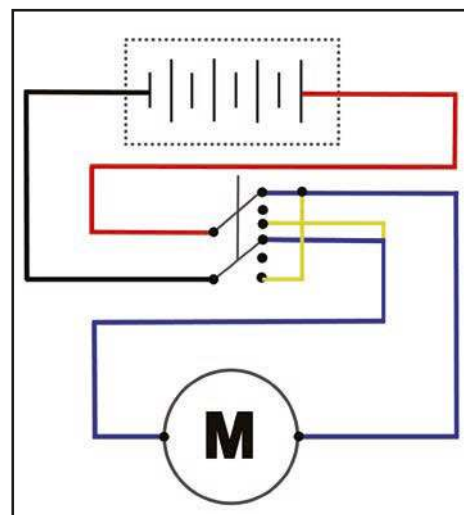
his back from the top LED, not only that, a fair bit of the wiring would still be showing from outside the cab. I determined to find a way of covering it up.

Moving the chair up by a few mills and forming a covered tray from below the seat down to and along the floor hid the worst of this and also allowed the driver to sit properly in the seat. The driver, a pleasant young chap, is from the Bachmann range of figures, technically built more for the smaller G scale, but he fits in nicely.

After fitting the body to the base, I got the R/C receiver connected up. I use the Micron system, which I've found excellent, this allows up to 12 locos to be controlled from the one transmitter. To only problem was that the size of the receiver meant a smaller battery box was required and AAA rather than AA cells.

Following electrical testing, the back panel was glued on, the cab roof being held in place with track pins and then some detailing carried out. Clear polystyrene front and rear windows, front windscreen wiper, cab-side handrails, roof mounted horn, air reservoir, small knobs for each of the engine compartment doors, exhaust stack, radiator water cap and fuel cap.

I'm rather pleased with this little



loco, it has a certain charm and although there were a few issues with its build, it was well worth the time sorting them out.

At the outset I had made up my mind that the complete train of 5 wagons and loco would make up into a narrow-gauge maintenance train, hence the reason for painting the loco yellow. I'll need to find a wagon now to make a tool van, and then perhaps something for the crew to travel in. ■

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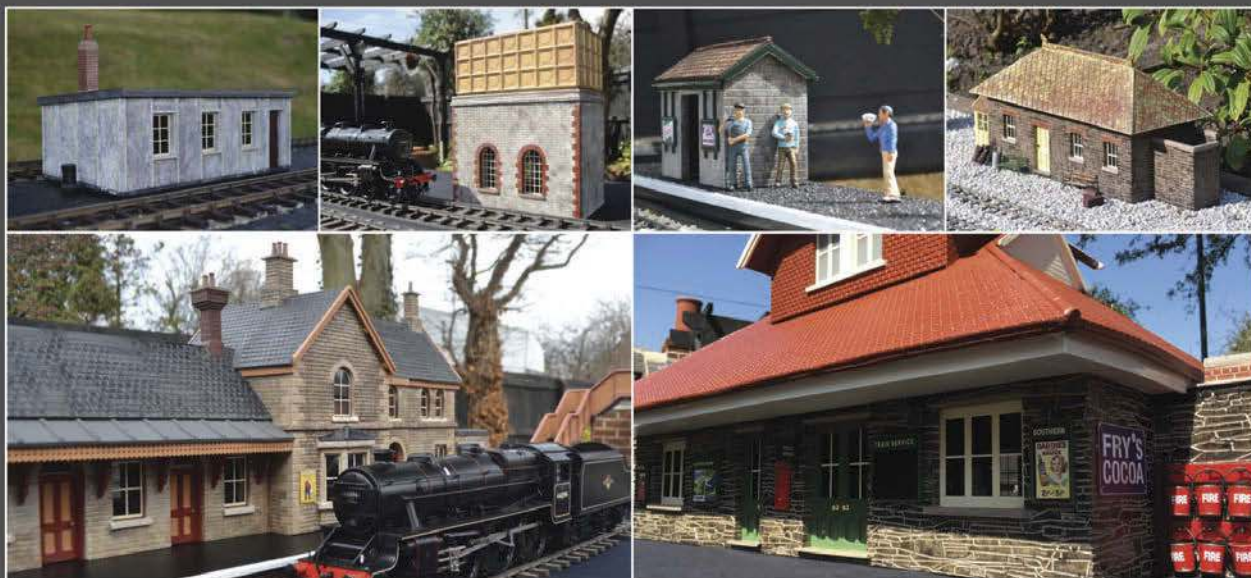
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 had one complaint – that they were too cheap!
 (I offered to rectify this for just that one customer,
 but he immediately withdrew his comment).

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 windows of the guard's duckets) and the hard-
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 photography skills are pathetic and the
 colours really do match across the
 range – just not in the pictures.








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A Footplate Crew for Douglas

In August 2019, Simon Atkinson showed us how he built his incredible model of a TR locomotive. It just needed a crew...

Following my article in **Garden Rail** August 2018 detailing construction of my model of the Tallyllyn Railway's locomotive 'Douglas' the editor has asked for an update on the latest developments..

Striving to attain realism has been my major priority throughout and with the construction of 4 detailed Tallyllyn coaches for Douglas to pull, now completed (article to follow) my thoughts turned to populating the footplate.

The search for realistic figures which would fit my chosen scale of 1:15 has been a lengthy one and a chance conversation with Steve at Hardy's Hobbies provided the solution. 3D printed figures modelled from scans of actual humans dressed in the appropriate clothing.

From the Hardy's range I was able to find a driver and fireman figure that suited Douglas's footplate. These were scaled to my requirements and printed – the resulting models had a superb finish which required very little surface preparation.

A laser cut acrylic jig was constructed which featured the cab outline, floor and boiler backhead in order to correctly position the figures on the footplate. Each figure is 'grown' with a convenient 2mm hole in each foot



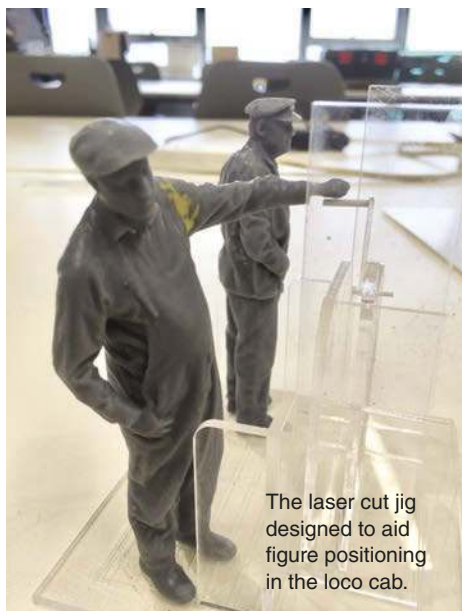
which I aligned with the jig floor and drilled holes to enable the figures to be positioned in the same orientation on the actual loco. In order for the drivers arm and hand to line up with the regulator on the loco, I cut away the arm and repositioned, glued and used Miliput to fill the resulting gap.

As I'm not very accomplished at figure painting, I turned to an expert

to bring the crew to life. The brilliant Claudia Everett was commissioned, and I provided various images of Tallyllyn crews to provide her with inspiration.

I was absolutely delighted with Claudia's painting – the final figures being everything I could have hoped for. To fit the crew to the Douglas's footplate securely I used my laser cut floor jig, held with double sided tape in order to drill the 4 fixing holes. Once removed, tiny self-tapping screws were fixed from underneath into each figures foot.

Thanks to Steve and Andrew at Hardy's Hobbies for their superb product and to the talented micro-painter Claudia Everett. ■



Garden Rail Resource

Claudia Everett

www.facebook.com/claudiaeverettminiatures

Hardy's Hobbies

www.hardyshobbies.co.uk

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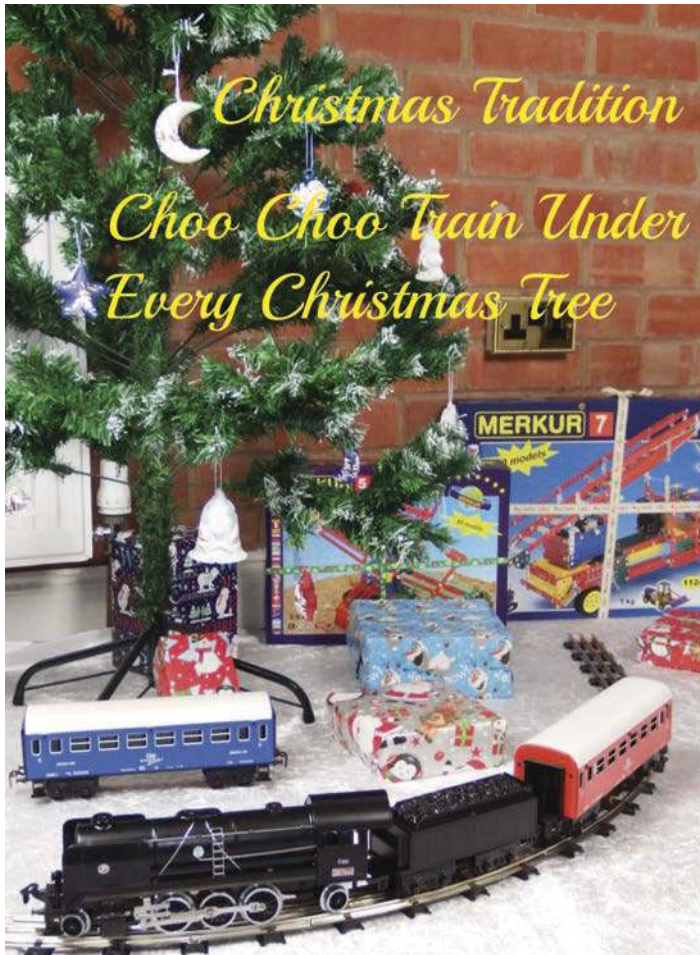
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64 mm wide
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Kit Features

- Pre-assembled chassis
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32 mm gauge

SM32 Kit £120
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R-T-R models are painted Brunswick green as standard, other colours to order.



Kits include everything needed except glue, paint and tools.

Mamod Stirling

The Editor takes a look at Mamod's latest steam loco.

More years ago than I care to remember, my father and I received a Mamod steam locomotive kit as a Christmas present. We enjoyed assembling the model and it ran well on the Peco SM32 track we laid along the garden for testing purposes.

With its wagging cylinders (I know, oscillating, but wagging sums the model up better) and more than spirited performance, it got us interested in outdoor railways. I think that was what my mum had hoped when she gave it to us, but I quickly found battery electric to be more suited to the track and never really got on with the solid fuel tablets. Despite this, a whole industry and hobby sprang up around these cheap and readily available models.

FIRST LOOK

Fast forward to today and I find myself looking at the Mamod "Stirling" locomotive, a very different proposition.

Gone are the oscillating cylinders and tablet firing. We now enjoy 14mm diameter cylinders that don't move and slip-

eccentric valve gear between the frames. The gas tank in the cab feeds an internal poker-style burner.

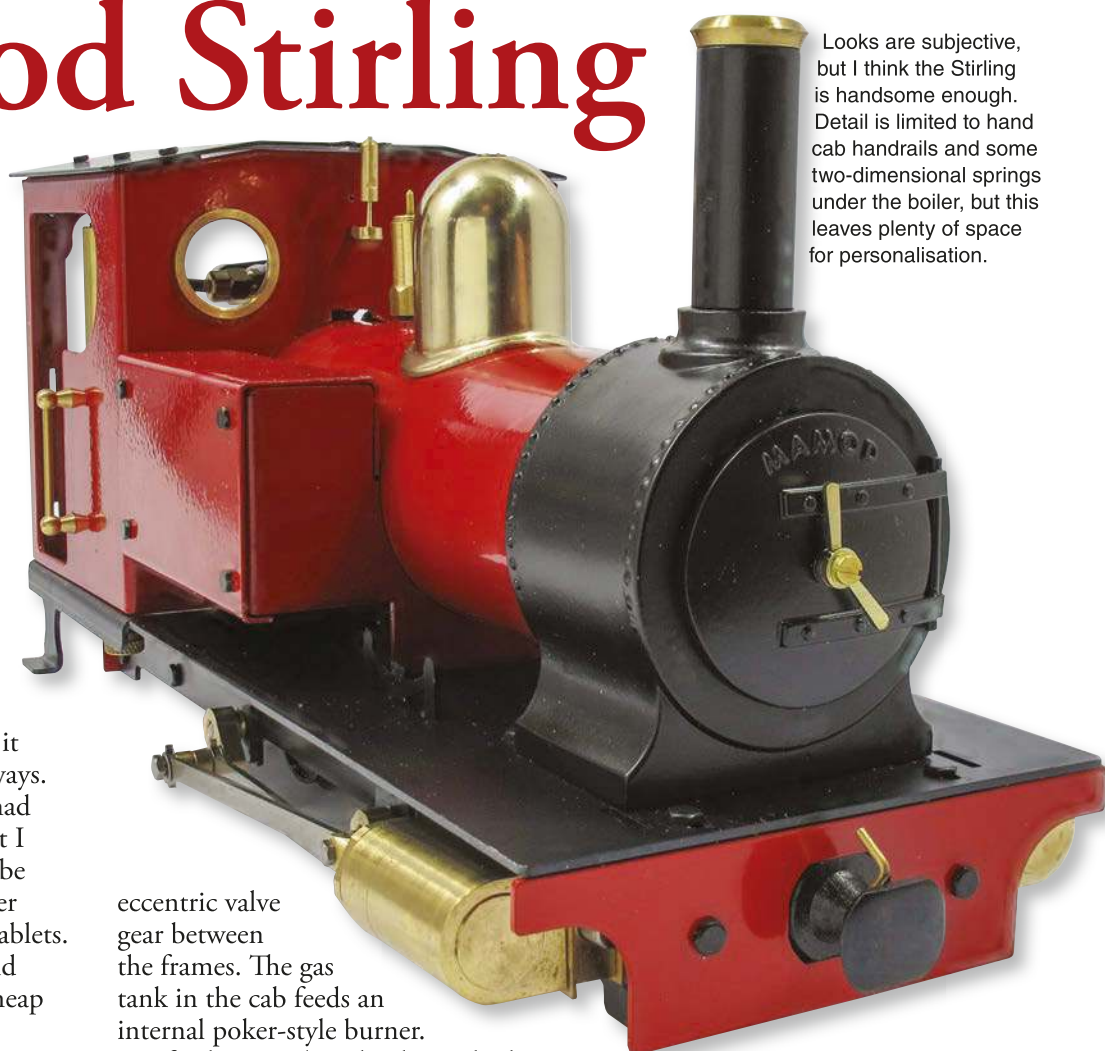
A freelance 0-4-0, the design looks plausible and very British. It sits well with G scale LGB stock and will be just as happy with 16mm wagons and coaches. You know those small narrow-gauge locos we all like? It looks like one of them to me.

At 2800g, the model is pleasantly heavy and seems very well made. Poking and pulling at the body didn't reveal anything loose or poorly made. Maybe it doesn't have the finescale detail of more expensive models, but it has all you need and what's there isn't going to be knocked off in a derailment. The paint is well applied with a maroon body, black footplate and cab roof.

Turning the model over, the 36mm diameter wheels can be regauged to suit 32 or 45mm

The cab roof slides off easy for access to the gas tank and lubricator. A cab back is included and even with this and the roof in place, fat fingers are able to get at the gas valve and regulator.

Looks are subjective, but I think the Stirling is handsome enough. Detail is limited to hand cab handrails and some two-dimensional springs under the boiler, but this leaves plenty of space for personalisation.



railways by undoing grub screws with an Allen key. Helpfully, a back-to-back gauge is included in the box.

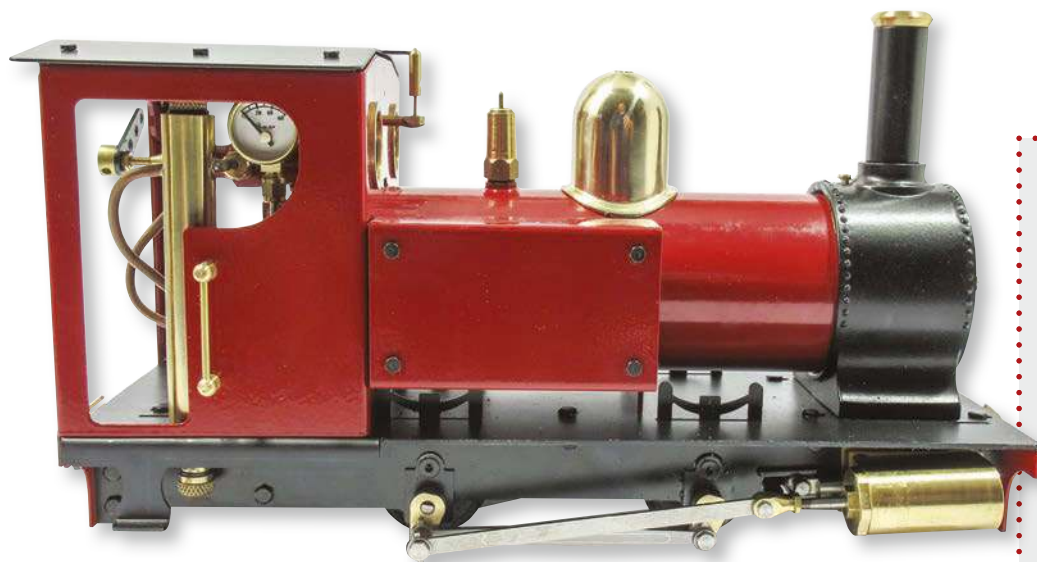
Looking in the cab we have (looking from the back) the gas tank with a knurled adjuster, the regulator in the middle and then displacement lubricator and pressure gauge on the right. The gauge looks out of the side, something to bear in mind when you put the model on the track.

ON THE TRACK

I'll admit I'm still a beginner with live steam so I followed the well-written instructions to the letter. All the oiling points were lubricated and then the lubricator topped up with steam oil. Undoing the top of this needs a flat-bladed screwdriver as it's tucked under the top of the cab (the roof slides off for easy access) so getting my fingers in was tricky.

The boiler is filled by removing the safety valve, topping it up and then removing 40ml using the supplied syringe. Finally, the gas tank is filled with a Propane/Butane mix.

Rotating the smokebox door removes it, then the gas is turned on and a long-



The pressure gauge is viewed through the side of the cab. Working pressure is 40-50psi.

nosed lighter inserted in the front. The model lit up first even with the gas valve about $\frac{3}{4}$ open.

I'd filled the boiler with warm water on a mild day so we saw pressure in just over 5 minutes. After a little pushing back and forth, steam, condensation and smoke oil spat out of the chimney (keep your face out of the way) and a few minutes later, I was able to open the regulator and the model started to move. At first this was jerky, but pretty quickly it shot off around the track.

The model certainly didn't hang around, but it didn't have any problem with LGB 6ft diameter curves or long USA trains points. A little tweaking of slowed things down a bit but as a new model I'd expect it to be more controllable once everything has run in. With a few LGB wagons on the back thanks to a re-bent paperclip, the speed dropped a little more. I'd say haulage is more than adequate for the sort of trains you'd expect behind a locomotive like this. A full gas tank will last 15 minutes.

CONCLUSIONS

I like the Stirling. It might not be the most sophisticated locomotive you can buy but it is well-made, rugged and I think, very good-looking.

As a newbie, I found it easy to fire up and can't see anything that would worry me from a maintenance point of view. Everything seems very easy to get at and the simplicity makes even cleaning up the model after a run a simple job.

For someone new to steam, the impressive collection of accessories in the box is a boon. No need to source a valve for filling the tank, it's in there. So are bottles of lubricating and steam oil, a back-to-back gauge, funnel, even a length of coupling chain!

If I'm being picky, I'm not a fan of the bolt heads on the tank sides, but these might provide access to spaces for installing radio control gear. The regulator is already set up with holes for connection to a servo. The lack of reversing, the model has to be pushed in the direction to wish to go, is an issue, but not as much as I would expect for most. If you are of the "watching the trains go by" persuasion, then simply being able to open and close the regulator will be enough.

For the price, made in the UK, this seems like excellent value for money. I'm sure there will be plenty of options to customise the model to please individual owners. This is a model you won't be scared to run, not a shelf queen. ■

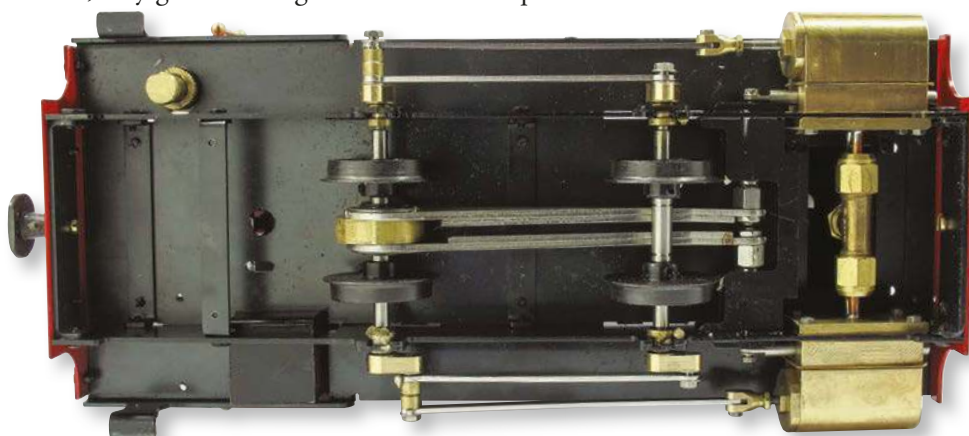
Specification

- Length 300mm
- Width 125mm over cylinders#
- Height 145 mm
- Weight 2800 g
- Internally fired Butane/Propane burner
- 14mm diameter cylinders
- Stainless steel steam pipe
- Internally framed regaugeable wheels
- 54mm diameter boiler
- 230ml boiler volume
- 8ml inline displacement lubricator
- 40 psi safety valve
- Bayonet smokebox door
- Sliding roof
- Silver soldered boiler
- 36mm wheels

Price: £660



A comprehensive set of accessories are found in the box – a funnel and syringe for filling the boiler, lubrication and steam oils, cab back, gas filler, back to back gauge, coupling chain and a set of self-adhesive Mamod nameplates. This last one is a nice touch as the company know many modellers will want to fit their own name.



Garden Rail Resource

Mamod Ltd

Summit Crescent Industrial Estate,
Summit Crescent, Smethwick, Warley,
West Midlands, B66 1BT
www.mamod.co.uk

Please mention **Garden Rail**
when contacting suppliers.

Looking underneath, all the lubrication points are easy to see. The wheels are shown set to 32mm gauge but can be moved to 45mm by undoing a grub screw on each wheel.

‘Talgarth’ and ‘Sabrina’- new from Accucraft for 2019



Jon Taylor takes two new locos from Accucraft for a spin.

2019 seems to be something of a bumper year for new releases in 1:19 scale from Accucraft. Following on from their popular rendition of ‘Dolgoch’ in its various historical guises, the firm has been developing a pair of new 0-4-0 generic locomotives: the side tank ‘Talgarth’ and saddle tank ‘Sabrina’.

‘Talgarth’ bears a distinct family resemblance to the earlier ‘Ragleth’ and ‘Caradoc’, whereas ‘Sabrina’ looks as if it would have been at home on one of the 3’ gauge ironstone systems that once abounded in the East Midlands. I understand that the power unit minus bodywork will also be available.

Having only seen computer generated impressions of this pair, I was surprised to find them slightly heftier than I had been expecting- more like 2’6" than 2’ gauge locomotives to my mind, but then, I model Penrhyn and the Victorian era Festiniog Railway (sic), so I am used to a somewhat more restricted loading gauge!

For the purpose of the tests, a train of various Accucraft Welshpool and Llanfair open wagons and vans was used, which seemed to suit the locos well. They would be a good size match for most 2’ to 3’ gauge stock, barring the smallest.

Aside from the bodywork, these are mechanically identical outside framed 0-4-0 locomotives, adjustable between 32 and 45 mm gauge, substantially built in stainless steel as per standard practice from this marque (*Editor: Previous models have been brass-bodied. These are made by Aster of Japan who work in stainless steel*). Unlike earlier freelance offerings from the Accucraft stable, this pair have double slide bars and full Walschaerts type valve gear, although this is not configured to allow for ‘notching up’, as the combination lever and anchor link are cosmetic and do not affect the slide valves’ events.

The two prototype locomotives examined for the purposes of this review had both already been test-fitted with twin-channel radio control by Accucraft UK’s agent Abbeybach Engineering, which is run by my good friend Dave Mees, whose ‘Wigfa and Llanrwst Light Railway’ has become the focal point of our informal local group, the ‘Eryri Irregulars’, and was the venue for the test runs with these two new locos.

There are a couple of other departures from previous practice. The bodywork on these locomotives is of steel, spot-welded together. This means that there are a couple of visible dimples around the platingwork, most noticeably on the

top front of ‘Sabrina’s’ saddle tank, but I personally did not consider that they detracted from the otherwise pleasing appearance.

The other change concerns the placement of the lubricator; on this pair, the usual cab mounted in-line displacement lubricator has been replaced by a ‘dead leg’ type, mounted below the footplate ahead of the smokebox.

Filling is via a threaded cap with a screwdriver slot which sits flush with the front footplating when screwed fully home. Care must be taken when replacing the filler plug, so as not to crush the sealing O-ring. I personally found this fiddly to unscrew and refit, due to its small size and proximity to the smokebox saddle. If the loco is being kept in steam with the use of a water top-up valve, considerable heat in this area will also have to be factored in!

With use, as the paint is inevitably scratched off the filler cap, it will become more prominent. The filling orifice is also quite small, consequently care must be taken to avoid the formation of air bubbles. There is no drain screw, so condensate must be sucked out of the lubricator using a syringe and tube. However- given the oily condensate emitted from



the chimney when going off shed for the first time- it delivers oil. My own preference though, would be for a return to the usual cab mounted lubricator with a drain below the footplate, which can be blown out using steam from the boiler at the end of the run.

Water sight glasses are fitted as standard. Abbeybach Engineering have modified the two prototypes to include a blowdown valve linked to the bottom water gauge fitting, and I understand that this will be replicated on the production locos.

Boilers on both locos are filled by removing the sand pot lid on 'Talgarth', or the dummy tank filler lid on 'Sabrina' and unscrewing a threaded plug. Again, a screwdriver slot is provided, but an O-ring provides the seal, so do not overtighten! As tested, the two prototypes were not equipped with water top-up valves.

The reverser is adjacent to the right-hand side cab doorway on each locomotive, and easily accessible for manual operation, as the centrally

mounted regulator would be; the original regulator had been a lever prior to the radio control conversion.

The gas regulator is, however, tucked inside the back left-hand top corner of the cab, the tank being in the front left corner. The gas regulator knob is smooth plastic, and I found it difficult to access and grip in this location without lifting the roof, especially with oily fingers. If I were to buy one of these locos, I would replace this knob with one of the commercially available alternatives- or if fitting R/C, move the manual steam regulator lever to the gas valve spindle. That said, the burner on both locomotives lit easily via the opening smokebox door, stabilised quickly and burned quietly. As the tank warms up in use and the contents pressurises, the gas can be eased back to avoid unnecessary blowing off from the safety valves.

The cab roof hinges to one side to access the gas filler valve. I did notice that on both locos, the roof tends to rattle slightly when the loco is in motion.

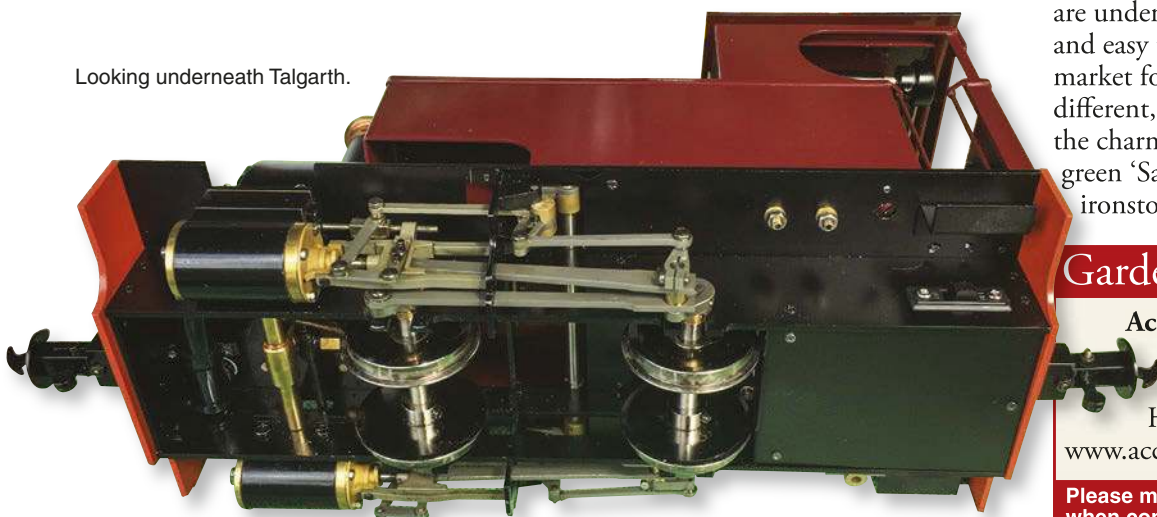
Accucraft pattern chopper couplings are fitted, although I did note that couplings on the two locos as supplied did not have a hook for coupling to centre buffer and chain fitted stock.

So, the burning question, how did they perform? Once the initial condensate had been cleared from the cylinders both locos trundled happily around the W&LLR with seven Welshpool wagons and a brake van behind them, at a sensible pace. The radio control was sensitive, but easily mastered- once I had remembered that the regulator stick on the R/C handset works the opposite way to my Roundhouse 'Charles'!

The large slide valve cylinders seem to provide plenty of power, and I found that 25-30 psi was plenty to handle the train on Dave's line, which does have a couple of undulations. Obviously, these were new, stiff-ish locos, and would only improve with a spot of running in.

Would I buy one? Well, generic locos are not usually my thing if I'm honest, as I like to model specific prototypes. That said, both these locos are undeniably attractive, characterful and easy to run, so if I were to be in the market for something for something different, I could easily be tempted by the charms of a rusty and weathered green 'Sabrina', with a rake of battered ironstone tippers... ■

Looking underneath Talgarth.



Garden Rail Resource

Accucraft (UK) Ltd.

Unit 4 Long Meadow
Industrial Estate, Pontrilas,
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www.accucraft.uk.com

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- Gauge: 45mm

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Price inclusive of shipping by UPS: to the UK is USD994 and to the USA is USD1009 per model.

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this isn't a new idea, the Timpdon versions are shorter than most at 23.5cm long so might be easier where access is limited. 32 or 45mm gauge, please state when ordering.

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GWR Electric Key Token machine cast in resin and brass. Kit does not include the base cabinet the machine sits on,

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Tylers No.6 Tablet machine cast in resin and brass.



Price: £7.95

SEVERN MODELS

16mm War Department Light Ration Wagon

Severn Models have produced their first 16mm scale wagon kit with a very highly detailed War Department Light Ration Wagon. The prototype was used for supplies to the front line and for returning injured casualties back to the field dressing stations behind the front line during WW1.

The kit is etched in brass and includes an opening door, when you removed

the pins which are correctly fitted to lengths of chain. The model is designed to be easy to assemble and comes complete with 32mm gauge wheelsets.

Price: £60

Severn Models

P.O. Box 785, Broseley, TF7 9FT
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Tallyllyn Railway air pump

Detailing parts for the Accucraft "Dolgoch" locomotive.

Price: £12.95

Trenarren Models

2 Brynglas Walk, Tywyn, Gwynedd,
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IP ENGINEERING

16mm Talyllyn Coach No.3

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As with all IP kits, the model is laser-cut from quality plywood and supplied with steel wheels, cast couplings and brass wheel bearings. All coaches can be made with either TR or centre couplings.

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IP Engineering

Spilsby Rd, New Leake,
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MOTLEY MINIATURES

16mm scale people

Soldiers

Price

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Painted: £15 each or £60 for 5

Set of three slate workers and tools.

Price

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Painted: £45

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Price

Unpainted: £7

Painted: £10

Motley Miniatures

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BA12 8BP UK

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LOCO-BOXES

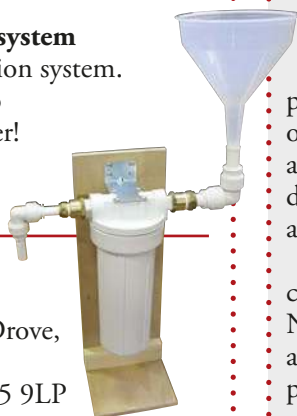
Water filtration system

Rain water filtration system.
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Loco-Boxes

2 Bannold Box
Cottages, Long Drove,
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HELMSMAN CONTROLLERS

Peco is very pleased to announce that we will be taking on the production, distribution and servicing of Helmsman Model Rail controllers and accessories, including those designed for gareden scales due to Geof and Lesley's well-earned retirement.

The PECO Helmsman range of controllers will be relaunched in the New Year and until then there will be a period of unavailability. As soon as production has re-started and stock is available we will advise through the

model trade and press plus provide full details on our website.

As with all Peco brands, Helmsman Controllers will only be available through official Peco retailers who have physical shop premises and via our overseas wholesale distributor network.

In the meantime, for questions on servicing and repair of existing equipment:

Please contact the Peco Technical Advice Bureau (TAB) on 01297 21542 or info@peco.co

The evolution of the garden railway magazine

Nostalgia just ain't what it used to be claims Dave Skertchly as he suggests that the evolution of the garden railway publications we all love can be traced to the invention of the photocopier.

Our garden railways are not model railways at all but real railways on a small scale.

The garden railway is nothing new, it was of course invented by none other than Charles Easton Spooner, the brains behind the iconic Ffestiniog railway.

Thankfully his garden railway locomotive, Topsy, still exists and is a delight to behold at Porthmadog. We can just imagine that the reason given for building Topsy was to carry out "learned experiments" after all, the Victorians couldn't be caught enjoying themselves, but nowadays, we can all see right through the excuses.

Some things don't change, and we can be sure that even Charles Easton Spooner had to agree the track routing with Mrs Spooner. For the next 160 years however, the garden railway was an oddity positioned somewhere between an engineered miniature railway and a large-scale indoor model railway running outside in the rain. It always rained in those olden days.

Until the last quarter of the 20th century hobby magazines had been



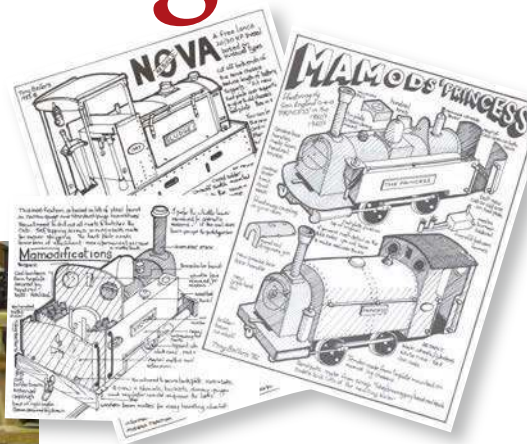
Charles Easton Spooner's Topsy. Probably the first ever garden railway engine (Photo James Gilchrist)

derived from books. They mostly comprised closely packed, learned text. Photographs were few and far between. Humour was non-existent.

Contributors could send in a roll of undeveloped FP4 black and white film with an article which the publisher would develop and crop giving no feedback to the erstwhile amateur photographer. By the time the FP4 was developed, printed, screened and run through the traditional presses the pictures would be rather murky and uninspiring. The unions kept a close hold on production technology while

authors were mostly editorial staff, who were cheaper to employ in those days. Alternatively, writers were acknowledged experts, just like our parents, passing down their opinions as received wisdom as though from the gospel.

By the middle of the 1970s many younger people and some who were just young at heart were keen to escape from this dreary world. Along with sex and drugs and Rock and Roll we discovered the works photocopier. At last we had the ability to print our own copy with photographs and drawings. It inspired a generation of fanzines which flooded



The fanzines had a freewheeling often comic book style which appeals to Dave.



The Merioneth Mercury left a legacy of superb drawings including Colin Binnies definitive rolling stock drawings now available free on line.

the market if you knew where to look, here is the definition:

Fanzine (blend of fan and magazine or -zine) is a non-professional and non-official publication produced by



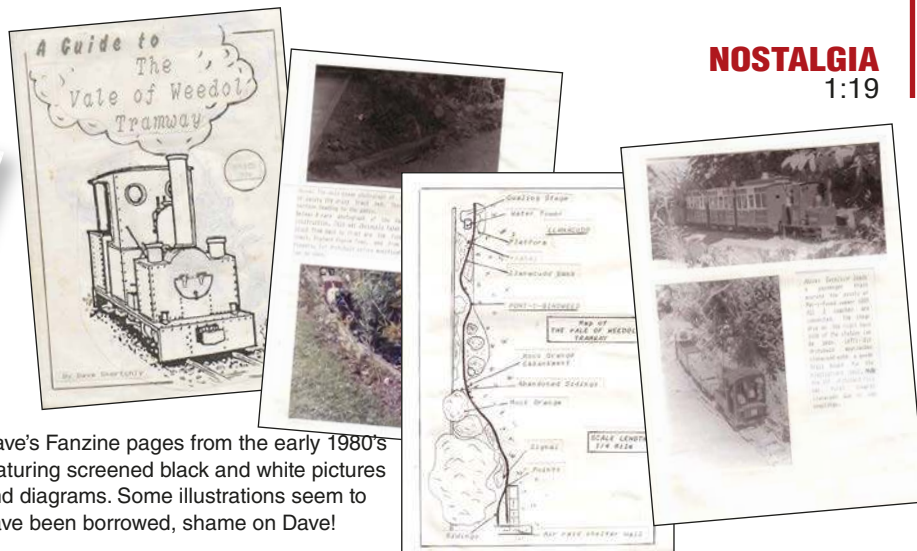
16mm Today is probably the premier fanzine and been published for over 40 years. You will have to buy a back issue if you want to own the History of 16 mil special issue. Back Issues are also available on CD.



Stuart Browne published his Archangel models catalogue which still inspires.



The fanzine is still alive and kicking meeting the needs of specialists and area groups.



Dave's Fanzine pages from the early 1980's featuring screened black and white pictures and diagrams. Some illustrations seem to have been borrowed, shame on Dave!

enthusiasts of a particular cultural phenomenon.

Some fanzines such as viz and Private Eye eventually went mainstream. They were irreverent, visual and anti-establishment and that is just what the early garden rail enthusiasts were.

Surprisingly an ageing church organist and registrar who, it is said, married Elizabeth Taylor twice, is perhaps not the immediate definition of a drug crazed hippy but his cutting humour, and quiet demeanour encouraged those early pioneers, I refer of course to Don Boreham. Men of the cloth seem to feature in this way-out mostly narrow-gauge world, we can think of Teddy Boston, Peter Denny and the Rev Awdrey.

I too was caught up in the world of fanzines. In those days you could buy Russian SLR cameras with a focal plane shutter and the associated dark room equipment for a song but at risk of subsidising the Commies, yet another anti-establishment approach. I was given a dotted screen which improved the quality of photocopied pictures and set about making my own fanzines, including the very first edition of the Vale of Weedol Tramway Guide in the

early 1980. I still have that precious paste up.

As technology developed, first offset litho printing, then word processors and finally digital photography, a whole series of club fanzines of ever improving quality were spawned. The spirit of the times in those early days is embodied in the Merioneth Railway Society rule book. Rule 1. There are no rules. Rule 2. See Rule 1.

The mainstream magazines meanwhile blissfully carried on with their mainstream focus with occasional garden railway features for summer amusement while the garden rail enthusiasts simply got on and published it themselves.

There were initially two sources of garden railway fanzine, the Merioneth Mercury published by the Merioneth Railway Society and 16mm Today published by the Association of 16mm Narrow Gauge Modelers.

SMT as it is now known survives as a subscription quarterly magazine and has been published for over 40 years. Production is currently done by Warners, who also produce **Garden Rail**, so that is two quality journals to keep us all amused. Others came and went such as the Crank Pin Journal, Merlins Messenger and the Pot Boiler.

Take a look at back issues of the Merioneth Mercury and SMT and you will find a totally different approach to that taken by the mainstream magazines. There are hand drawn sketches such as those by Tony Bellars and John Wenlock. I particularly like John's drawing of a "Volcano" Boiler. The mind boggles.

Another important character who still influences us today is the sainted Colin Binnie. His attention to detail left us with a definitive set of rolling stock drawings and a supply of the ubiquitous curly spoked wheel at affordable prices.

Colin asked that his drawings and writings be made freely available and so they are, take a look at www.colinbinne.org and enjoy the talent and enthusiasm of a true enthusiast. Stuart Browne produced both fanzines and a superb catalogue for his Archangel brand which still gives pleasure to this day.

The Association of 16mm Narrow Gauge Modelers have published an official history by John Wenlock which is a glorious fun read, full of fact and nostalgia, but you will need to buy a back issue if you want one.

The fanzine has not gone away, try the smaller societies such as the G Scale Society, Australia's Rails in the Garden, and let us not forget Heritage Rail which is available free as an on-line download.

Garden Rail magazine evolved as a commercial venture to provide a monthly news stand quality garden railway magazine. In my opinion it has developed from its fanzine roots, indeed many contributors cut their teeth in garden railway fanzines, and this enables them to get straight to readership. The freewheeling **Garden Rail** packs the newsstands worldwide with fabulous color photos and carefully edited, entertaining and unpretentious stories.

As I sit on my rustic park bench outside the Sheep Shearers Arms I flick through my carefully selected and treasured fanzines of the 1980s and re-live the buccaneering spirit and enterprise of those days. Come to think of it that spirit has never gone away, from fabulous commercial steam locomotives to scratch bodged projects of endless imagination the whole of human life is here in the garden to inspire and share. It is great to think that we have so many friends worldwide willing to share their own projects and opinions both in fanzines, and in this magazine. ■



It took a different breed of man to change the world of model railways, Don Boreham's Narrow Gauge Railway Modelling is now rather dated but very enjoyable, Rev Teddy Boston and his enthusiasm for Narrow Gauge, is a great read if you can get hold of a copy.

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Letters are welcomed on any aspect of large scale railway modelling. Please e-mail the Editor: phil.parker@warnersgroup.co.uk or post to The Editor, **Garden Rail Magazine**, Warners Group Publications, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire, PE10 9PH

RAILCARS

With reference to the September Garden Rail, do I have an old and battered Faller Railcar kicking around? Well, not really.

This one has had a little modification to it so it doesn't look quite as Faller Railcar as it did originally. I bought it years ago, and very second-hand, like most of my purchases. I think I paid a fiver for it.

I did a quick bit of calculation and

decided that most of it was about 1:24 scale, so the seats, which were plainly a larger scale effort, have been replaced with some home-made seats so I can accommodate a few more (smaller) people. It's had lights fitted, and has had a bit of a repaint. The horns don't take kindly to being painted and the paint tends to rub off, leaving the red plastic standing out a bit. It's not used very much on the line, as the steam locos are far more popular with the operating staff (me).

I'm afraid Mark Thatcher's garage mechanics can't be very familiar with the layout of the Mini. If they look for the battery under the bonnet they will be mistaken as it isn't there – it's in the boot. So the bad news for the customer is that the mechanic can't even find the battery...

Perhaps some day I might be awarded with the pedant's hat...

Chris Dowlan



It's not only the rolling stock that's vintage

UGLY LOCOS

In response to your request concerning an ugly locomotive, please try this one. She started life as an Accucraft diesel. I had great fun chopping up the body and rebuilding it into a real ugly. Unfortunately she has long since been scrapped and this is the only photo I have of her

Paul Fletcher

I enjoyed your editorial on "the Cabbage" and the maintenance trolley – you are not alone as I've always liked the more "eccentric" vehicles. The Airfix Blohm und Voss BV141 was a favourite back in the day and I have a liking for articulated locos.

DIARY DATES

Date: 17-20 October 2019

Event: Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition

Venue: Warwickshire Event Centre, A425, Southam Road, Leamington Spa, CV31 1XN

Organiser: Meridienne Exhibitions Ltd

Web: www.meridienneexhibitions.co.uk

Times: 10am – 5pm (Thurs-Sat) 10am-4pm (Sun)

Admission: Adult £10.50 Senior £9.50 Child £4.00 (on-line booking discount available)

Exhibitors: See website for full details

Additional info: Free parking, refreshments

Date: 26 October 2019

Event: Exeter Garden Railway Show

Venue: The Matford Centre, Matford Park Road, Marsh Barton Ind Estate, Exeter, EX2 8FD

Organiser: South Devon Garden Railway Group Limited

Web: www.extergardenrailwayshow.com

Times: 10:30am – 4:30pm

Admission: Adult £7 Concessions £6 Child free

Exhibitors: 25 layouts and 40 trade stands. See website for full details

Additional info: Being all on one level the venue is wheel chair friendly and there is an excellent restaurant on site.

Date: 30th November 2019

Event: Steam in Beds

Venue: Eaton Bray Village Hall, Eaton Bray, Nr Dunstable, LU6 2DJ

Organiser: Bedfordshire Area Group of the Association of 16mm Narrow Gauge Modellers.

Web: www.bag16mm.org.uk

2020

Date: 29th February

Event: Model Railway Winter Showcase and AGM

Venue: The Rufus Centre, Steppingley Road, Flitwick, Bedfordshire, MK45 1AH

Times: 10am to 4pm

Admission: Non-member (Family ticket) £5, Member £3

Organiser: The Gauge Three Society

Web: www.gauge3.org.uk

SUBMISSION NOTES

Garden Rail welcomes articles submitted via posted disc, e-mail, Dropbox (or other large file sending system on-line). Please ensure that your name, e-mail address, telephone number and postal address for payment on publication are included. Send to phil.parker@warnersgroup.co.uk or to the contact address on the Contents page.

Articles should be submitted in MS Word or other word processing format. Please do not use fancy formatting or embed photos in the piece, these should be sent separately at the highest resolution possible and in JPEG format. Printed photos of a historic nature will be accepted. Captions for all photos should be included as part of the submission. You must own copyright to any material submitted.

Back to railways – the cabbage looks like a baby class 58 and although the prototype might be full of problems in the model world it could be great. The maintenance trolley would be a useful addition to the permanent way gang and reminded me a little of the IP Engineering Ezee range “Daisy Railcar”.

I’ve been an occasional reader of

Garden Rail and have just started a subscription as after years of procrastination I’ve finally started my own garden railway. I’m building up a collection of the IP Engineering Ezee range starting with the Goods train set which I’ve thoroughly enjoyed putting together. Once we get into the Autumn I’ll start work out in the garden on the

railway itself – in the meantime I’ll run the trains round the wooden track indoors or on the decking.

I’m enjoying the variety of articles in **Garden Rail** at the moment especially the scratchbuilding and layout focussed ones.

Ian Allen





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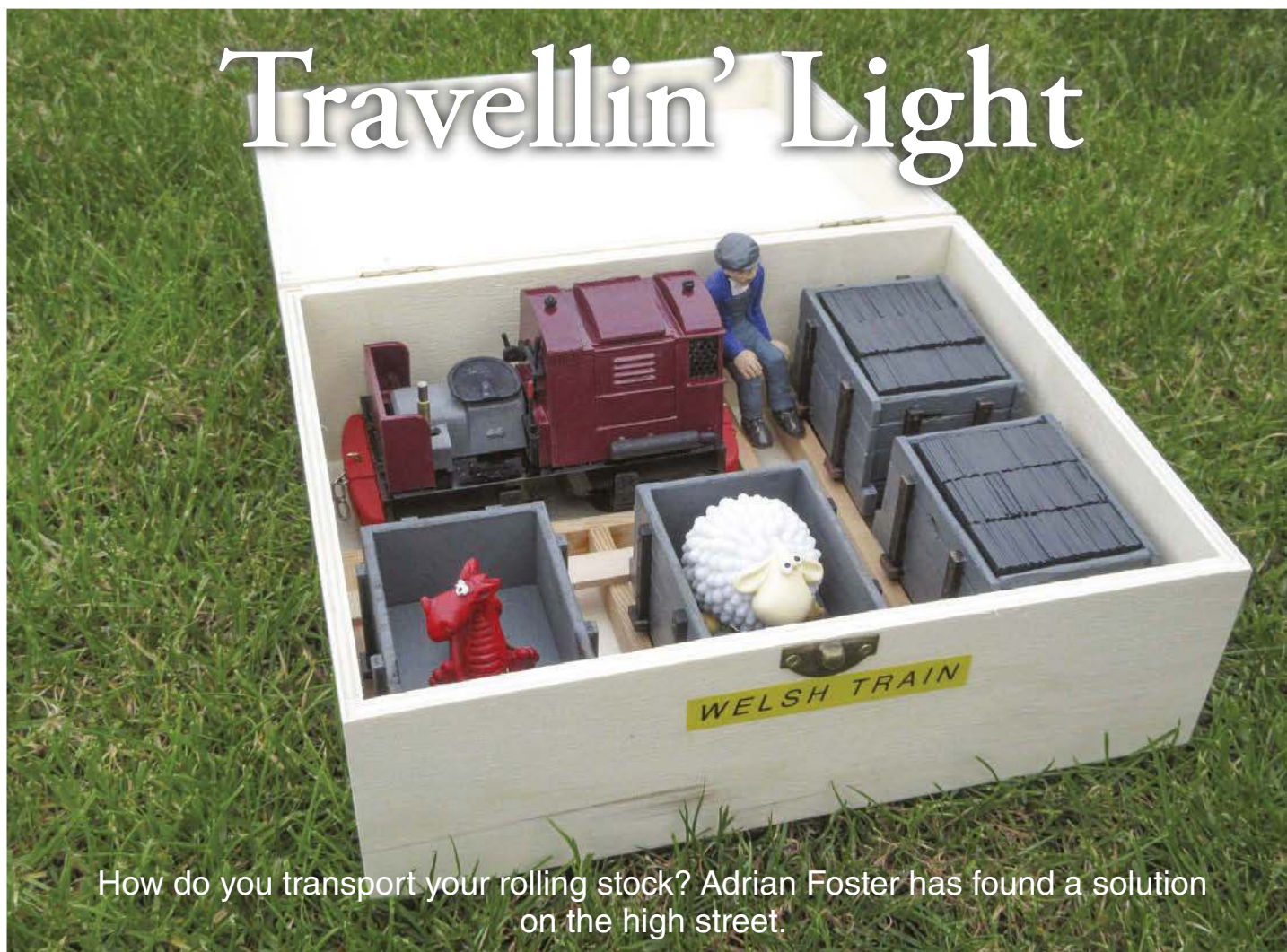
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Travellin' Light



How do you transport your rolling stock? Adrian Foster has found a solution on the high street.

We've all been there. There are times when you are visiting one of your group's smaller railways and the usual paraphernalia of steam loco, three or four coaches or wagons, not to mention lubricating oil, steam oil, gas, water and lighter is just a bit too much and the whole lot comes dangerously close to ending up as an expensive pile on the floor.

The brewery train fits with space for spare couplings or perhaps some tools.

Or maybe you just want to travel light.

Well, I think I might have the answer. Let me introduce you to the wooden box sold by The Works, that well known shop that most towns have and sells books, art materials and stationery.

This box measures 250mm x 200mm x 100mm (10" x 8" x 4" in old money) and costs a mere £4.

Depending on how you divide it up internally and I use strips of 6mm x 12mm

softwood ($\frac{1}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ "") you can get in it one small diesel and three or four wagons.

The photographs show my Welsh Train box and contains one Ruston 20DL, two wagons of slate, one sheep wagon and one dragon wagon (!). These four wagons are all Phil Sharples' small Welsh coal wagons (other wagons are available) but contain other Welsh products.

A couple of other boxes contain a brewery train (wagons of barrels) and a mixed train comprising wagons of sand, gravel, a lump of rock and the driver's dog.

A box will also hold one loco and three Binnie skips.

So there you have it. A train in a not very big box – it doesn't take up a lot of room in the car and you are running before everyone else has even lit up. ■

If you prefer a trip to the stationery store, how about a box-file full of skip wagons?



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Darjeeling NDM6, 0-4-0D, R/C battery electric £1252, sound £1355

Bulldog 0-4-0D R/C Battery electric £634

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Silver Lady 0-6-0T Feb 2020 Manual £1700, R/C £1915



Fowler 0-6-2 tender, Mar 2020 Manual £1625, R/C £1850

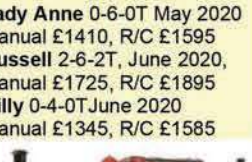


Katie 0-4-0ST April 2020 Manual £1345, R/C £1585



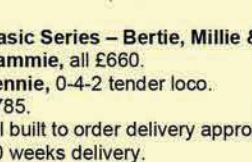
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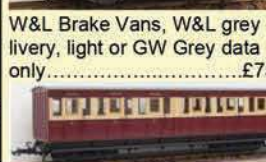
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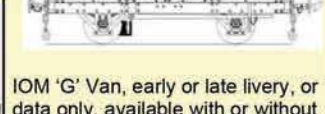
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