

GARDEN

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Rail

HISTORY



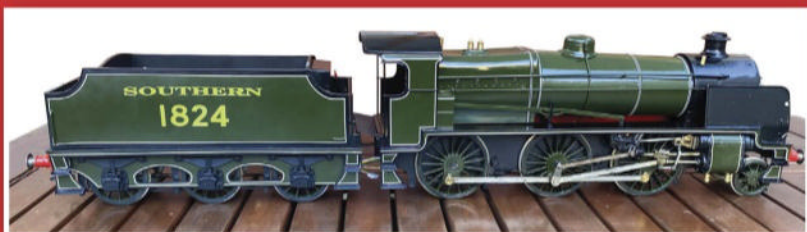
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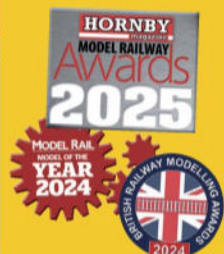


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View from the end of the Platform

TINKERING

“I don't have the skills...” is a phrase that appears regularly in social media posts, and it really winds me up.

None of us were born with the skills to build a model railway. They develop over time, with practise, and mistakes. I flatter myself that I've acquired a few along the way, but no one can ever know everything in this hobby. While I'm happy to bolt things together or hack away at wood and Plastikard, the world of CAD design is a mystery to me. One day, I'll crack it, or at least that is what I promise myself.

I was reminded of this as I sat at my workbench catching up with some locomotive maintenance. The battery box that's been kicking around for a year is now in the roof of my Lady Anne, replacing the old, warped one that kept dropping the batteries while running.

A new servo is fitted in Ragleth, and my Merlin Mayflower's wheels are now set to 45mm gauge, in preparation for a visit to a friend's line.

A few weeks ago, while visiting another line, one loco suffered a blocked gas jet. I not only diagnosed the issue, but using

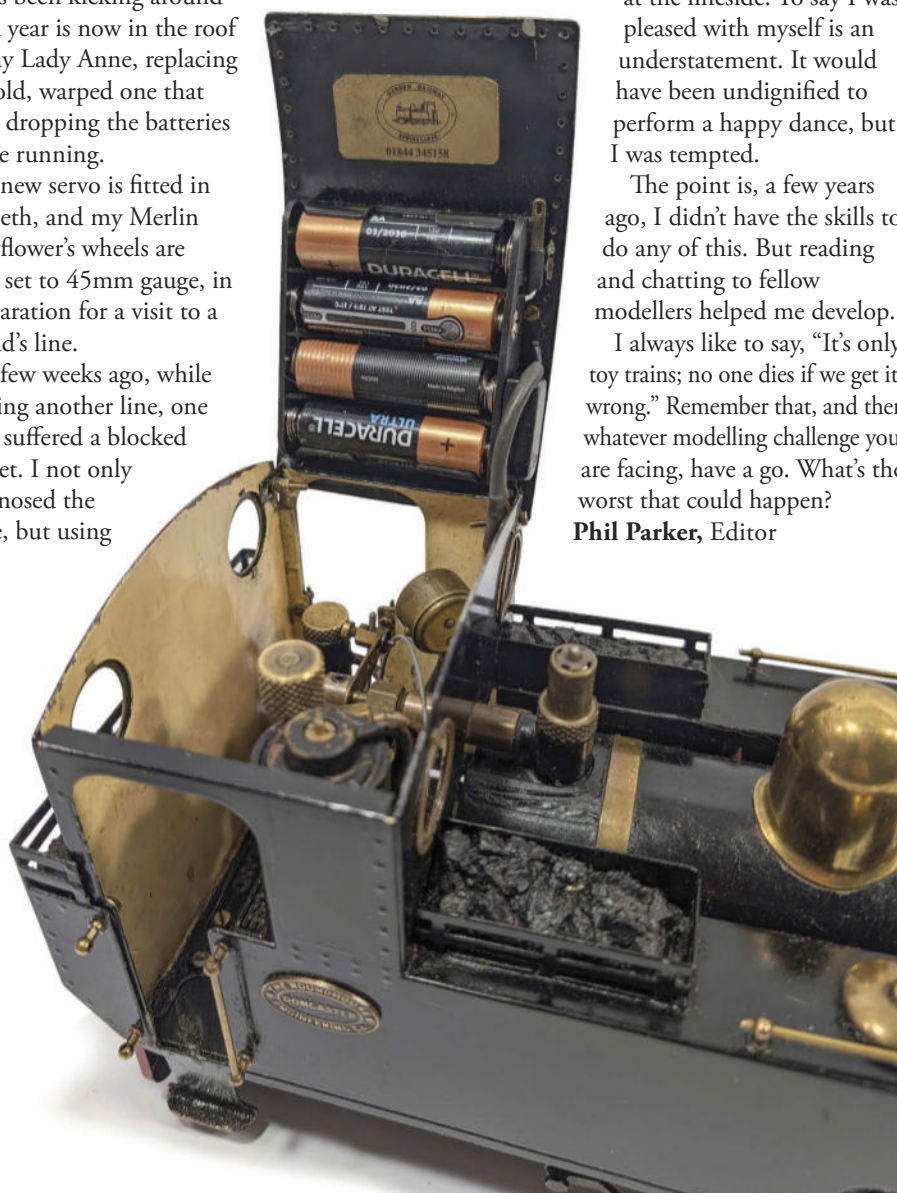


the tools in my 'flight box', I extracted the part, cleaned it up and fixed the problem. All at the lineside. To say I was pleased with myself is an understatement. It would have been undignified to perform a happy dance, but I was tempted.

The point is, a few years ago, I didn't have the skills to do any of this. But reading and chatting to fellow modellers helped me develop.

I always like to say, “It's only toy trains; no one dies if we get it wrong.” Remember that, and then whatever modelling challenge you are facing, have a go. What's the worst that could happen?

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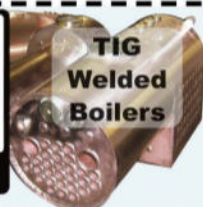
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The Tidewater & Lake Teslin Railroad

Railways have been part of Brit **Malcolm Holland's** life, but he chose to go to American in the garden.



Railways have always been a big feature of my life. My father and both his brothers were all keen enthusiasts, so there was always train talk around. However, garden railways was Dad's fault!

It all started in the late-1960s with a Tri-ang 'Big-Big Train', 0-gauge set, which soon moved from indoors to a rockery in the garden of our house in Princes Risborough. Hours of fun were had with that set-up.

In 1970, Dad's job saw a move west to Wiltshire, and that's when he really got into his stride, building a course scale O gauge layout in our new garden in Wootton Bassett.

1979 saw me start working on the real thing when I started an engineering apprenticeship with BREL, in the once mighty Swindon Works, something I'm still very proud of. However, although trains still featured in my life, I had also developed one of my other great life passions, classic American cars, which have had to share my time and resources.

Into the 1990's, now married and a house owner, it was my late first wife, Lorraine, who really started my garden railway by purchasing a G scale Bachmann 2-4-2 loco and suggested I move my railway modelling activities outdoors. Her cunning reasoning being that she might finally get some landscaping of the garden completed, and the spare bedroom could become a nursery. And so it began, railway construction and an expanding family!

The Possum Creek & Alpine Pass Railroad started to snake its way around our small



September 2009, construction well underway. Once an unruly hedge had been cut back, it opened up another 4 or 5ft of available space, which allowed a path to be laid at a lower level. Building up a wall of sleepers gave the main station (Teslin) a working height of about 4ft. The lower levels make use of 4" half-round timber, either longitudinally or in a 'log-roll' form.



Freight trains passing at Juneau, prior to the recent rebuild.



A works train crosses the steel viaduct, hauled by an LGB 0-4-0 switcher.



The last major construction project before the line could be completed in 2012 was the viaduct across Glacier Valley, as this area became known. Made from steel angle and strip. I welded the towers up before setting them in the ground, and then welded steel strip to the towers to support the track.

plot. It was always going to be US outline, I had previously become very interested in US railroading, in particular, narrow gauge and short lines, so that was the theme it took. The railway was a generic, backwoods affair, sort of set in Colorado, but incursions by other visiting trains were not uncommon! Sadly, Lorraine died in 1998, leaving me with more important matters to deal with, such as adjusting to single-parent status. During the next few years, we did manage to host a couple of G Scale Society gatherings, but the railway finally 'closed' when we moved house in 2006.

Remarriage and White Pass inspiration

I married Tracey in 2006, and a new chapter started in all our lives. The family expanded again, as we now had five assorted offspring between us! We moved to a much larger house, with an enormous mature garden – ooh, the potential!



The military train passes a passenger at Teslin. This train commemorates the time when the White Pass was taken over and operated by the US Army 770th Railway Operating Battalion in WW2. All the vehicles are 1/24th scale. I even managed to include a model of a Dodge Weapons Carrier that I once owned.



Taking water. The tank is my own design and wooden construction. It has now been relocated to the lower station (Juneau) and a new one, similar in design to those used on the WP, has been installed at Teslin.

Our honeymoon took the form of an Alaskan cruise, from Whittier to Vancouver, and one of the shore excursions was a trip on the White Pass & Yukon Route. The seeds of inspiration for a new garden railway were sown.

Although now just a tourist railway, serving mainly the cruise ship industry, historically, the WP & YR had operated big-time, narrow-gauge railroading. The post-war years saw some of the first-ever fully intermodal operations; this was the sort of thing I wanted to capture the essence of in the garden.

Now with a larger garden, it would be possible to create some of the fabulous landscape elements. However, although I wanted to capture the flavour of the WP, I didn't want to create any form of model of the existing line. After delving into the history of railroading in that part of the world, I discovered a multitude of historical schemes and proposals for railways



The original loco depot at Teslin. This shed was originally built for my previous garden railway, so had a fully outdoor life before this. It ultimately succumbed to the elements and has recently been replaced with a single-track shed at the other end of the station. The scrap Bachmann 4-6-0 was an exercise in airbrushing and weathering.

connecting to the WP. This gave me the idea of a branch from Carcross on the WP, to Juneau, the Alaska state capital, which, even today, is only accessible by sea and air. So, the Tidewater and Lake Teslin RR was born. This would allow some leeway in creation of freelance locos and stock, as well as using RTR WP equipment.

Concept and Construction

After a bit of consideration, we identified an undeveloped area on the right-hand side of our garden with easy access to the garage as being most suitable. The area is roughly 45ft x 20ft, with the only object to avoid being a mature pear tree. Steep gradients and sharp curves are not considered best bedfellows for

garden railways, but in order to capture the flavour of the WP, these would, with careful planning, be required.

The layout is basically a folded circuit with a spiral at one end. Originally, I had three stations with passing loops, but have now reduced it to two. The main station, Teslin, sits atop a 4ft-high sleeper-built wall. The lower level supports the second station, Juneau.

The original layout design had a small pond located in the middle of the spiral. This included two short tunnels, one of which went under a rock-built waterfall. This pond fed a watercourse that ran into our large pond. This arrangement was never particularly successful, so we left the small pond and waterfall to operate independently for some years.

There is another tunnel, approx. 4 ½ft long, again, this flies in the face of perceived wisdom, but other than being a bit tricky to clean the track, it has so far proved OK. I had considered training our miniature Dachshunds to earn their keep by towing some form of track cleaner through, but I am yet to develop that idea!

A lot of rock and soil was required during construction, fortunately, as we were also digging another larger pond,



A posed photo, but it had to be done when the opportunity of a good snowfall gave a real White Pass feel to the line! A number of photos taken at this time have been used to create Christmas cards. This was the original third station/passing loop, which has now been removed. The brewery building has now been relocated to Juneau, which is where the real one is located.

it generated a lot of material. Rocks are mostly in the form of Sarcen stone, which 'grows' naturally hereabouts!

Planting is Tracey's area of expertise, and she delved deep into the study of Pacific Northwest flora to establish what was available in the UK that was similar to continue with some form of authenticity.

Building took three or four years on and off, most of 2010 was written off, for example, as I had to have a double hip replacement. It was finally completed in 2012.

12 years of use and nature took its toll, 2024 saw the start of some major rebuilding. A lot of the original timber work had rotted and had to be replaced. The opportunity was taken to ease the radius and gradient of the spiral and, to this end, the small pond and two small tunnels were removed. This also improved access for maintenance and track cleaning, as I'm no longer as flexible as I once was, and falling in the pond was becoming a real danger!

The rebuild has also included a new branch line from Juneau to be added for extra interest, to allow our two young grandsons somewhere to run their trains to and from.

Tracklaying

Track is all Peco except for the end of the branch, which transitions to LGB to allow the youngsters to vary the layout on the patio. I have around 155ft of main running line, with additional loops at each station. Track base is either Mendip limestone sub-base or concrete block, ballasted with 6mm limestone chippings. Track is all



General view of Juneau, the new spiral and the developing settlement of Spruce Ridge, named appropriately after the planting of miniature Sitka spruce trees on the new site. Some buildings stay out all the time, others, such as these at Spruce Ridge, are normally stored indoors, being a little less robust.



A passenger train climbs the original spiral, having passed through the tunnel under the waterfall. This area has now been redeveloped and the spiral diameter increased and the gradient eased.



The new spiral under construction in 2024 after the small pond had been removed. Constructed with salvaged concrete blocks at the core and faced with stone.



Transportation of road vehicles was a big part of White Pass operations, prior to the completion of the highway to Skagway in 1978. I envisaged a similar operation occurring between Juneau and Carcross. The International tractor unit in WP colours is inspired by a photo of a trainload of brand-new Kenworth tractor units being delivered for the WP trucking service.

solder-bonded with feeders at various points around the circuit for additional reliability with track power.

Locos and rolling stock

Modellers of the WP have been well catered for by the main manufacturers over the years. The mainstay of our fleet is a couple of LGB Alcos running on track power, a couple of Bachmann 4-6-0's and an LGB diesel switcher converted to battery RC. In total, we have about a dozen locos available, but not all are suitable for this line.

I still have some Colorado narrow gauge stock that I run, my historically accurate excuse being that much Colorado stock was moved to Alaska in WW2 to supplement that used on the WP - that's good enough for me!

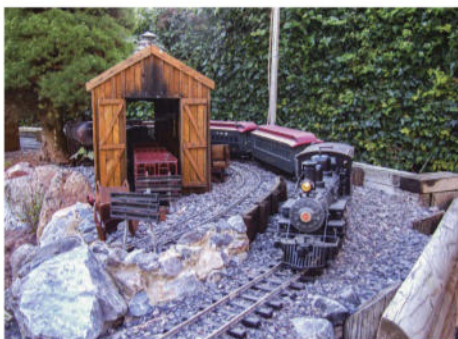
I've spent quite a bit of time examining photos of the old WP and trying to assemble freight trains of the sort that have run on the WP over the years, from WW2



An Alco hauled passenger train at Teslin. The photo shows how much the original conifers have grown and how they are causing the track level to subside at times. I'm going to have to do some thinning out!



An LGB Alco hauls a passenger train up hill, across Glacier Valley on the steel viaduct.



Passenger train leaves Teslin to drop down around the spiral, passing the new loco shed.



Steam-hauled container train climbing the new spiral.



Busy times at Juneau. I have recently constructed an oil transfer terminal using old plastic paint containers and scrap bits and pieces. The Alaskan Brewing Co. brewery is always kept busy!

to the current day. So, to that end, we have a WW2 train, a container train, oil tanker train and car transporter 'motorail' type train, as well as plenty of passenger coaches. I do have one stipulation for all my rolling stock, however, everything has to have metal wheels to improve track holding.

Control

I'm currently using both track power under RC control using G Scale Graphics RailBoss system and battery RC using RC Trains equipment. This gives a great deal of flexibility running a couple of trains at the same time – carefully, on single track!

Structures

These are a real mixture of media. I have home-made timber and plastic structures and kit-built from the likes of Piko. A few more are still to be built. In particular, a new station building is required for Teslin, as the old Brandbright structure is now getting quite past its best.



The most recent loco to enter the fleet is what I call the poor man's Mikado, as I can't afford an LGB White Pass No' 73. It is an Aristocraft 2-8-2, kit-bashed to narrow gauge proportions, with the addition of a modified Bachmann 4-6-0 cab and scratch-built tender. I have named it after my late father.



Overall oblique aerial view, taken in 2025, showing the new enlarged spiral in the foreground. Sadly, the mature pear tree that required the site to curve around it has now gone, with just the stump of the trunk remaining.

Conclusion

Aside from all the regular maintenance a garden railway requires to keep things rolling, I still have one big future project I'd like to achieve. I'd like to build a pair of WP GE 90 Class 'shovelnose' locos. I have acquired some LGB power bogies, but I'd like to try my hand at 3D printing the major components. Having been a CAD engineer for many years, the computer modelling element doesn't cause any concern, but I will have to get a grip of home printing at some point to complete the task.

Meanwhile, we keep playing trains; the eldest grandson, the Chief Engineer, as I call him, is always ready to assist with that! What's better than a summer's evening, adult libation in hand, listening to the sound of Alco's climbing the grade? ■

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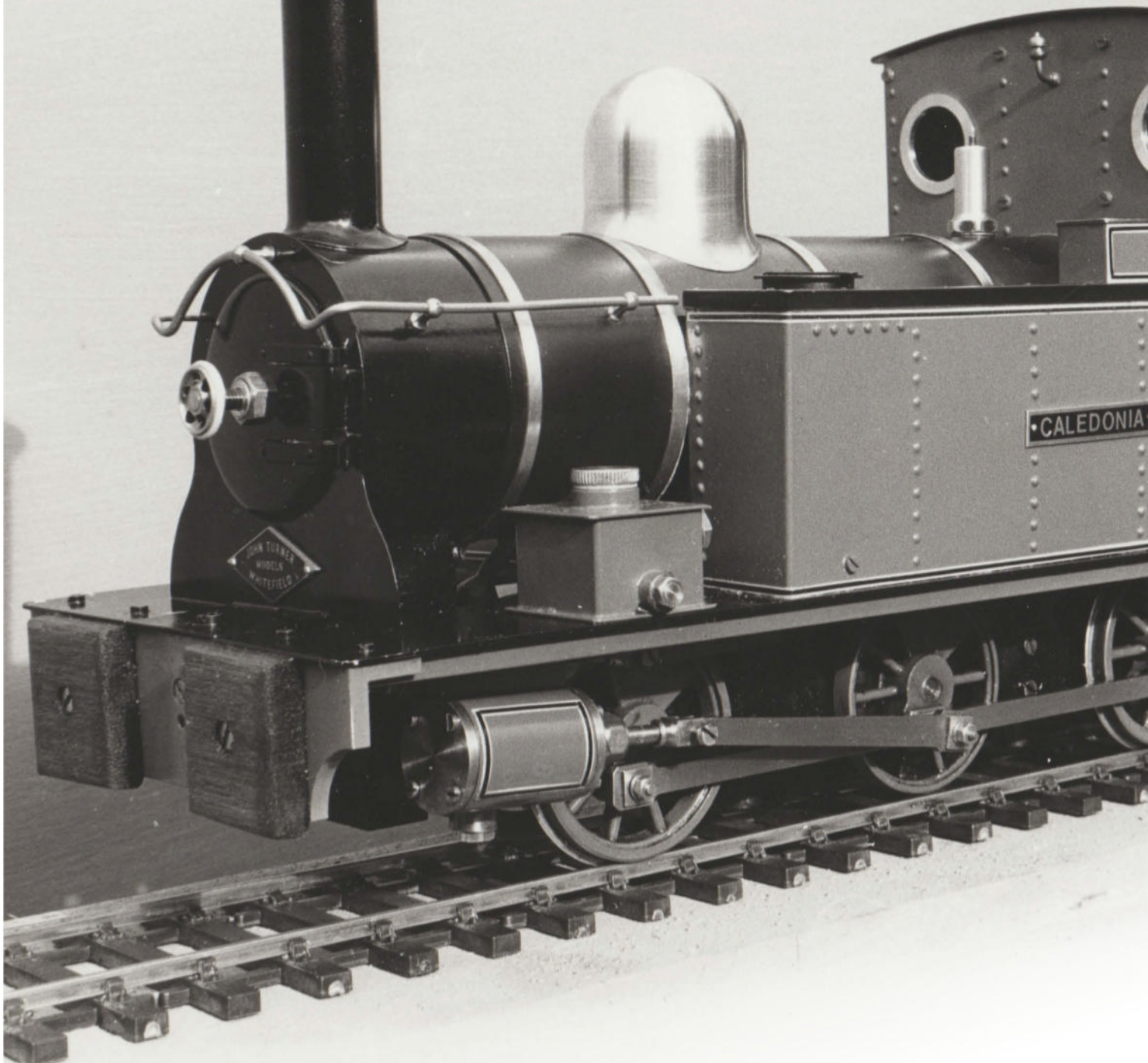
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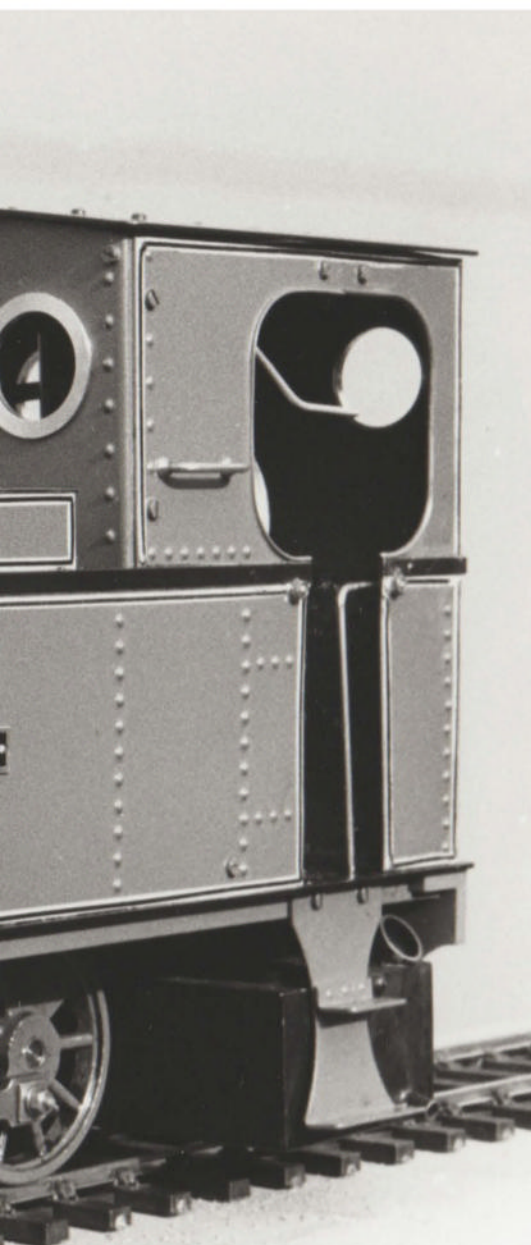
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'Caledonia' as featured
in Peter Dobson's book.
(Photo: Peter Dobson)



‘Caledonia’, and John Turner

Dave Pinniger recalls an engineer whom many people have never heard of.



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Caledonia in the 1986 catalogue.

When I was collecting information for my recent article in *Garden Rail* 382 on 'Foxdale', the Lindale Caledonia kit, I realised that the designer John Turner is virtually unknown these days.

He was a very skilled model engineer and a great innovator, but was also a shy man who did not like to be in the spotlight. Like a number of other 16mm loco builders, he was also a poor businessman and had a reputation for slow building, keeping customers waiting a long time for their locomotives.

This article was prompted by a copy of a splendidly-illustrated catalogue, which he produced in 1986, I found in my archive file. As I mentioned in the 'Foxdale' piece,

John designed the Lindale kit, but was very disappointed with the quality of the materials used by Lindale to keep reducing costs, and so, when Lindale closed down, he decided to set up his own business, John Turner Models, to make 16mm scale steam locos of the highest quality in Manchester.

The first design he produced was a revised version of the Manx Northern 'Caledonia' 0-6-0T, which, although superficially similar to the Lindale version, was a completely different locomotive.

Apart from using much better materials, such as steel for the coupling and connecting rods, he fitted precision lost wax cast steel wheels and brass bushes to bearing surfaces. A stainless steel Wheldon-type

firebox contained the heat, and a hinged cab roof allowed access to the controls. These included a reversing lever, which operated a unique design of reversing valve gear based on Marshall's from 1879, described in detail by Jack Wheldon in his review published in the *Model Railway Constructor* in July 1986.

As with the Lindale loco, there was an exhaust regulator in the front of the smokebox for fine-tuned control.

Caledonia was a pot boiler, and offered with either meths firing or with a gas burner with a pressure regulator. Cosmetically, the loco was enhanced by neat rivets on the cab and side tanks, handrails, cab steps and a nicely flared dome. Finally, the engine was offered as manual or with radio control.



Jack Wheldon, testing a Caledonia on his Border Counties Railway. John Turner is watching and there is a Duke in the siding at Mutely Standing.



A Duke on test on the Border Counties Railway in 1986. I have a memory that this loco was called 'Scallywag'.

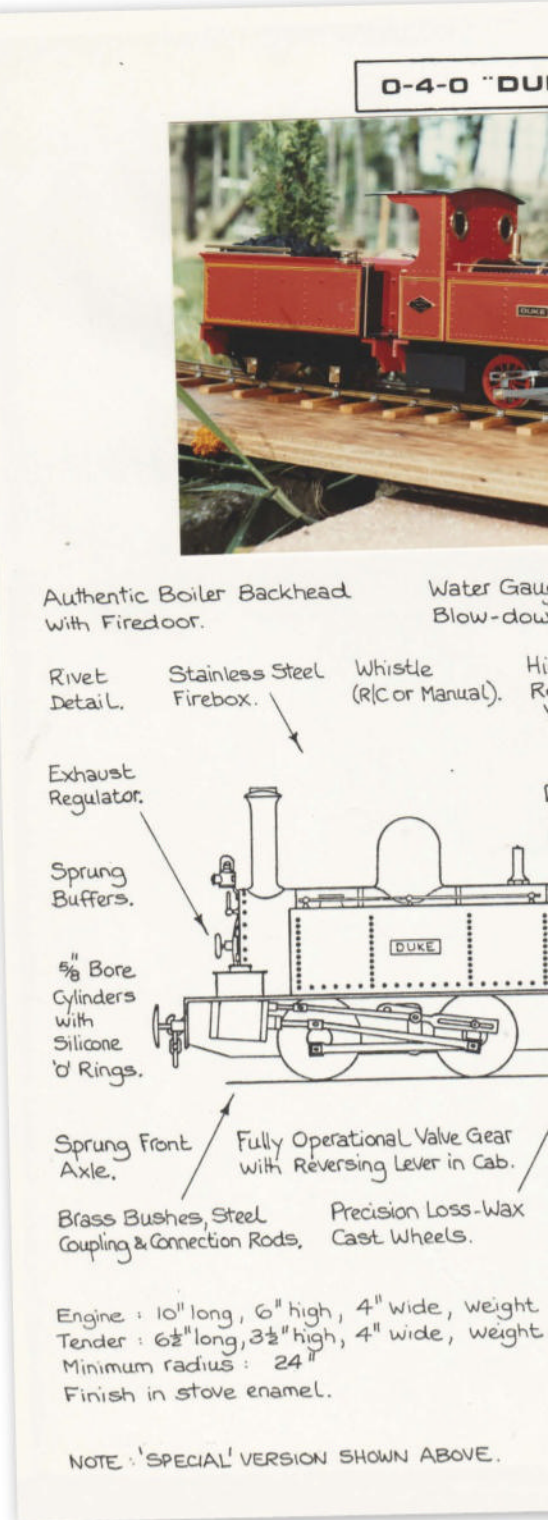
I had the pleasure of operating one of these fine locos owned by Peter Dobson, and was very impressed with the power, efficiency and duration of run that could be achieved. I do not know how many were made, but they rarely appear on the second-hand market.

John also produced at least three other designs utilising the same materials and engineering ideas. Duke was a smaller 0-4-0 side tank, but with an open cab and a four-wheeled tender fitted with a gas or spirit fuel tank, and a water tank with a hand pump.

Douglas was offered as a saddle tank version of the Duke.

John's magnum opus was Ronaldsway, a very large 0-6-0 side tank engine with a large six-wheeled tender. The prices in 1986 were quite high for the time. Caledonia cost £595 for a manual loco, and £750 with radio control. Ronaldsway was an eye-watering £1050 manual and £1200 with radio. All the locos were offered as either 32mm or 45mm gauge, but being inside-framed, they were not convertible.

Interestingly, the 1986 catalogue also offers some replacement



parts for the Lindale Caledonia, including steel coupling and connecting rods, but crucially not the wheels, which had a tendency to disintegrate after a while.

As a footnote, owners of Cheddar locos may recognise the Turner valve gear and gas regulator system, which was copied by John Woodroffe. I remember visiting Cheddar Models on one of its open days many years ago and seeing a John Turner Ronaldsway and a Duke in the main office building. I wonder where these locos are today? ■

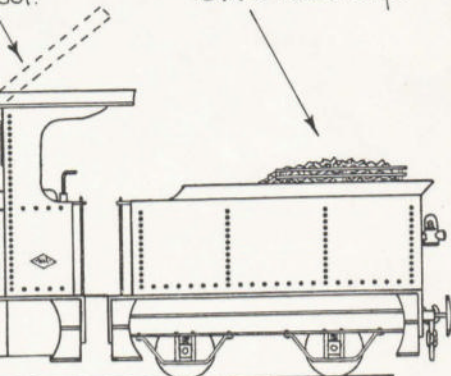
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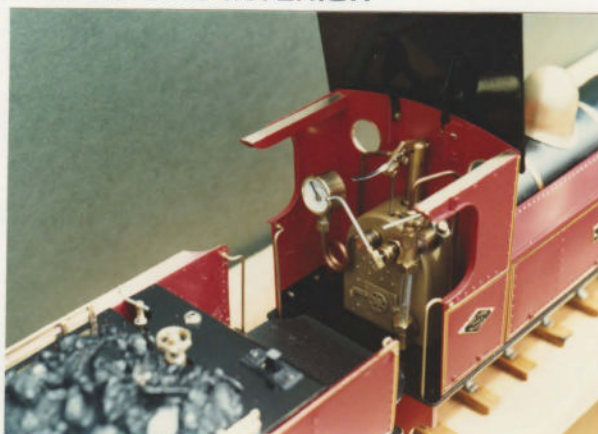
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Regulator
(Controls
height of
fire)

Gas Tank
ON/OFF Valve

ON/OFF Switch for
Radio Control.

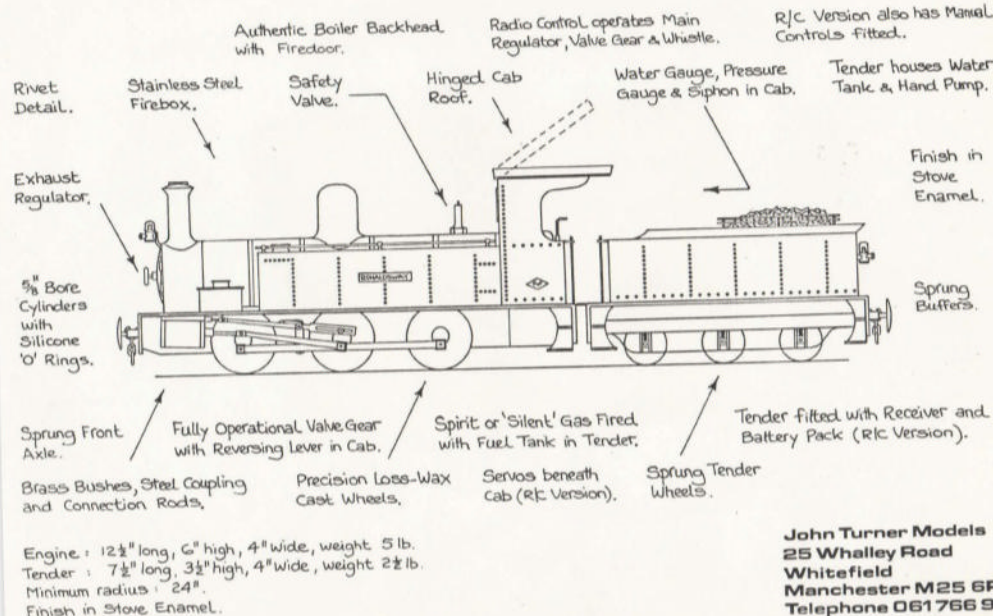
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**JOHN
TURNER**
MODELS



TOP MIDDLE Duke in the 1986 catalogue.

ABOVE Cab interior details of Ronaldsway.

LEFT Ronaldsway in the 1986 catalogue.

Further Reading

- John Turner Models 'Caledonia', a live steam review by Jack Wheldon in *Model Railway Constructor* July 1986. p 367
- *A Passion for Steam* by Marc Horovitz. Atlantic Editions 2008 and Cal Pac Trading Company 2014. p 160
- *16mm scale live steam model locomotives. Vol 1* by Peter Dobson. 1985. p55



Building an estate loco

Amy and Ben Bucki assemble the PS Models kit.

The second completed loco for our 32mm layout was meant to be a machine that was in keeping with our developing theme - what-if, British Rail, 1990's narrow gauge, and inspired by the Vale of Rheidol and Corris. And, while a couple of kits are indeed part-constructed, the one that got over the finishing line first was this little machine, very much an impulse purchase at a show.

We were wandering around the 2025 Barrow Hill Garden Railway event and spotted this loco on the Phil Sharples stand. To be honest, he had quite an appealing range of little locomotives, but the Estate Loco really stood out to us as a fun little engine. After some thought, we nipped back and bought one.

As said, it doesn't massively fit with our plans, and certainly won't have the guts to pull a decent-sized train of the types we are planning around, but part of the aim with our line is to effectively have a rockery covered in Alpine plants that just happens to have a railway weaving through it, and we were quite taken with the idea of a dinky

little shunter and one or two wagons left idly trundling about while we're sat outside having a brew. This loco seemed ideal.

The other consideration was that this could form another 'lunch time kit'. We've both been looking for projects we can do in breaks at our jobs; with the world of work forcing us to eat at our desks as a rule, it can become easy to fall into a trap of working through lunch. Having a little kit like this to potter with gives something fun and practical to do as a distraction from the temptation of checking emails, or doom-scrolling on the phones.

We've never had any problems with the rolling stock kits from Phil Sharples, and the loco went together just as well as any of the wagons we've previously built. It's a very small, lightweight thing, and will probably benefit from having some additional weight squeezed in, although that will be a challenge with the tiny size! There were no ill-fitting components that needed filing or trimming, and everything went together as it should.

The livery was the only poser; we wanted a machine that would perhaps fit

in with the general BR theme, but was obviously an industrial machine. It also would be nice for it to be quite subtle, so in the end, a vaguely British Railways green was chosen, but without any yellow or red warning markings, chevrons, or similar. In fact, the only lifts in colour away from black, green, or gunmetal were some light touches, like the axle boxes and handrails.

We have a tendency to weather our stock quite heavily, to make it look used, but for this one we were going more for the atmosphere of a 'pet' loco, which still works for a living; it's old, but not some battered relic, and while it obviously is looked after by its crew and owners, it needs to look like it gets a bit mucky. Trundling about with the odd wagon or hopper, it looks the part, and was fun to put together. ■

Garden Rail Resource

Phil Sharples Models
www.philsharples.com

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

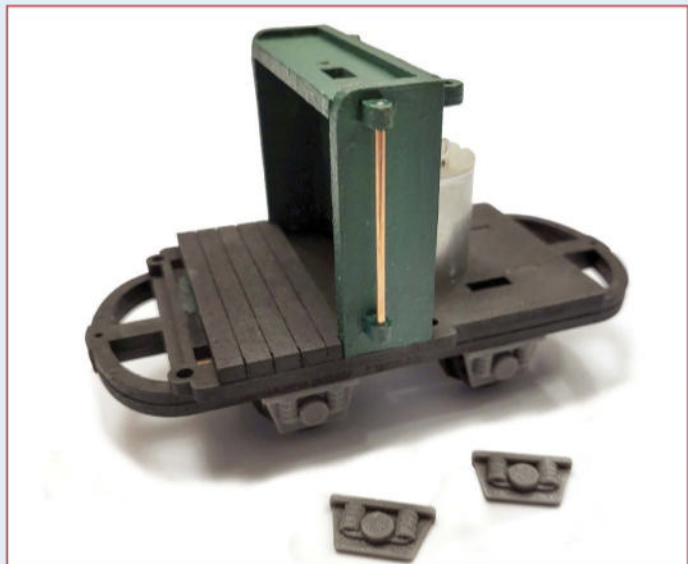
THE BUILD: STEP-BY-STEP



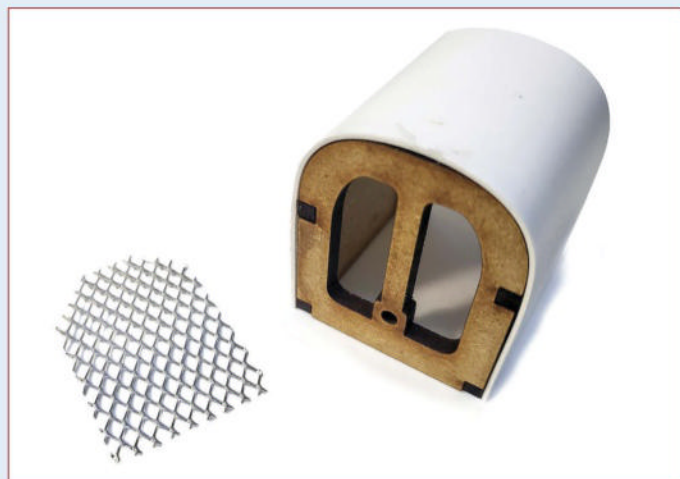
1 The chassis is nice and simple, following the usual pattern from this manufacturer. Plastic bearings are the only slightly fiddly bit, needing to be gently tapped into the holes in the frame sides. It was painted with a couple of coats of slightly watered-down black acrylic paint, easy to do at this early stage.



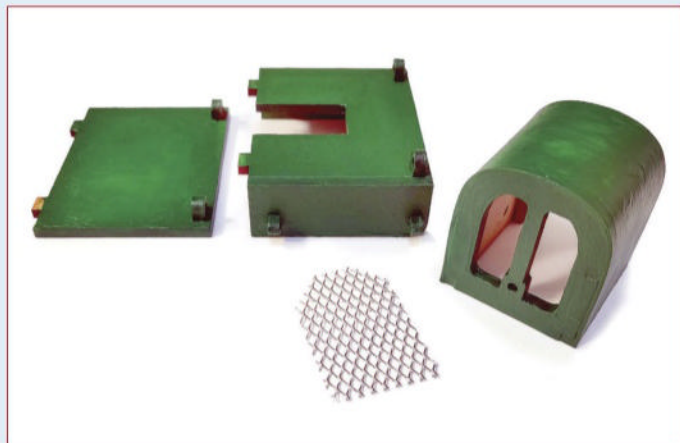
3 The cab roof is a nice construct of more MDF pieces to create the framework, which is also skinned in Plastikard. Again, warming it up over a radiator helps form the curve, and any overhangs are trimmed off when dry, as we did with the bonnet.



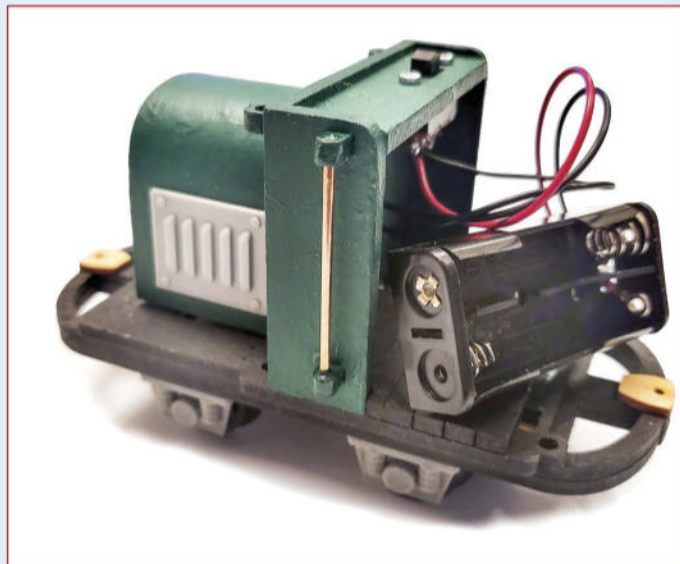
5 On such a small model, there aren't many fine details, but the few there are have been nicely done to add a little interest. The 3D-printed axlebox/spring covers are a nice touch, and the handrails are suitably robust. These are made from supplied metal rod, and were cut-down once in situ.



2 Four components make up the basic bonnet shape, with a fine mesh for the radiator grille, and a piece of Plastikard to form the overall cladding. This was slowly attached by supergluing and clamping one side, letting it set, then repeating for the other side. Warming it up over a radiator gave a little more flex.



4 Each of the body components was given an undercoat, then a couple of layers of slightly-gloss green acrylics, brush-painted on. It would be weathered and toned down a little later on, once all the components were brought together.



6 On such a small model, there's a limit to where you can hide the electronics! The motor pretty much fills the bonnet, and the battery sits under the control console, though it will be disguised somewhat by a driver figure. Also, note the louvres, more 3D-printed components.

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Date: Saturday, October 10, 2026

Venue: Elsecar Heritage Centre, Wath Rd, Elsecar, Barnsley, S74 8HJ

Times: TBC

Web: www.yorkshire.16mm.org.uk

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Date: October 15-18, 2026

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Times: Thursday to Saturday 10am - 4.30pm, Sunday 10am - 4pm

Web: www.midlandsmodelengineering.co.uk

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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 and not have submitted it to other publications.

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ABOVE 'Harlech Castle' works a permanent way train on the Ffestiniog Railway.

A Coupling of Castles

Mark Thatcher takes the opportunity to compare two 16mm Baguley Drewry locos from his collection.

While I love live steamers, I think you can't beat a good, reliable battery-powered RC diesel loco for when you just want to plonk something on the line, or rescue a stalled steam loco, and here we have two. In fact, referring to the title of this missive, I think I may have accidentally created a collective noun for these two similar yet different Castles. Yes, on the surface of it, 'Harlech Castle' from Essel Engineering and 'Cricceth Castle' from Roundhouse Engineering may appear to be similar, but they hide a multitude of differences.

Now, this article is not a direct comparison of these two models, or concerned with the build quality or performance of each, although they do both perform very well, but it is more about what has been added to each model to make it individual and any other cosmetic differences. In any case, both of my Castles were purchased second-hand, and neither of them are stock models, so this would not be a fair comparison anyway.

My Roundhouse 'Cricceth Castle' was purchased as a second-hand model from a stand at the National Garden Railway show, at the Peterborough Arena in 2021, before the show relocated to Stoneleigh.

It has done a few hard miles since then. My 'Harlech Castle' came from Anything Narrow Gauge earlier this year, and I am very pleased with it. For a second-hand model – it looks new!

Both of my models have working directional lights, but neither has sound, which are options for both models. For the sake of clarity and brevity in the pictures, 'Cricceth Castle' is on the left of any combined shots, with the 'Harlech Castle' to the right. The model names have also been truncated to CC and HC, respectively. If anybody out there owned these models previously and can shed any light on what they did to personalise theirs, please drop a quick line to our Editor for the letters page



LEFT From the front view, while the width and height of both models are pretty-much identical, the bufferbeams on the CC extend lower than the HC. Also, the front profile of the steps is different, with HC having a more angular finish, whereas the tops of these are curved on the CC. I chose to fit Cambrian Model Rail's centre buffers to my CC as I bought it with chopper couplings, which did not match with the rest of my stock.

BELOW Despite this picture seeming to show the HC is very slightly narrower than the CC across the bufferbeams, this is more of an illusion than anything else. A quick check with my digital micrometer proved this, as CC has a bufferbeam width of 97mm, with the HC coming in at 96.8mm, and that difference could well be down to my inept use of said tool!



ABOVE The transmitters are where these locos differ the most. My Roundhouse CC version one utilises a 2.4Ghz handheld controller more favoured by the RC car fraternity. I am not a fan of using a steering wheel to control the loco's speed, and as the wheel has no inertia to hold it into place, I made a 3D-printed bracket to do so. HC's 2.4Ghz controller from Timpdon Electronics is much lighter and smaller and has multiple options for controlling lights and sound, if fitted. A similar range of RC transmitters and receivers is now carried by Fosworks.



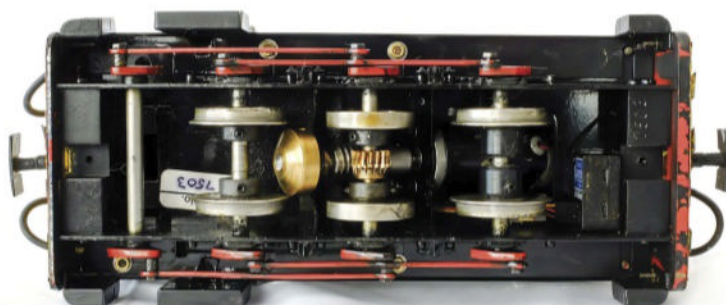
BELOW On the surface of it, the footprint of both locos looks similar, but you can see that Roundhouse's CC has a stouter appearance as the sides of the body are much wider than Essel's HC, which sports running boards. The CC has been repainted by the previous owner into a British Rail colour scheme, whereas the HC is a stock colour scheme as supplied from Essel to represent the loco as it is on the Ffestiniog Railway.



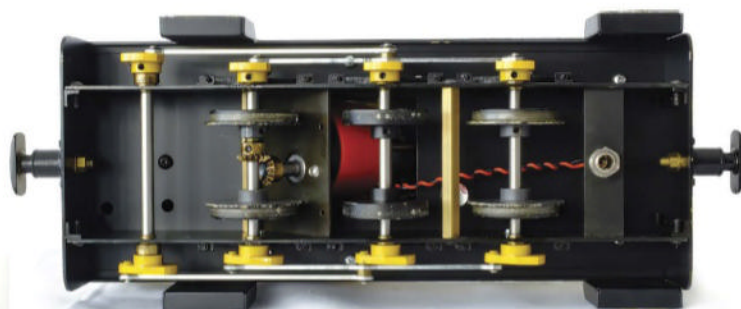
RIGHT The rear lighting arrangement is also similar, only with the running lights on CC being spaced closer together. The radiator grille would prevent this on the front. It looks like a couple of aftermarket faux taillights have been added to HC. I am not a fan of these as they protrude out from the rear of the body, and are inset with red jewels. I don't want to risk damaging the paintwork trying to remove them, although if I can pop the jewels out, I could fit 3mm red LEDs into the surrounds and wire them into the lighting circuit, which would look a little better.



LEFT Directional lighting is fitted to both locos. Roundhouse's CC is a more detailed affair with the two white headlights switching to two much smaller and less bright red LEDs. The direction of these lights is purely down to the direction of the loco. The Timpdon Electronics solution is more refined with the ability to have the lights on, off, or in any orientation, albeit there are no red tail lights on the HC.



ABOVE CC's general wheel/axle arrangement, with the rear-most axle acting as a lateral frame stretcher more than anything else, and the other three axles have wheels attached. The central pair are flangeless to help the loco negotiate tighter radius curves and are driven by brass worm gear. Notice the flywheel weight, which helps the loco to keep momentum, and no underslung charging port, as this is located in the cab.



ABOVE On the other hand, HC is driven by the rearmost wheelset with a similar worm gear arrangement. There is no weighty flywheel on Essel's model. The charging port is located underneath, which does mean laying the loco on its side to charge it, and the charging wires and motor are also clearly visible. A piece of hexagonal brass bar has been added to further stiffen up the chassis. Each chassis arrangement of these two models has its pros and cons.



ABOVE The cosmetic difference between these two locos is most apparent. CC has been repainted in what I can only assume is a 'what if' BR livery. Despite searching for the D9000 class of locos on Google, the closest I can find is a Class 02 diesel shunter or a much larger Class 14 (D9539 from 1965) loco, which has similar two-tone green paintwork. It is a pity the red maker's plates are attached to the HC where they are, as this would be where the Ffestiniog crest and FW letters would go on their works loco, but like the rear lights, I don't want to risk damaging the paintwork by removing them.



LEFT The shape of the exhaust stacks is different, too. Personally, I prefer the rounder version from Roundhouse, although, of course, this may not be prototypical on Essel's HC. CC comes with cab windscreen wipers as standard, HC does not, and these have been fitted to the front cab windows only, although I have seen other Essel Castles where these have been retro-fitted to the front and rear windows.

RIGHT The bufferbeams on my CC are showing signs of age. I can only guess these were solid yellow originally and black Trimline (which is now coming away) has been added to create wasp stripes. This, in itself, is a bit odd, as I believe Roundhouse used to supply CC with painted wasp-striping from the factory. You can also see the much-talked-about visible cheese head screws on the CC, whereas Essel's HC has some neat rivet detail from the factory. The chequered plate on HC has been added as an extra.



RIGHT More retro-fitted details have been added to the rear of both of these models. The vacuum pipes on CC looks like they come from Brandbright. They are flexible and can be positioned, hooked up to the beams, or left loose. HC sports some rather nice angle iron detail, a couple of brake levers to the cab sides and a centrally positioned switch to the ends of the body. I may add some vac pipes to my HC in the future, as I love them on the CC.



LEFT The top of the rear of CC looks quite plain in comparison to the HC, which not only sports the working lamp, but also an oil filler cap, which helps to break up the empty top plate. You can just spy the driver figures in the cabs on both of these models. Coincidentally, although they are different figures, they both come from Modeltown. Pity about those HC's aftermarket tail lights, though!

So, you do get something for a pair in this game!

I am lucky enough to have several live steam and battery-powered locos in this scale, so why on earth would I go for two locos that are broadly the same? The simple answer is, I just love them both. I have seen so many variants of these models and all have their own character, which itself is something to say about what some may think of as characterless diesels!

I am still in awe of the many scale modellers, far more skilled than I, who have taken these excellent base models and have made them their own by repainting them, lining them, and adding extra details here and there. I am still on the lookout for others that are finished differently, as I would love to see my collection grow over the years. In itself, this must prove that in this hobby, not all things are equal.

Perhaps in the years to come, my follow-up article will be called 'A Compendium of Castles', there's another collective noun for you! ■

Garden Rail Resource

Essel Engineering
www.esselengineering.co.uk

Roundhouse Engineering
www.roundhouse-eng.com

Fosworks
www.fosworks.co.uk

Modeltown
www.modeltown.co.uk

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

BELOW I have staged this shot as a final size comparison together with two W&L sheep wagons from Woodleigh Engineering for a sense of scale. These locos not only work together as a pair but also work well with typically scaled 16mm rolling stock.





Figuring it out

Mark Thatcher looks at this new and extensive range of figures from The Gauge Gallery.

One of the best things about this hobby is that it is a broad church. Figures really illustrate that well. I have seen Minions loaded into an open wagon, with Dr Who as the guard. There are even naturist sunbathers available if you are into that sort of thing! Figures fall broadly into two camps: life-like and caricatures. I have several figures in both styles, but would say, if you are looking for very high-quality, life-like figures, then The Gauge Gallery figures may be just the ticket.

Available for 16mm, G and 7/8th's scales, these figures are printed at an ultra-high resolution in an ABS-like hybrid resin, which took The Gauge Gallery 12 months to develop. They tell me this results in strong figures that are less brittle than resin or ABS-like resin figures would be. With a burgeoning range of over 50 figures to choose from, these Indian figures are merely the tip of the iceberg, but they really caught my eye. Naturally, many other types of figures striking different poses are available.



These two Indian-themed figures seem to capture the heart and soul of a chaotic station, with hawkers plying their trade walking along the line next to a stationary train, or sometimes a moving train. So far, there is no one sitting on the roof, but I am sure these will come along later!

All the figures here have been painted by The Gauge Gallery for this short review. Yours will come unpainted. If you want a steer on painting, then check out Daniel Cousin's article 'Painting figures the easy way' in *Garden Rail* 357 from May last year. ■



Just look at the detail of this fruit basket. If I had not known, I would have guessed that these were printed in resin. They are not, but show zero print lines, which is a most impressive feat and really does set the gold standard in model figures.

Garden Rail Resource

The Gauge Gallery
www.thegaugegallery.co.uk
Unpainted 16mm figures - £10.00 each or a choice of four for £35.00
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Skeleton Wagons

When the Long Dale Light Railway required rolling stock, **Steve Hind** fired up his engineering skills.

The CME of the Nottinghamshire-based LDLR (yours truly) was away visiting the Bala Lake Railway during September of 2024. While having a cup of tea with Steve Currinn, the locomotive supplier, based on the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, a discussion started of the type of locomotive that would be needed for the logging operation soon to commence back in Nottinghamshire, for which the LDLR had secured the transportation contract. A few suggestions were taken on board and an Accucraft Shay was ordered, for delivery by December 25th of the same year.

When back in Nottingham, the CME soon realised that having a suitable loco was only half the problem; several

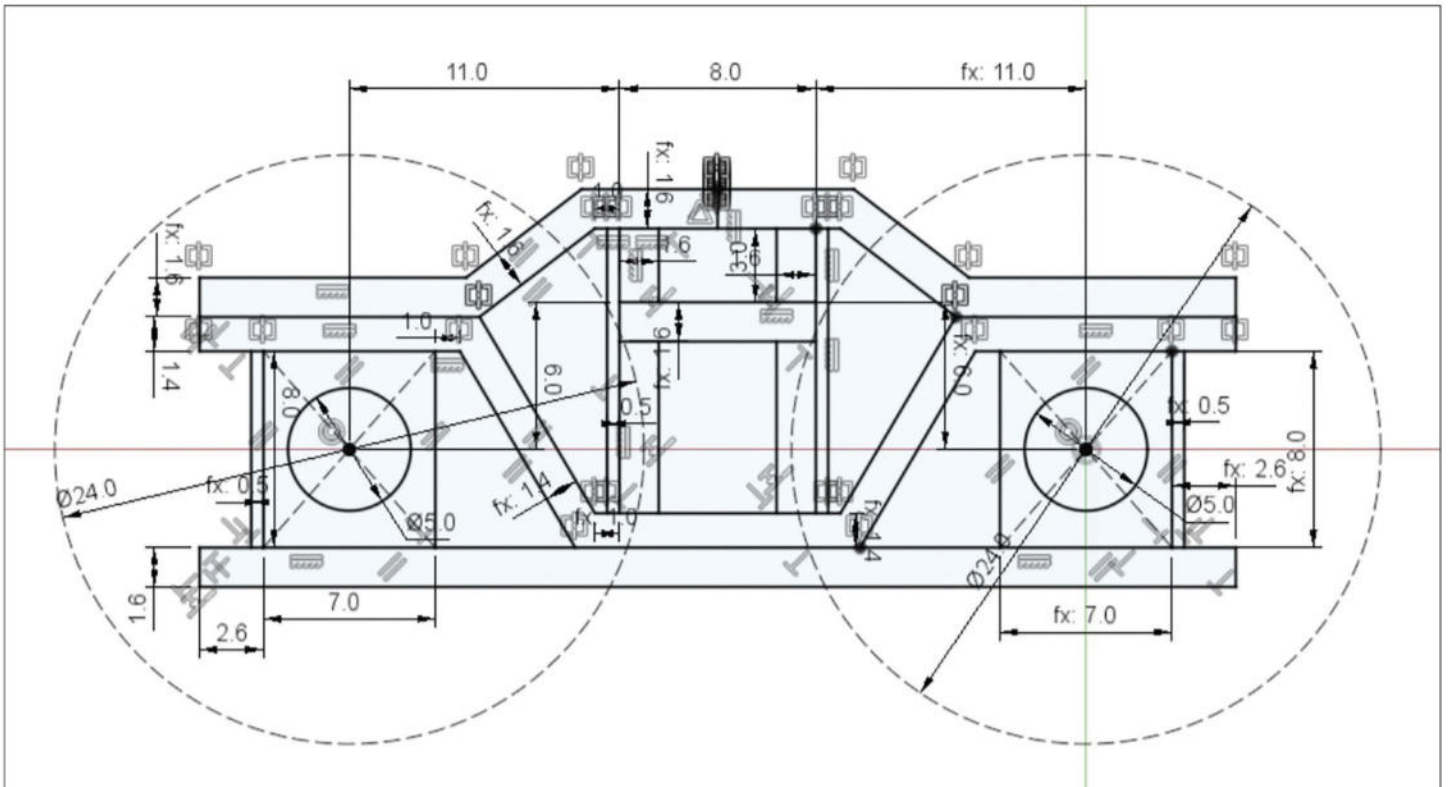
attempts to find suitable logging wagons came to nothing. Plenty of options were offered for 3ft (45mm) gauge, but nothing for 2ft (32mm). The logging company gave a specification of 13ft 9inch long logs, which would allow for some tight radius curves on British narrow gauge track.

Trawling books and slightly more modern sources of logging photos provided me with an outline specification for a skeleton logging wagon, made up of a long timber straight frame, with two cross supports and a chain down loop at each end of the crosses. The running gear would be a pair of bogies with small wheels. Due to the tight radius of track, the couplings would be mounted on the bogies.

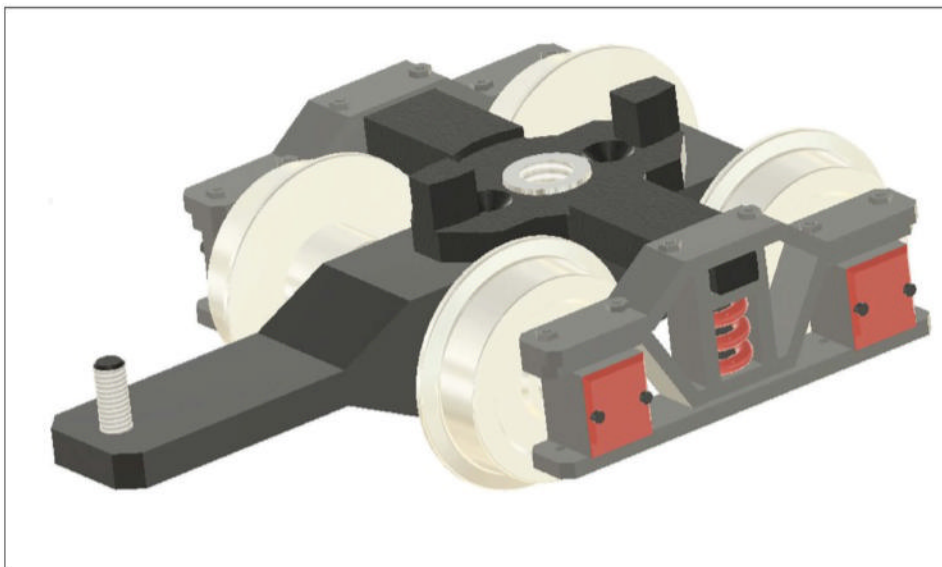
A Blueprint was downloaded from cults3d.com of a similar USA wagon. From this, the LDLR drawing office produced a 3D drawing in Autodesk FUSION (it's not Fusion 360 anymore).

Knowing the log size makes it easy to size the model. Timber grain features were added by drawing curved lines and extruding every other area by 0.2mm, which is the layer height when working at speed. All LDLR models are split into components to follow a few rules.

- No supports to hold overhangs
- All (most) gluing to be done before painting
- Easy to spray paint, with only minor hand-brush work for details
- Use fixing M2, M3, or M6 to join components together after painting



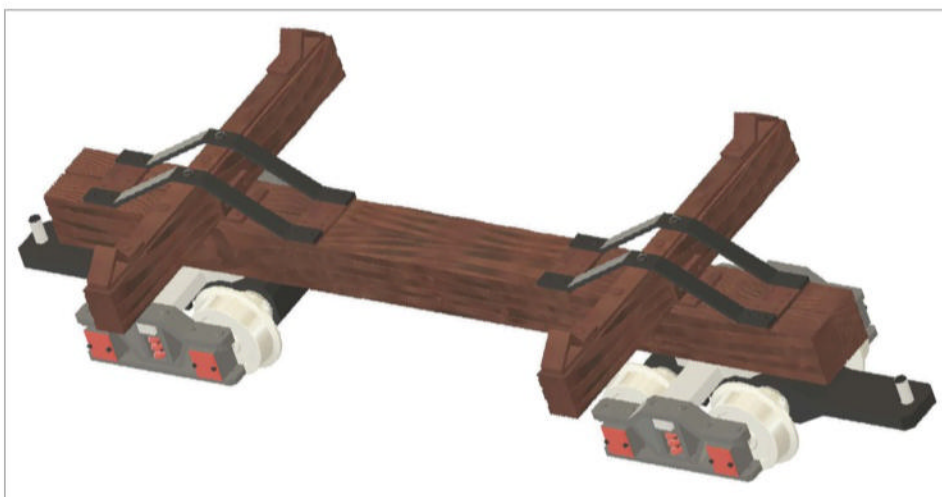
The CAD design for the bogie sides.



The render showing the complete bogie.



The CAD design for the wheels. Note the grub screw holes at the rear, I don't want any loose wheels!



Another render, this time showing the complete wagon.

The first wagon was printed, glued (EMA solvent-welded) and painted with one coat of plastic primer, followed by two brown top coats. The iron work was then hand-painted black.

I designed the bogies so they can be built 32 or 45mm gauge.

Axles are 3/16 316 stainless steel, rough cut from 3m bar with a grinder before trimming the ends in a Mill, so they are 42mm long for 32mm gauge.

Wheels were turned from leaded EN1A mild steel bar 25mm Dia x 3m long, cut into 14mm blanks. The 6mm x 11mm dia boss is turned first, then flipped in the chuck, and using a copper washer, the flange and face are turned. Finally, the axle holes are drilled in four steps:

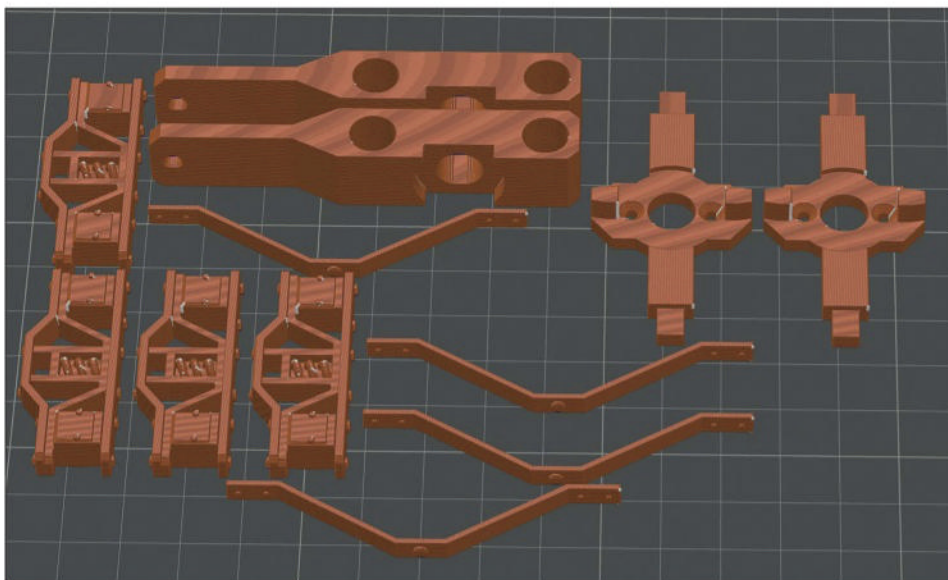
- Centre drill
- 3mm drill
- 4.5mm drill

Finally, the hole is reamed to 3/16. All this is finished by a final polish with files and emery paper.

The Boss is drilled to take two M3 grub screws using the Mill for 2.5mm holes, then hand-tapping M3.

The wheels are generally made in batches of eight, then cleaned with solvent before being primed and painted black.

With the wagons delivered, it was time for a steam up, involving a trip into the local woods after a windy weekend. We found plenty of downed branches to allow logs to be cut and loaded onto some of the wagons, and secured down with small chains, ready for the new Shay to do its job. ■



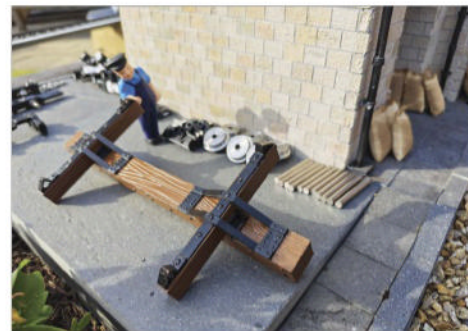
Some of the parts, ready for 3D printing.



Components printed, assembly begins.



Assembled bogies, fitted with the wheels turned from metal blanks.



The skeleton wagon body.



Wagons built and loaded with offcuts from the garden.



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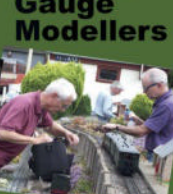
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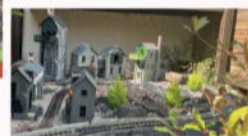
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SCAN ME

Postcards from Shade Gap

We return to **Andy Coward's** Isle of Westland
line, which we visited in January 2021.



A battery-powered model of Alice, built by Brian Stubbs.



A pic that sums up my approach. The wagon has been adapted and is running over a bridge, built by me from a basic kit. The loco has a few adaptations. All are painted and weathered. The scenery has plants, also adapted to give a sense of realism.



A close-up of the lovely detail on No.4 as it heads a train of Bachmann tippers.



A quiet day at Shade Gap station.



Diesel traction to the fore in the form of a Roundhouse model. More work is needed to improve the look of this model to my eyes, but it's a useful piece of motive power.



'High Westland' shunting the yard.

Staff chew over the latest gossip while at Shade Gap. The loco is the Accucraft Baguley with a substitute chassis by Roger Hine. The loco is the most used on the line, covering everything from track tests at the start of a running session to retrieving steamers that have run out of puff. I have a number of chassis built by Roger and recommend them highly. The oldest is one of his budget diesels, which must have travelled halfway to the moon by now and is covered with dents from track testing tumbles but runs as well as when new.



'Callous' calls at a de-staffed station where the glory days of narrow gauge lines have gone. At the moment, the station is in a run-down condition, as described in an earlier article, with windows boarded up and signals removed.



'Beddgelert' hauls a train of adapted LGB models, now running as bogie vehicles on the 32mm track.



No.4 again, this time heading into Shade Gap station. Several trees have been lost here recently, changing the look of this scene quite substantially.



Here the railcar passes a line of trees at the points at High Westland. These get regular pruning to achieve the shape. I have no idea what they are as I buy them in batches on Amazon cheaply.



Crossing the bridge over the dry river bed. The other bridge is in the background. When I first saw this loco displayed from Roundhouse, I was not attracted to it, but it grew on me. A superb runner, and after a bit of work with some Humbrol, I hope it looks like a well-maintained, but little-cleaned, machine.

Recently, I was approached by a customer who is also a member of the Gauge 3 Society, to build the Garden Railway Specialists kit of the N Class and complete it in full Southern olive lined green livery. I had built one of these models in the past, which helps as you have the benefit of experience and know what workarounds are required to complete this, or any kit. In theory, it should be a quicker build than the last one.

The large cardboard box and brass etch sheets were handed over to me in mid-May 2025 and work started soon after. I always start the tender first on these big kits, as it then forces me to complete the rest of the loco.

Tender construction

The tender is largely a brass construction for the body, with a few white metal parts. The outside tender frames are, in fact, dummies, made from laser-cut mild steel, with decorative white metal axle boxes and springs glued in position.

The actual frames are inside bearing frames that bolt onto the mild steel floor of the tender, as well as linking up to the dummy outside frames by means of long bolts and collars. All parts are secured using 8BA and 6BA nuts and bolts. I chose to increase the amount of flexibility in the middle axle to accommodate track undulations, as garden railways are never perfect.

For the tender coal space, I soldered in place two long lengths of 5mm brass angle along the inside faces of the tender. This created a ledge for the dummy coal load to drop onto. The short rear section is approximately 25mm deep, which accommodates the charging socket and switch. There is a short section at the front that tucks beneath the locker toolboxes. The middle section is the coal space, which is the only part to lift right out. All the radio control equipment, including the sound card and receiver, as well as the 20 AA batteries, are in the rear of the tender.

SR N Class in G3

Mark Pretious tackles the Garden Railway Specialists multimedia kit.





The dummy tender springs. Each is made up of several parts, to be assembled on the outside frames.

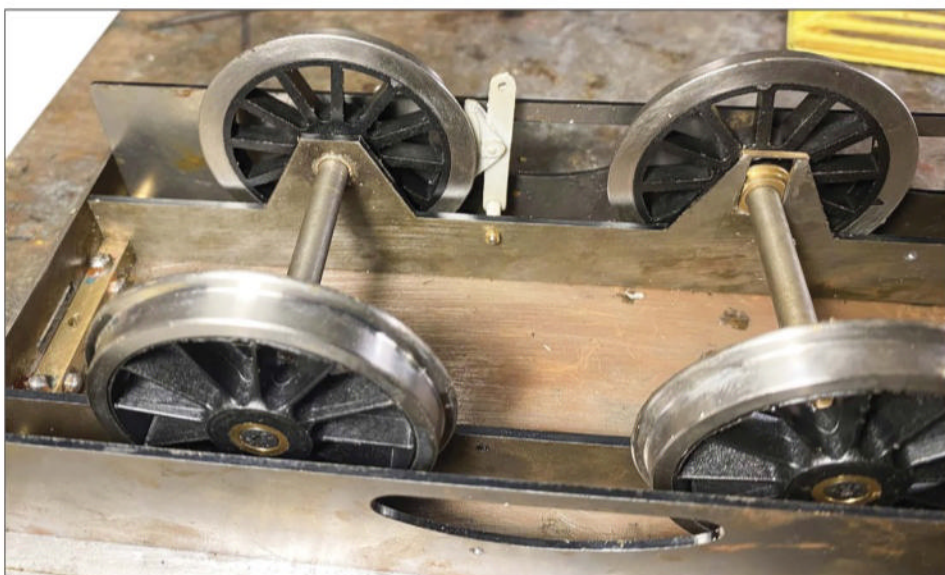
Locomotive chassis

The loco chassis went together relatively quickly, with the front pony truck being the first part to be bolted together to ensure that it runs smoothly. This was set aside after painting with primer, and the laser-cut mild steel main frames were assembled using the frame spacers, as provided by GRS. All of these are held in place using 6BA cheese head bolts. I did have to countersink some of the bolts where they were close to fouling the rear of the driving wheels.

The hardest part of the build on the chassis was setting up the positioning of the cylinders relative to the motion bracket. It was necessary to put a 0.75mm shim behind the bracket on each side to ensure the valve gear was running in parallel to the mainframes. The front axles' crankpins are a countersunk 6BA bolt going into a brass fitting that secures the rods away from the area of the slide bars to mitigate against fouling.



The tender body is a big brass box.



Vertical movement in the centre tender axle will improve roadholding on less than perfect track.

The middle crank axle had another turned brass section (journal) that is bolted in position with a long countersunk 6BA bolt. To prevent the journal from rotating on its axis, I fitted two countersunk 10BA bolts through the flat section of the turned brass section, into the wheel face, to ensure the return crank would be fixed and it would not cause issues with the valve gear and crank setting.

The cylinders are cast resin and were offered up to the main frames in the required position. A lot of time was spent getting the alignment of the centre line of the cylinder in line with the centre of the crank axle. Once the main coupling rods and the connection rods were fitted to the loco, I then made sure that there were no binds or tight spots. The inside of the cylinder was drilled out carefully, and a section of brass tube with an internal diameter slightly greater than the outside diameter of the piston rod was glued in place. Once this was proven on both sides, I then added on the return crank to the middle axle, along with the eccentric, which attaches to the bottom of the radius rod. The next part was to link up the base of the crosshead to the union link, combination lever and the valve rod and lever, and to connect into the centre part of the radius rod. This again took quite a lot of fettling to get it right. When completed, I got to do it all again on the other side! Power is from a Slaters 24-volt helical drive motor and gearbox.



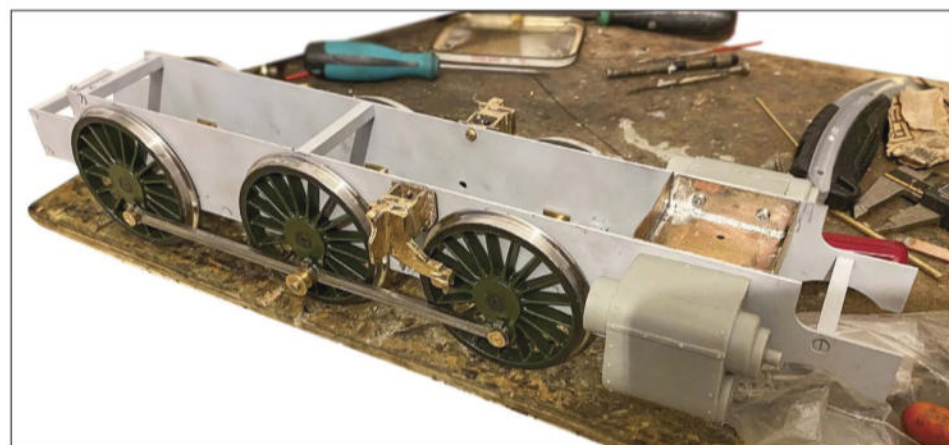
The tender fully painted and lined.



The front pony truck.



Looking down on the chassis, you can see the equalising beam between the non-powered driving wheels. Another aid to track holding.



Cylinder castings fitted and lined-up with the driving axle.

Bodywork

Just like the tender, the loco footplate and cab are also of brass construction. The brass footplate was offered up to the chassis, which, by this time, was painted, and bolted in position.

The front lower footplate was formed to shape, and the raised centre landing was also made up to fit snugly between the mild steel frames and the smokebox saddle.

Smoke deflectors were created with rivet and bolt details added, plus the beading on the outer edges. These were fitted a little while later, as they would get in the way during construction.

The rear cab footplate was formed to shape, and the cab sides and front were added to the structure. The cab roof and the raised floor of the cab were added to the overall strength of the footplate section. I had to add the valances and steps on the front two corners, as well as the cabside steps.

Once the footplate was completed, I modified the way it bolted onto



Footplate and cab assembled and bolted into place.



Test fitting the three large resin castings for firebox, boiler and smokebox.

the chassis. Two bolts went in from underneath to the underside of the cab floor, the next two were brass angle brackets fitted to the underside of the foot plate and directly bolting to the mainframes, which had been drilled and tapped to 6BA. I did the same method at the front, just behind the pony truck. So, in all, there are now six bolts securing the footplate to the chassis.

The boiler is made up from three pieces of resin, the smokebox, boiler barrel and the firebox, which are glued together. The chimney and dome are lost wax cast brass fittings that have to be cleaned up and added in the required positions.

The chimney is hollow, so I drilled the hole in the smokebox as this would be where the sound would emanate from, once completed.

Four bolts secure the boiler to the footplate and frames, two underneath the saddle and two through the back of the cab wall. All the smaller detail parts were added on once it had been painted, such as the safety valves and the whistle.

Coupling up

To allow the loco and tender to be separated quickly, I devised a method of easy uncoupling. There is a male and female plug and socket lead on the loco and tender taking across four wires, two for the motor, plus two for the speaker. The drawbar is fitted permanently to the loco and is offered up to the tender.



Boiler fittings, smoke deflectors and pipework being fitted.

I fitted a long 6BA bolt with a scratch-built brass shovel attached to the location bolt, which has a slight lean to it. Visually, it looks as though it is resting against the coal scuttle when installed. This has the advantage of being easy for anyone with podgy fingers to get into the area with ease.

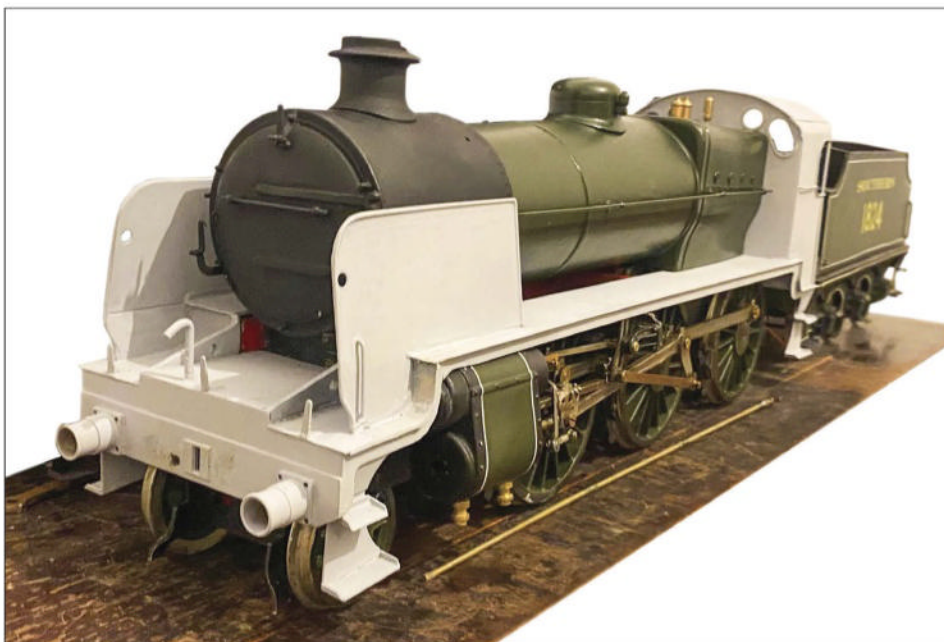
Painting

All the metal parts were thoroughly degreased prior to painting with etch metal grey primer. I then used the red or grey plastic primer from Hycote, depending on what part of the loco I was painting.

The inner frames are sprayed, initially with red plastic primer, then a bright red from Tamiya. Black is Halfords satin black aerosol spray paint. The southern olive green is all brush-painted and supplied from Phoenix Precision Paints. White lining is from HMRS, part of its general-purpose lining sheets range, sold at 0.25mm and 0.5mm thick. Everything was sealed in with aerosol satin and gloss varnishes from Railmatch. The transfers on the tender side and the front bufferbeam are water slide transfers supplied by Mark Seward, aka Blacksmith Models. These go on very easily, and I would recommend anyone to use his services for bespoke transfers for your models.



Backhead detail.



All the metal parts are cleaned and primed before painting. One benefit of bolting the sub-assemblies together is that they can be painted separately.

Control

The radio control is supplied by Fosworks and has a 7amp receiver with bespoke sound card system located in the hollow of the tender space. The loco is fitted with 20 AA batteries and the biggest speaker I had available that could fit in the space. This is mounted on a piece of 80thou plastic card fitted to the inner face of the firebox. The speaker is pointing down the boiler barrel, which, in essence, turns the boiler barrel into an amplifier, with all the sound coming out of the chimney.

Job done

The final testing and handover were done in person at the customer's garden railway. This included me showing him the sound functions, oiling points for the mechanical parts of the loco, as well as the recharge procedure and things to be aware of. I then get the satisfaction of seeing a happy customer beaming as he learns his new loco

and its driving quirks, such as the level of inertia at slow speeds and how to use the sound functions.

In conclusion, the kit is well thought out, with a good level of detail, although not for a beginner to the hobby. However, the option is there to improve and enhance the model even further. I have done a few of my own workarounds to improve on a good kit, and I would do this in the smaller scales as well. I would rate this as one of the more satisfying GRS kits to build, especially when it is running in the garden railway environment. ■

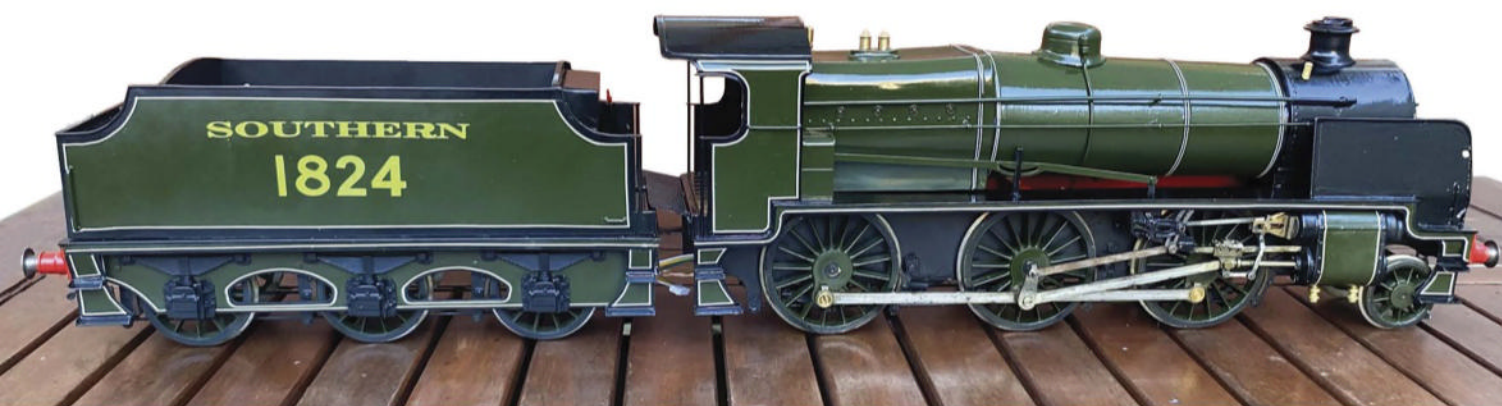
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Old rent-a-wreck

Peter Twigg distresses a slate wagon kit.

By rights, the Dysynni Valley Railway shouldn't have had any slate wagons. Its main business was hauling manganese ore, and that needed tippers. But when word got out that McConnell planned to sell Bryneglwys slate quarry, a small group of miners started prospecting near Caerberllan, and they struck a small offshoot of the Narrow Vein. So the DVR invested in a small fleet of slate wagons, very similar to those in use on the Talyllyn just over the hill, but enlarged to suit the DVR's wider gauge.

Sadly, the new venture was small-scale and didn't last long. The DVR's slate wagon fleet stayed at just a handful, and they were soon (ab)used for other purposes. This and exposure to the Welsh climate saw them deteriorate. As they began to collapse, they were cast aside, like worn-out tools that had served their purpose.

The reality is more prosaic; I just like slate wagons, and I wanted a small fleet of Talyllyn-style two-rail wagons. Several years ago, I built a slate wagon kit from PDF Models, so this time I chose a set of four 45mm kits from the same source; they offer reasonable value and seem to maintain the overall 'look' of a TR slate wagon,

even for 45mm gauge. Certainly, there are more detailed and more expensive models available, but I reasoned that, since I'm already taking complete liberties with gauge and size, I could live with something that's a touch impressionistic. The kits went into the drawer, and there they stayed for some time while other projects got in the way.

And then, one day recently, browsing the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum photo collection, I happened upon a John Adams photo from the early days of TR preservation of a decrepit Talyllyn slate wagon. I was inspired, and I just had to try to put one of the kits together in the style of this grungy specimen.

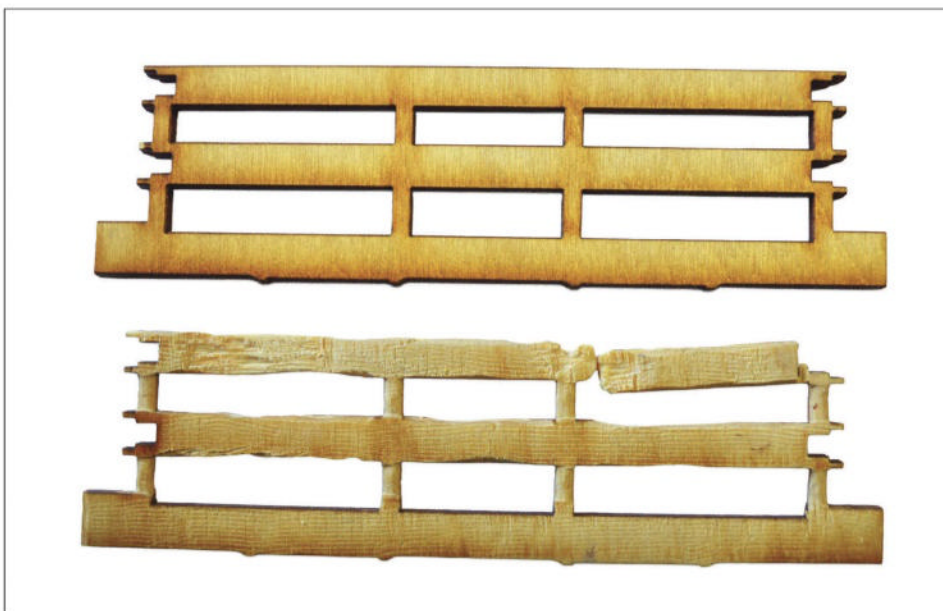


This is what I was trying to recreate. It's a good job the Talyllyn's preservationists were able to supplement clapped-out stock like this with ex-Corris wagons! (Photo reproduced by kind permission of the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Trust).

I dug out one of the kits. Weighing up the task, I identified some 'signature' elements that I wanted to try to reproduce, in addition to the wagon's overall decrepit, rusty and rotten appearance. These were: the rotted and broken top rail on one side; an axle box with the grease cover missing; some of the heads on the rods supporting the body sinking into the rotten wood, and some bolt heads having steel offcut load spreaders under them; and a rotten dumb buffer on one corner, with its iron strengthening hoop missing.

There were also features I didn't want to replicate. I use traditional large-scale hook and bath chain couplings, rather than the prototype's D-rings and single links; I wanted my model unbraked, the DVR never got around to hiring wagons out to gravity-defying picnic parties. And finally, I wanted the model to run without derailing, which I suspect might have been asking too much of the original, given the state of the wagon and the TR's track at the dawn of the preservation era!

The PDF kit uses ply for the body, with moulded axle boxes, detailing parts and Binnie spoked wheels. It is amenable to extra detailing; notably, my kits did not contain the corner-strapping, which is a prominent feature of the prototypes. This is present on the models currently shown on PDF's website, so I'm not sure if this was a packing oversight in my examples, or whether the kit has now been improved; PDF has changed hands since I bought my kits. In any case, it was not difficult to reproduce the strapping in sheet styrene. A compromise in the PDF kit is that the sides and ends are each cut in full from a piece of ply, and this does not really reproduce the "bobbins" that space apart each rail of the body. The real things look like giant iron cotton reels, whereas in the kit,



One side as it came out of the pack, and the other after attention with files, mini-drill and razor-saw blade.



Body going together. All the work on the floor caused it to start warping, so when I glued in the floor, I jammed in some lengths of coffee stirrer to hold the floor down against the sides.



Making a start on the bolt heads and strapping.

they just appear as square lumps of ply. These were slightly improved by rounding with a file. I did think about trying to create more of the 'bobbin' shape, but with 12 per wagon I decided life is just too short!

I set about each of the body parts with a craft knife to whittle the rails into more worn shapes, using small burrs in the mini-drill to add more texture and to cut in some deeper areas of rot. The broken top rail was created by sawing through at an angle at the site of the break, and sawing through about 80% of the rail at the corner; I could then bend the rail down and glue the two parts of the break together with PVA, using wood filler in the gap created at the bend. Once all this had dried, I used an old razor-saw blade and coarse sandpaper to impart more wood texture to the body parts. I also used an old needle file to deepen and exaggerate the

plank lines on the floor. The mini-drill came again to chain drill a line of holes down part of one of the plank lines; these were slightly opened out with the craft knife to give the effect of a couple of rotting planks causing a small hole in the floor. I then took the mini-drill and the razor saw blade to the floor planking to give it a good texturing; this was particularly necessary because, I guess to maximise use of material, the grain of the ply ran across the planks.

I built the body with waterproof PVA. I don't envisage operating in the wet, but I'd prefer the wagon not to disassemble itself if it gets caught in a shower. The plastic mouldings were attached with 5-minute epoxy, after I'd carved off the grease cover on one of the axle boxes, and drilled a hole where the grease would go in. I fabricated the afore-mentioned corner strapping from strip styrene, with bolt heads made from the same material. Now I'm showing my age; these days, I suppose, I ought to be making such things with a 3D printer.

Then it was a matter of painting, using dilute washes of light brown acrylics as a stain to replicate aged wood. I dry-brushed on some light grey to represent what was left of the original livery and applied thin washes, firstly of dirty dark grey to simulate the sooty steam-age environment and secondly of dark green to highlight the areas of rot. I also mixed up some red and orangey shades to be dry-brushed onto the ironwork to represent rust.

For couplings, I used the hooks provided in the kit along with two links (three



Looks like something wet was left for some time in one end of the wagon, and the floor has started to rot out...

would drag below rail level) from my stock of Houston Gate chain, dunked in brass blackening. Finally, the wagon was a bit light, so I hammered flat 40g of fishing sinkers and glued them under the floor.

So, a nice little project to while away a few winter evenings, which was not too complex and gave scope to be a bit creative. Three more kits to go; I wonder if I can find more characterful prototypes? ■

Garden Rail Resource

PDF Models

www.pdf-models.co.uk

Houston Gate Locomotive Works

www.hglw.co.uk

Narrow Gauge Railway Museum

www.narrowgauerailwaymuseum.org.uk

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Old rent-a-wreck sits in the back road at Caerberllan during the DVR's last days. The little slate stockyard behind was abandoned to the weeds years ago, and the wagon's decrepit state is emphasised by the surprisingly tidy example behind it.

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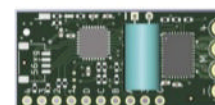
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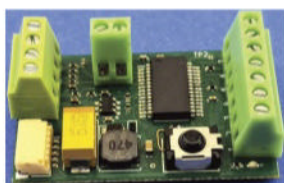


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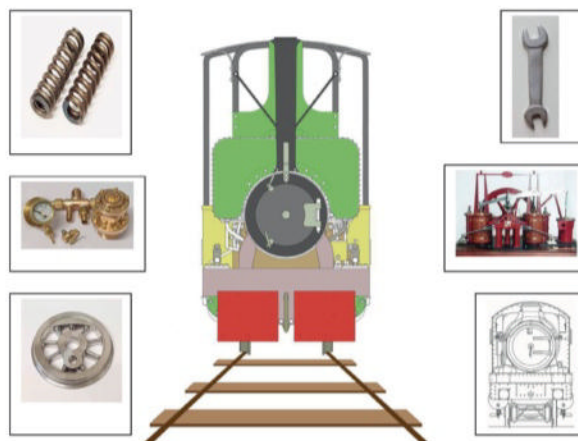


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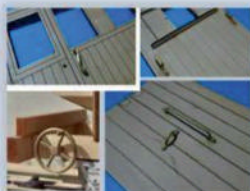
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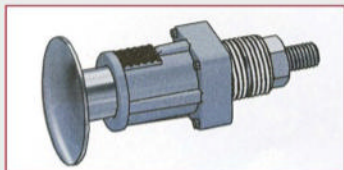
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Wagon inspiration, sitting outside at the Ffestiniog railway.
(Photo: H Jones)



The fastest wagon in the west (of Wales)?

The Editor builds a Porthmadog Harbour flat wagon.

How long does it take to design and manufacture a kit?

That's the question Huw Jones keeps being asked, so, at the Portmadog show, he decided to find out. Outside the Ganolfan, where the H Jones Engineering stand was located, at a show, there sits a flat wagon. It was used around the harbour in Porthmadog to transport various items, and is now preserved.

During Saturday lunchtime, out came the tape measure, along with a camera to take as many photos as possible. Back at the workshop that evening, Huw fired up his computer and warmed up the 3D Printer. He started on the CAD model at 17:18hrs – the model was finished at 19:28hrs.

This includes a 30-minute print time and two coats of paint drying.

The kit was on sale the next day!

Is this some sort of record? A model going from idea to being on sale during a show?

Best of all, this isn't an esoteric wagon, but something really useful. We could all find space in a train for a flat wagon after all.

The kit is pretty simple to assemble, being based on 3D-printed parts – a chassis and a set of inside bearings, with a laser-cut plywood desk. Sadly, it's 32mm gauge only, and while the model I'm building has plastic wheels, steel is an option for only £7 more.

With a story like this, I was quickly in touch, and the kit arrived a few days later. As befits the design history, assembly of this lovely little model is the task of an evening. Or maybe a lunchtime... ■

Garden Rail Resource

H Jones Engineering
www.hjonesengineering.com

Porthmadog Harbour Flat Wagon

Price
Plastic wheels: £14.95
Steel wheels: £21.95

Cambrian Model Rail
www.cambrianmodelrail.co.uk

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

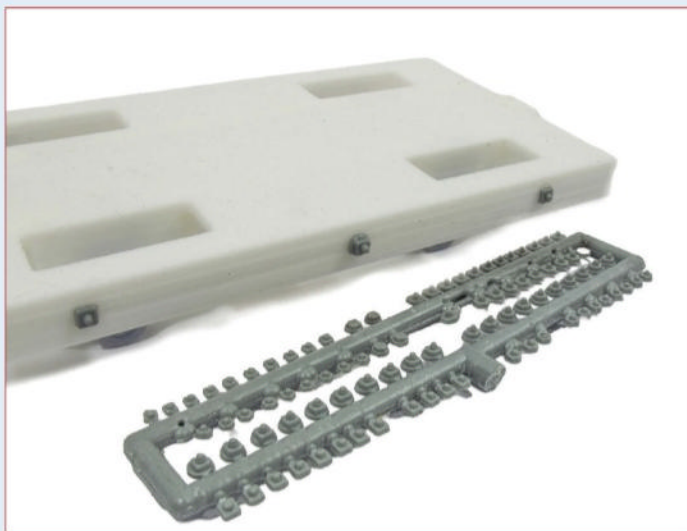
THE BUILD: STEP-BY-STEP



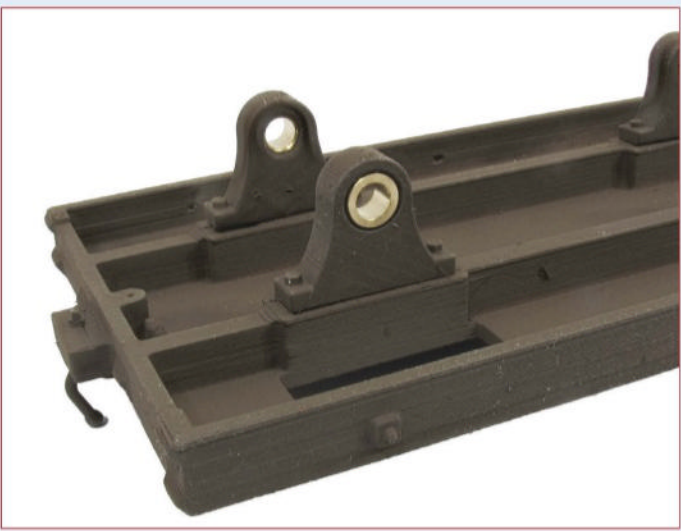
1 | Open the box, and out comes a selection of 3D printed parts for the underframe, plywood deck, plastic wheels, brass bearings and some nails.



2 | The inside bearings slot into the underside of the chassis, making sure the rim for the bearings faces outward. They are a snug fit, but I used a touch of superglue to be sure.



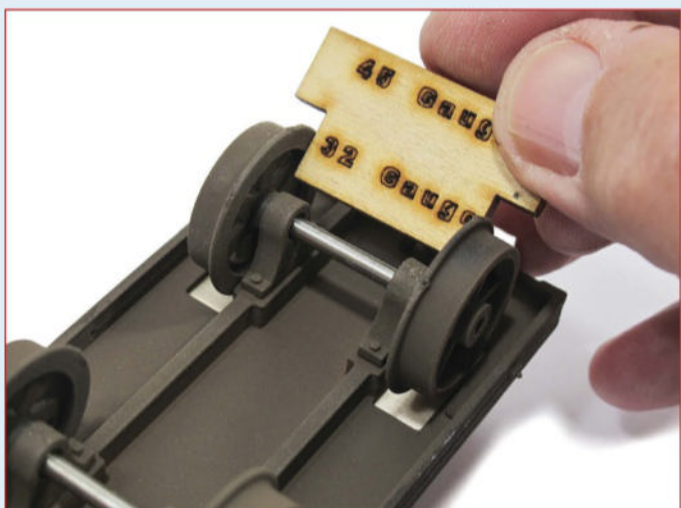
3 | To represent the bolt heads seen on the solebar, we are provided with some nails and printed dimples to indicate their location, but I replaced these with Cambrian Models plastic bolt heads.



4 | After a couple of coats of Precision Paints underframe brown, the brass bearings are pushed into place. Again, they are a snug fit, but I added a tiny touch of superglue.



5 | The laser-cut desk is stuck in place with superglue, and then painted with slightly thinned acrylics from Lifecolor's Weathered Wood set of paints. Wheels are dry-brushed with the light brown at the same time.



6 | Wheels slide on the axles. I pop them in a vice to press them home fully and squarely. A quick check of the gauge, and the wagon is ready for service, although a little extra weight would be a good idea.

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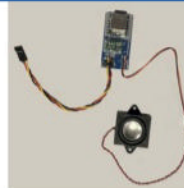
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LS = Live-Steam
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Trade information on new products for the garden railway modeller.

If you are a trader with any new product, contact phil.parker@warnersgroup.co.uk.

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

MAXITRAK

Fowler diesel

16mm scale

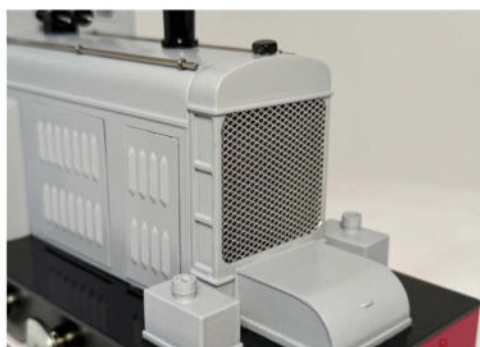
Maxitrak's new Fowler 0-6-0 jack shaft diesel represents the type of industrial locomotive produced by Fowler of Leeds in the run-up to the Second World War. They featured a front-mounted gearbox and jack shaft system driving all six wheels. The cab footplate is low in the chassis, reducing the overall height for tight clearances. The centre wheels are flangeless, making the model suitable for LGB number 1 radius.

Chassis and footplate are all steel construction, with a robust (3mm thick) 3D-printed body. Power is from a 12v motor, with bevel gear drive to rear axle.

Manual controls are mounted on a steel switch panel in the cab, there are also several remote-control options available.

The model will be built in the UK by Maxitrak using Essel Engineering parts.

Contact Maxitrak to register your interest in the model.



Details

Specifications:

Length: 234 mm over buffer beams

Width: 98mm

Height: 148mm over roof

Wheel Dia: 30mm

Wheelbase: 80mm

Weight: 1.5kg without battery

Gauge: 45mm or 32mm – adjustable

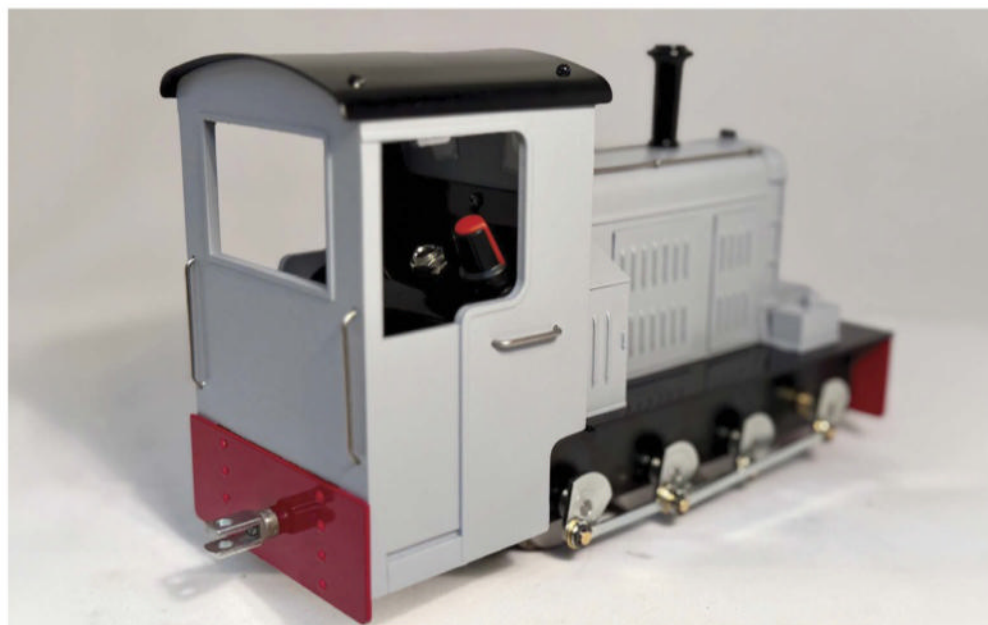
Coupler: Centre buffer/Clevis or Accucraft Chopper coupling

Cab Controls: Manual control with charge point. Radio Control & sound options available

Livery: Blue/grey/maroon/green with red buffers and back chassis. Other liveries available to special order.

Proposed price: £795 - £850

Website: www.maxitrak.com



MAXITRAK

Update: TR No.3

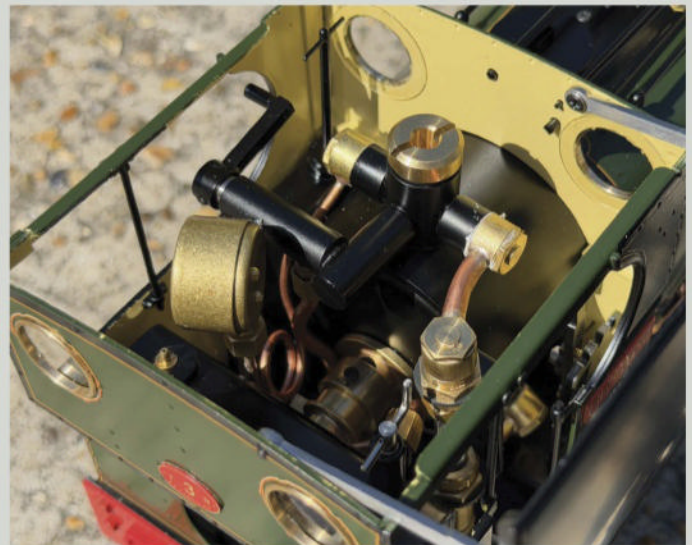
16mm scale

We've been sent an update on the forthcoming TR No.3. The engineering sample has been assessed, and we are told that there is very little that will need to be tweaked before production can be approved. These are the latest photos of the locomotive, which certainly looks good in the opinion of our tame Tallylyn enthusiast.

Details

Price: TBC

Website: www.maxitrak.com



BOOT LANE WORKS

'Eleanor' locomotive kit

16mm scale

'Eleanor' is based on the 1877 Vulcan-built Spooner locomotive, 'Kathleen'. As with all Boot Lane kits, the model is a mix of 3D-printed and laser-cut acrylic parts, and comes complete with all parts for a basic model. Provision has been made for remote control, but the builder will have to source their own components for this.

Details

Gauge: 32mm only

Price: £150

Website: www.bootlane.org.uk



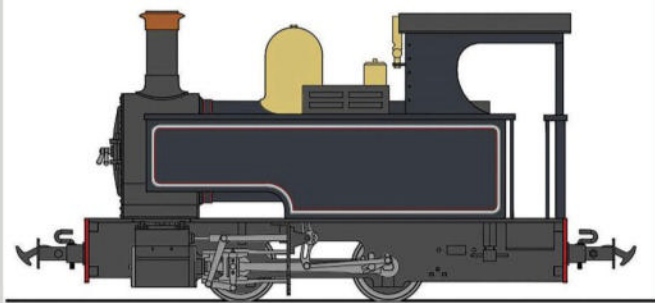
MAXITRAK

Caradoc returns 16mm scale

First introduced over 25 years ago, the Caradoc helped bring affordable live steam to the 16mm hobby, and now it's back.

The model will be re-engineered with an all-new chassis, featuring slide valves and Walschaerts valve gear, plus a range of new liveries. Caradoc is a staple locomotive on many lines, big enough to pull a good-length train yet small enough for tracks that have tighter clearances and smaller radii.

Caradoc will be manufactured in Japan, with painting and lining completed in China.



Details

Proposed price: £1,400

Website: www.maxitrak.com



TIMPDON MODELS

Seachlight wagon 16mm scale

A working searchlight wagon for either 32 or 45mm gauge. Based on a wartime prototype, there is a very similar wagon at Statfold Barn. The kit is made from laser-cut plywood, and everything is included apart from paint, glue and three AAA batteries.

Details

Gauge: 32 or 45mm gauge

Prices: Kit: £69.50, RTR: £109.50

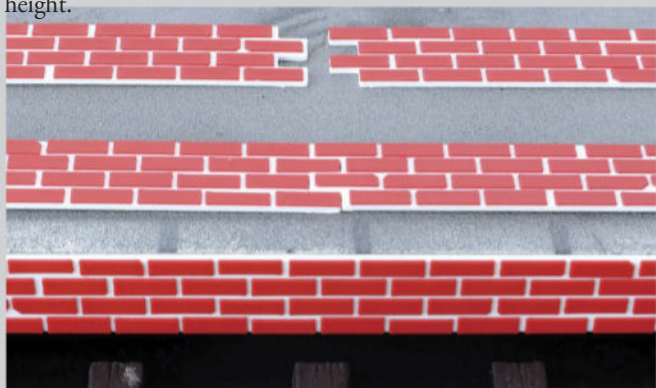
Website: www.timpdon.co.uk

WOODLEIGH ENGINEERING

Brick platform 16mm scale

Woodleigh Engineering has made a name for itself producing very detailed items, and this platform edging is no exception. Each edging strip is pre-coloured and designed to fit perfectly with adjacent strips. The join is invisible and even the mortar lines are spaced correctly. You can buy as many lengths as you need to face off the edge of your platform. It would not be a difficult job to pick out the odd bricks in a contrasting colour and weather the whole surface down with a wash if you wanted to.

Each platform edging strip measures 235mm long and is 18mm high, which seems to be about right for a 16mm scale platform height.



Details

Prices: £1.50 per length

Website: www.woodleigh-eng.co.uk



TIMPDON MODELS

Corris Slab Wagon 16mm scale

Designed for carrying slate slabs, which were a speciality of the Corris area, Timpdon's laser-cut kit includes everything, apart from paint and glue, to assemble the model.

Details

Gauge: 32 gauge

Prices: Single kit: £17.50, three kits: £49.50, single RTR: £37.50

Website: www.timpdon.co.uk

PIKO

Reindeer Flyer 25-ton diesel G scale

If you looked at last month's review of the Gaugemaster diesel, and thought, "I like that, but it needs reindeer", then the good news is that PIKO will be producing a Christmas version of the model.

Battery powered, with a Simple R/C Pocket Remote with pre-programmed buttons to control speed and direction, plus horn and bell sounds, it's just the thing to run around your tree in December.

Sadly, a shortage of space precludes us from featuring the delightful matching rolling stock, a tank car and reefer, but these can be found on the website.



Details

Prices: \$624.99

Website: www.piko-america.com

CLIFF BARKER

Trickle charger

The TC10 'Trickle Charger 10' is intended to provide up to 10 channels of simultaneous, constant current trickle charging for NiMH battery packs. The idea is for those who are fortunate enough to have several loco's can now just plug in the 2.1mm - 2.1mm links from a baseboard jack, or direct from the charger. They don't need to worry about the state of charge, it just does it for you and keeps batteries topped up until next required.



Details

Prices: £65 plus charge leads, depending on number and type, £12 for a suitable 18 or 24 volt transformer

Website: www.cliffbarker.me.uk

H JONES ENGINEERING

FR Oyster Wagon kit 16mm scale

During the slate quarrying boom in Blaenau Ffestiniog, one of the cheapest, protein-rich foods that were

available to the quarrymen was oysters, harvested from the beds off the Welsh coastline. As such, they were often transported from the harbour at Porthmadog to Blaenau Ffestiniog and the other towns and villages along the line. These drop-side wagons were used to transport the oysters in either sacks, crates, or barrels.

The kit comprises laser-cut plywood parts for the main body, and the frames are an FDM 3D Print. Additional detailing is achieved by resin-printed parts. The running gear is standard Binnie wheels, with steel axles and brass bearings. There is also the option to upgrade to steel wheels.



Details

Dimensions: Length: 143mm, width: 80mm, height: 62mm, coupling height: 25mm

Gauge: 32 gauge

Prices: Plastic wheels: £27.95, steel wheels: £34.95

Website: www.hjonesengineering.com

H JONES ENGINEERING

FR 2-Ton Open Wagon kit 16mm scale

These wagons were built at the workshops at Boston Lodge and were frequently used to transport coal and other goods around the railway. They were also seen loaded with barrels and other merchandise, sometimes sheeted over with tarpaulins.

The kit comprises laser-cut plywood parts for the main body and the frames are an FDM 3D Print. Additional detailing is achieved by resin-printed parts. The running gear is standard Binnie wheels, with steel axles and brass bearings, with the option to upgrade to steel wheels.



Details

Dimensions: Length: 153mm, width: 66mm, height: 78mm, coupling height: 25mm

Gauge: 32 gauge

Prices: Plastic wheels: £29.95, steel wheels: £36.95

Website: www.hjonesengineering.com



Write in and share your ideas with other enthusiasts

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.

Warhammer 40K loco

My name is William Upton, and I'm a 13-year-old garden railway enthusiast from Scarborough, North Yorkshire. I wanted to share a project that combines two of my favourite hobbies: garden railways and Warhammer 40,000.

I've been interested in garden railways for as long as I can remember. My grandad has a G scale line in his garden, and I've always loved running trains there. We often visit shows and open days together with my grandma, and my favourite locomotive has always been the Tin Turtle.

Alongside railways, I also enjoy building and painting Warhammer 40K models, a 28mm tabletop strategy game from Games Workshop. The hobby involves assembling and painting miniature figures, vehicles, and terrain, and I wanted to bring that world into the garden railway scene by creating a Warhammer-themed locomotive.

For the build, I started with a Games Workshop Genestealer Cult Goliath Truck kit I received for Christmas. My grandparents bought me a Swift Sixteen chassis, and I saved my pocket money to



buy the RC parts and batteries from RC Trains. The first challenge was fitting the truck body over the chassis. The motor almost fitted inside the cab, so I had to cut away some of the bodywork and use spare panels to fill the gaps and cover the frame rails. I made a chassis cover from Plastikard that slips neatly over the brass frame.

Phil at RC Trains recommended a 4-cell battery pack, so I extended the truck bed to make room for it. For painting, I airbrushed a yellow base coat, masked the stripes, sprayed them black, and then finished the details with acrylics. I still plan to add water-slide decals and a wash to complete the look.

The finished loco runs well and fits perfectly into the Warhammer 40K universe. I'm really pleased with how it turned out, and I'm excited to build matching rolling stock to go with it. I especially enjoyed the challenge of making all the parts fit together and finding creative solutions, like using mesh to bridge the gaps on the rear cover extension.

I'd like to thank Nick at Legions Retreat/Chalk Garden Rail for introducing me to Warhammer and supporting me along the way; Phil at RC Trains for the RC equipment and helpful advice; Swift Sixteen for the excellent chassis; my grandparents, Eric and Margaret Upton, for the presents and for taking me to railway shows; and my mum and dad for helping me build the train.

My next project will be another Warhammer-inspired locomotive, this time based on the Rhino APC, using an interesting new power chassis. In the future, I hope to build more 40K-themed trains and maybe even a full layout. I'm also excited to use the trains as interactive terrain in games of Warhammer 40K.

Thank you for taking the time to read about my project. I hope it inspires other young hobbyists to try something new and imaginative in the world of garden railways. **William Upton**

A less silly idea

I have just read Barry's article in *GR* 382, about fitting low-cost RC to a loco with as much interest as I'm sure you did, and I have a question for him (which I'm equally sure I'm not alone in asking), so could you pass this along to him, please?

I have followed the link to the eBay item he gave and the description indicates that the unit uses PWM and provides "...precise control of motor speed, realize smooth speed regulation..." (I quote). My question is, why, therefore, did he find that it only provided forwards and backwards without any speed control?

Mike Jeffries

As often happens with these devices from the far east, the descriptions given need a tad of interpretation. A pinch of salt may be required on this one.

From my experience with these units, and I've only played with two of them, the speed the motor runs at depends entirely on the input voltage. This unit does not act as a 'variable' speed controller in the way your the description may imply. I have found no way to vary the speed while on the move unless there is a setting via the code switch on the control board that I have not yet found. The various settings on mine provide for the direction control buttons to either click and lock, or press to go and release to stop, if that makes sense.

From my experience of many years buying all sorts of cheap devices on eBay, I find that most sellers cut and paste descriptions and not always from the same device they are selling. The chances are there is, or was, a cheap device out there that will do all of what the description says, but its not this one, therefore, I have only claimed the unit can do what I have been able to make it do. Considering the lowish cost, I would encourage people to get one, have a play, and report back on their experience. For me, it certainly beats chasing a loco around to avoid a collision and gives a little bit of play/shunting value.

Hopefully that helps.

Barry Loraine

Wagons and Waggon



Dave Mees Wigfa & Llanrwst Railway.

Up to today, the Ffestiniog continues to use the term 'waggon' for the historic, pre-preservation fleet, or replicas thereof, while deferring to the modern term 'wagons' for vehicles brought onto the railway in the years since 1954.

All of my stock that runs with Livingston Thompson is historic FR, so I use the 'waggon' form to refer to it. If I'd talked about a mix of FR and non-FR, I'd have had a mix of 'wagons' and 'waggon' to really give the editor a headache!

John Savage

Plant spotting



Editor: It seems I can't tell one plant from another, as I've been informed that the flowers in this photo are pansies, not primroses, as said in the July issue. Back to weeding for me!

Metal printing

In his article on 3D metal printing, Andrew Giffen didn't say where his printing was carried out. Can you find out?

Mark Greenwood

Editor: I've checked with Andrew, and he would recommend using the Craftcloud marketplace for a wide range of quotes, and one of the main companies that quotes is called Prototi, which has a website that can be used directly.

Seen at the Gauge 3 Society AGM

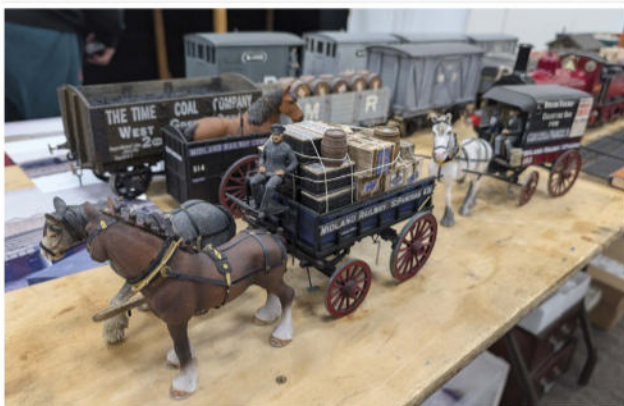
Some impressive large-scale, standard gauge modelling.



From an LBSC original design, this vintage engine is coal-fired and an impressive runner.



John Buxton's award-winning Class 73 electro-diesel in Pullman livery.



It's not just trains. This lovely horse-drawn vehicle was built by John Tucket for a future layout.

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R**

We head to Yorkshire to visit The Snape and Thornton Watlass Light Railway.

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- Building a Coris Railway van
- 'Eternal Star', a stunning double Fairlie
- Plus much, much more...





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