

BRITAIN'S No.1
MODEL RAILWAY MAGAZINE

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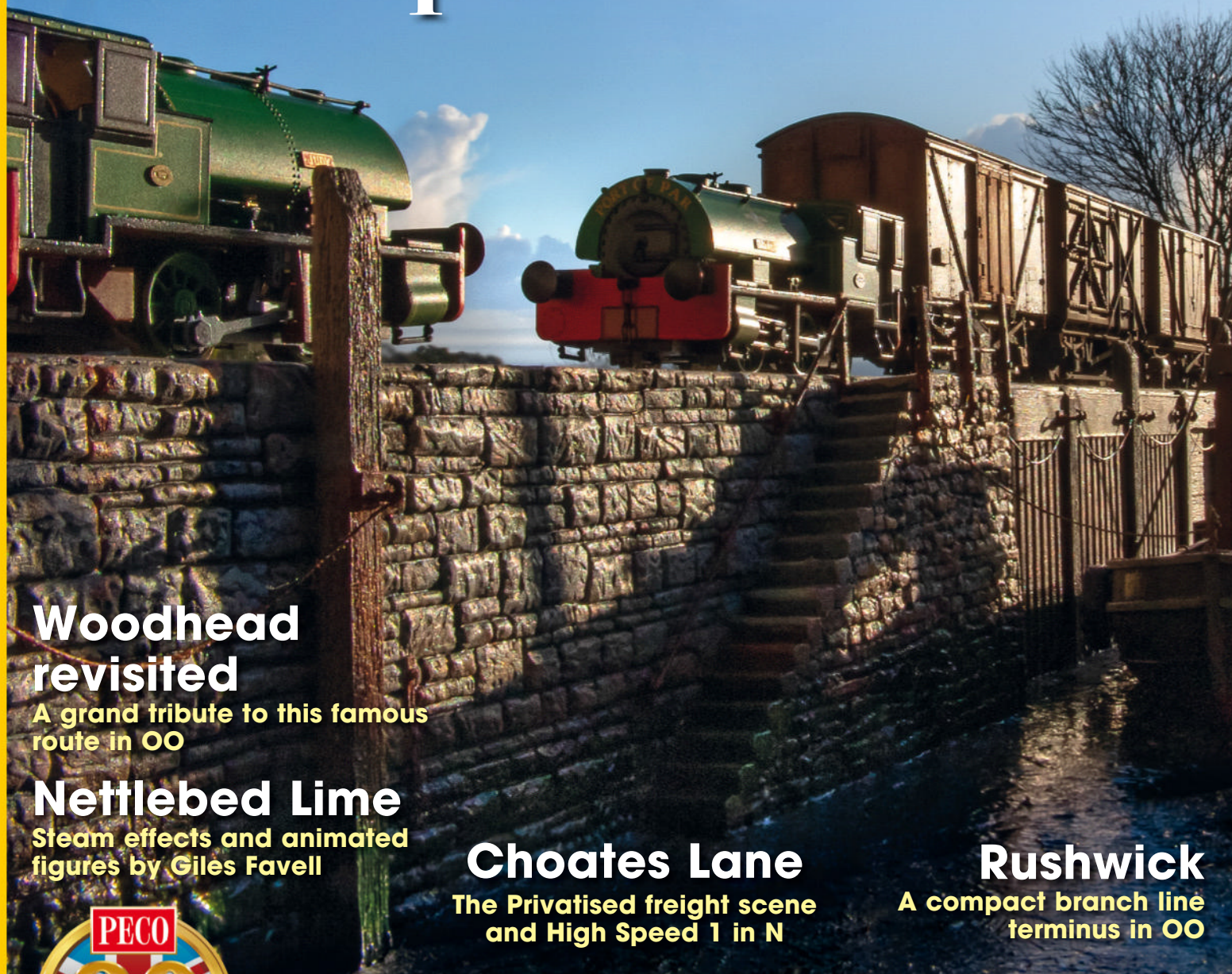
AT THE HEART OF THE HOBBY

VOLUME 77 No 904

RAILWAY MODELLER

Par-fect pair

New Bagnall 0-4-0STs in OO
Reviewed inside...



Woodhead revisited

A grand tribute to this famous route in OO

Nettlebed Lime

Steam effects and animated figures by Giles Favell

Choates Lane

The Privatised freight scene and High Speed 1 in N

Rushwick

A compact branch line terminus in OO



Also reviewed inside...

Class 69 new from Bachmann in OO

Hornby Adams B4 and train set in TT:120

New tooling Gresley V2 from Graham Farish in N

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RAILWAY MODELLER

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February 2026 Vol 77 No.904

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Railway of the Month

Having first appeared as Plan of the Month in the December 2017 RAILWAY MODELLER, David Breakell's 4mm scale impression of the Sheffield-Manchester Woodhead Route is now well on the way to completion.

96 Rose Beck Bridge

Scale Drawings

Michael Scott describes how, using mainly card sheet, he created this distinctive arched iron bridge for installation on his West Yorkshire-based N gauge layout.

99 From the Archive

Toby Jennings delves into the RAILWAY MODELLER Digital Archive to look back at issues of the magazine from 75, 50 and 25 years ago.

100 Choates Lane

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Plan of the Month

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110 Scottish sojourn – part 4

Chris Ford continues the construction of this West Highland layout project in 4mm, which makes extensive use of products from the Peco range.

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The 73rd annual RAILWAY MODELLER Cup Competition, in which you can vote for your favourite article published in the magazine during 2025 – with over £600 worth of prizes to be won!

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124 Humphrey Road Sidings

No chinchillas were harmed in the making of this OO gauge layout by Norman Raven and his family, which is set in an imaginary 1950s era in which Nationalisation of the railways never took place.





RAILWAY MODELLING *Explored*

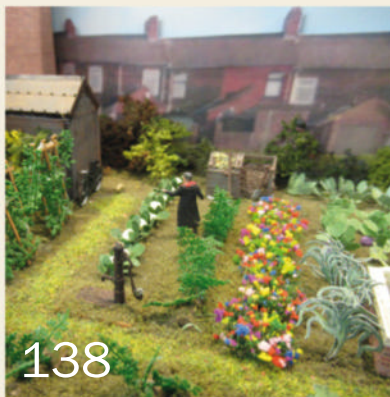
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Keith Hayward's first venture into O gauge modelling evolved from an industrial shunting layout into a small Great Western branch line terminus, but can still be operated in either form.

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Cover photo: The new Rapido Trains UK OO gauge models of Port of Par 'twins' Alfred and Judy (see review on p144), photographed on a quayside diorama that was featured in the April 2014 RM. The photo was taken outdoors using natural sunlight.

130 Turning heads in 16mm

Giles Favell describes some of the innovative methods he used when creating *Nettlebed Lime*, a 32mm gauge layout that features radio-controlled locomotives, animated driver figures and steam effects.

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142 New Product Reviews

Leading the reviews this month is the GB Railfreight Class 69 diesel locomotive in OO from Bachmann, followed by the Port of Par Bagnall 0-4-0 saddle tanks in OO from Rapido Trains UK. We also assess the TT:120 Branch Line Freight Train Set with its London & South Western Railway Adams B4 0-4-0T, and the Stroudley 'Terrier' 0-6-0T in British Railways lined black livery, from Hornby; the N gauge London & North Eastern Railway V2 2-6-2 from Graham Farish/Bachmann and 'Not-Quite-Mink' vans from Rapido Trains UK; and the O gauge Class 153 diesel railcar from Heljan.

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162 Societies & Clubs

The biggest and best guide to the exhibition scene up and down the land.

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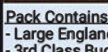
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E82006 - Class 74 Electro Diesel E6101 BR Blue.....£182.71

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E82008 - Class 74 Electro Diesel 74007 BR Blue.....£182.71

E82009 - Class 74 Electro Diesel 74010 BR Blue.....£182.71

E82010 - Class 74 Electro Diesel 74009 BR Blue Weathered.....£191.21



OO Gauge Class 66s - In Stock

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50-000SFX - Class 66/0 66015 EWS DCC Sound Fitted Deluxe.....£314.46

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50-000ASF - Class 66/0 66096 EWS DCC Sound Fitted.....£288.96
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50-001SFX - Class 66/5 66515 Freightliner Green DCC Sound Fitted Deluxe.....£314.46

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SLE387F - Curved Left Hand Point.....£17.60

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Point.....£17.60

SLE390F - Double Slip.....£58.00

SLE391F - Small Radius Right Hand
Point.....£15.20

SLE392F - Small Radius Left Hand
Point.....£15.20

SLE393F - Short Crossing.....£15.20

SLE394F - Long Crossing.....£16.40

SLU395F - Medium Radius Right Hand
Point.....£16.00

SLU396F - Medium Radius Left Hand
Point.....£16.00

SLE397F - Medium Radius Y Point.....£16.80

SLE399F - 3 Way Point.....£44.00

N Gauge Code 80 Electrofrog Points

SLE386 - Curved Right Hand Point.....£17.20

SLE387 - Curved Right Hand Point.....£17.20

SLE388 - Large Radius Right Hand
Point.....£17.20

SLE389 - Large Radius Left Hand
Point.....£17.20

SLE395 - Medium Radius Right Hand
Point.....£15.10

SLE396 - Medium Radius Right Hand
Point.....£15.10

SLE397 - Medium Radius Y Point.....£15.10

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SL389 - Large Radius Left Hand
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SL395 - Medium Radius Right Hand
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N Gauge Code 80 Setrack Points & Packs Of Track

ST-5 - Setrack Right Hand Insulfrog
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Point.....£12.70

ST-3001 - Pack Of 8 Setrack Standard
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ST-3003 - Pack Of 8 Setrack First Radius
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ST-3018 - Pack Of 8 Setrack Fourth Radius
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ST-300 - Setrack First Radius
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3 x ST-11 Double Straights
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6 x ST-12 1st Radius Double Curves
1 x ST-5 Right Hand Turnout
1 x ST-6 Left Hand Turnout
2 x ST-8 Buffer Stops
2 x ST-9 Power Connecting Clips

ST-301 - Setrack Second
Radius Starter Set.....£70.80

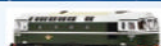
Pack Contains
4 x ST-1 Standard Straights
4 x ST-11 Double Straights
8 x ST-15 2nd Radius Double
Curves
1 x ST-10 Standard Straight
(Wired)
2 x ST-5 Right Hand Turnouts
2 x ST-8 Buffer Stops

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2D-001-010 - Class 33 D6523 BR Green
Small Yellow Panels.....£133.15



2D-001-011 - Class 33 33056 'The Burma
Star' BR Blue.....£133.15



2D-001-012 - Class 33 33025 DRS.....£133.15



2D-001-024 - Class 33/1 D6580 BR Green
Small Yellow Panels.....£133.15



2D-001-025 - Class 33/1 33107 BR
Blue.....£133.15



2D-001-026 - Class 33/1 33103 'Swordfish'
Fragonset.....£133.15

N Gauge Class 56s - Due Early 2026



2D-004-010 - BR Class 56 56302
Fastlane.....£133.15



2D-004-011 - BR Class 56 56131 BR Large
Logo Blue.....£133.15



2D-004-012 - BR Class 56 56029
Transrail.....£133.15



2D-004-013 - BR Class 56 56059
EWS.....£133.15



2D-004-014 - BR Class 56 56303 DCR
Green.....£133.15

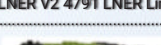


2D-004-015 - Class 56 56006 BR
Blue.....£133.15

Next Versions Of The N Gauge LNER V2s - Due December/January



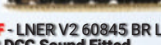
372-610 - LNER V2 4791 LNER Lined
Green.....£186.96



372-611 - LNER V2 4843 'Kings Own
Yorkshire Light Infantry' LNER Lined
Green.....£186.96



372-612SF - LNER V2 60845 BR Lined Black
Early Crest DCC Sound Fitted.....£280.46



372-614 - LNER V2 60847 'St Peters School'
BR Lined Green Late Crest.....£186.96

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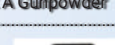
961001 - Triple Pack GW Iron Minks GW
Grey Early Years.....£59.45



961002 - Triple Pack GW Iron Minks GW
Grey Inter War Years.....£59.45



961003 - Triple Pack GW Iron Minks GW
At War Pack A Gunpowder
Vans.....£59.45



961004 - Triple Pack GW Iron Minks GW
At War Pack B Salvage



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TT3015M GBRf, Class 50, Co-Co, 50049 'Defiance'

TT3041M BR, Class 50, 'Barham' 50016

TT3042M Network South East, Class 50, 'Ark Royal' 50035

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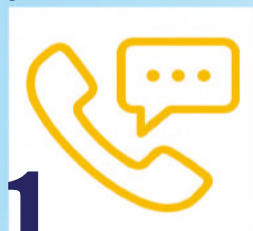


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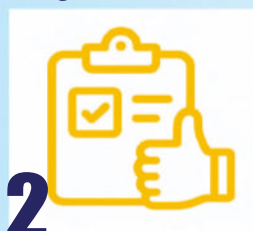
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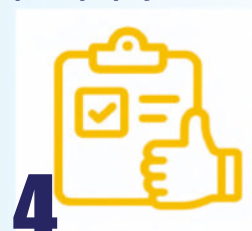
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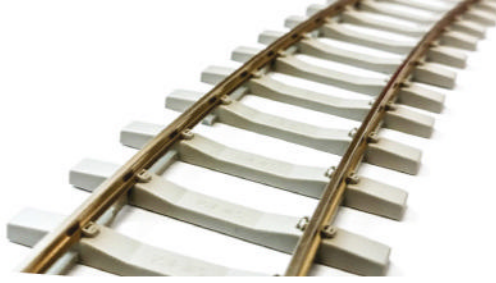
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No. 13003 looks somewhat careworn in this view taken between shifts at Tinsley Depot on 16th June 1984. The locomotive is coupled to an ex-LNER tender, which had been in use as a sludge carrier. GAVIN MORRISON



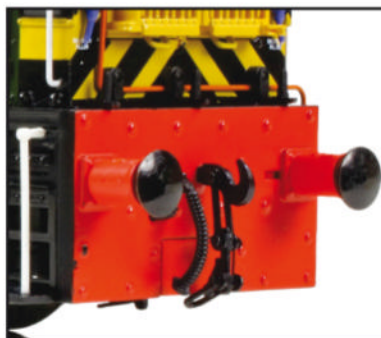
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BR BLUE
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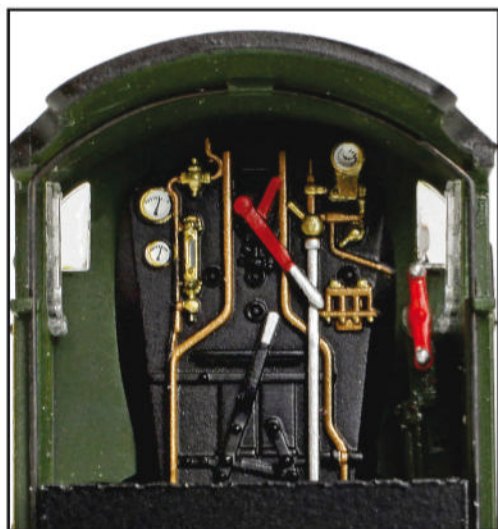
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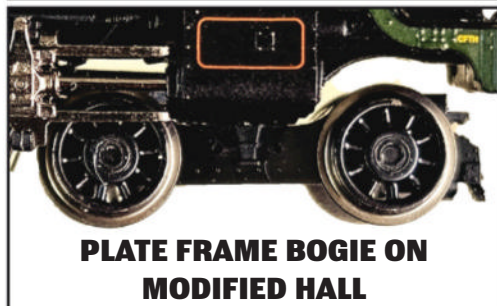
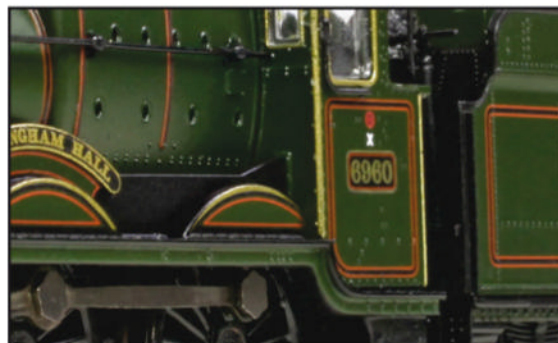


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372-010/SF

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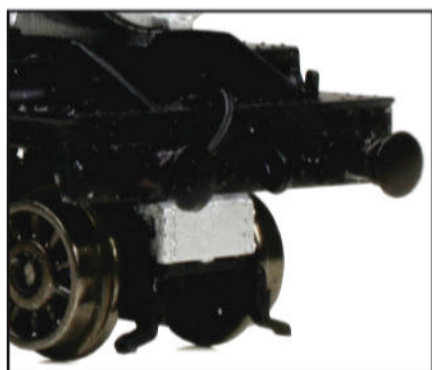
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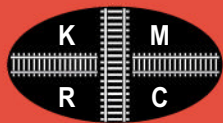


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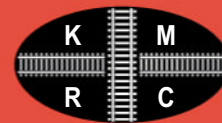


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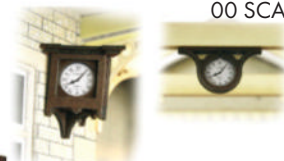
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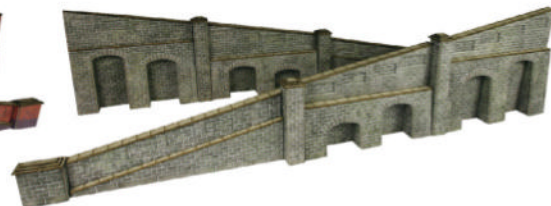
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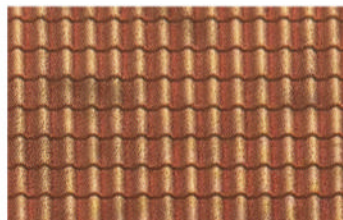
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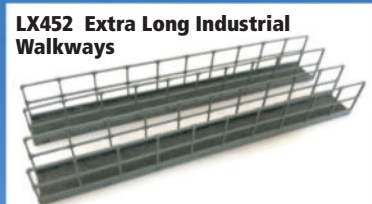
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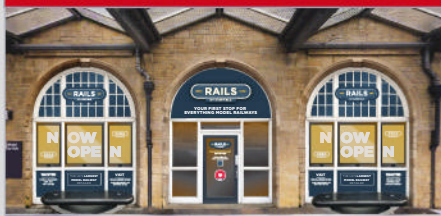


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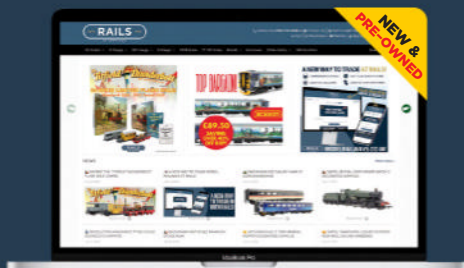


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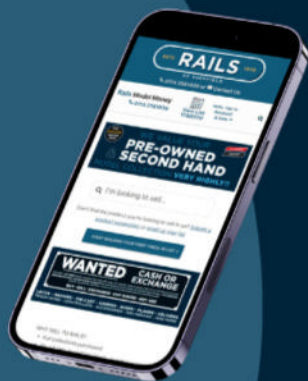
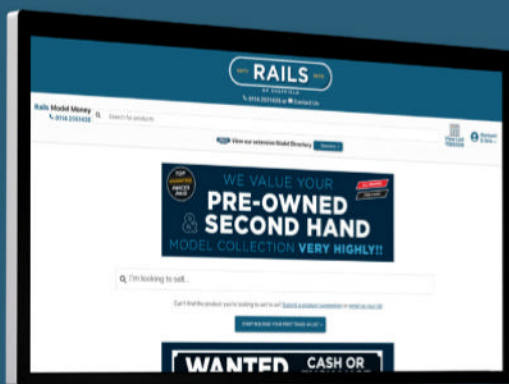


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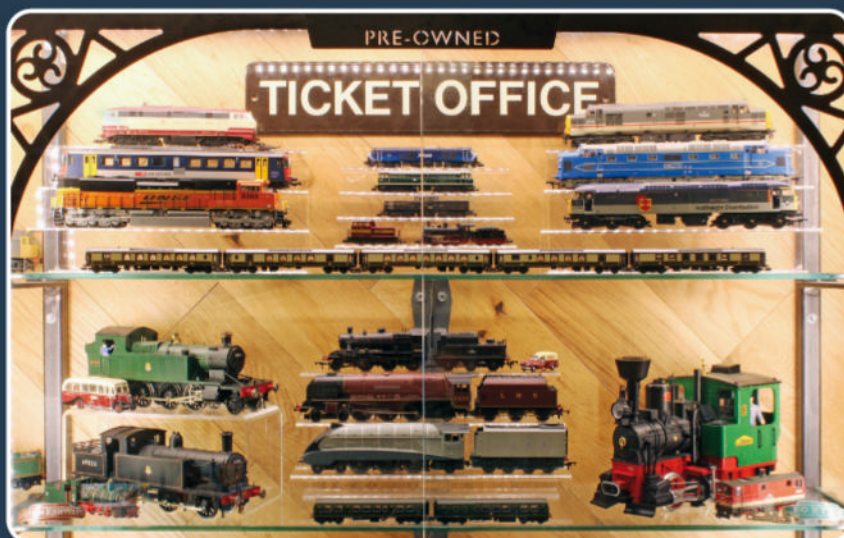
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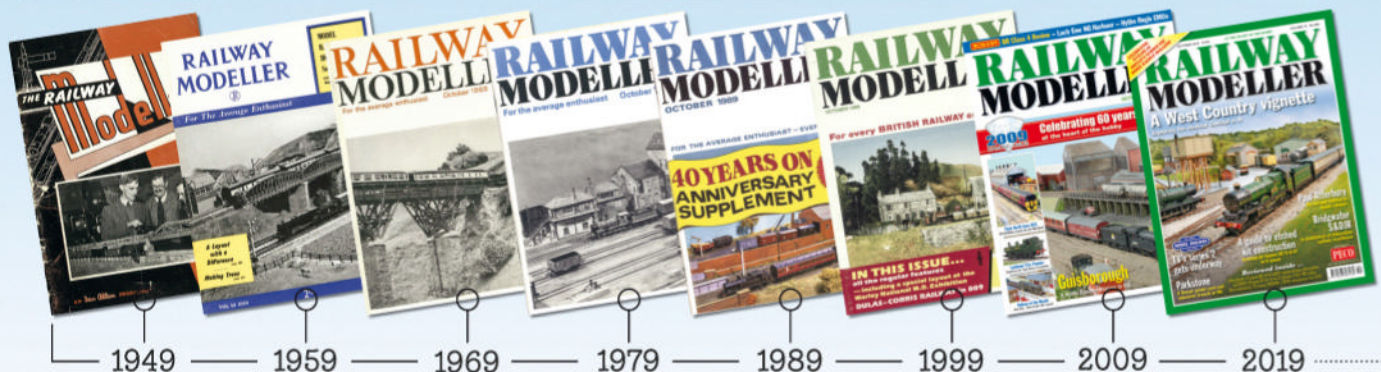
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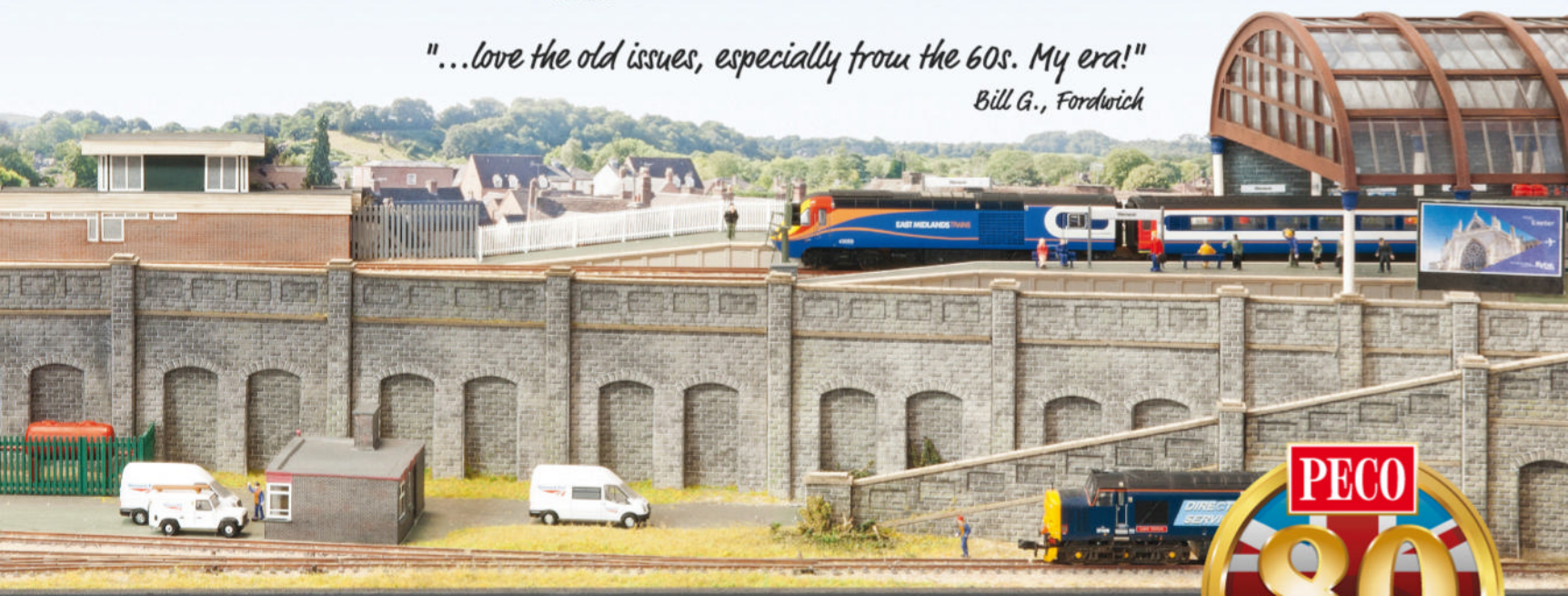
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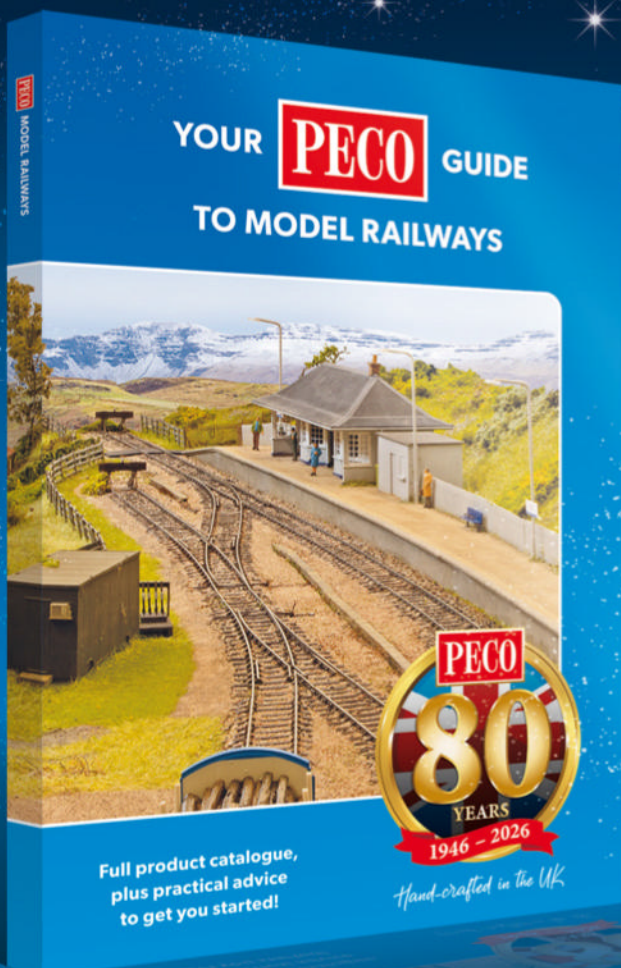
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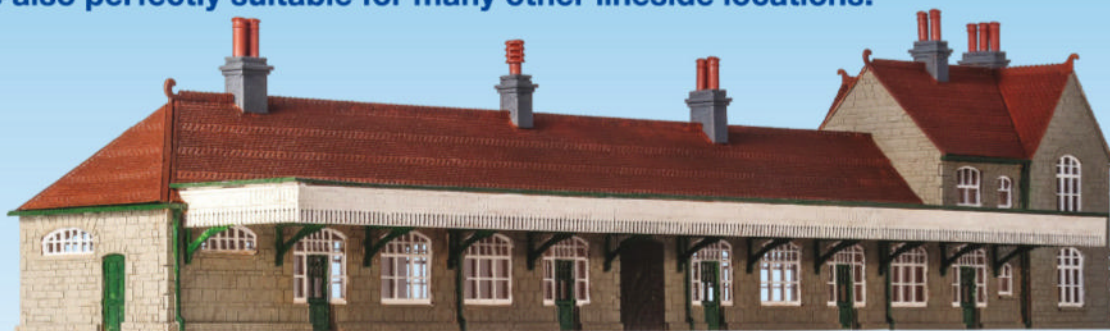
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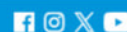


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Advertisement & General Manager
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email: john.king@peco.co
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Subscriptions

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email: subscriptions@peco.co
Tel. 01297 626203

Chairman
C.M. Pritchard

Editorial Office (not subscriptions):
Tel. 01297 3060 05

Email:
editorial@railwaymodeller.co.uk

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Welcome

The next big thing?

What's going to be the next big thing in the hobby? This was the starter for ten posed to me at a recent exhibition, during an informal discussion with several other modellers. It is certainly a thought-provoking question, and one to which different individuals are likely to respond with different answers.

To be able to look forwards and offer any kind of prophetic view, it is helpful to first reflect on what has come before. Looking back into the long history of the hobby, landmark changes have usually occurred as a result of technological developments, these sometimes originating in completely different fields and then being adapted for railway modelling applications. One such example would be 'sugar cube' speakers, the development of which followed the miniaturisation of audio technology for mobile phones, this eventually leading to the now commonplace installation of digital sound in model trains.

Amongst the major changes that have occurred within the hobby since the turn of the century, 3D-printing and laser-cutting are almost certainly the most significant. Both of these production processes have opened doors to modelling opportunities that were hitherto unobtainable – not just commercially, but also for individual modellers working on their own personal projects at home.

Returning to the opening question, I wonder whether the next big thing could be Artificial Intelligence? Although the fast-growing proliferation of AI in our everyday lives is being met by many (myself included) with a certain amount of fear and trepidation – and not without good reason – it does have the potential to provide all sorts of exciting opportunities for our hobby, perhaps not in the immediate future, but certainly within the next few years.

Whilst we've already seen, with varying degrees of success, how photos of models can be manipulated with AI to introduce snow and steam effects, or transformed into 'moving pictures', whereby static details (such as figures and road vehicles) are brought to life, there have been few demonstrations of AI being applied to practical modelling projects. However, one example is the backscene used by Chris Odell on his *Fèdrag* layout in O09, which was featured in our June 2025 issue. Chris used DALL-E computer software, which is a text-to-image model developed by OpenAI, to interpret text descriptions (prompts) for the landscape he wanted. The resultant image was then printed onto a vinyl sheet and fixed to a plywood backboard.

But what else could be possible in the future? What about using AI to create a 3D computer model of any given structure or railway vehicle, which could then be 3D-printed in the scale required – all without the need to first draw it up using Computer Aided Design software? Or how about using AI to create a layout plan based on a particular prototype that adheres to set criteria, such as a specified footprint, maximum permitted gradient and minimum radius? Only time will tell...



Chris Odell used AI alongside traditional modelling methods on his O09 layout. Photo: Andrew Burnham



Craig Tiley Editor

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And for all enthusiasts modelling overseas railways.

CONTINENTAL MODELLER

Published on the third Thursday of the preceding month.

Railway of the Month

Photography by Craig Tiley



A famous trans-Pennine main line in OO gauge

Woodhead revisited

Having first appeared as Plan of the Month in the December 2017 issue of *RAILWAY MODELLER*, **DAVID BREAKELL**'s 4mm scale impression of the Sheffield-Manchester Woodhead Route is now well on the way to completion.

It began with a tunnel mouth. Not the most obvious starting place, perhaps, but this was Woodhead Tunnel and, for me, it ticked all the boxes. It was like a Disney version of a medieval castle, with the crossing over the River Etherow as its drawbridge and moat. I saw it first as an old photograph in a book, with an Edwardian express bursting out of the smoke-filled darkness. Then, on a holiday in the Peak District, there was the original – or rather, what was left of it, with the line closed and lifted, and the Gothic towers decapitated. I sensed this was the story for me.

As a boy, like many others, I was given a train set one Christmas, but when teenage years arrived, other

interests took over. Fast forward a mere five decades of growing up, my legal career, family and, well, life, and I was contemplating retirement. A prospective house move triggered a trip to the attic, whereupon my wife Fran saw the boxed-up train set. Encouraged by her, I laid the track on the living room floor and railed my old locomotive, a Tri-ang Class 3MT tank. It started straight out of the box.

We finally moved to a house with a large, unconverted roof space, and the ideal location for a 'lifetime' layout presented itself. By early 2016, the conversion was finished and I was ready to make a start. I had been doing *pro bono* work for The A1 Steam Locomotive

Left

Robinson O4 2-8-0s were the freight workhorses of the Woodhead Route in GCR, LNER and early BR days. No.6190 emerges from the tunnel modelled on Thurgoland Tunnel, south of Penistone, with a loaded coal train.

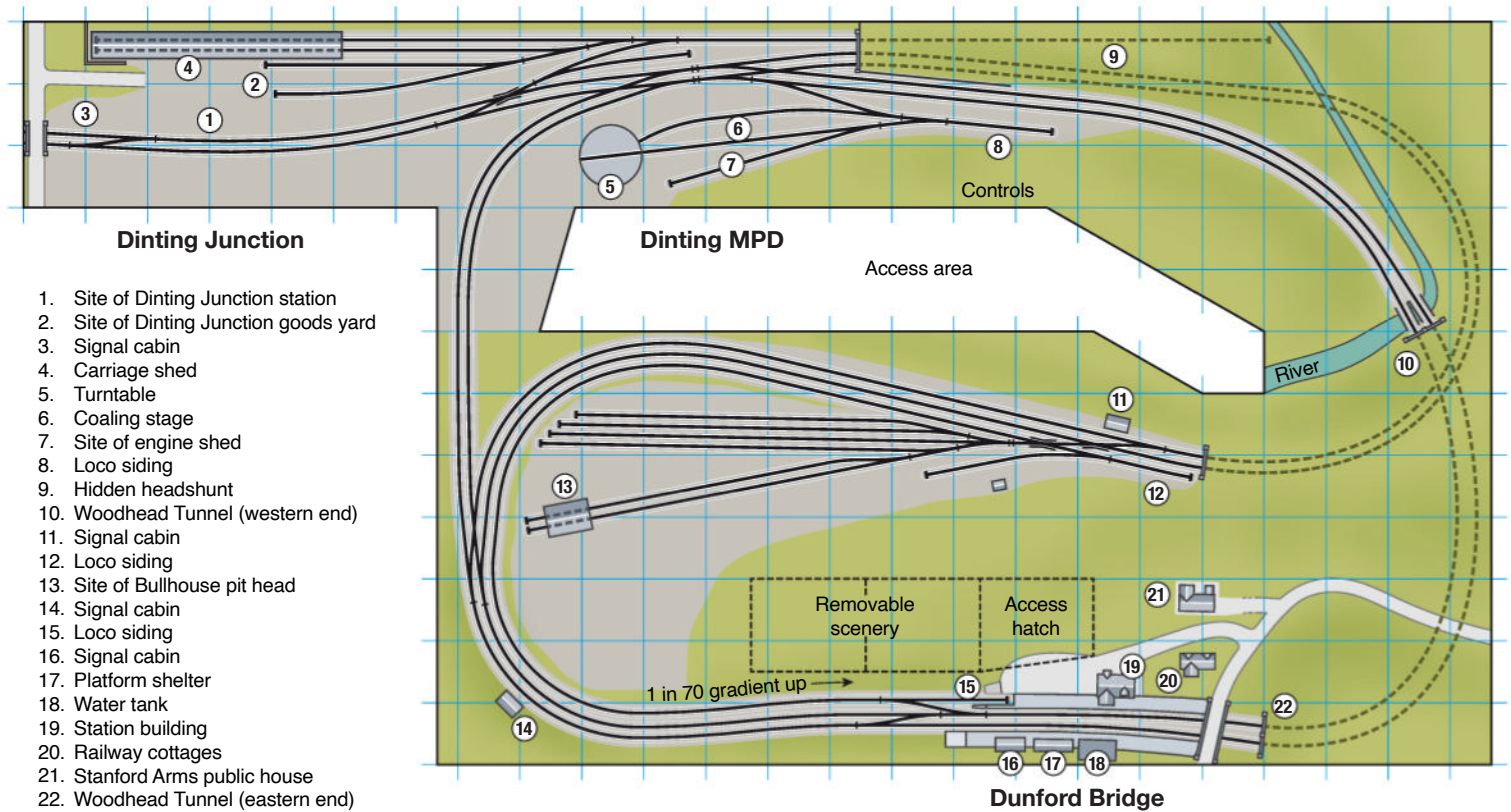
Right

Robinson J11 0-6-0 No.5317 arrives at Dunford Bridge station with a stopping passenger train.



WOODHEAD

Overall dimensions: 710cm x 360cm. Each grid square = 30cm x 30cm.



Trust, the builders of *Tornado*, since retiring and it was there I met Graham Nicholas. I mentioned my interest in building a layout and Graham offered his services.

What sort of railway do you want?

I knew that it would be London & North Eastern Railway steam, to reflect the heritage I had come to know at the A1SLT. I also wanted a 'railway in a landscape', so that I could re-create the scenery of northern England that had appealed so much to Fran and I on our holidays. During

“ – I also wanted a ‘railway in a landscape’, so that I could re-create the scenery of northern England – ”

David Breakell

one conversation with Graham, the word 'Woodhead' came up. The result was a design which became Plan of the Month in the December 2017 *RAILWAY MODELLER*. The layout has evolved significantly from that point, but remains faithful to the original concept: main lines around the room, with a spur coming off them leading to a major station; an engine shed inside the loop; and reverse loops (running partly under the main lines, off scene) which enable 'out and back' trips from the spur.

I ordered baseboard tables from Harry Maynard, with a couple of access hatches cut out of the plywood tops. We erected the tables in stages, to allow easier access.

With no engines to convert, I decided to go straight to Digital Command Control. I was seduced by the idea of running locomotives as double-headers or tail-end bankers (which was prototypical for coal trains on the Woodhead Route).

We began at the far end of the layout, where the tunnel would predominate. I noted the care with which Graham approached the business of track alignment. As

Below left
David Breakell by the entrance to the tunnel modelled on Thurgoland. The sidings will serve Bullhouse Colliery, using modeller's licence to combine two locations.

Below
David demonstrates one of the lift-out scenic sections which allow access between Thurgoland Tunnel and Dunford Bridge station.



Right
Dunford Bridge station,
with the eastern portal of
Woodhead Tunnel in the
background. Note the
tunnel's ventilation shaft
on the hilltop, built in the
same castellated style as
the tunnel mouths
themselves.



I imagined it on the real railway, he put marker pegs in the 'six foot' and checked the curves against the version on his laptop, ensuring a smooth, prototypical look.

Heading for the hills

Another early discussion point was the gradient. I wanted to give an impression of the heroic struggle made by these engines, hauling coal trains up to the summit of the route. The difference in elevation between the highest point on the layout and baseboard level was a critical piece of maths. In real life, the maximum gradient approaching the tunnel (from either end) was around 1 in 130. We ended up with a gradient of 1 in 70. I didn't want a model railway with 'ramps', but to me, the gradient still looked a tad on the gentle side. I suggested to Graham that perhaps it should be steeper. "Oh no," was his response, "that wouldn't be fair on the engine!" A railwayman, first and last. In the end, the scenery took care of my concerns on that front.

The access areas in the baseboards plus a couple of crawl spaces in each corner weren't enough to construct the moorland scenery, if the end boards were pushed

back against the wall. So, inevitably, I built the hills before the track was laid and tested fully.

I used plywood formers and a roll of chicken wire, overlaid with plaster bandage, for the hills. The benefit was that they were hollow, so I could squeeze an arm into the tunnel from the crawl spaces if I needed to rescue a train! I smoothed out the bumps and ridges in the hardened surface with wet Polyfilla laced with PVA, and painted the whole thing earth brown with emulsion paint. Suddenly, instead of bare track on plywood, there was the suggestion of a landscape.

Enter Cliff Parsons

I'd accumulated a fair amount of historical information by now. Fran and I had visited Dunford Bridge at the eastern end of the tunnel and cycled the route between there and Penistone, at one time a major junction. I had E M Johnson's two-volume book *Woodhead*, with its evocative black & white photographs.

I had also got involved with the Ashford International Model Railway Education Centre project. The founding president of AIMREC was Cliff Parsons, of *Gresley Beat*





Previous page
The O4 with coal empties and the J11 with the local train meet outside the western portal of Woodhead Tunnel.



Left
The Stanford Arms pub offers a welcome place to take a break in the middle of the isolated Pennine moorland.

fame. With typical generosity, Cliff offered his help on the scenic front, and I was not about to say no. There are so many things you have to learn as a newcomer, and I didn't have time to learn them! Cliff gave me my first lessons in applying static grass, plastic weld, hot glue and many other things. Confidence is all: once I had got the hang of a new technique, I was away and started progressing the scenery in leaps and bounds. In due course, the hills above Woodhead had acquired bushes, heather, and even sheep.

One feature which made a big difference to the look was the dry-stone walls, so typical of the region. Fortunately, Osborn's Models had recently come up with walls suitable for an undulating surface, and after a little painting, they really looked the part.

I'm not keen on photographic backscenes, nor do I like right-angled corners in the sky. So, the backscene had to curve around the hills, meaning flexible MDF or hardboard, and it would be hand-painted. Once the boards were erected, I was painting at the extreme end

of my reach. Fetching a stepladder, I painted them from behind the layout, leaning over the top. In other words, I was painting upside down! I began to realise why Michelangelo took so long on the Sistine Chapel.

I used what's known in painting terms as aerial perspective to create the sense of a distant horizon, with the colours fading from green to blue and finally blending into the sky, and I wanted clouds over the hills, not flat blue. Anyway, I must have made a fairly convincing job of it, because Graham commented: "I've seen 'em like that. It's about to rain up there."

First compressions

But now came the challenge of modelling man-made structures. First on the list was the western end of Woodhead Tunnel, with its octagonal towers, battlements and all. With some guidance from Graham and Cliff, I got there. Once it was installed and tested with an engine, I moved on to the matching structure at the Dunford Bridge end.

The Woodhead Route boasted stations at either end of the tunnel, Dunford Bridge and Woodhead. I decided, reluctantly, that I would only build a station at one end. Compression is inevitable in modelling, but two stations would take away from the sense of remoteness that this part of the layout was intended to evoke.

The choice was Dunford Bridge, where there was a little more modelling room. On the Woodhead side of the tunnel, I restricted myself to creating the River Etherow and its rail crossing, before the tracks headed off westwards.

Starting on the village

I tried to get some experience with buildings by making a generic card kit, so I made a mess room for railway crews from a magazine kit. It was a pretty bad effort, and I still keep it in the attic to remind me of where I've come from!

Judging from the photos, Dunford Bridge was no more than a hamlet pre-World War II. There was just a terrace of railwaymen's cottages, a pub-cum-hotel called the Stanford Arms and a couple of farms. On the layout, I painted part of the village on the backscene and then, using Petite Properties kits, built a pair of semi-detached cottages (to include the station master's house) and a detached house which would serve as the pub, installing them in their actual positions, either side of the station approach. To orient everything spatially, I first scratch-built the road overbridge, which is skew to the platforms and on a slight incline. Cliff produced two flights of lattice iron steps down to the platforms from the bridge (kit-bashed from the Dapol footbridge kit).

Construction of the Petite Properties kits was pretty straightforward, and they were brought to life by plasticard cladding. The pub needed commercial detail, so Fran produced some noticeboards and a pub sign for the road. I launched into detailing the station master's vegetable garden and the pub's beer garden with its rhododendrons in bloom.

The station buildings

From photographs, the station buildings were quite distinctive. It was obvious they would have to be scratch-built to look authentic. All of these buildings had been demolished, and I couldn't find plans of them online, or via national museums and city libraries.

I joined the Great Central Railway Society and through that met John Quick, their former Model Steward and a GCR expert. He was incredibly generous with his time, hospitality and knowledge, providing me with some unpublished photos which I refer to constantly. John also encouraged me to think of developing the layout by spanning two periods, the post-World War I GCR and the pre-World War II LNER.

The simplest structure to tackle was the platform water tower. I began by making approximate scale

Below

The station building and water tower at Dunford Bridge were scratch-built for accuracy, though the waiting shelter is a modified Hornby item.

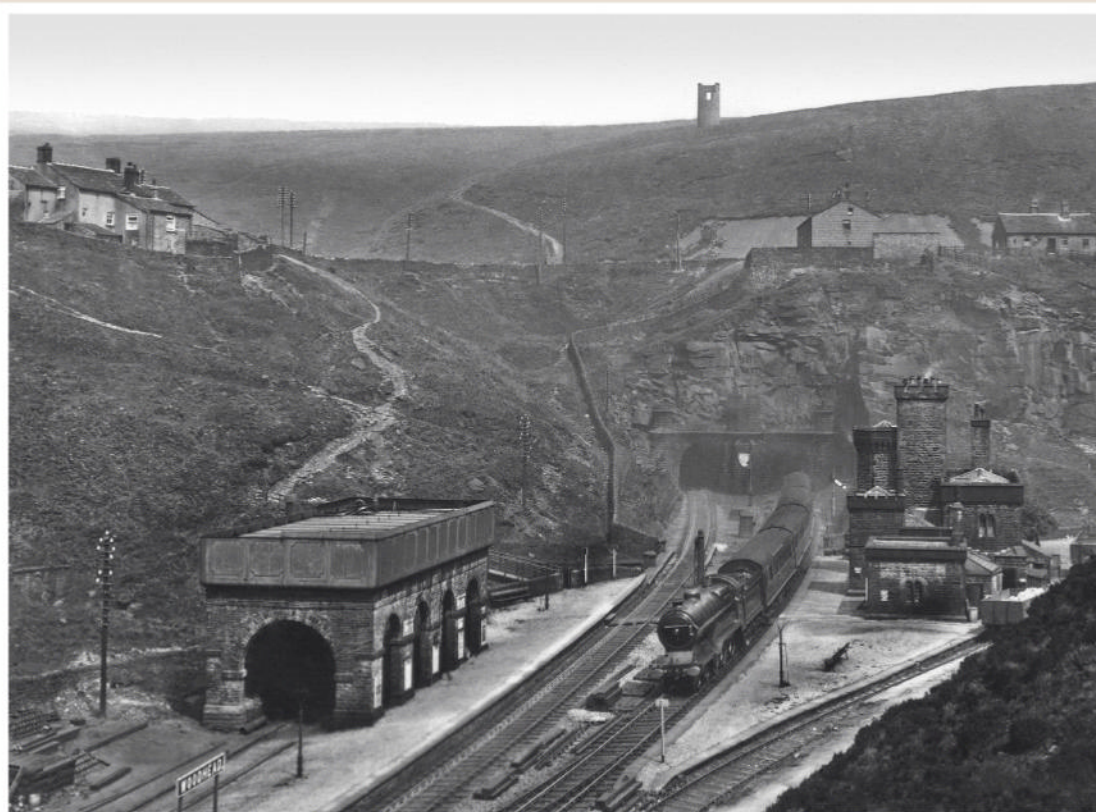


Historical notes

The Woodhead Route, constructed in the 1840s by the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway, became a crucial link between the growing northern powerhouses of Lancashire and Yorkshire. To build it, the MS&LR had to breach the Pennines and, in doing so, constructed what was at the time the longest railway tunnel in Britain. Its rails carried Yorkshire coal westwards and empty coal wagons eastwards, as well as manufactured goods and passenger trains.

By 1899, the MS&LR had renamed itself the Great Central Railway and had opened its own 'London Extension', completing a fast, direct link between Manchester and London Marylebone, via Sheffield Victoria. Shortly afterwards, John Robinson was appointed its Chief Mechanical Engineer. Robinson designed many elegant and highly successful steam locomotives over the next couple of decades, before handing over to Nigel Gresley when the GCR was folded into the LNER at the 1923 Grouping.

A vital route in both world wars as well as in peacetime, the Woodhead Route was again a pioneer in the 1950s under nationalised ownership, when a long-anticipated overhead electrification project was completed linking Manchester, Sheffield and Wath. British Railways had built Britain's first overhead electrified main line railway. But that massive investment was to prove short-lived. The

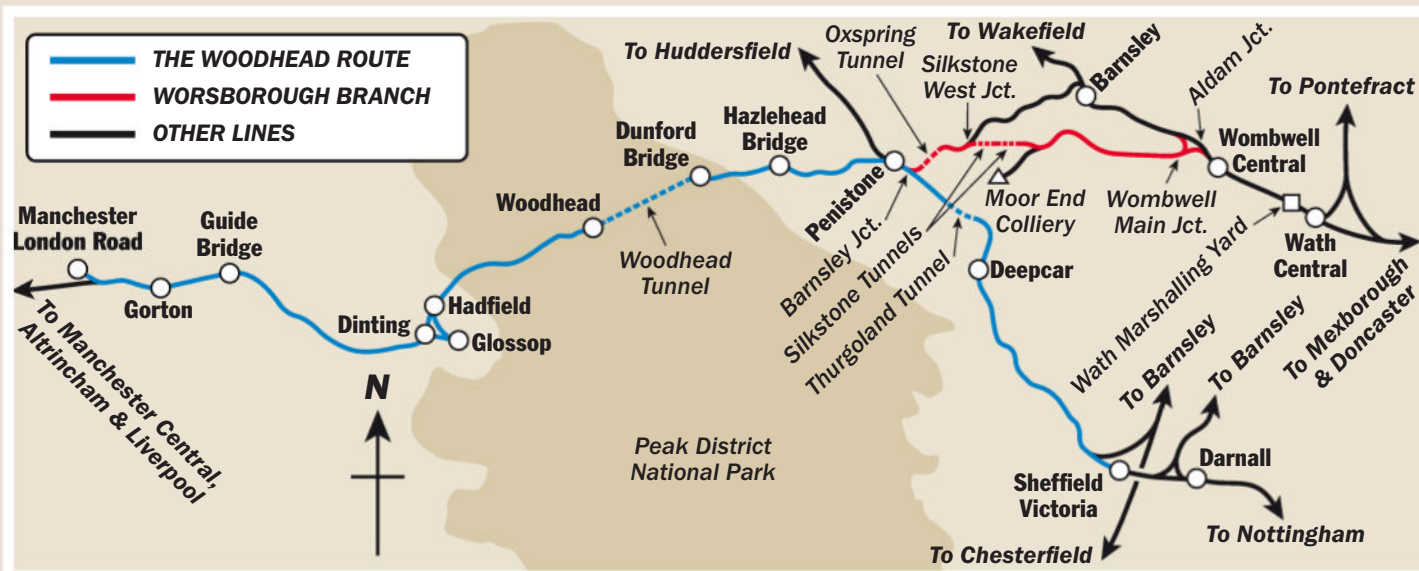


▲ The western portal of Woodhead Tunnel and Woodhead station, pictured circa 1920. A Great Central Railway Robinson Class 1 4-6-0 has just emerged from the three-mile long tunnel and is starting the long descent towards Manchester with a short passenger train.

Photo: Rail-Online

railway's fortunes dwindled in the 1960s, in parallel with the rise of the car and the decline of the coal industry. Passenger traffic was insufficient to save it (freight had always provided the lion's share of its income) and so the route died, a victim of premature rationalisation, its engineering advantages discounted. Passenger services were withdrawn between Hadfield and Penistone in 1970, and the last freight train ran in 1981. An 11-mile section of track, including the tunnel, was

lifted and the end-pieces were turned into two stubs, a suburban branch for Manchester and a freight-only line from Sheffield respectively. The lifted middle section was made into a hiker's path, the Upper Don Trail. The tunnel itself became a conduit for the Central Electricity Generating Board. And so today, travellers between Manchester and Sheffield have the doubtful privilege of either taking the winding Hope Valley line or driving on the traffic-clogged A57.



Right
Foam underlay gives the appearance of the neatly ballasted track of the steam era.

drawings of the front and side elevations, converted them to card mock-ups and then made the final model in foamboard and plasticard. One distinctive feature was the tall, almost church-like, windows of the pump room below the tank. York Modelmakers came to the rescue with a bespoke set. The signal box needed rather more detail, but by then I was happily into it. The waiting shelter I kit-bashed from an old Hornby one, with a gabled roof in place of its pent one.

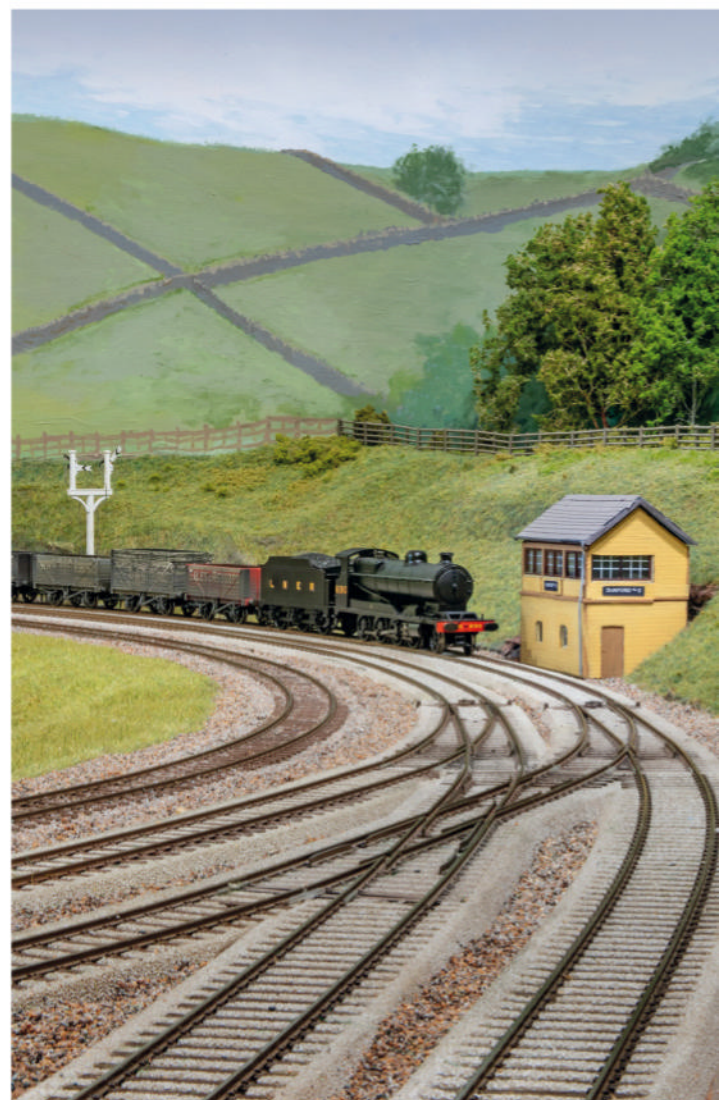
The final task was the station building itself. Information was limited, but one missing link was provided in Bob Pixton's *Sheffield Main Lines*, which included a rare picture of the station from the eastern end. I started by making drawings of the presumed footprint and worked out, using chimney stacks and other visual clues as guides, where all the internal rooms were likely to have been. That allowed me to guesstimate the unseen roofline and where the doors and windows were placed. Once I had settled on a design, construction proceeded using the methods described above.

Guided by Peter Smith's *Station Colours*, I adopted the brown, stone & cream of the pre-1937 LNER livery. Now the scene is virtually complete, with some Modelu figures on the platform and in the pub garden – and a 1938 Morris 8 Roadster.

End of this stage

In the meantime, the entire track has gone down and I've started modelling the other, larger station with its depot (which has evolved into Dinting Junction). Then, next to the sidings on the reverse loop, I'm planning to build Bullhouse Colliery. The story of these two major stages will follow, as well as comments on rolling stock (which all needs weathering) and operational matters. I'll also have a whole raft of people to thank, including those credited above, as well as newer participants, like Fred Garner and Chris O'Donoghue.

My final comment harks back to boyhood memories, my eyes down at track level as my Tri-ang 2-6-2T headed down the straight towards me. It has occurred to me since that the way we experience the real railway, standing on a platform awaiting a train, is similar to this, and both are quite different from the usual layout-



viewing arrangement, looking sideways-on as trains pass in front of you, left to right, and back. My layout is oriented end-on, so I can crouch down and watch a Robinson 2-8-0 labour up the goods loop for Dunford Bridge, bringing it all back...



Right
Work is now in progress on the section of the layout that will become a large station, modelled on Dinting.

Rose Beck Bridge



MICHAEL SCOTT describes how, using mainly card sheet, he created this distinctive arched iron bridge for installation on his West Yorkshire-based N gauge layout.

All photography by the author

Long Cut End Viaduct Bridge near Dewsbury is typical of examples that can be seen on the railways of West Yorkshire, and was the ideal prototype for my N gauge version, destined for use on my layout that depicts the fictional town of Chandwell.

The real bridge crosses the Calder & Hebble Navigation at an angle. The resultant structure is visually striking, but not necessarily something you would attempt to make by hand, from card, especially in 1:148 scale.

I had long wanted to model a bridge like this for *Chandwell*, but I had put off the idea as I thought it would be too complicated, or would require purchasing ready-made items or laser-cut parts.

After some thought, however, I realised that layering my own card parts could achieve a passable result, even in this small scale.

Much of the bridge itself was a simple build, but the challenge was the series of arched ribs that span the

▲ The slightly dilapidated Rose Beck Bridge, built in 1877 by engineer Benjamin Knight, crosses the River Chander just upstream from Roberts' Weir behind The Weir pub. It has been a Chandwell landmark for over a century.

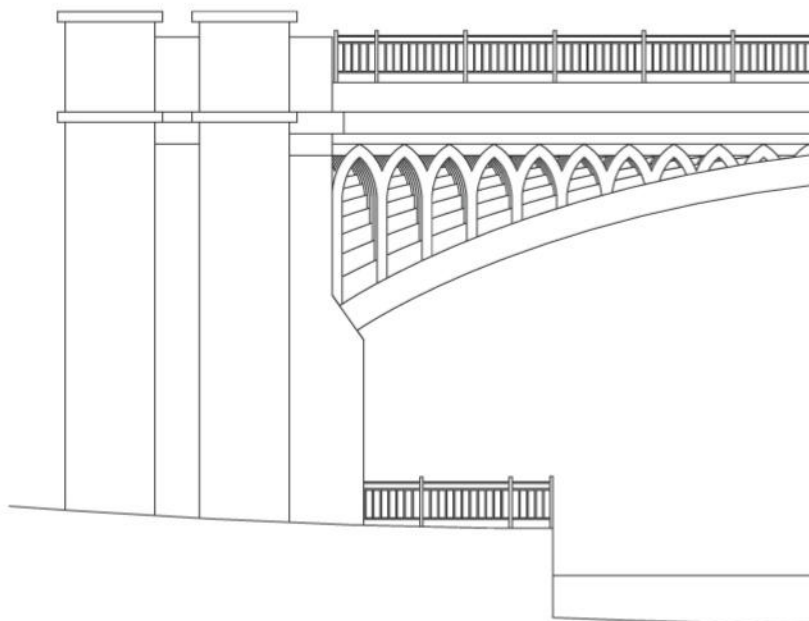
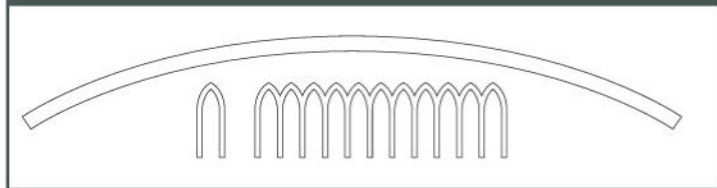


Fig.1 Basic arch components



river. With a three-track main line above, nine of these ribs were required, meaning that accurate sizing and cutting was essential.

Drawing the arched ribs

I drew the arches on computer using Inkscape software (Fig.1).

The overall arch was constructed from a basic two-centre Gothic arch (similar to those you might see in a church) and a curve. Given that the ribs are 1:148 scale and I intended to cut them out by hand with only a scalpel, I could not add too much detail; I kept the bar width of the Gothic arches at 1.5mm, which is about the smallest I can cut reliably freehand.

With the pieces arranged, the overall shape of the arched rib looked about right compared to the prototype (Fig.2).

Since my trackbed was already in place, I made the abutments the height necessary so that the top of the arch met the underside of the trackbed – a piece of 5mm plywood.

Giving it substance

I wanted the arches to have some three-dimensional presence and not look like they were just cut-out bits of card. To achieve this, I needed to use layers.

My layout is only viewable from the front, so I had the luxury of only having to model one face of each of the ribs. To this end I realised that, with only three layers of 0.5mm card, I would be able to create a solid-looking cast-iron rib. I wanted to achieve the look of

A view of Long Cut End Viaduct Bridge (as per its official name that is legible on the sign) near Dewsbury, the prototype that provided the inspiration for the model.



Fig.2 Arch profile

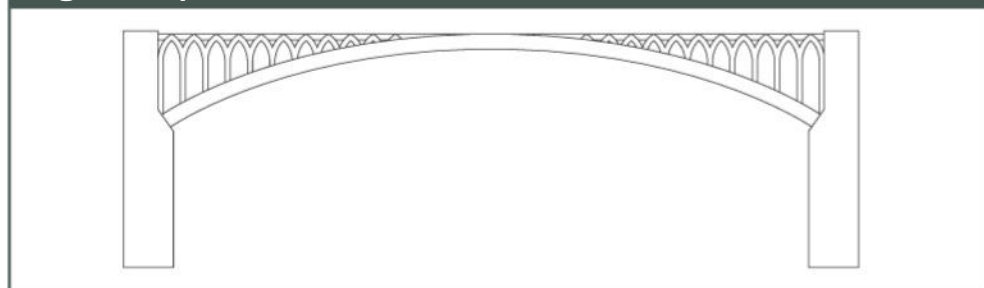
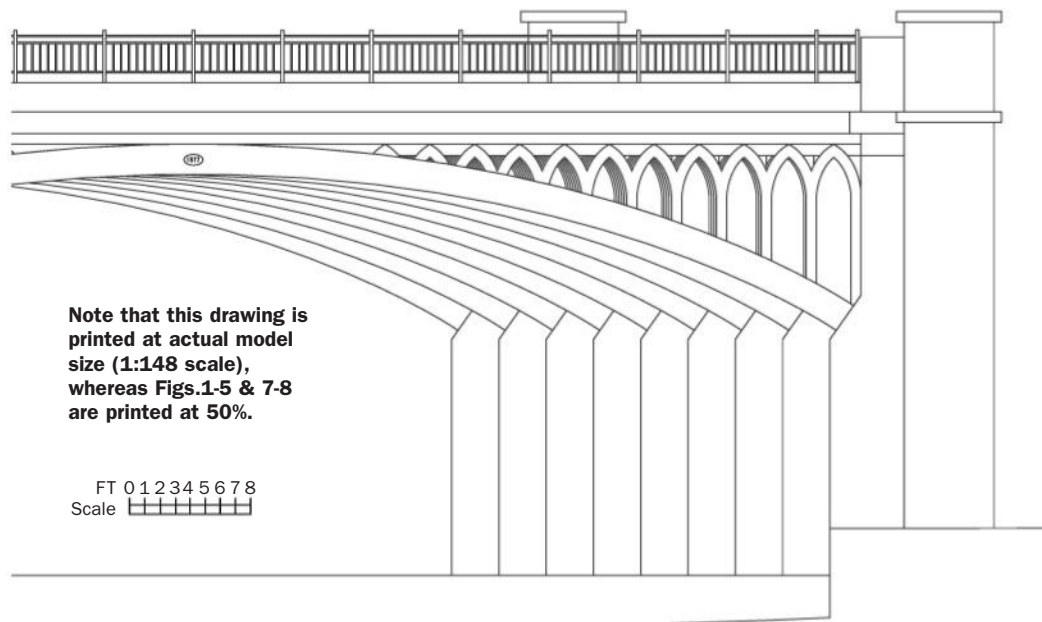
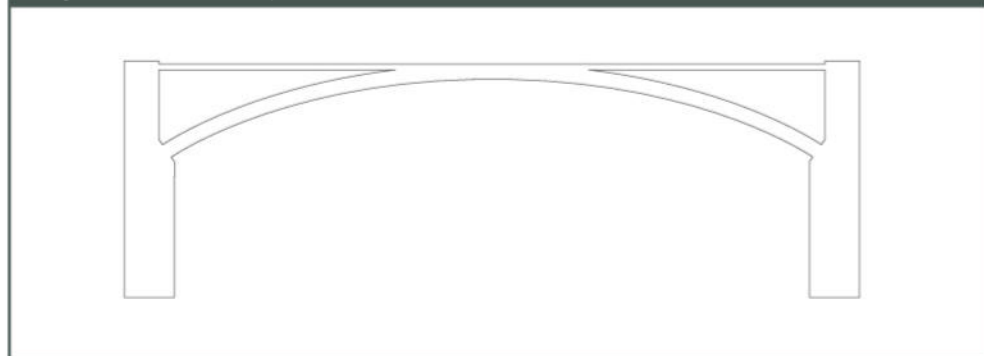


Fig.3 Rear arch layer (0.5mm card)



Note that this drawing is printed at actual model size (1:148 scale), whereas Figs.1-5 & 7-8 are printed at 50%.

FT 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Scale

an inner core with the Gothic arches in front of it, the whole embedded inside a more sturdy arched frame.

I started with the back layer (Fig.3). This included only the horizontal top support and the main arch. It would be easy to cut out with a scalpel. By including the abutments too, I was able to build these up separately to make it look like the cast iron arch was resting right in the middle of the stone supports.

The middle layer was the most challenging (Fig.4). Each of the pointed arches is represented individually, and some of the holes that needed to be cut out were tiny. Each arch took almost 40 minutes to cut out. (The work was spread over nine mornings; I find the cutting relaxing at the start of a work day!)

By contrast, the front layer was the easiest to cut (Fig.5). This was simply the main arch and the abutments.

Once cut, the three layers were laminated together to form a single part, just over 1.5mm thick.

Fig.4 Middle arch layer (0.5mm card)

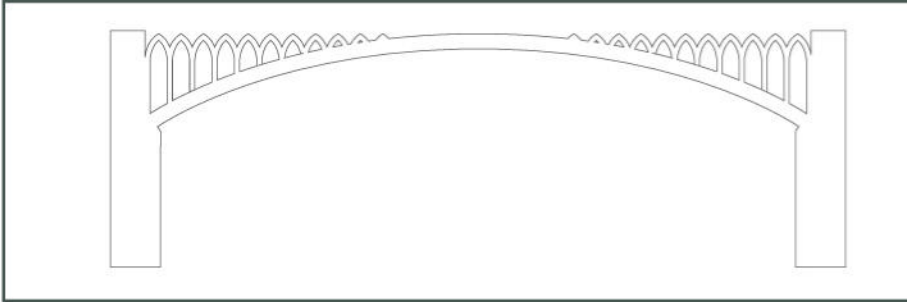


Fig.7 Arch abutments

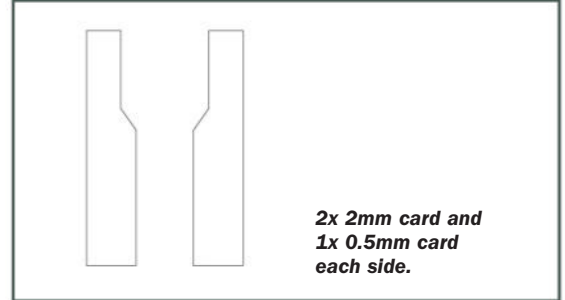


Fig.5 Front arch layer (0.5mm card)

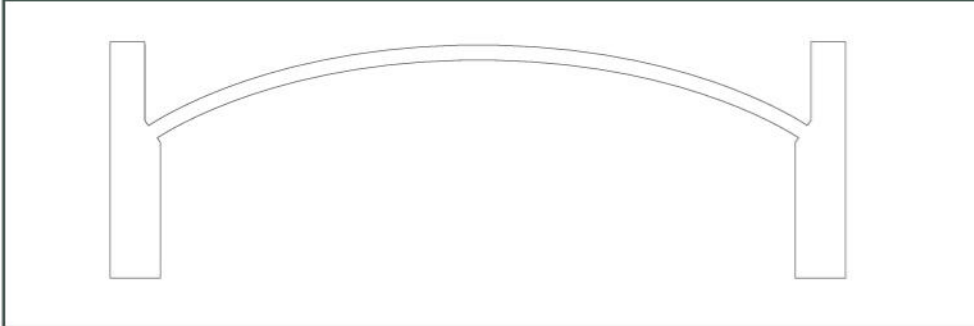
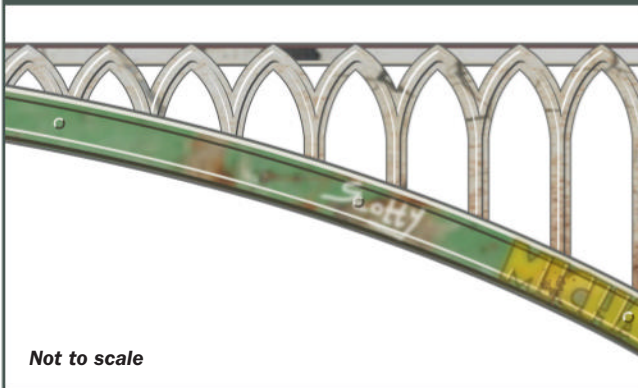


Fig.6 Arch texture detail



I created the white and green rusty texture using freely available texture images, and I added a highlight and shadow layer to trick the eyes into thinking they're seeing more 3D parts than they are in reality.

These were just simple lines drawn in Inkscape, but the end result is very effective (Fig.6).

To make the most of the texture, I printed the arches onto 110gsm matt photo paper, which I then stuck onto 0.5mm card using a glue stick. The layered nature of the girders

would work well with a painted finish too, I believe.

Adding the abutments

I eventually had nine arches, each made from three layers of card. I needed to make these the correct depth for the trackbed, which itself is on a curve. I settled on the bridge needing to be 104mm wide.

Accounting for the paper layer, I used 0.6mm as a working thickness for the card. Therefore, my arches

worked out at about 1.8mm deep, with nine of these equating to 16.2mm. Simple maths then allowed me to determine the required abutment width for each of the arches.

I settled on making these from two layers of 2mm card, plus a single layer of 0.5mm card on each side of the arch (Fig.7). These were cut and stuck to the arch, and then wrapped with Scalescenes Dark Random Ashlar texture. Inspired by the Dewsbury

prototype, I added some graffiti to the abutments where these run alongside the riverside path.

Adding the skew

With nine individual sets of arches and abutments, it was simple to arrange them in the correct position to introduce the skew caused by the bridge crossing the river at an angle.

A simple plan was drawn up (Fig.8), which was printed and then used to position the abutments and glue together the nine sub-assemblies.

Finishing off

The elegance of the bridge results from more than just its arched ribs. I used simple sections of card to build up the edges of the bridge, and stacks of card wrapped in Scalescenes texture to make the buttresses.

A top railing was added, this being an etched brass accessory from N Brass Locos – that really is too fine to cut from cereal boxes!

As only one of Chandwell Viaduct's 19 arches, Rose Beck Bridge fits right into the scene and speaks immediately of West Yorkshire.

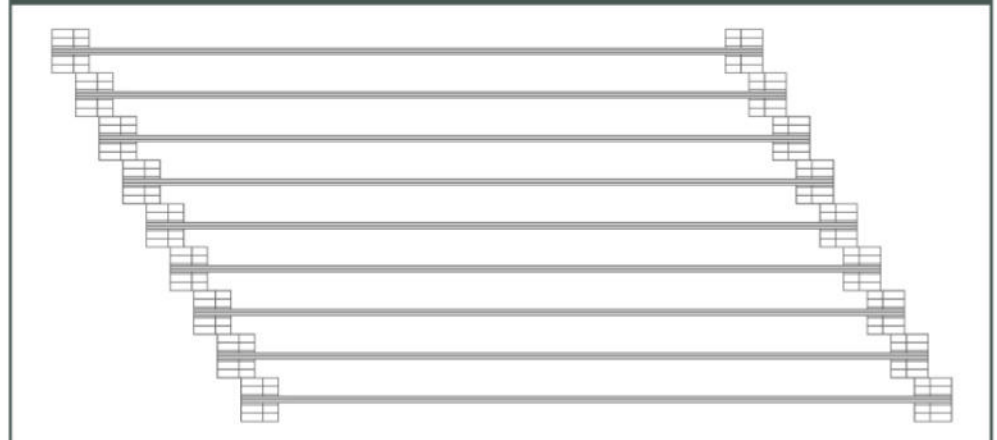
I continue to be amazed by the effectiveness of hand-cut card when built up in layers, and I consider this to be one of my best card-built models – simply because it is not immediately obvious that it even is card.

I first thought making something like this by hand from card would be impossible. It took my 10-year-old son asking me, "Why can't you make it?" to inspire me to have a go. I hope that this short article has helped to inspire you to have a go too.



▲ The nine sets of arches and abutments after arranging on a skew.

Fig.8 Bridge arch arrangement plan



FROM THE ARCHIVE

A look back at
RAILWAY MODELLER
from 75, 50 and 25
years ago...

TOBY JENNINGS delves into the RM Digital Archive to look back at historic issues of the magazine.

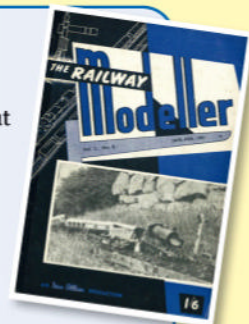
75 years ago: January-February 1951

This issue of RAILWAY MODELLER has a truly bizarre claim to fame: the only one in the magazine's almost 77-year history to feature the aftermath of a train crash on the cover! The unfortunate train in question was on the garden line featured in the following issue – the *Lynbury & Melchester Railway* – but the caption asks only: “The question is, what hit it?” No more details are given, here or in the next issue, but judging by the damage to the rolling stock, it must have been a serious collision. Like the previous advice of 1950s issues to weather structures by smoking them with a cigarette, or cover a workbench with asbestos, this is probably *not* an image we’d put in the magazine today...

The main layout featured in this issue is *Southern Transport*, a fictionalised and partially electrified version of the Swanage/

Wareham/Wool area in 19mm gauge. The author, **Norman Matthews**, “theoretically joined up” his layout “on paper” with the *Mid-Wessex Railway* by Kenneth Brennan; have any other modellers done something similar with friends?

The prototype layout plan is for Cahirciveen (sic), on the Valentia Harbour branch in the west of Ireland: the rustic charm of this line, portrayed clearly in the accompanying photos, would certainly **make for an attractive layout**, and it's now easily achievable in terms of available ready-to-run OO gauge rolling stock, thanks to the J15 0-6-0 from OO Works and Hattons 'Genesis' six-wheeled coaches in Córas Iompair Éireann livery.



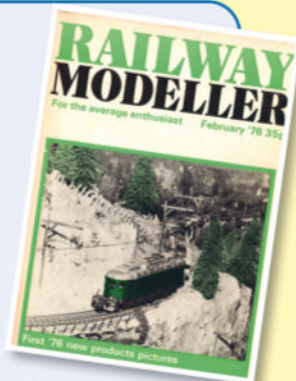
50 years ago: February 1976

A significant announcement in this issue was the launch of the Mainline range of model railway items by Palitoy – the first locomotives being the J72 0-6-0T, BR Standard 4MT 4-6-0 and Class 45 'Peak' diesel. These marked quite a milestone in ready-to-run manufacturing, because while their mechanisms did not always prove to be the most reliable in the long term, Mainline locomotives brought new standards of detail to the hobby and laid the foundations for the following generation of quality models from Bachmann.

Constructional articles include pieces from two eminent modellers – London Midland & Scottish Railway historian David Jenkinson, and Allan Downes, on building scenery and contours – and one by Michael Andress on 'kit-bashing' a shunting tractor. Scale Drawings depict Stamford East station in 2mm scale

– acting as a follow-up to the 4mm scale layout of that location which was the Railway of the Month in the previous issue – and a Great Eastern Railway vacuum-braked perishables van in 7mm, 4mm and 3mm scales.

The Railway of the Month in this issue – this being shortly before the advent of CONTINENTAL MODELLER – is *The Swissberg Line*, an HO gauge Swiss layout with working overhead catenary. But even more remarkable is *Bury Knowle*, an O-16.5 narrow gauge layout whose builder, **John Hayward**, achieved it despite being confined to a wheelchair, having only limited arm movement, and the use of only two fingers on each hand.



25 years ago: February 2001

There was something of an industrial theme in this issue, with the Railway of the Month being *Iron Mould Lane* – a superb OO gauge layout depicting part of a steelworks, using an HO scale American Walthers kit for the blast furnace, a structure so big that the scale difference is not noticeable. Later in the magazine comes *Nant-y-glo Mine*, an equally convincing and highly detailed industrial narrow gauge line in O-16.5, in a space of just 4' x 2' and complete with a working wagon tippler made with Meccano parts.

One other notable layout featured is *Lofthouse* in N gauge – as its name suggests, a loft-based system – not just for being well-modelled, but simply for being exactly the sort of extensive main line set-up that would inspire many people in the hobby.

Constructional articles include modelling an unusual set of level crossing gates at Brampton Fell on the Newcastle-Carlisle line, and

recycling expanded polystyrene meat trays as the basis of a scratch-built engine shed, while the Railway Modelling Explored supplement includes a guide to TT gauge – long before the new British TT:120 scale was dreamed up!

The lead item in the reviews is the Bachmann Blue Riband Class 08 diesel shunter in OO; coincidentally, we've just had an announcement by Accurascale of an all-new 08 in the same gauge (News, RM January 2026) and recently reviewed the successor retooled version from Bachmann (August 2025) – but it's a measure of the quality and detail of the 2001 model that it still stands up well alongside its replacement.



RAILWAY MODELLER Digital Archive

The full RM Digital Archive is available to subscribers, details for which can be found on page 30a.

Choates Lane

Many model railways re-create past eras – but **STUART CONLON** looked to the future with this N gauge layout, which he built with **TIM HITCH**.

Photography by Craig Tilley



There were a few serendipitous events which brought this layout from imagination to reality. One of these was Tim's conversion to N gauge (a very wise decision, I felt). After this came a competition by the Modern Image Group of the N Gauge Society to build a modern layout in N. We decided to enter the contest.

We both supported the view that, although there are some fabulous layouts based on nostalgia, there are an awful lot of them. Railways are for the future, especially as technology increasingly supports the principle of guided wheeled transport rather than independent horseless carriages (cars). The movement of goods and large numbers of passengers is already proved to be best by rail. So, we had the theme of what we wanted to build. Now it was time to put these vague ideas into wood, rail, wires and models.

The starting point

First came an examination of what we could bring from what we already had. Tim was new to N gauge and was starting to build up a collection of models of locomotives,

As two Eurostars pass on the High Speed line, a Foster Yeoman Class 59 departs on the freight line with empty hoppers. An N Gauge Society Hunslet diesel shunter is in the siding.

wagons and coaches that interested him. I was already building a layout following my interests in French and Swiss railways, named *Pont de Quutas*.

At this stage what we had was Eurostars, one each of the main set (eight cars) and an extension set (four cars). Purchases online and at model shops produced sufficient stock to run two full-length Kato Eurostars (18 carriages plus two power cars) and some spares. The length of a 20-car Eurostar told us immediately the minimum size of the layout we needed in order to display the train to full advantage: approximately 100 inches for the train plus room to turn it into the fiddle yard, and the layout had to fit into my lounge or garage when put up. The length of 12' was therefore decided, and the width of 3' by the minimum radius curve needed for modern N gauge models.

Setting the scene

The iconic image of a Eurostar is one that is used to emphasise the modernity of today's railways. This fulfilled the object of the competition. The time period would be at least 1994 when the Channel Tunnel services commenced. However, at about the time the layout was in planning, the second stage of High Speed 1 (the Channel Tunnel Rail Link) was opened. We decided that this should be

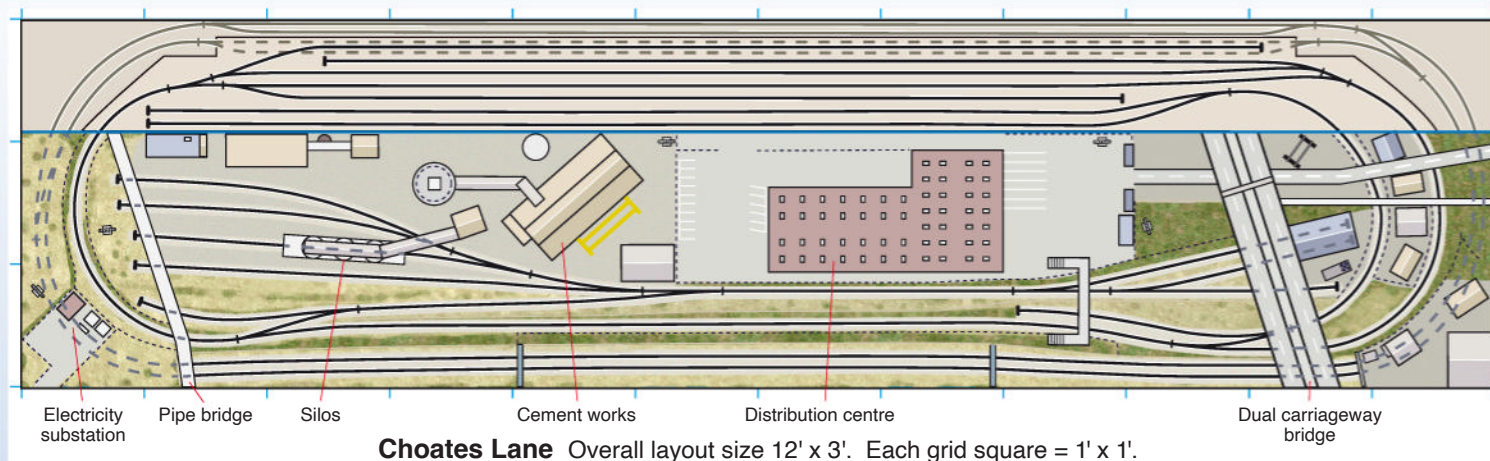
modelled, which set the era, and gave us an idea of where to fix the layout in terms of the area. The best way of bringing trains on and off a layout is a tunnel, of which there are several on HS1. We focused on the tunnels coming from London, particularly the exit from the second tunnel, after the trains pass through Stratford International station. This tunnel exits at Dagenham close to the Ford Motor Company works. A look at the map showed a network of tracks at the site of the tunnel entrance. We could have Eurostars running in a cutting as they entered and exited the tunnel, while above them were railway lines on which ran modern freight trains.

The era was fixed by the trains. As I had a collection of TGV (French) and ICE (German) trains, plus Thalys (Paris-Brussels-Amsterdam/Cologne) and AVE (Spanish) trains, we could fix the era as one year ahead of the current year to show all European High Speed Trains running into St Pancras International on HS1. If only that were already happening!

The freight trains would be hauled by our collection of Class 60s, 66s, 67s, 70s and other classes likely to be still running, although Javelins are missing from the scenario. There are also 1:160 scale Class 66s available in European liveries (as well as

59 101 Village of Whatley, in Heidelberg Materials livery, arrives to pick up a cement train. This limited edition locomotive was produced by Revolution Trains.





the 'Class 77' in ECR livery) which may yet be seen on the line into London St Pancras International and the connection from there to the North London line.

Planning and naming the layout

What was needed now was a track plan. The various maps we had available showed, even today, a fairly complex network at the site. Straight away came the decision to keep HS1 separate from the older lines on the layout. This would mean two fiddle yards, an upper and a lower, and would keep 1:160 scale models (Eurostars and all TGVs and ICEs) away from 1:148 British scale rolling stock so that they would not look incongruous alongside each other. We decided also not to model the chord that runs from HS1 to the Dagenham lines in



▲ An accident on the dual carriageway bridge has brought traffic to a standstill. Road vehicles are Japanese or European.

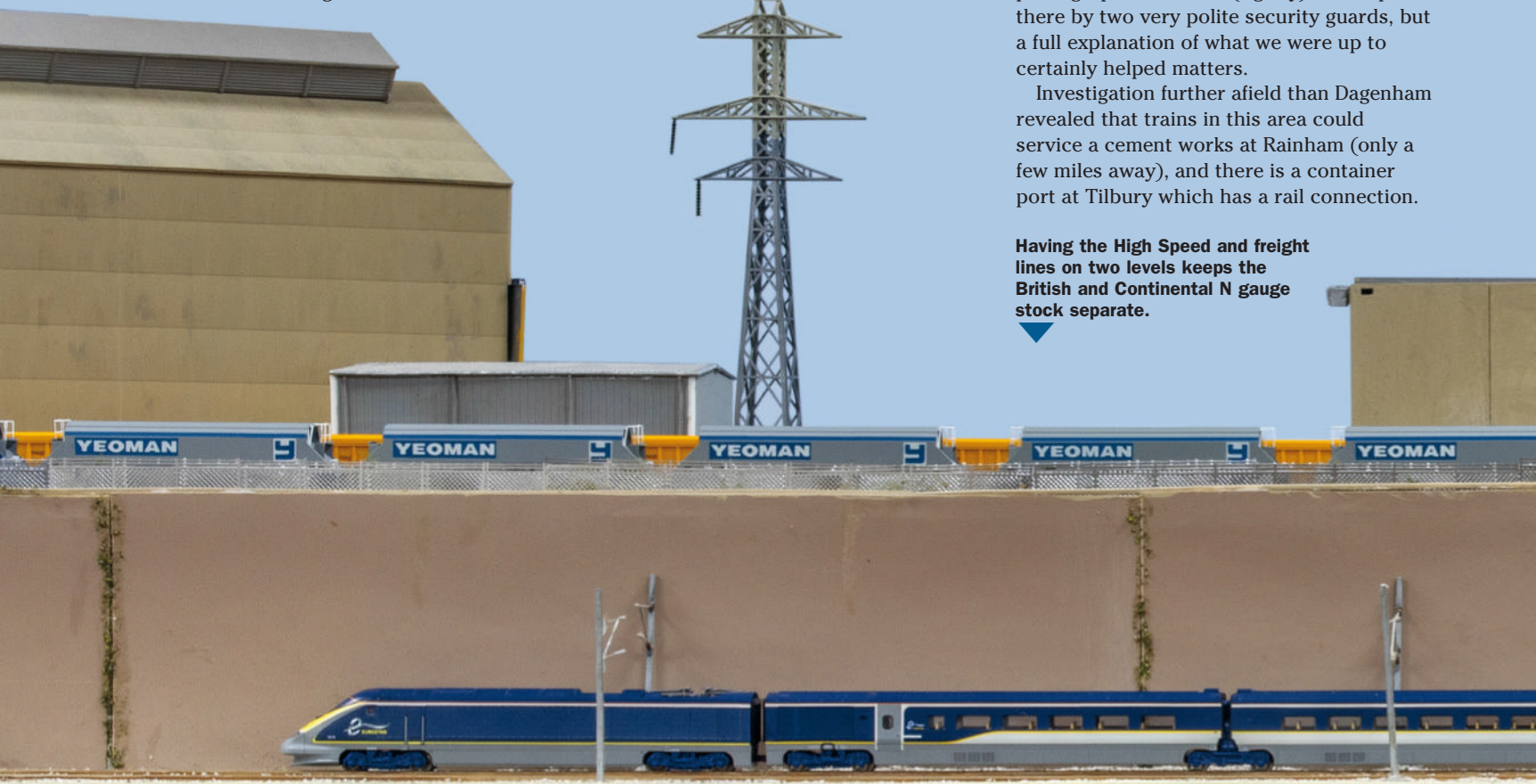
order to avoid the clash of scales, and to reduce problems by keeping the fiddle yards separate rather than having only a single one. The left-hand tunnel, underneath the Ford pipe bridge, is therefore entirely fictional.

The real excitement, before the building of a model railway layout commences, is the site visit. We discovered that there seemed to be no area or piece of equipment that did not have an 8' high security fence.

However, we had good views from the station footbridge, which also crosses the High Speed line, of the many lines that run alongside the classic passenger route. We also went to the Ford private road for more photographs. We were (rightly) intercepted there by two very polite security guards, but a full explanation of what we were up to certainly helped matters.

Investigation further afield than Dagenham revealed that trains in this area could service a cement works at Rainham (only a few miles away), and there is a container port at Tilbury which has a rail connection.

Having the High Speed and freight lines on two levels keeps the British and Continental N gauge stock separate.





▲ **GB Railfreight 59 003 Yeoman Highlander** (another Revolution model, produced for Rails of Sheffield) passes the distribution centre.

Adding the large distribution warehouses in the area and the Ford Motor Company, we had large enterprises in the vicinity which could support many train movements. At this point it became clear that we would not be constructing an accurate model of the area, but certainly creating a scene realistically based on it.

Tim's family contacts found us plans of the cement works at Ketton (Rutland) so the large works on the layout is not really Rainham, but further north. That left just the name to be decided. I looked up the area in an old A-Z street map, and found reference to Choates in the immediate area, so hit on *Choates Lane*, as that did not exist. I felt the

obvious Ripple Lane, the address of the Ford Motor Company, had already been used.

The viewpoint for the visitor to the front of the layout is as though they are on the site of Dagenham Dock station looking southwards to the River Thames and therefore towards the container port at Tilbury. The cement works is to the left, although not as far as Rainham. The Ford Motor site is just off the layout. That leftward (eastward) direction takes Eurostars towards the Thames Tunnel,

Ebbfleet, Ashford and the Channel Tunnel. The rightward (westward) direction takes trains on High Speed 1 to Stratford International and St Pancras International, the terminus for Eurostars in London, and also has its own connection

to the North London line. The upper level tracks are connected to the British rail network by means of the Tilbury line and the junction at Barking, taking trains everywhere in Great Britain via the North London line.

Baseboards & track

The first task was to build the baseboards, and here our membership of the Bentley Model Railway Group (Chippenham, Wiltshire) came up trumps. One of our fellow members, Keith Townsend, is a master carpenter. We gave him our plans and within a very few days he produced three superb baseboards complete with supports, made from the best wood and plywood suitable for the purpose. This was a mistake on my part in the original plans. As Tim is disabled, the size and weight of the three boards were not easily manageable by the two of us, so with Keith's advice I



decided to split them so that the layout is now on six boards. Cork of 1/16" thickness was laid on the board tops to give a firm but quiet base for the track, and painted light grey as a backing for the scenics.

The track plan could now be finalised. The easy part was the High Speed line, which at the front viewing side was double track, and at the back became quadruple track in the fiddle yard by the addition of two loops. As this fiddle yard was tucked under the high level lines, a crossover was incorporated so that loading the trains onto the rearmost lines was made easier.

The high level lines are based on a single main line from which lines lead off into the cement works, with all its sidings, and a headshunt and a single line branch off into the container port. This is only partly in front of the backscene so that container trains can be marshalled out of sight. Behind the backscene, the continuous single main line is looped into two tracks, plus three sidings. There are two sidings provided for

the container trains entering the fiddle yard from the container port branch. All sidings and the loop behind the backscene are within the necessary entry and exit curves.

Electrics – by Tim Hitch

The controllers are from Gaugemaster: the two handheld controllers are Model W, and there is a Model UD panel mounted in the control box. The control panel controllers are able to operate the whole layout, depending on the number of operators.

The point motors are Peco PL-10WE with PL-15 microswitches attached. The microswitches are to change the polarity of the points, as only live frog points (Peco Electrofrog) are used. The signals are not interlocked to these switches, so have to be operated manually. These point motors have the extended pin for mounting under the baseboard and are of the low current type, controlled by single pole flash switches (on-off-on). A Capacitor Discharge Unit is used in conjunction with the point motors.

The dual carriageway road bridge is scratch-built and based on the A13 near the prototype location of Dagenham.



▶ This Class 59, in original Foster Yeoman livery, is the other N gauge ready-to-run model of the class, by Dapol.

Electrically the layout has been divided into five sections (blocks). Blocks 1 and 2 are the HS1 Up and Down lines; Block 3 is the suburban/main line; Block 4 is the cement works and associated sidings; and Block 5 is the entrance to the container port. A controller can be switched to control one or more blocks. Blocks 1 and 2 are controlled by single pole, double throw centre off switches. This only allows the two panel-mounted controllers to be switched to feed the blocks. The other blocks have a rotary switch to determine which controller will be working which block. Within some of





the blocks, isolators are located, controlled by single pole double throw switches.

There are four working signals on the layout. Two are 2-aspect signals (yellow/red) with calling-on lights to protect the exits from the container port and cement works. The calling-on light allows entry into the headshunts. The suburban line has two 3-aspect signals (red/yellow/green) at each end of the layout. The signal protecting the anti-clockwise direction has two working light indicators (feathers) for the entrances. These indicate whether the route is selected for the cement works or container port. The feathers are controlled by the point microswitches and some simple electronics. The signal aspects are controlled by a single pole triple throw (on-on-on) switch.

Light Emitting Diodes may in the future be mounted in the control panel to inform the operators of the position of the points.

Scenery & buildings

We wanted the scenery to be as modern as possible. Most of the buildings visible at Dagenham were either 1960s industrial designs or later. The main building for the cement works was a large shed used as a clinker store. We found the Walthers steel mill building kit was ideal for this, and it dominates the layout. Except for the Kato and Lyddle End office blocks, all other buildings for the cement works, including the silos, are scratch-built from plans and photos (including aerial ones) of the Ketton Cement works. The large chimney for the

works is correct to scale at 300'. This was machined from a single piece of aluminium for us by a man in the trade, and is so large and controversial that we have on occasion forgotten to bring it to shows.

Because modern industrial buildings are often so large, the buildings and structures on the layout are mostly removable. This allows us to 'coffin' the baseboards close together, but adds to the number of boxes we have to take to shows. The two large buildings that make up the distribution centre were obtained as kits from the USA, as there seemed to be nothing available this side of the 'pond' that would be suitable. The portable cabins in the car park are Skaledale models. The dual carriageway road bridge (based on the A13 bridge in the



◀ **66 720 in GB Railfreight Wascosa livery (another Revolution Trains model) is held on the line from the container port.**

thin layer of mixed scenic grasses (mainly from Woodland Scenics) plus a few clumps for shrubs and bushes, as if these have been missed by the man working with a strimmer to keep the areas and paths tidy and clear.

Rolling stock

The stock on the High Speed line is mainly Kato – the Eurostars, TGVs, Thalys trains and AVEs (Spanish TGVs) – plus ICEs from Fleischmann, Minitrix and Arnold. On the upper level, all the stock is freight: long container trains from Graham Farish and Dapol; cement wagons from Graham Farish; other freight such as ferry vans (from all sorts of manufacturers in both Continental and British scales) and aggregates; and even petroleum and coal trains, on occasion. Since starting the layout, I have collected the Ford vans made some years ago by Minitrix for Hornby in N gauge. Although anachronistic for both the area (they carry German markings if you look closely) and era (they ran a few decades ago), they look fairly good and do at least go some way to representing the major employer in the area. Nowadays, most Ford company freight is conveyed in curtain-sided wagons, but in N gauge these will have to either await the manufacturers coming up with a suitable model, or be scratch-built (there is a Ford one in HO by Rivarossi).

All these trains are hauled by a variety of diesels of Classes 66, 60, 57, 67 and 70, plus heritage locomotives, in the various liveries of the Privatised railway. Passenger trains are banned from the upper level tracks because of signalling issues, and steam engines are not permitted.

The road vehicles are either Japanese, mainly Tomytec, or European vehicles by Herpa, Wiking, Arnold, etc.

HS1 missed the deadline...

Like every layout enjoyed by its operators, there are still many jobs to be done. As we add items we think of new details to be added and improvements to be made. We are grateful for all invitations to exhibit the layout and show our attempt to display a different theme to the majority of layouts that we all enjoy.

Oh, by the way – we missed the competition deadline date by about 18 months!

See it at Erith show

Choates Lane will be in operation at the Thamesmead Model Railway Exhibition 2026 on **24 & 25 January** – held in Erith, South East London, just across the River Thames from its prototype area! See the Societies & Clubs pages for more details.

vicinity of Dagenham Dock station), and the pipe bridge based on the Ford Motor Company one, are scratch-built. The electricity pylons which tower over the landscape at Dagenham are from Kato and require very little adaptation to look British.

One very large pylon is half scratch-built to represent the Thames crossing towers in this area.

Even in the 21st century industrial wasteland that we are attempting to model on *Choates Lane*, there are areas where green nature tries to break through: alongside and on the rail lines, on the paths and roads, and on small patches of ground overlooked by the developers. For these places, I sought the assistance of Dave Spencer of *Penrhos* fame (and winner of the prize for the best BR era steam layout at the Hartlepool show in 2011). His techniques on *Penrhos* were followed on *Choates Lane*. For example, the many miles of fencing were secured to the layout by glueing the fence bases to very thin strips of cork, and then disguising these with a



◀ **An electricity substation fills the left-hand corner of the layout, next to the Ford Motor Company pipe bridge.**

Rushwick

For the latest in his series of exhibition layouts, **NICK PALETTE** built an OO gauge Western Region branch terminus in the steam/diesel transition era of the 1960s.

Photography by Craig Tilley



Those who have known me for some time will know that I am a serial layout builder, and I normally have a cycle: exhibit a layout for around 18 months whilst building the next one; after 18 months or so, sell the first layout, start exhibiting the new one, and think about constructing another.

So, that is how *Rushwick* came about. In the first lockdown period, I found some pieces of plywood in my garage that would form the foundation for a small layout. As a serial layout builder, I usually have a supply of points, both new and recycled from other

projects, and I buy my plain flexible track (Peco Streamline) in boxes of 25 lengths, which means I usually have enough for a new layout. I also keep a good supply of scenic materials on hand, so there was nothing to stop me embarking on a new project.

Regional transfer

Several years ago, I built a layout which measured 4' 6" by 15" (plus a fiddle yard) and it developed into *Ashbourne (Midland)*, based on BR (London Midland Region)

▲ **Bachmann Class 121 diesel railcar W55027 idles in the platform as it waits to depart for the main line junction.**

practice. Given the size of the plywood on hand, I wanted to do something similar but this time with a more Western Region feel.

Like many people in our hobby, the layouts I build tend to be exercises in nostalgia. I think we all like to look back to certain times in our past, and for me it is the period of BR when steam was beginning to give way to diesel. My father was a lifelong railwayman, and for all my younger days we lived on the Western Region of BR. Therefore, my nostalgia ranges from my early trainspotting days of former Great Western Railway steam through to the introduction of diesel-hydraulics. As a result, *Rushwick* portrays that period of the 1960s when diesels were beginning to become the norm but there was still the occasional steam locomotive about.

Terminus and traverser

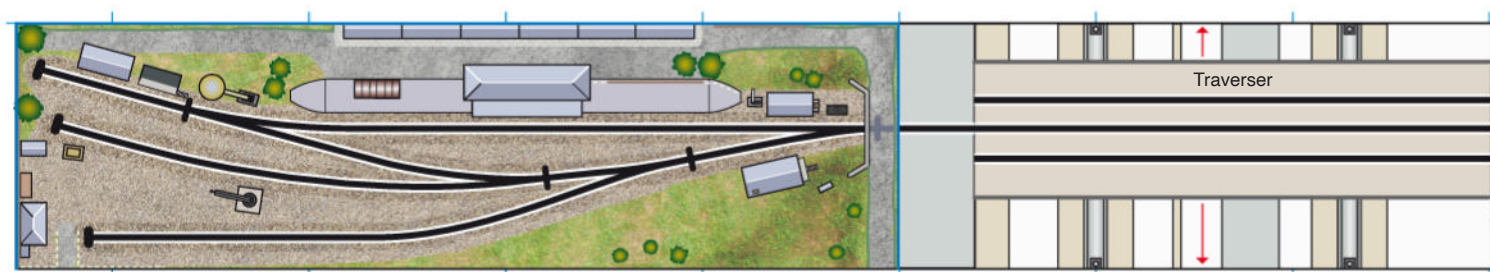
Having constructed the foundation, I decided to use Peco code 75 track and points. I wanted to portray a typical small branch



◀ **The small Great Western station building is a Bachmann Scenecraft item.**



▲ The viewing side of the layout: a cutting helps to hide the exit to the traverser.



Rushwick Overall layout size (including fiddle yard) 7' 6" x 1' 3". Each grid square = 1' x 1'.

line terminus with a run-round loop and a couple of sidings for freight. Fortunately, I had the number of points in the correct configuration for the track plan I had in mind.

In the past, I was finding that when I built a new layout, I was also building a new fiddle

Heljan Hymek diesel-hydraulic D7039 displays one of the Kadee couplers which are uncoupled by strategically placed magnets.

yard. I wanted to get to the stage where I had a fiddle yard that was common to more than one layout. Therefore, I took the opportunity with *Rushwick* to marry it to a 3' long traverser that I already had. The traverser has a plywood frame and uses drawer runners to move the tracks in order to align with the exit track from the layout. The 3' length allows a short passenger train of a locomotive and two coaches, or a freight

train with a loco plus five wagons and a brake van.

Scenery and buildings

In lockdown, there was time to devote to the building of the layout, and it only took just over a week to build the baseboard and get the track down, wired and tested. I was then in a position to concentrate on my favourite part of layout building – giving the model its





character through the buildings and scenery. Standard techniques were used for the scenery – a framework of card covered with plaster bandage was used for the cutting. This was sealed with pre-coloured plaster mix and then covered with sieved natural earth from the garden. I remember reading once that nothing looks better for earth than real earth! Plus, of course, it is cheap. Much use was made of static grass, mixing some of the more muted colours for a more realistic look.

We are well served by the manufacturers with much of what is needed to furnish a layout in terms of rolling stock, buildings and related accessories. The main station building, signal box and houses are from the Bachmann Scenecraft range. Other buildings in the station area are made from Wills and Ratio kits.

Locomotives and stock

The rolling stock used on *Rushwick* comes from the major UK manufacturers: locos are Heljan Hymek D7039, Dapol Class 22 'Baby Warship' D6326, Bachmann Class 121 'Bubble Car' W55027 and Bachmann '8750' pannier tank No.4680.

The layout is powered by Lenz Digital Command Control and the three diesels are equipped with ESU Loksound decoders. The point motors (Peco solenoids) and the one signal (Dapol) are also operated via DCC. Passenger and freight stock is a mixture of



▲ Dapol Class 22 'Baby Warship' diesel-hydraulic D6326 arrives with the branch pick-up goods train. The starting signal is also by Dapol.

▲ The yard crane and the classic conical GWR water tower are made from kits by Wills (ref.SS51) and Ratio (ref.528) respectively – both now part of the Peco range.

is a Rushwick on the line from Worcester to Hereford, no attempt has been made to replicate it.

O gauge next?

Rushwick has had many outings, the highlights being Doncaster in early 2023 and lastly Stafford in September 2023. I say lastly, as I felt it was time to move on to another project and the layout was sold to a new owner at the Stafford show.

Building and operating *Rushwick* has been an enjoyable exercise. I feel it has demonstrated that you don't need a huge amount of space to build a satisfying, working model railway. It also demonstrates that there are sufficient resources available off the shelf to build a convincing scene without the need to scratch-build (not that I have anything against scratch-building!) and have something up and running in a relatively short space of time.

All that remains now is to settle on the next project. An O gauge micro layout is becoming more attractive as each day goes by...!

Hornby and Bachmann, all fitted with Kadee couplers as standard with strategically placed magnets for uncoupling. In the case of fixed formations, such as the two Hornby Collett coaches and some pairs of wagons, non-Kadee couplings are used, in the form of either a drawbar or Fleischmann close couplings. This means that there is no accidental and unwanted uncoupling when over the magnets, plus it gives a more realistic closer coupling of the vehicles.

The layout doesn't have a specific location, but 'somewhere west of Bristol' probably sums it up. The name was chosen at random and, whilst I appreciate that there

Scottish sojourn

CHRIS FORD continues the construction of this West Highland layout project in 4mm, which makes extensive use of products from the Peco range.

Constructional photos by the author.

Finished layout photography by Craig Tiley



Very early on in the planning process for this layout project, it became obvious that there was room for 'something' in the lower left-hand corner; ideally something non-railway.

Tin chapels were once a common sight all over the UK, but more so in Scotland with its

history of Nonconformist worship. A search for images on the internet threw up a few possibilities, but I settled on a structure at Skerray; granted, a long way from the West Highland Line, but it just oozed atmosphere!

Although giving a slightly smaller overall footprint, the obvious way to represent the feel of the prototype was to use two Wills chapel kits butted together, with a copious amount

of weathering and decay added. These simple kits are ideal for adapting in this manner – I have used them on numerous occasions over the years for anything from station buildings to narrow gauge engine sheds.

The resultant tin tabernacle is one of three structure builds that are covered in this month's article. The second of these is a platform store – a very basic structure that is ideal as a first scratch-building project.

The third and final structure is the second of the two Peco laser-cut kits referred to last month – the LK203 West Highland Railway Extension Station Building.

So, here we have a trio of structures, built in three different ways – an adapted plastic kit, a complete scratch-build, and a laser-cut kit built as intended. Let's get started...

The tin chapel built in this article is in the foreground as a Class 156 Diesel Multiple Unit stands in the station.



The tin tabernacle

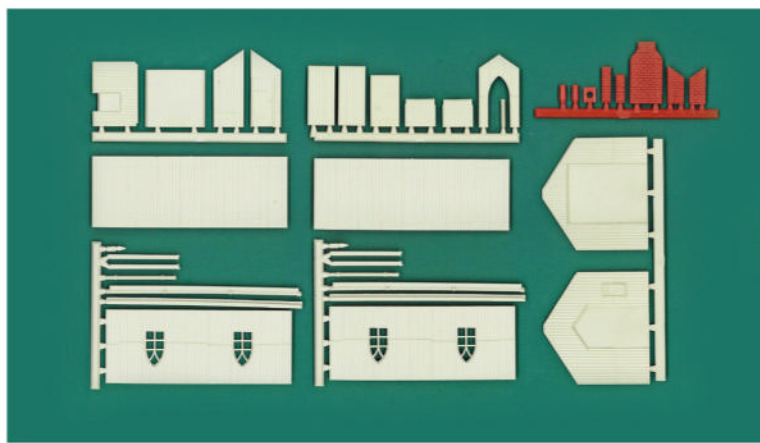
Items used

Peco

2x SS70 Wills Corrugated Iron Chapel kits

From other suppliers

Small files and sanding stick
Craft knife
Solvent
Blu Tack®
30thou black plastic sheet or similar
Paint



72



Here, two sides from the Wills corrugated iron chapel kits are shown butt-jointed together, braced on the reverse side with two scrap lengths of sprue.

73



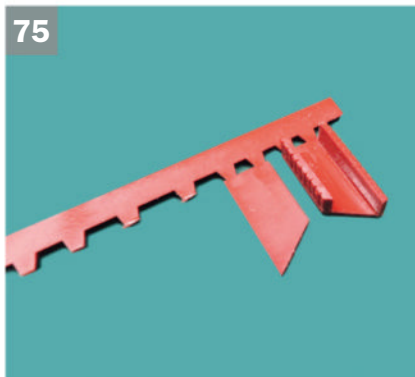
The basic structure was easy enough to assemble, the two extended side pieces being linked with one each of the two types of end that are supplied.

74



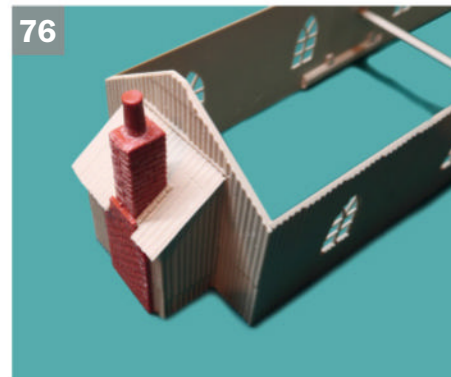
However, the extended structure does lack sufficient rigidity, so I firmed it up with another length of scrap sprue – waste not, want not.

75



The sections of the chimney can be a bit fiddly to put together, so the tip here is to part-build it while still on the sprue.

76



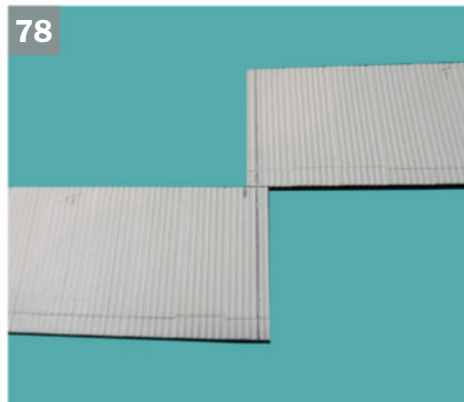
The boiler house was built up and added exactly as per the instructions...

77



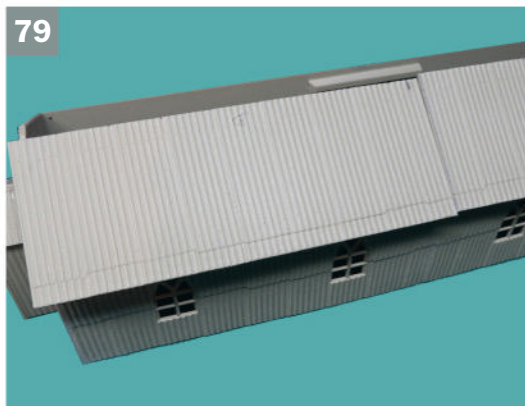
...as was the entrance porch at the other end.

78



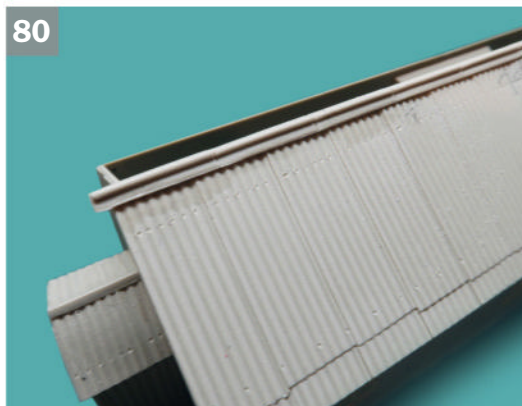
The objective with the roof sections is twofold: first, to get the right length, and second, to get the top of the end wall to sit snugly into the recess on the roof part. The corrugations act as a guide: here, the left-hand part is marked to be reduced by two corrugations; the right-hand piece is more of a bodge, reduced by one and a bit (i.e. cut one off and file back until everything fits). This wasn't as tricky as it sounds.

79



The roof parts are shown here after cutting and are being trial fitted (for the umpteenth time!) to make sure the fit on the end walls was good.

80



The capping piece has no location for the angle, so here one set of roof parts has been fixed temporarily with Blu Tack® to the end walls while the capping is added, thus ensuring that it sits vertically.

81



With the roof now on, all the details such as downpipes, guttering and bargeboards could be added. The chimney pot also had some attention with a 2mm diameter drill twirled in the top to give an indent.

82



At this point the entire building was sprayed with Halfords white primer, and the serious weathering commenced with a mix of orange, brick red and the delightfully named Technical Typhus Corrosion from Citadel. When this process was at a fairly advanced stage, 24mm x 16mm pieces of black plasticard were added over seven of the eight windows to represent plywood boarding.

83



The finished structure, waiting to be bedded into the weeds. The remaining window was blacked out from the inside using the same stock of black plasticard.

The scratch-built platform store in situ next to the Peco LK203 West Highland station building, based on Arisaig.



The platform store

Items used

Peco

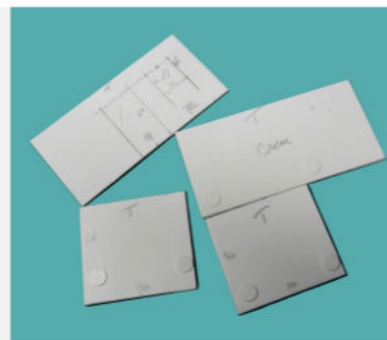
1x Ratio render sheet (ref.313)
1x SSMP199 Wills Corner pieces
1x SS46 Wills Building Details (Pack A)

From other suppliers

Craft knife
Sanding board
Files
Solvent
30thou plastic sheet or card
Paint

84 With the structures around Arisaig as my base, it was time to take a look at the small platform store. Quite frankly, it makes a World War II pillbox look like an architectural masterpiece, but that is what is there. What it does do is present the less experienced modeller with a very straightforward entry to scratch-building. I searched around for some drawings, but ended up taking a couple of screen grabs from current YouTube videos of the station and estimated the dimensions from an assumed door height of 6' 6". Converted to 4mm scale, this came out at 72mm long, 36mm to the roofline and 40mm deep. I assumed that the flat roof must have a slight fall from rear to front to drain into the downpipe, but without driving 500 miles accompanied by a ladder, I couldn't be sure and went with just 'flat'. Of course, after I'd finished, I found a photo from above (where else but a Peco TV video!). Never mind...

The walls were cut from Ratio N gauge render sheet (ref.313) at the sizes indicated. The door looks to be wider than standard, presumably for platform trollies, so I allowed a 14mm opening. The blocked window is 12mm square and sits level with the top of the door.

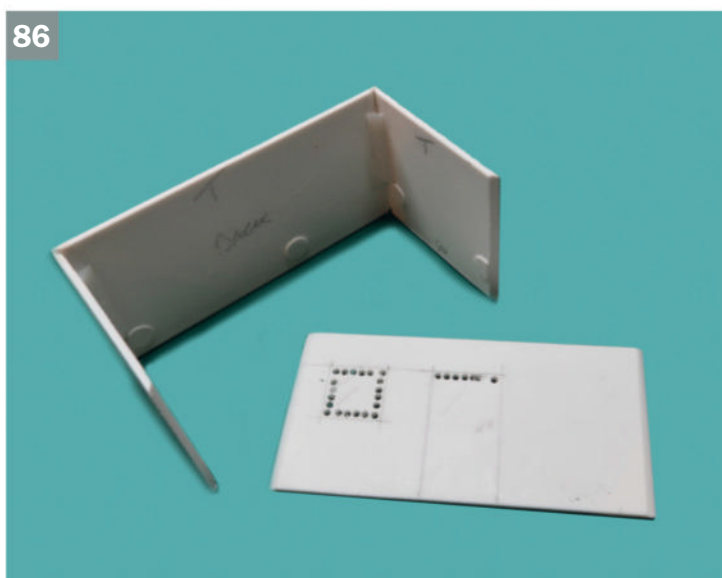


85



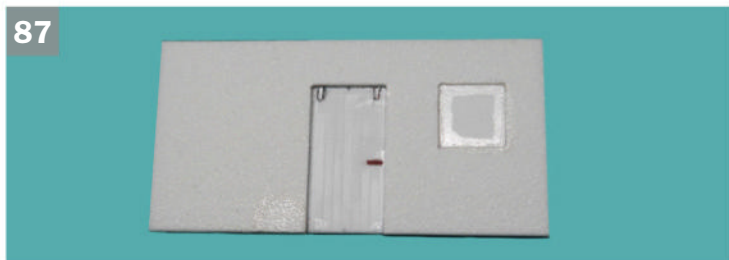
All the walls were given a mitred edge, formed using my usual home-made sanding block.

86



The ends and rear walls were assembled and supported with Wills corner pieces. Here, the front has the doorway and window aperture being removed using a saw and chain-drill method: the doorway sides are sawn and the holes are joined. The waste piece I pushed out and the edges were cleaned up using a small file.

87



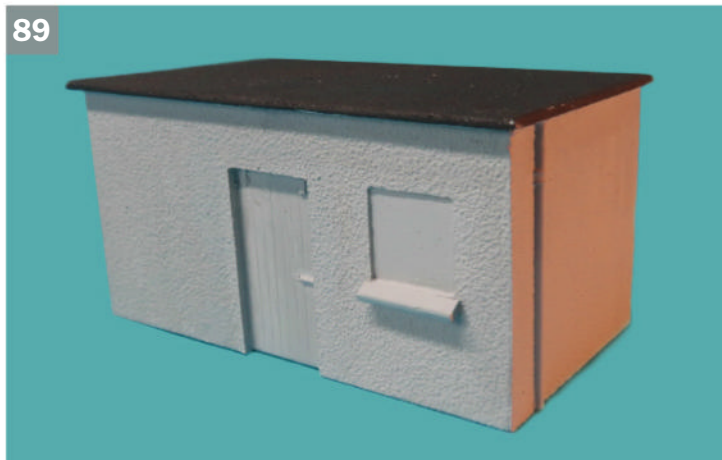
The window was blocked using a scrap of 30thou plasticard and the door made from the same material, with planking scribed in using the side of a craft knife blade. I noted that the door is not hinged, but is hung from an internal rail and slides to the left. The hanging plates and horizontal handle were represented with tiny pieces of plastic.

88



A roof piece (75mm x 44mm) was added, along with a downpipe from the Wills building details pack.

89



The prototype paint scheme is less than inspiring: everything below the roofline is painted pale grey, which I represented with Citadel Cobex White. The roof got two coats of the ubiquitous Humbrol 67 German Grey.

The station building

Items used

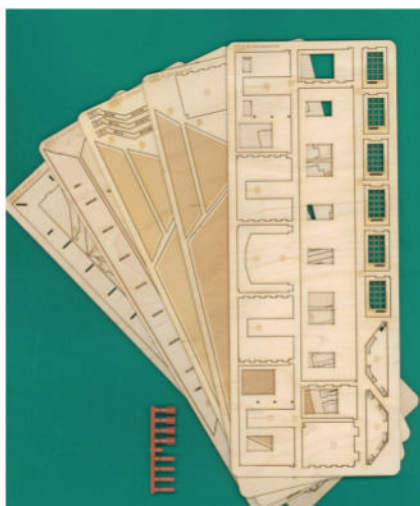
Peco
1x LK203 West Highland
Station Building kit

From other suppliers
Tools and paint as per the
signal box
Filler

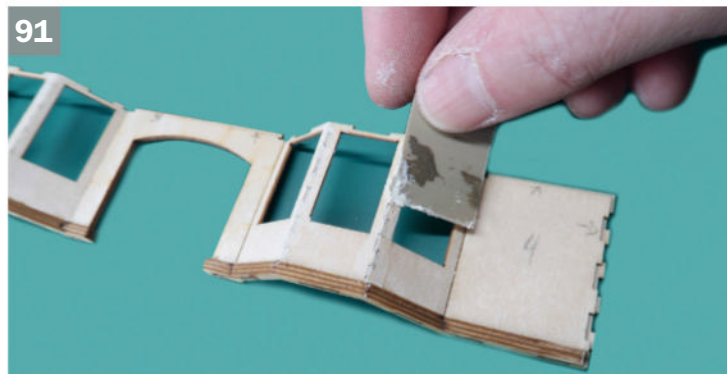
90



The first task with the station building kit is to get the front walls together, these being a series of overlays. As can be seen, at this stage the parts are quite fragile.



91



To conceal the joins between the interlocking parts that make up the bay windows, several coats of model filler were applied. This was left to harden fully before rubbing down with fine wet and dry paper.

92



The left-hand bay window after the filler had been rubbed down to a smooth finish.

93



The front wall, complete with the window units, which are simple overlays at the rear. Like the signal box, these are cut beautifully but, unlike those on my boarded-up signal box, can actually be seen!

94



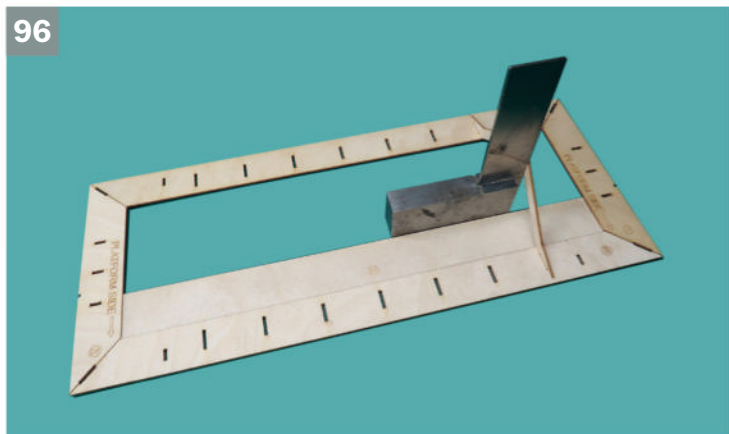
The end walls are 'handed' and again the quality of the laser-cut parts is shown here with a similar three-layer construction.

95



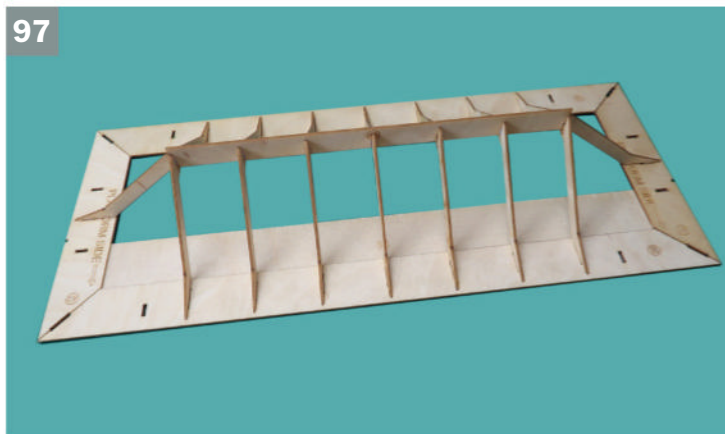
There are two walls which make up a vestibule area inside, with access doors to each wing of the building. These were added between the front and back walls to create an 'H' format, before the end walls were then added.

96



The longest part of the build, not surprisingly, was the setting of all the roof trusses. Most model buildings quite rightly dodge around any internal prototype support system, though here the job actually felt like I was building something properly. Getting the trusses perfectly square and vertical was a prerequisite.

97



The finished internal roof section with the ridge piece added. Note that the top of this piece protrudes above the final roofline to become the visible ridge.

98



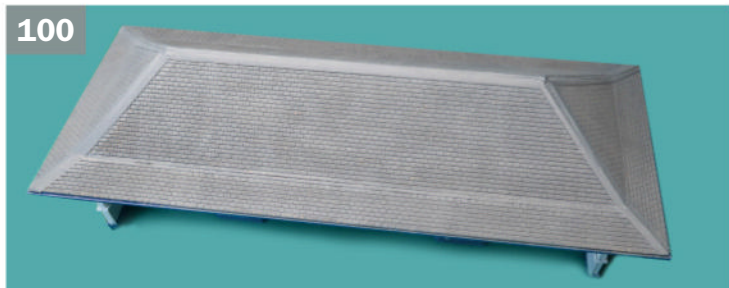
This was the stage of the build about which I was most concerned. Any small discrepancy below decks will affect the fit of the roof panels... and so it did. I'll admit to quite a bit of fettling to get it looking right.

99



I painted the carcass Citadel Cobex White with royal blue detail before the glazing went in.

100



I did study the Peco TV video showing the build of the firm's larger Rannoch station laser-cut kit, noting the method of finishing the ridges with 4mm strips of greaseproof paper. These were added before the whole roof was painted Humbrol German grey and test fitted to the main structure.

101



Although the kit is supplied with two chimneys, photographic evidence of the modern-day building at Arisaig shows only a single stack. Therefore, only one was made up. This was pre-painted and added to the right-hand end of the ridge.

102



The finished building, fully painted. Some may question the lack of my usual weathering; my response would be that contemporary photos and videos indicate that the prototype station is remarkably well turned out, so that's how I have left it.

Next month

In the fifth and final part of this series, Chris adds the final scenic details including ground cover and vegetation.

A big project in a small scale

An industrial Beyer Garratt in 3mm

Not one to shy away from a challenge, seasoned 3mm modeller **GEOFF HELLIWELL** set out to scratch-build a model based on the former Baddesley Colliery standard gauge 0-4-0+0-4-0, William Francis.

Model photography by the author

When I first started work at EMI in Feltham, there was a bookshop in the high street, and one publication that caught my eye was *Steam Locomotives in Industry* by the Industrial Locomotive Society (published by David & Charles).

Inside was a photo of an industrial 0-4-0+0-4-0 Beyer Garratt. This locomotive fascinated me, but was way beyond my capabilities as a 3mm scale modeller at that time: I was struggling to make anything work at all, let alone an articulated monster with not one, but two, sets of outside Walschaerts valve gear!

Over the years, odd photographs cropped up, mostly of the Baddesley Colliery example *William Francis*, but it didn't fit into my modelling needs and was still a daunting prospect. It appeared again in issue No.103 of *Industrial and Narrow Gauge Modelling Review* as a fabulous 7mm scale model,



built by Giles Favell from a Mercian Models etched kit. A bit of research also came up with a 4mm kit by Backwoods Miniatures, but neither remained in production, so there was no chance of getting the artwork for either of these kits re-scaled. Giles' article included a general arrangement

drawing and a number of useful photographs, and I found myself thinking seriously about how to build one in 3mm scale.

Initial considerations

I scanned and re-scaled one of the simpler drawings, and it quickly became apparent that, despite my having built quite a few locos over the intervening years, this one was not going to be easy.

Although, by my standards, it is quite a big loco – working out

▲ All scratch-built: the author's finished 3mm scale Beyer Garratt, based on the preserved example, *William Francis*.

at about 145mm over the bufferbeams – the power bogies actually have less space in them for a motor than either of the Wantage Tramway locos that I had built previously. The front tank (which is the larger of the two) is only 17mm long, whereas even the Manning Wardle gave me nearly 30mm to play with! Eventually, I decided that the only way of powering it was with a large motor in the boiler and drive shafts to the bogies. It was possible to fit a large 12 x 30mm Sagami can motor inside the boiler, along with a pair of flywheels. A spacious firebox offered a route for the drive to reach

▶ *William Francis* also wore blue livery, but darker and with cream lining.



articulated drive shafts below the footplate, and so it was that the design started to come together.

Computer-based design

In the past, I have produced drawings of mechanisms using my trusty Rotring drawing board, but this time, having decided that the number of small parts needed was going to need a custom etch, I carried out the design work using Computer Aided Design software. Another first was importing a bitmap image of the valve gear from which I could take measurements, but first I needed to establish how the drive would reach the axles. I had decided upon the Sagami motor as the N20 motor/gearbox combination that I used on my 'Nearly Ready-To-Run' locos (see Talking Points, RM June 2022) wouldn't go into the boiler, but this meant that the final drive had to be with conventional worms and pinions.

I therefore had to decide which axle to drive, and so another complication reared its ugly head: in order to keep the change in length of the drive shafts on curves to a minimum, the flexible couplings for the bogies needed to be as close to the pivot point as possible. With very little vertical space to play with, I decided to drive the outer axles, but this still left me scratching my head with regards to the pivot design. It needed to take up as little height as possible, but it also needed to allow the bogies to be detached easily. I decided to use a large diameter (but low profile) 'top-hat' section male pivot, with a phosphor bronze sprung clip as the female half, mounted below the footplate on the boiler unit (the photo shows this better than I can explain it). This arrangement allowed the drive shaft to pass underneath the pivot and then rise upward slightly to a worm over the outer axles, whilst keeping the universal joint on the pivot centre.

Next, I got down to some serious CAD work and drew the frames, valve gear and most of the bodywork parts. There are a lot of rivets on the tanks in particular, and I decided half etching them would save a lot of effort. I added lots of duplicate



▲ William Francis stabled at its workplace of Baddesley Colliery in Warwickshire in September 1963, with its cream lining just visible beneath the grime. Photo: Hugh Ballantyne/Rail Photoprints

valve gear parts to the artwork as I was sure I would mess up a few!

The etches arrived and I started work. The bogie chassis parts went together quite well, with my standard 4mm square horn block bearings fixed in place on the driven axles and free to move downwards on the other. A pair of 10BA screws were used between the axles to hold the pick-ups in place as well as the rear of the tank. Another pair were fitted behind the bufferbeams to hold the cylinders in place as well as the front of the tank.

Originally, I used Hollywood Foundry ball and socket flexible couplings. However, quite early on the ball components split, so I had to remake them in brass

and, when I came back to the project after working on the N-RTR locos, I found that the sockets had split as well, so they too had to be remade.

Cylinders and motion

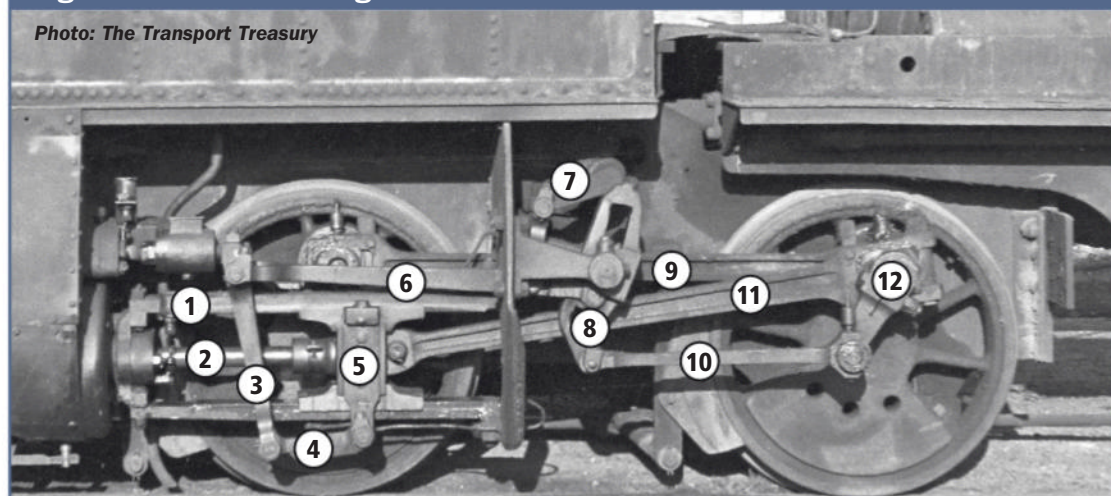
The cylinders were machined from brass, and the slide bars and bracket were designed as a sub-assembly (using an approach devised by fellow 3mm Society member John Sutton). The valve gear (see Fig.1) was challenging as it is about half the size of that of a typical express loco. If modelled in either forward or back gear, in one direction or the other it

would be wrong, so I decided to model it in mid-gear. This has the advantage that the radius rod doesn't move, so the gear can be simplified: the combination lever and union link can be treated as a separate entity from the return crank, eccentric rod and expansion link, and life becomes a lot easier. I fitted a crank pin nut to retain the coupling and connecting rods, and another to mount the return crank. This resulted in the cranks sticking out rather too much, which came back to bite me later on.

Much of the above makes it seem like, so far at least, it was

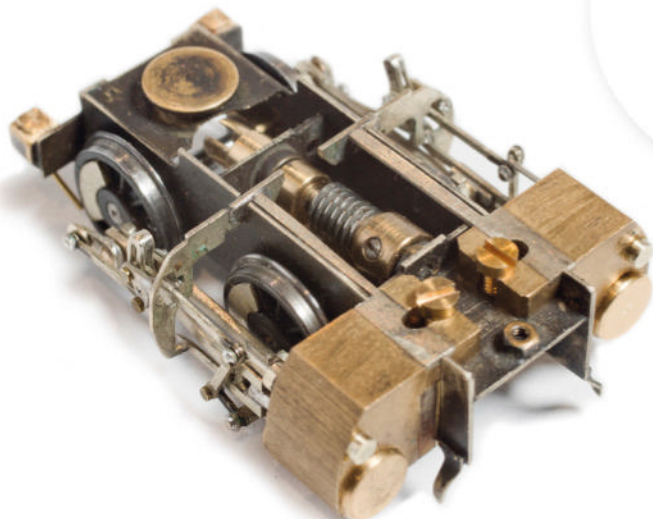
Fig.1 Walschaerts valve gear

Photo: The Transport Treasury



- | | | | |
|----------------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Slide bar | 4. Union Link | 7. Lifting Link | 10. Return Crank Rod |
| 2. Piston Rod | 5. Crosshead | 8. Expansion Link | 11. Connecting Rod |
| 3. Combination Lever | 6. Radius Rod | 9. Coupling Rod | 12. Return Crank |

One of the power bogies, showing the 'top hat' pivot, which engages with a sprung clip on the boiler unit (inset).



all plain sailing. Well, it all went together OK, but I had to spend a lot of time fiddling and fettling to get it to run smoothly – with so many interacting parts in close proximity, it can be hard to trace a problem. I nevertheless reached a point where the basic mechanism

would run smoothly up and down my test track, so I turned my attention to the bodywork.

Pressed for time

It quickly became apparent that the 0.4mm nickel silver that I had chosen for the etch was too thick to press out the very

closely spaced rivets on the tanks and, in any case, the top edge would look overscale, so I ordered another etch in 0.3mm brass. Several hours were spent pressing out all the rivets and bending the parts carefully to fit, before soldering everything in place.

I then worked my way through making the detail parts for the power bogies, including buffer shanks and a very intricate tank filler for the front bogie. I machined lumps of brass as ballast weights to go in both tanks, these being glued in place before fixing the top plates.

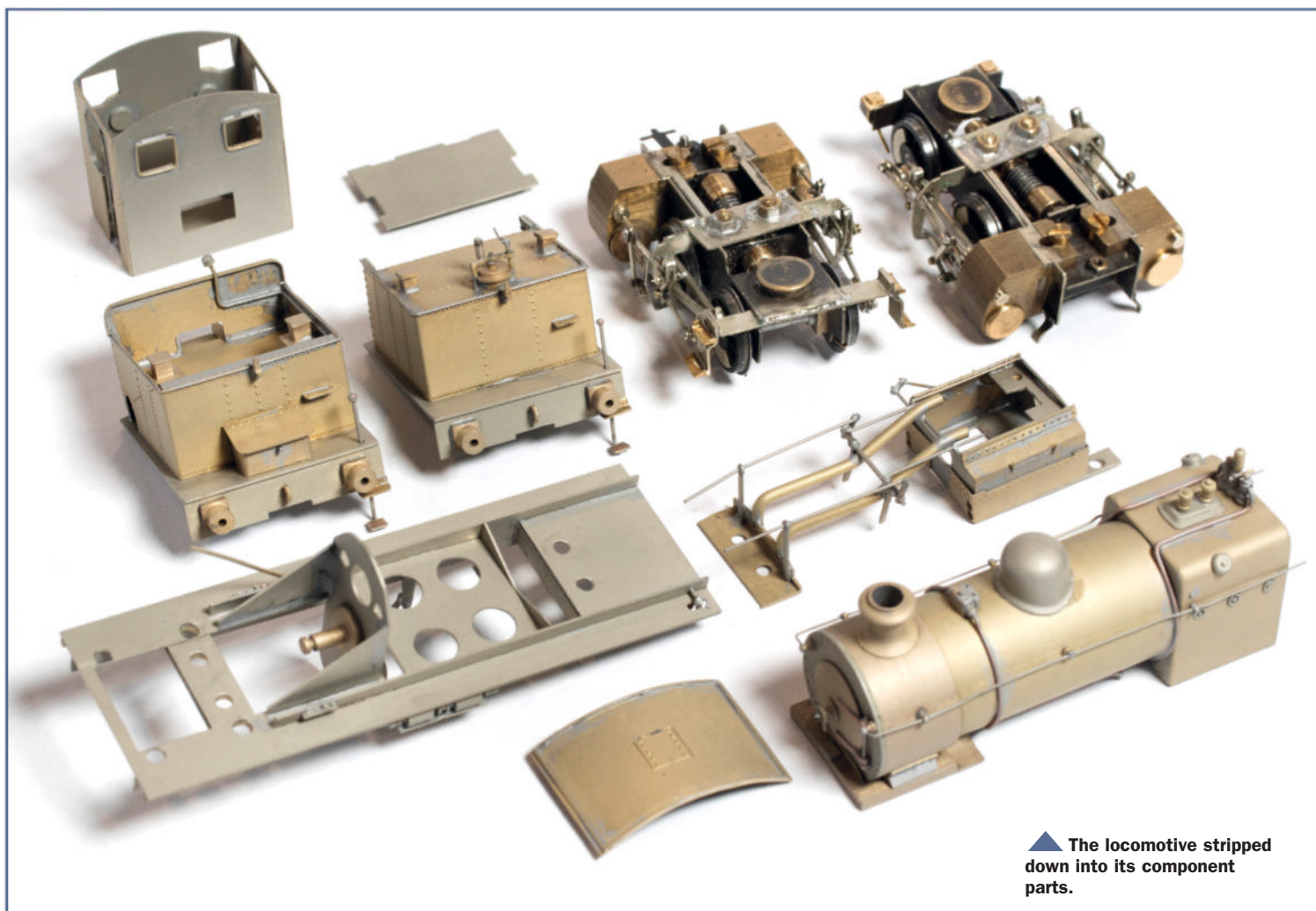
With the power bogies completed as sub-assemblies,

each consisting of tank, chassis and two sets of cylinders and motion, I then turned my attention to the boiler and cab.

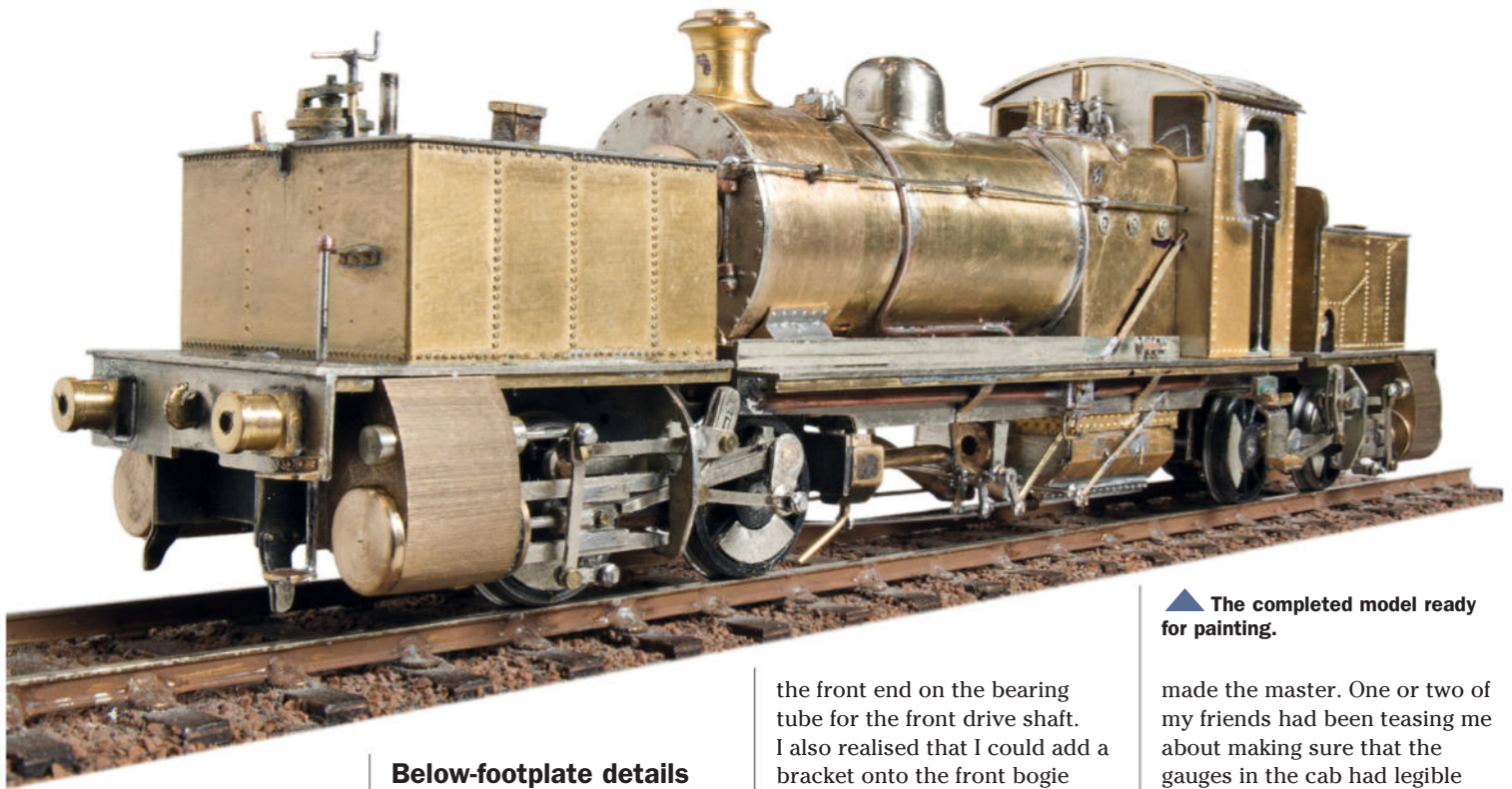
Boiler and firebox

The footplate and side girders that support the boiler, together with the motor mounting bracket and transfer gears, had been assembled early on to allow the mechanism to be tested. The motor bracket had to be narrow enough to allow the boiler and firebox to be slid horizontally over the motor and between the side frame plates. This meant that, although the smokebox could be fixed with a 10BA screw, there was no way of doing anything similar at the firebox end. I therefore drilled a pair of holes in the top corners of the firebox backplate and fitted two matching register pins in the front of the cab. The cab itself is fixed to the footplate by four 10BA screws.

The boiler itself is a length of tube with a smokebox turned from bar. This had a piece machined away to allow the base of the firebox to be put in place, and the whole thing was



▲ The locomotive stripped down into its component parts.



soldered together with a fine blowtorch. The firebox was made in the usual way: front and back plates plus wrapper. Thankfully, I could just solder one end in place, turn it over and solder the other. I filled the corners with plenty of solder, both to make it strong and allow the front corners to be rounded without breaking through. Another blessing is that there are no straps around it, though there are washout plugs, which are tiny! I made them as top-hat section turnings with a 0.4mm hole counter-bored to 0.8mm, and inserted a piece of wire with the end squashed to a square. You can't really see that the plugs are square, but at least I know they are there!

Boiler fittings

The chimney, dome and smokebox door were turned on the lathe, and the smokebox front was cut out on my pantograph engraver. The two tricky bits were the top feed, and the whistle and valve arrangement on top of the firebox. Although fiddly to make in themselves, working out what they actually looked like from the available pictures took up a lot of time – the few close-ups I found didn't show the top of the boiler. Consequently, they are my 'best guess', but I think that they look the part so I am happy with them.

Below-footplate details

A similar problem with prototype fidelity arose when it came to adding all the pipes and rods below the footplate. Despite having a fairly extensive set of below-footplate pictures of *William Francis* (taken by fellow 3mm Society member John Walker when he visited Bressingham), the inverted 'pylon' that these items are mounted on – for this particular loco – sits right where the drive shaft runs through on the model. At least two of the other examples of these locomotives were more like the general arrangement drawing, with brackets on the frames that would allow me a space for the drive shaft. However, no good images could be found, so it was a case of figuring out how I could make it look the part and still fit it either side of the drive shaft.

Before that, though, I had to make the ashpan. Since the firebox contained the transfer gears and would need to still have room for the wiring, I needed to allow maximum access from underneath. This, together with the drive shafts getting in the way yet again, meant that I couldn't make the ashpan the 'W' shape of the prototype. I could make the angled sides, but the drive shaft sits right in the middle. There was also the problem of how to fix it in place. In the end, I made two of the screws that fix the cab dual-purpose and supported

the front end on the bearing tube for the front drive shaft. I also realised that I could add a bracket onto the front bogie pivot, which could be used to support the various pipes and rods.

The exhaust steam pipe from the rear bogie runs along the centreline, just where the drive shaft sits, so I decided to fit not one, but two, steam pipes either side of the shaft. This gives the right look and helps to conceal the drive shaft, even if it isn't correct to the prototype. It also makes all the under-footplate detail into yet another sub-assembly.

Completing the model

I had now reached the point where I prepared a list of missing items. The boiler backhead is the only casting on the entire model and is the one for the S&DJR 7F, for which I

▲ The completed model ready for painting.

made the master. One or two of my friends had been teasing me about making sure that the gauges in the cab had legible dials (they do not) but I did my best: I made up a neat set of control wheels and gauges to sit above the boiler backhead, and a mixture of bits of wire, handrail knobs and such to represent the mass of pipes and valves in front of the driver.

I then turned my attention to the cab steps. Here I hit a snag: the steps would badly foul the return cranks on the rear power bogie, and the fact that they stuck out too far anyway made things even worse. There was nothing for it but to remake the cranks and try to make them more compact. This is where the John Sutton sub-assembly approach comes into its own: once the return crank rods were disconnected from the crank, the cylinders and valve gear



The model sports a fully detailed cab interior, with the firebox backhead casting for a Somerset & Dorset 7F 2-8-0.

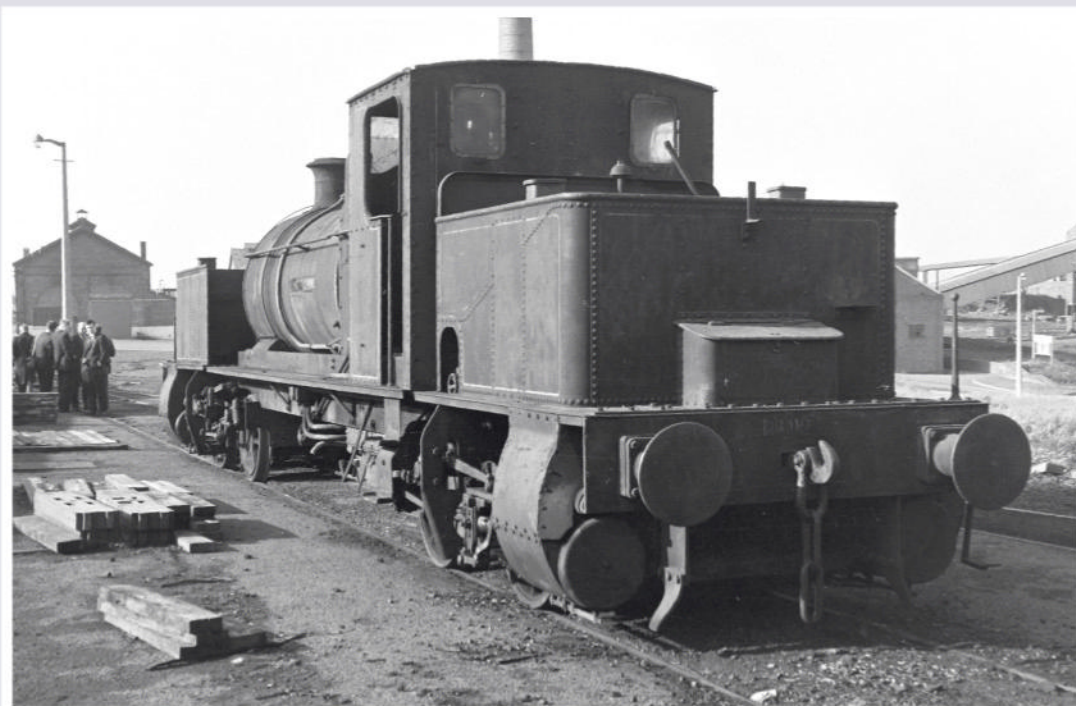
Prototype information

Of the four standard gauge Garratt locomotives constructed by Beyer Peacock & Company for industrial use in Britain, Works No.6841 was the youngest, being completed in 1937.

It was delivered new to Baddesley Colliery in Warwickshire, where it was named *William Francis* after the son of the colliery's founder. The site's railway network included gradients as steep as 1 in 23, hence the need for a powerful locomotive.

Carrying dark blue livery with cream lining, the 0-4-0+0-4-0 was equipped with 3' 4" driving wheels and four cylinders, providing a tractive effort of 24,600lbs. Weight in working order was 61 tons 10 cwt.

Withdrawn from service in 1966, the locomotive was purchased from the colliery by Mr J R Price for preservation at Bressingham Steam Museum. Now the last surviving standard gauge Beyer Garratt locomotive in Britain, it has been based at



its Norfolk home ever since and last steamed in 1980.

Following the death of Mr J R Price in 2013, his son passed ownership of the

locomotive to the museum. In 2020 an overhaul and return to steam was proposed, subject to funding being available.

▲ *William Francis* out of use at Baddesley on 5 March 1967, following its withdrawal from service the previous year.
Photo: The Transport Treasury



▲ The model in action on *Hoath Hill*, the author's 3mm scale layout.

could be removed and put to one side while I worked on the cranks. This took a full day to sort out, but I managed to make the width over the cranks over 3mm narrower! Despite this, it was also clear that the steps would have to be mounted on the bogie, instead of on the cab footplate as on the prototype, so that they didn't foul on curves. With the remaining details, though fiddly, presenting few issues, I ordered a set of works and name plates from Narrow Planet, and it was ready for the paint shop.

A complex build

If you are building something like an 0-6-0 side tank loco, it is pretty straightforward and the compromises needed are generally fairly minimal. The

more complex the project, the more challenges and compromises there are, and that is certainly true of the Beyer Garratt. Above the footplate, everything is pretty close to the prototype, but the need to accommodate the drive shafts has entailed some stretching of the truth lower down. This made it by far the most complex loco I have ever built and probably ever will!

I am nevertheless very pleased with the result as being both well engineered and a fine looking loco. I think that the finished model really looks the part and looks great trundling through my layout, *Hoath Hill*, on a train of internal user wagons. How it got to deepest Sussex is another, mercifully shorter, story...

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JANUARY



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FEBRUARY



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MARCH



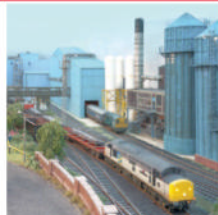
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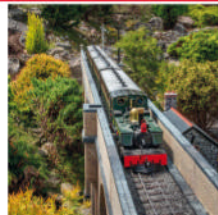
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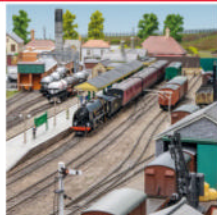
Eli Wood

AUGUST



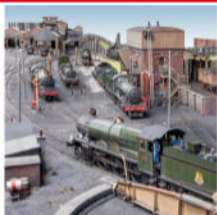
Dial Hill Railway

SEPTEMBER



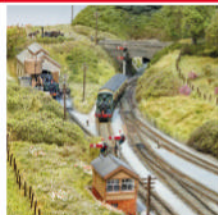
Buckhorn Weston

OCTOBER



82G

NOVEMBER



Penworth

DECEMBER



Ryburn

Rails – rewriting the rules of retailing?

Launched in 1970 by Hedley Barber, Rails of Sheffield began trading from the back of a grocery shop. Since then, it has grown to employ more than 60 people with multiple ‘bricks and mortar’ premises – including a brand new store, which opened amid much fanfare on 29 November at the Yorkshire city’s principal railway station. Following his attendance at this event as a VIP guest, former Hornby Marketing Manager Simon Kohler reflects on his past association with this enterprising model railway retailer, which today remains in the hands of the late founder’s son and other family members.

I remember, quite clearly, my first visit to the Rails of Sheffield store. This would have been back in the late 1990s: I arrived there with my then Hornby colleague, Chris Yates (now the proprietor of The Model Centre), who, at that time, was the Sheffield retailer’s Hornby Sales Representative.

This visit was part of a three-day tour of Hornby stockists, during which my goal was to meet with as many different retailers as possible and listen to their criticisms of Hornby. In those early days, before the fortunes of the Margate-based manufacturer changed, it was a little like walking into the lion’s den... and expecting the lions to be vegetarian! By the time we arrived at Rails, I was already feeling a little bruised from some of the justified tongue lashings I had received elsewhere, and I was expecting much the same from Rails.

Chris introduced me to the owner, John Barber (son of Hedley Barber, who passed away on 11 August 2015 aged 86). John was standing behind his counter and testing, as it happened, a Hornby locomotive model, which he was in the process of selling with great enthusiasm to one of his regular customers.

Having braced myself for another bruising, I was soon to discover that my apprehension was unfounded. With the happy customer heading out of the door, John extended a warm welcome to Chris and I, complete with the offer of a cup of tea.



▲ Members of the Rails of Sheffield team and invited guests outside the new Sheffield station premises on 29 November. Simon Kohler is pictured second from left, with John Barber third from left.

With us now sitting comfortably in John’s back office, Chris explained why I was there, advising John that he was not to hold back with any criticisms. John fully understood the situation that Hornby had found itself in and expressed his sympathy. He then went on to describe how he perceived the state of the model railway market. He believed that, although many modellers were critical of Hornby, in reality they all wanted the manufacturer to succeed and become a force to be reckoned with once again. He continued by adding that, in his opinion, all Hornby had to do was focus on what it was good at and make improvements in those areas, so that the manufacturer could compete with its rivals. Many of John’s opinions aligned with my own thinking, and I left Rails feeling positive about the path that Hornby needed to take.

Over the following years, I would often bump into John at various shows. We

◀ The new Rails store is situated in a prime location alongside the station approach.

All photos: Rails of Sheffield except where stated



would chat about the model railway industry and, although we did have the odd disagreement (ably captured in the James May television programme *Big Trouble in Model Britain*) we always remained friends.

After 2020, John began to step back from the main day-to-day running of the business, which was now being handled by his two nephews, Adam and Oliver. This change in management structure seemed to herald something of a metamorphosis for Rails. The retailer had already forged a commercial relationship with the Science Museum/National Railway Museum, this bearing fruit with several joint model ventures, but in more recent years it has further developed this approach with many of the UK model railway manufacturers.

More recently still, the firm's business development continued with the acquisition of the Hatton's retail arm (following the demise in late 2024 of the Widnes-based retailer) and will soon expand further to offer bespoke services including weathering and Digital Command Control sound fitting. In addition, its mail order business continues to go from strength to strength, this being supported by the retailer's extensive use of social media as an advertising and promotional tool.

When its custom-built warehouse and offices opened in 2021, it was starting to become clear, even then, that Rails was beginning to take a totally different approach to selling model railway products than most other retailers in the UK. It was a sign that Rails was starting to think 'outside the box' and was actively searching out potential alternative opportunities...

A new venture

On Saturday 29 November 2025, I attended the opening of the retailer's latest venture, a new shop situated at Sheffield railway station – a move that could be seen as a real masterstroke of vision and marketing.

The launch gave me the opportunity to talk once again to John Barber and other members of the company's staff. These conversations gave me a totally different outlook on the current state of the hobby in the UK. Far from believing that the model railway industry was on a downward trend, they were all incredibly buoyant about its future and were convinced that it is all to do with offering new and exciting products, as well as providing a professional and reliable service – from new and exclusive models, to second-hand or 'pre-loved' models. Rails even has a separate store dedicated to handling toy memorabilia of days gone by – Vintage Toys & Trains, which is situated on Chesterfield Road, not far from the main Sheffield shop.

It remains a true family-run business, which now includes John's daughter who, having obtained a degree in business studies, is now putting these

Exclusive 00 gauge models of the Class 88 were released by the retailer in 2025.

Photo: Callum Willcox

Rails of Sheffield has commissioned a second run of 00 gauge models of the LMS 'Twins' from Bachmann (see news). The original batch was delivered in 2015.

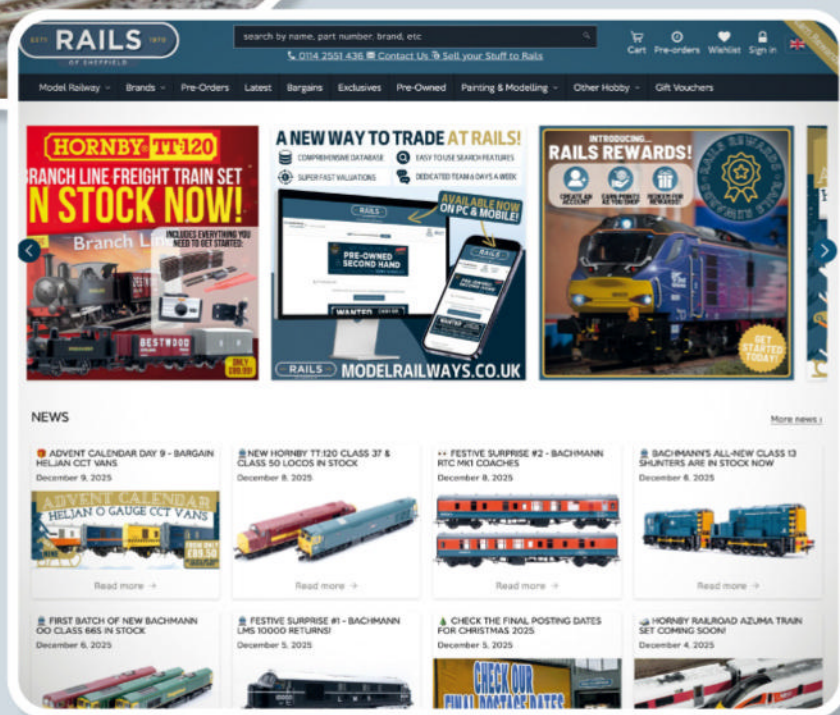


Amongst the displays in the new station shop is this TT:120 demonstration layout. The new B4 0-4-0T is included as part of a just-released Hornby train set (see reviews).



skills to good use, having worked over the years in most, if not all departments at Rails.

With the team's inherent enthusiasm and passion, linked to a dynamic business approach, the future for Rails of Sheffield looks very positive...



In parallel with its continued expansion of 'bricks and mortar' premises, online mail order is a key part of the retailer's business model.



Humphrey Road Sidings

Modelling, words and photography: **NORMAN RAVEN**



Right, what's an old bloke like me doing modelling the Southern Railway? I pose the question because I was born in the North East of Scotland, lived most of my working life in Edinburgh and now while away the days in East Yorkshire; hardly strong SR connections.

The answer to the question lies in my liking for SR stock in general and the Maunsell green livery in particular. This resulted in the purchase of various examples of the genre from time to time, bolstered by the odd birthday and Christmas present.

As is usual, thoughts then turned to a layout. I say 'usual' because that is the way most of our layouts come about. We have six exhibition layouts and I confess readily to

being a serial layout builder. We enjoy building and exhibiting layouts. By 'we', I mean my daughter Melissa, son Simon and my good self – masquerading under the name Raven Miniatures, which also covers our efforts in doll's house modelling – and my late wife Meg, who passed away in July 2024. I must also include Arion, the Norwegian Fjord horse, and Phoebe the dog, both of whom are fully paid-up members of the group. Responsibilities within the group are shared. Simon and I do the planning and building, Melissa offers (mainly) constructive criticism, Meg made strategic decisions such as 'we'll buy that' and assisted at exhibitions, while Arion and Phoebe look on in amusement.

▲ **Former South Eastern & Chatham Railway C Class 0-6-0 No.1256 (a Bachmann model) with a rake of Private Owner wagons.**

I normally plan a layout (my mind is a cosmic whirl of creative invention – others see it differently!) and make the baseboards. Tracklaying is usually a joint effort between Simon and I. The technical stuff like Digital Command Control is very much Simon's preserve. I do most of the scenic work, including the painted backscenes.

Enough of this, you say, what about this layout? We have been exhibiting for some 30-odd years, and in general we try to offer something a bit different for exhibition managers. Most of our layouts are of the



▲ A Southern Railway 0-6-0 goods locomotive of a later generation – a wartime Bulleid Q1, by Hornby – arrives in the sidings.

overseas persuasion, but we occasionally dabble in home efforts, and *Humphrey Road Sidings* is one example.

Different things

What are the things 'a bit different' on the layout then? Firstly, it represents the SR but is set in the 1950s, as though Nationalisation had not taken place. No political statement is made here, simply an opportunity to give a slightly different presentation. The setting of the 1950s is an indulgence, recalling slow, happy times spent with friends and parents, in particular my father, who used to take me train-watching on occasional Saturdays at the local station and goods yard at

Fraserburgh, my home town in Aberdeenshire. This sparked an interest in railways and transport in general.

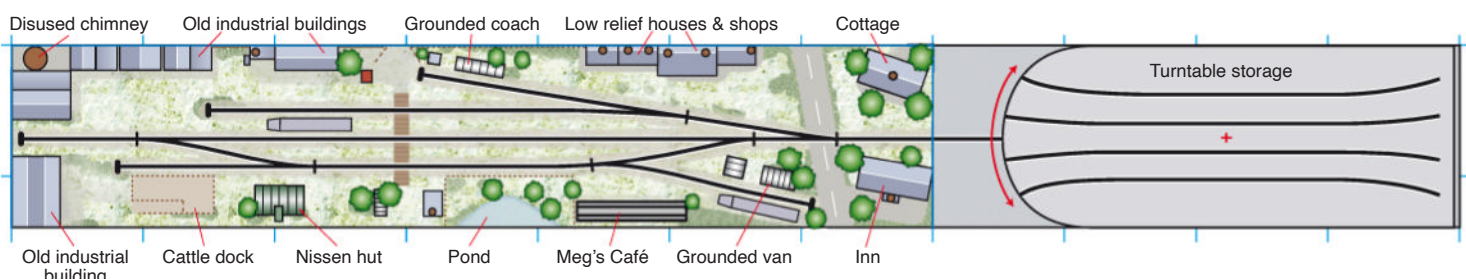
The second difference is that the layout depicts a snow scene, of which more anon.

We tend to name layouts after things with a personal connection, and 'Humphrey' here is a reminder of Meg's car, which expired at an MoT just as we were building the layout.

Concept

The concept of the layout is a simple storage yard to terminus theme. In this case, there are no

An elderly gentleman feeds a group of wildfowl on the pond.



Humphrey Road Sidings

Overall layout size 11' x 1' 3½". Each grid square = 1' x 1'.



passenger workings, as the layout depicts a small goods yard located somewhere in SR territory. This also gives me a chance to indulge my liking for Private Owner wagons and their differing liveries. Yes, I know that may be stretching things, but it is, in effect, a fantasy layout.

When planning a layout, I make every effort to ensure that it will fit in our vehicle (a Mercedes Vito Dualiner), with space for operators and all the other necessary accoutrements, thus obviating the need for van hire costs. We have had our share of

large, impressive layouts but I am now much more in the small, if not micro, layout vein. My best effort on that was an American switching layout of 3' by 9" – we put the stock in a Tupperware™ box, unplugged, and were on our way five minutes after the exhibition closed. Bliss!

The boards

To meet the above requirements, *Humphrey Road Sidings* has a 7' (2.1m) scenic section and a 4' (1.2m) storage yard, all being carried across three boards. The boards are

▲ **London, Brighton & South Coast Railway E4 0-6-2T No.2517 (Bachmann) has just delivered a new tractor for a local farmer.**

laser-cut kits from Grainge & Hodder, and are of the canopy type with integral backscene and roof. The boards are aligned with 25mm brass pattern maker's dowels, which fit into holes already cut in the board ends. The integral back and top result in a box shape which makes for easy transport and storage.

There are no separate lighting bits and pieces, as illumination is provided by six strips of 12V cool white LEDs fixed to the roof of the board. This is a big advantage for setting up and breaking down – a simple plug connection or disconnection, and we're good to go. It also means I don't have the embarrassment of forgetting the lighting gantry bolts. Ask me about it!

The boards are finished in a fetching grey primer. The back board was given a little more careful treatment with filler and white primer, to give a suitable base for the hand-painted backscene.

Track & ballast

I quite enjoy tracklaying and ballasting (yes, I need to get out more!). Track is Peco code 75, with medium radius Electrofrog points operated by Peco Twistlock motors, which have the benefit of easy installation using the supplied templates. Frog polarity is changed by Gaugemaster items. The gauge and sleeper spacing is HO, but once the

▲ **The light dusting of snow was created using Woodland Scenics snow, baby powder and fine glitter.**



A delightful Tudor inn is tucked away in the woods close to the yard entrance (the level crossing is just visible on the left).

track is painted and ballasted, I think it looks fine. Ballast is chinchilla dust, a fine, sandy substance used by domesticated chinchillas for cleaning their fur – not ground-up chinchillas, as one horrified lady thought at a doll's house show demonstration! A bag from the pet store cost me £10 and has already ballasted three layouts.

Control

Like most of our layouts, control is DCC using our ESU ECoS set-up. We like to operate from the front of the layout, although the solid backscene and top make this something of a necessity anyway. Rather than being tied to one operating position, we control the trains, points and accessories with our iPhones and iPads linked wirelessly to the ECoS unit through an Edimax router using the Touchcab app. This system has worked well for us for some 12 years or so, but the app is no longer supported and cannot be downloaded. Some creaks and groans are now becoming apparent, and we shall have to be looking at a replacement arrangement sometime soon. We plan to continue with front operation since it allows easier communication with the public, including allowing selected candidates to have a go at driving, blowing whistles and tooting horns. Such fun!

Simon has fitted all the locomotives with sound decoders and stay-alive capacitors, and has wired all the decoders for the points, including route setting for the entry track and the run-round loop. Points can be



operated from the track plan on the ECoS screen, or from a list in the iPhone or iPad screens. These more complex issues I am happy to leave to him.

Operation

You can see from the attached diagram that the track plan is a simple affair, being a loop and some sidings, with the outside world represented by the tracks on the turntable storage area. Like the track plan, operation is simple, but sometimes odd situations can result. Essentially, trains are brought on scene, shuffled around a bit with some wagon exchanges and then exit. Operation

does not rely on a set schedule or timetable, although I keep thinking of that possibility. Moves are just made up as we go, which explains my sometimes puzzled look!

Operation of the layout depends on a reliable coupling system, and we use Kadee couplers. For those unfamiliar with these, they are buckeye-type couplers which couple easily and are disengaged by magnets in the trackbed. Once the couplings are disengaged, it is possible to push the uncoupled wagon to a desired position and

Hunslet Austerity 0-6-OST No.98 (produced by DJ Models) has been borrowed from the Army to shunt Humphrey Road Sidings.





▲ A Ford Prefect 100E helps to set the date of the layout in the 1950s.

leave it there. The couplings then spring back to the centre position ready to couple up again. We use the European-style couplers, mainly Nos.18 and 19 which plug into the NEM pockets now common on most British ready-to-run stock.

For the uncoupling magnets, we commonly use a strip of 3mm cube neodymium magnets glued between two sleepers. I found, however, that the short, light nature of the British stock led to some problems, and I decided to revert to the standard Kadee magnets between the rails. The Kadee under-track magnets would have been better, but a bit difficult to fit as the track and ballast

were already stuck down firmly. For efficient operation, I make sure that the stock is weighted with some lead (not magnetic) strip, and to prevent the wagon itself being attracted to the magnet, the free-rolling wheels are retarded a little by a small piece of Blu Tack™ in the axlebox or a small piece of sponge between the floor and the axle.

Scenery and buildings

The layout is set in a wooded valley with a road running through it, and some nearby houses, shops and a rather attractive inn. The sidings serve a motley collection of older commercial buildings. The scenery therefore is fairly heavily arboreal and the painted backscene reflects this. The paints used on the backscene are common old

household paints, tester pots and cheap acrylics applied with 2" and 1" brushes. The trees are made from seafoam or moss, with the rest of the scenery from Woodland Scenics. Most of this has been recovered from scrapped layouts and has done sterling service in the USA, Germany and Japan!

Meg liked snow layouts, and this was the fifth example which I was ordered to make. We are always asked how we do the snow. The first step is to make the scenery as normal, as the effect I want is a light snowfall rather than a blizzard. I then paint cheap white paint on those areas to be covered with snow. This is done on a small area at a time so that the paint stays wet for the next step, which is to sprinkle the snow mixture on the wet paint. Once this is dry, I use the ordinary ballasting technique of dribbling diluted PVA glue to fix the snow. This method allows melting snow effects, such as at the yard entry gate, and means we don't leave a pile of snow on the exhibition hall floor once we've gone.

The snow itself is a mix of Woodland Scenics snow bulked out with baby powder and very fine glitter to catch the light (cosmetic glitter is useful here). Ideally, the glitter should be clear or silver in colour. There are now a number of snow effects on the market, but I still use this old method which has served me well over the years. Although I like to model snow, I hate the real stuff because I have to go out in it as a gritter and snowplough driver. At least on the layout I can control the frequency and depth of it!

▶ Dieselisation comes to Humphrey Road Sidings, in the form of BR 204hp shunter (later Class 03) D2011 delivering a six-wheeled milk tank wagon.



The buildings are mainly from the Petite Properties 1:76 range of laser-cut MDF kits, some low-relief. The Bowman Precision Engineering building is a combination of two low-relief buildings back to back. The cattle dock is an LCUT Creative kit, and Meg's Café is a Ratio grounded coach kit with full interior and lights.

One element of the buildings I am particularly pleased with is the brickwork. Rather than being covered with brickpaper, the buildings sport individually applied bricks. This option convinced my family and friends that I had finally gone off my trolley! However, I find it fairly therapeutic. The bricks are suitably coloured punchings (chads) from the old days when computers operated by means of punch cards. I get them from Bob Dawson and his nephew, Scott, who are excellent architectural modelmakers and can be seen demonstrating at selected shows.

The first step is to paint the wall a brownish-grey mortar colour. A thin smear of PVA glue is applied, and individual bricks are picked up on the point of a craft knife and pressed onto the glue, ideally in a

A former Great Eastern Railway J70 tram locomotive visits the sidings, passing Meg's Café in a Ratio grounded coach body.

relatively straight line. I try to replicate the proper brick spacing, although stretcher bond is the name of the game rather than the more proper Flemish bond. I may be a little adrift but there is a limit! Very close inspection would distress a proper 'brickie', but from a normal viewing distance the effect is quite pleasing.

Stock

Locomotives are a mix from what one might describe as 'the usual sources'. Five steam locos and a diesel are more than sufficient to handle the trains presented, and to enable the operator to ring the changes when appropriate. All are excellent slow speed performers and just right for the layout. No, I can't recall the Southern having a J70 either, but in my little world it has been borrowed for evaluation. In reality, it was a birthday present and thus has to run on the layout.

Rolling stock is again from the usual suppliers, the vast majority being purchased second-hand. There is a fine concoction of vans, opens, flats and tankers with, as previously mentioned, a fair smattering of Private Owner examples.

All the stock is weathered to varying degrees. Locos I have kept fairly clean, but all have been treated to at least a whiff of

matt varnish. The rolling stock ranges from quite clean to fairly scruffy. My weathering technique is quite simple, involving around 10 minutes with a paintbrush, matt varnish and grey and brown acrylic paint.

Vehicles on the layout are mainly from Oxford Diecast, and the 1950s setting gives me a chance to represent vehicles I remember well from my childhood. These too are given a coat of matt varnish, as one of my bugbears is a glossy vehicle on a layout.

A family affair

I enjoy exhibiting our little model and shunting layouts are definitely my favourite. Thanks are due to my family, and our friend John, for their invaluable assistance, encouragement and support. Since we started exhibiting the layout in 2020, it has won several awards for best scenics and by public vote. If you see us at a show, we are very happy to chat and demonstrate any aspect of the layout.

If any exhibition managers would like to invite *Humphrey Road Sidings* to their show, I can be contacted by email at:

fluff48@zoho.com

We also have a dedicated website with further information about our modelmaking activities: **www.ravenmrm.co.uk**



Experimenting with narrow gauge in a large scale

Turning heads in 16mm

GILES FAVELL describes some of the innovative methods he used when creating Nettlebed Lime, a 32mm gauge layout that features radio-controlled locomotives, animated driver figures and steam effects.

Photography by the author

This latest modelling adventure all started when I pulled a kit out of the cupboard. My lovely wife, Diane, had bought me a 16mm scale Slater's Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST kit some years previously, which I hadn't got round to building, but upon rediscovering it, I suddenly found the urge...

I decided at the outset that the kit would be constructed for indoor use, and radio control, and so would need re-motoring with a 3V gear motor, fitting with a large battery, and a small Deltang receiver (later replaced with a Micron 601). I also had something else in mind, which had been rattling around in my head for several years, and this was the perfect locomotive to

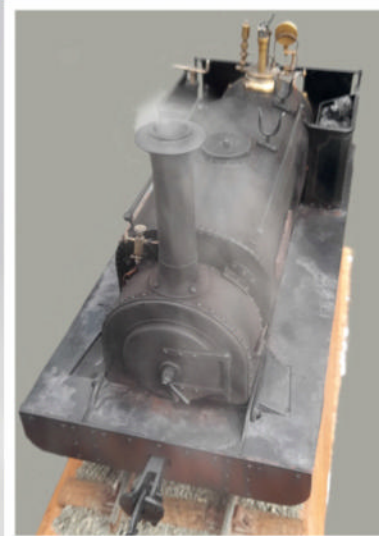
experiment with it – and that was ultrasonic steam.

The Quarry Hunslet was built with radio gear supplied by Andy at Micron Radio Control. A (mostly) home-made steam unit was then built and fitted using an inexpensive ultrasonic mister disc (c.£3.00) and driver board purchased on eBay, with only very minor modifications undertaken. (The unit is triggered by a reed switch sensing a magnet on the front axle.)

Named *Holy War*, the model was weathered to within an inch of the scrapheap. Brass and copper fittings were polished and then heated to tarnish them before attaching to the model, which was then declared finished.



▲ The locomotive that started it all – the Slater's Quarry Hunslet 0-4-0ST, finished as *Holy War*. The kit comprises etchings, resin parts, castings and turned components.



▲ *Holy War* showing the convincing steam effect (left) and the highly detailed firebox backhead (above).



A real head-turner

A driver was also going to be a necessity, for which a suitable 3D-printed figure was procured from Modelu. However, since I was already employing radio control to drive the locomotive, I decided I could go a stage further and have him turn his head to look where he was going!

This was a bit of a fiddle, as it involved fitting the smallest available servo (1.7g) into his back, with the shaft central to the neck, whilst making everything invisible. It was important to do the neck surgery carefully and sensitively, so he still looked entirely like a human being at the end of it all, rather than some giraffe-necked unfortunate!

A hole was drilled all the way up one leg for the necessary wires. The Micron 601 is an excellent receiver for this kind of job because you can program the speed of operation, so the head turns with a natural motion.

Large scale, small layout

Having done all this, of course, I now wanted a small layout on which to run it. After a little sketching, I came up with a very simple arrangement on a 6' x 2' 6" board, which allowed a run-round loop, a siding for unloading, and a second, smaller siding – all pretty compact for 16mm scale.

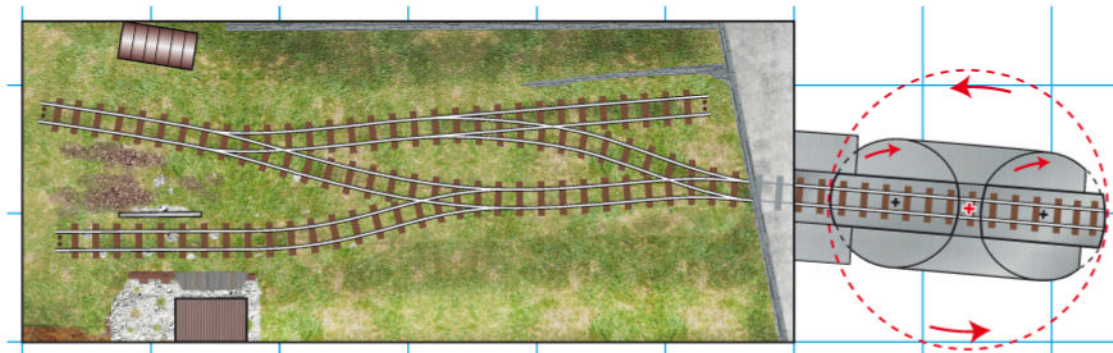
I bought a pile of Cliff Barker points and track, and bodged together a board – decked with insulating foam left over from a building job – and set to work.

I made my own point motors to my own design. These are 3D-printed and are simple, but very effective (I have used exactly the same design for OO9 as well). They use N20 gear motors for power, and incorporate up to three microswitches: one for stop every 180°, one to switch frog polarity, and one to change the LED panel indicator. The point motor locks the blade to one side or the other, and is only powered when actually switching. (The design is available to download from Thingiverse – search for 'point motor' and look for my giles61 username.)

▲ The Kerr Stuart Tattoo Class 0-4-2ST, pictured with a pair of lime hoppers.



▲ A servo was fitted to each of the Modelu 3D-printed driver figures, to enable the heads to turn to suit the direction of travel.



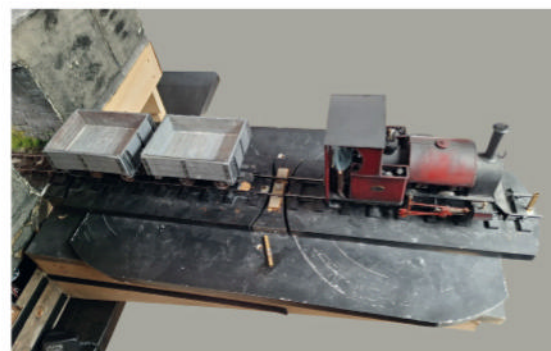
Nettlebed Lime Size of scenic section 6' x 2' 6". Each grid square = 1' x 1'.

Scenic effects

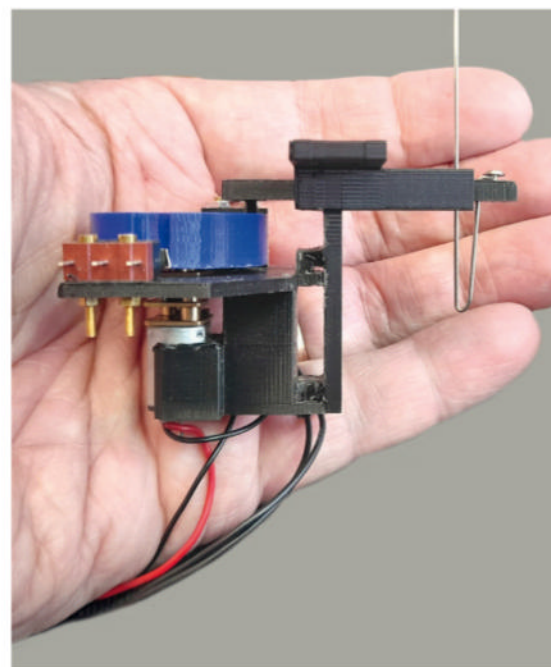
Track was spray-painted black, and then washes of rust were added. Rectangles of foamboard were cut and glued in the spaces between all the sleepers, as the trackwork was going to appear old and neglected, and this infilling reduced the amount of ballast I needed to use.

Ballasting was a mix of different grades of granules,

▲ The fiddle yard takes the form of a turntable deck, this in turn supporting two smaller turntables, all of which move in sync to reverse the train formation with a single rotation.



▲ The trackwork was laid using items from the Cliff Barker range, with the spaces between the sleepers then infilled using small pieces of foamboard.



▲ A completed point motor assembly prior to fitting, with the operating linkage for the tiebar on the right. The black frame was 3D-printed.



▲ Grass cover was a mixture of commercial static grass fibres (6-12mm length) and horse hair, dyed to suit. The bridge was fabricated using a plywood carcass, faced with foam blocks to simulate the stonework.

together with cooked (to kill any bugs and bacteria) and sieved earth.

The bridge is simply a plywood carcass with foam blocks adhered to the surface, with the stones then getting a brushed coat of watered-down plaster/PVA mix. Stones were next picked out in slightly different greys before the whole bridge received a black wash (water with a little black paint in it) to tone it all down and bring it all together.

The bulk of the scenery is carved foam, scrimmed with butter muslin and a plaster/PVA

mix, then painted a muddy brown.

The grass took forever. I do have a very good static grass applicator, but it wouldn't do quite what I wanted. The grass is a mix of 6mm and 12mm fibres, but also with a lot of horses' mane.

For the latter, I bought a hank of fine white/fair horse mane on eBay and dyed it a gentle grass green, lighter in colour than the static grass. (It is worth noting that artificial hair cannot be dyed – it has to be the real stuff. It's also better if it doesn't dye evenly, and when you cut bits

off, cut at an angle so you end up with different lengths.)

All the grass material was first mixed together in an ice cream tub. When it was ready, a few square inches of PVA glue was brushed onto the scenery, and then a small handful of grass mix was taken, rubbed between my palms to form a cigar shape, the end pulled off, and planted into the glue – ad infinitum.

Having applied grass to a section, I would then sprinkle dried earth over it – trusting that some would fall down any remaining gaps onto any exposed glue. All excess would then be removed with a vacuum cleaner and collected after it was dry. It was a long, laborious job, but worth it. Short grass

and flock were added to the trackwork to add to the look of neglect and decay.

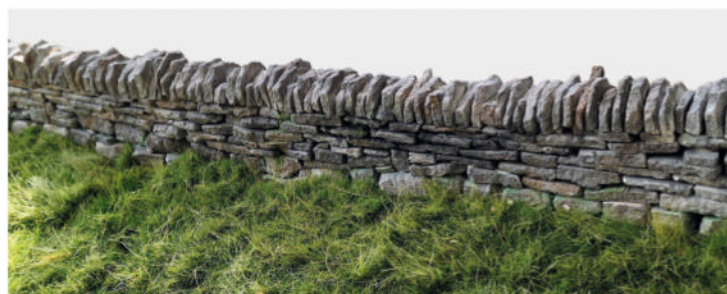
Building a wall

Aesthetically, the layout really needed something at the back, and all I could think of was a wall. The problem was that it would need to be quite good, or I couldn't live with it. A dry-stone wall was really the thing that might look best, so I set to work. I modelled some pieces of ply into the right form as far as length and shape were concerned, and these were to be the backbone of the wall.

I cast a couple of trays of hydrocal lightweight plaster (available from suppliers including Woodland Scenics),



▲ Lengths of dry-stone walling were modelled by fixing individual stones to backing boards. The stones started out as a tray of cast hydrocal lightweight plaster, which was then scribed, cut, and fettled to suit.



▲ Capping stones were made using a tray of cast plaster to a reduced depth, thereby providing thinner stones than those used in the wall itself. The stonework was weathered using a thin wash of water-soluble oils.

The extent of the layout's scenic section, with the unloading mechanism for wagon loads of lime visible on the right.





▲ The layout does not have a fixed backscene, but instead utilises a theatre-style cyclorama erected 18" or so behind it.

ranging in thickness between 4mm and 9mm or so. When more or less dry, these were scribed and broken up into strips about 10mm or so wide. Needless to say these came out fairly irregular, and that was a good thing!

I would cut a stone's length off a strip, and then fettle each stone, mostly at the ends, but often the top or bottom as well, to represent a rough-hewn or natural stone, and then glue it to the ply backbone, and repeat.

Tedious, but effective. Capping stones were made of the thinner material, and required more fettling.

The painting of the wall was a joy. I used water-soluble oil paint, but the thinnest wash – very little paint, so it was really just tinting the water. The whole wall received a light grey, and then I mixed some more dirty water with browns to pick out a few individual stones. Subtlety was the key with the wall. If I overdid it, there was no going back.

A shepherd's hut

There needed to be another element to balance things, and I

decided on a shepherd's hut. I remember them from my youth – decrepit and disused in fields – so I've modelled the sort I remember. The carcass is 2mm MDF for convenience, whilst the corrugated iron is modelled using recycled aluminium trays (as used for pies – a lot thicker than aluminium foil). I had to draw up and print some dies to press the corrugations, including a special curved one to make the curved sheets, all of which were bonded to the carcass using No More Nails household adhesive. The wheels were drawn up using DesignSpark Mechanical CAD software, and printed on my old

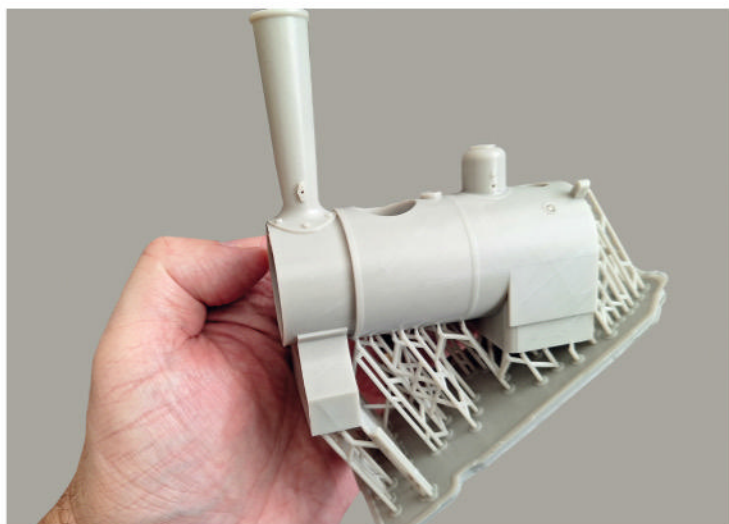
Elegoo Mars 2 Pro 3D printer. Aerosols and talcum powder were used for the paint job.

Off-scene turntables

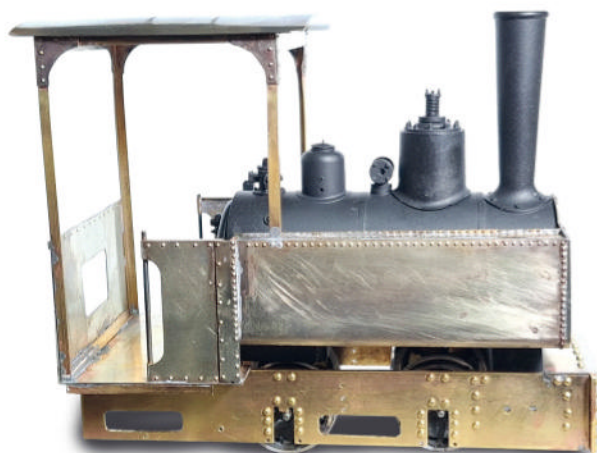
The layout has only one function. Wagonloads of lime are brought in, and are tipped, discharging onto an (unseen) conveyor, before being removed to get another load. It would have been a waste of space to have a conventional style fiddle yard, because all we need to do is reverse the position of the two trucks and the loco. I therefore came up with the idea of having a twin (revolving) turntable arrangement. This consists of a turntable with two smaller



▲ Photos showing the three key stages of the shepherd's hut construction: the carcass modelled using 2mm laser-cut MDF (left), the corrugated iron exterior formed using recycled aluminium food packaging (centre), and final painting and weathering using aerosols and talcum powder.



▲ The Decauville Type 1 0-4-0T was built using 3D-printed...



▲ ...and nickel silver components.



▲ This model is also fitted with the steam effect and an animated figure.

turntables on it, but they are all geared together so that, as the main turntable turns, the two smaller ones stay facing in the same direction. It sounds complicated, but it's not really, and it does make operation simple.

Expanding the fleet

There are two other locomotives in addition to the Quarry Hunslet. The first is a Kerr Stuart Tattoo Class 0-4-2ST. This is actually based on the now-preserved former Penrhyn Quarry example, *Stanhope*, but



▲ The Kerr Stuart 0-4-2ST, scratch-built using 3D-printed parts and a milled chassis.

with a lowered boiler, as I thought I would need the headroom. I drew this model up in DesignSpark Mechanical, and again this was printed on my Mars 2 Pro, with a chassis milled out on my Stepcraft D450 CNC machine.

It is also radio-controlled, fitted with one of my steam units and a driver with turning head. Powered by a 70rpm N30 gear motor through bevel gears, wheel tyres are Slater's with my own printed centres.

The third locomotive is based on a Decauville Type 1 0-4-0T. Built from a mix of nickel silver and 3D-printed components, this was my toughest loco build to date, but very pleasing. Again, it is fitted with working steam and a driver. All locos are capable of operating for at least a full day before they need recharging, and over an hour before water (steam) needs topping up.

The tippers are of my own design, and are 3D-printed – and are in consequence quite heavy pieces of stock. They carry pumice representing lime, but tip effectively. They run on Peter Binnie wheelsets.

Presentation

Being from a theatre background, I use a printed backcloth as a cyclorama, positioned 18" or so behind the layout, and larger than the layout itself. This does help stop the eye from being distracted by things behind, and generally helps control what is seen.

The model is lit using four photographic floods (5000k) and operation is from the front/side.

Drastic action

I recently faced something of a dilemma, as we had to change

our car, and the layout did not fit in the new one! This prevented *Nettlebed Lime* from being taken to exhibitions, which was a pity as it had, at that time, only made one appearance, at the Uckfield show. However, having decided that it would be nice to do some more exhibitions with the layout, I took the drastic action of sawing the model in half and making good the joint, thereby solving the issue!

I have put more information on dozens of radio control and other projects into various videos on YouTube, where you can find me under 'gilesengineer'.

Supplier information

Cliff Barker (track)
www.cliffbarker.me.uk

Micron Radio Control
www.micronradiocontrol.co.uk

Modelu
www.modelu3d.co.uk

Peter Binnie (wheels)
www.peterbinnie.com

Slater's Plastikard
www.slatersplastikard.com

Thingiverse
www.thingiverse.com

Woodland Scenics
www.woodlandscenics.com



RAILWAY MODELLING *Explored*



Projects, hints and tips for beginners from Railway Modeller readers and staff

THIS MONTH • A first O gauge layout • Scenic cameos in 4mm scale

Jennings' Sidings

Photography by the author



KEITH HAYWARD's first venture into O gauge modelling evolved from an industrial shunting layout into a small Great Western branch line terminus, but can still be operated in either form.

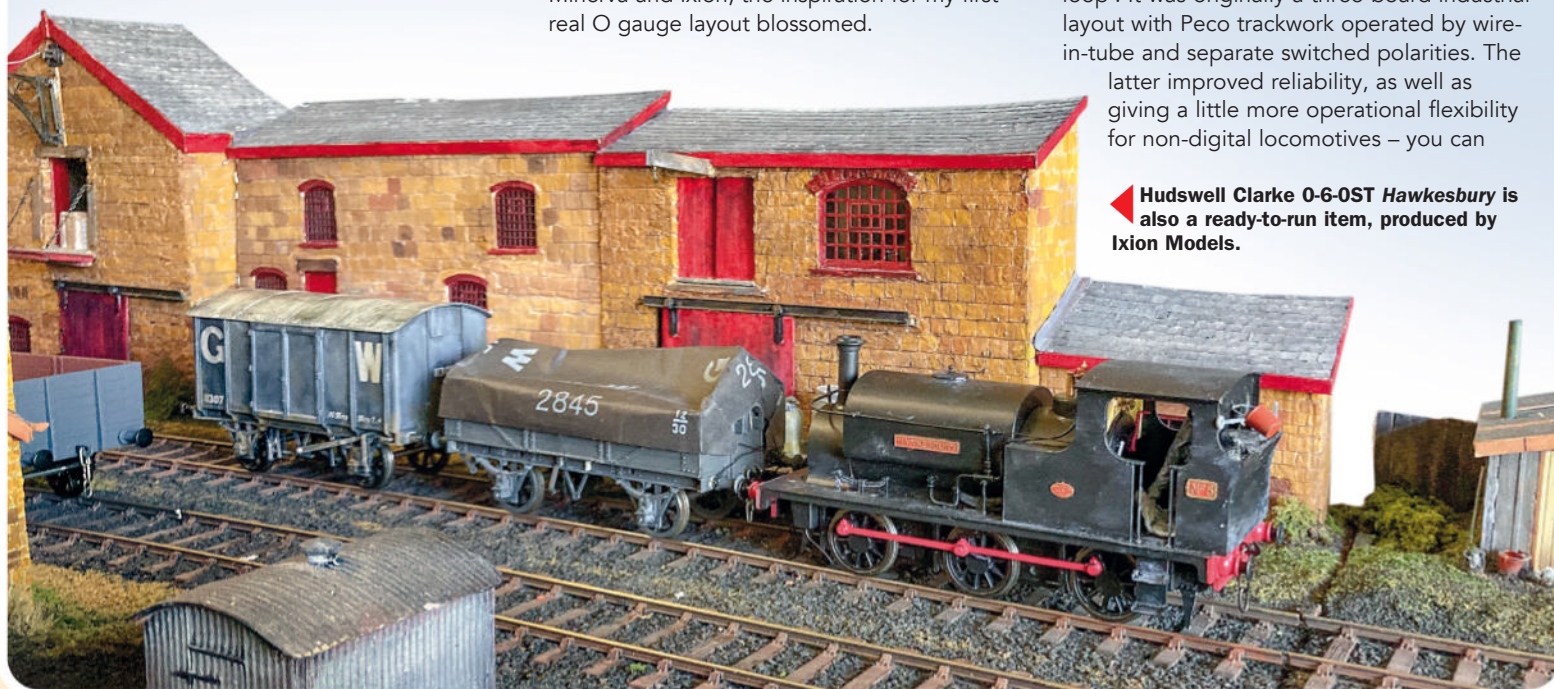
Like many ageing 4mm modellers when returning to the hobby after 20 years, I thought moving up a scale would save eyes and some increasingly arthritic fingers from further distress. This assumption was something of a mistake, as the cube law of size and the additional detailing requirements of the larger scale just added to the fun.

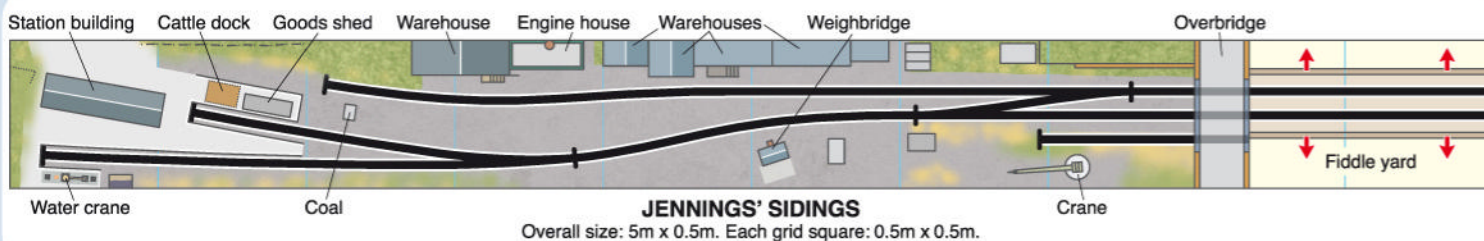
But on to the origins of *Jennings' Sidings*. I started off with the idea of a classic terminus, but a realisation that I would have to build some detailed 7mm locomotives, and perhaps carriages, was too daunting. Wagons I can do and, thanks to the emerging stable of ready-to-run rolling stock, combined with the arrival of some lovely industrial locomotives from Minerva and Ixion, the inspiration for my first real O gauge layout blossomed.

▲ **Pannier tank No.5700 is a ready-to-run model by Dapol.**

The breakthrough was to revert to the track plan of my last 4mm layout, the P4 *Fegg Hayes* (RAILWAY MODELLER September 1992). *Jennings' Sidings* repeated the now classic space-saving technique of 'half a run-round loop'. It was originally a three-board industrial layout with Peco trackwork operated by wire-in-tube and separate switched polarities. The latter improved reliability, as well as giving a little more operational flexibility for non-digital locomotives – you can

◀ **Hudswell Clarke 0-6-OST Hawkesbury is also a ready-to-run item, produced by Ixion Models.**





JENNINGS' SIDINGS
Overall size: 5m x 0.5m. Each grid square: 0.5m x 0.5m.



▲ **English Electric 350hp (Class 08) diesel shunter No.13003 is another Dapol R-T-R model.**

Extending the layout

The three-board industrial layout worked well enough; at 3m by 0.5m, the original concept had led to a small, if not a mini layout. But I now had the 7mm structural bug. You could also blame the arrival of a ready-to-run '1400' from Dapol to match a Lionheart autococh acquired long ago 'just in case'; the availability of two Great Western Railway 'Flying Banana' diesel railcars (I bought the Heljan version) provided further incentive to

add some passenger facilities. Otherwise, it was just a continuing case of modeller's itch – and the immediate availability of a Hemyock-

style station building, which, in true *Blue Peter* fashion, was 'one I had prepared earlier'. The station platform is a little on the short side, but appropriate to the sort of decrepit rural station acquired by the GWR at the Grouping.

A big plus of the two-board extension was the addition of another siding, and thus a cattle dock and a small metal goods shed, courtesy of Skytrex. The new arrangement provided more operational potential, and as most trains run the full length of the layout, it maintains audience interest from one end to the other, as well as the satisfaction of a long(ish) trundle back to the fiddle yard. I also added a water column, again from the Skytrex range. I had a GWR tower, which I was tempted to use, but it looked a little odd so I will save it for the next layout. The station building, as I have mentioned, is based on

isolate one engine and shunt wagons with another.

I sprayed the track with track colour and picked out the chairs with a 'rust' felt-tip pen. I then dry-brushed the sleepers with neat white oil paint to produce a worn appearance. Woodland Scenics fine ash ballast completed the track and electrical aspects of construction.

Adding the structures

The first set of buildings were inspired by a Cotswold setting and the joys of replicating stone-clad structures. As my first 7mm model, I chose the weighbridge office from the Great Western Railway Fairford branch.

My usual method to reproduce stonework is to start with a cardboard shell, with a Polyfilla surface scribed and painted with watercolours. I used the same technique on a run of warehouses – based on photos of some standard structures with interesting features – and ditto the overbridge that hides the fiddle yard. Other scenic features include real wood fencing, knocked about a bit for verisimilitude, a grounded wagon, a timber hut, horse and cart, and kit-built sheds with well-placed figures doing something or other. Again, going up a scale required more attention to detail and a renewal of an old skill learnt from years of painting model soldiers. The horse and cart also needed chains and reins.

For the groundwork, there is no static grass, but I used the classic turfs and fibres (where did the large rolls of cotton lint go?) to fill a relatively small area.



▼ **Looking from the fiddle yard end of the layout towards the station.**

the Hemyock half-timbered structure. I built this from card and wood strip; the brick infill was scribed cardboard (this was a bit easier than trying to cut plasticard to fit) and painted with watercolours. I cheated on the roof by using corrugated iron sheet; my only excuse was that a long run of tiled buildings had exhausted my patience. Fully detailed interiors, largely from Invertrain, are illuminated using the Woodland Scenics lighting system. This is an expensive option, but so simple I was sold on it immediately. It makes such a difference – all the buildings ready for the next layout are modelled with full interiors and lighting.

I extended the warehouse-cum-factory buildings with an engine house fitted with lights to show off the steam pump inside. I added another brick and stone building based loosely on the water mill at Cheddleton in Staffordshire, but in Cotswold stone to match the run of warehouses from the original section.

I colour-matched the scenics – helped by the original choice of cinder ballast for the track and yard. More figures and other scenic features completed the new setting. I have populated the locomotives and coaching stock, which like many things related to O gauge is not an optional luxury. Thanks to Stephen Williams' article on Pendon in the June 2023 RAILWAY MODELLER, I now realise that the driver of the railcar does not have the correct white coat!

All in all, *Jennings' Sidings* proved to be a good introduction to O gauge modelling: important lessons were learnt and new techniques absorbed (such as using wood strips for timber structures – either coffee stirrers or C&W sleeper strip). I can now offer *Jennings' Sidings* in its short industrial form as well as a GWR station, thanks to an improvised end piece to the three-board format, using structures culled from a now discarded layout (a one-board wharfside 'shunter'). This is operated with temporary 'sleeper' buffers fixed with impact adhesive and the track ends 'rusted up' – all to be removed easily and buffed up when operated



as the long version. It is also very nice to have the smaller layout readily available for a quick running session and not 'boxed up' for safety's sake.

Operation

Operation of the long version is a simple oscillation between either a diesel railcar or an autococh on the passenger service, and a freight pulled by one of the two R-T-R 0-6-0 pannier tanks currently available. The two-road traverser is a little constraining for the larger layout and may be replaced with a third road, but the overhang to serve the 'stub' siding that would result may take some careful thought. The industrial variant is a straightforward shunting operation, with little need for run-rounds or brake vans. In this case, the loop road becomes an additional siding. In both cases, freight trains are necessarily short, and I need to count wagons when they are returning to the fiddle yard.

Future plans

So, where next? The original three-board *Jennings' Sidings* might yet have another

▲ The timber-framed station building, with brick infill, is based on the structure at Hemyock on the Culm Valley Light Railway.

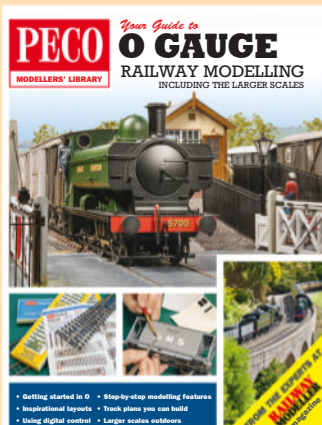
extension; a fully detailed wagon repair shed proved surplus to requirements for the new Stafford Railway Circle O gauge layout, and begs to be added as another single board extension. But there are limits to adding new sections to what is now an ageing layout. For the moment, however, *Jennings' Sidings* can sit side by side with the emerging *Blandings Parva* (for Wodehousians there will be a pig in the cattle dock) – a more conventional GWR terminus, possibly with some scenic extensions, but this time anticipated rather than added later.

My thanks to friends and fellow modellers of the Stafford Railway Circle who have also helped to renew my interest in this hobby, and to the Gauge O Guild for inspiration and useful guides to the larger scale.

The name?

Euan Jennings built some lovely engines and rolling stock in P4, and was my carpenter in residence and a much-missed friend.

Getting started in O gauge



If you are considering embarking on your first O gauge model railway project, a great starting point is the Peco Starter Track Set (ref.ST701), which contains a selection of straights, curves (second radius) and points from the Setrack range. One of the straights is supplied with wires pre-fitted to the rails, which means connecting to a controller is very straightforward.

With sufficient parts provided to assemble a basic configuration of trackwork, expanding the contents of the starter set into a larger system can be achieved using fully compatible items from the Peco Setrack and Peco Streamline (bullhead) O gauge ranges.

Also included with the starter set is a copy of the 124-page Peco Modellers' Library title *Your Guide to O Gauge Railway Modelling*, which provides a perfect introduction to 7mm scale with a whole host of layout suggestions and practical step-by-step modelling features.



Ideas for entertaining scenic cameos

LES RICHARDSON takes us on a tour of Burch Green, an OO gauge layout that was constructed by a group of modellers in memory of a fellow modeller and friend. The model features many novel cameos and scenic details for viewers to spot at exhibitions, a selection of which are presented here.

Photography by the author

Back in 2016, whilst our group of modellers (all members of Bingham Model Railway Club) were in the process of completing our latest layout, our good friend Chris Burch (the Reverend Canon J Christopher Burch, to use his full name), of Syston Model Railway Society, passed away suddenly. Chris had a number of small shunting layouts that he used to take to shows to entertain children, and for them to drive. He was an exceptional layout operator and one of the nicest people you could hope to meet.

At that time, our group consisted of Alf Hodkin, Jim Ross, Geoff Warren and myself. We decided to make a small shunting

layout in Chris's memory, hence *Burch Green*. However, as the four of us then had a combined age of somewhere over 250, we thought we would build it in OO rather than Chris's preferred gauge of N. That way, we felt we would be able to manage the fine detail the layout needed. We decided that the track plan would be kept simple, and based it on a classic shunting puzzle. However, Chris enjoyed beer and Marmite, so we decided to include a brewery for the former and a van for the latter!

The foundation of the resultant layout is a pair of proprietary baseboard kits, each measuring 4' x 16". The layout has two levels – the railway being on the lower one (laid

▲ *Burch Green* is essentially an OO gauge shunting puzzle, with a detailed townscape modelled on a raised level along the back.

using Peco code 75 Streamline track), with a townscape on the higher level.

We are all veterans of a good number of shows and realise that visitors don't always spend that long looking at layouts, unless there is plenty for them to look at. Accordingly, we spent a considerable amount of time on smaller scenic details, and also devised a prominent 'Can you find?' sheet for viewers to identify our hidden celebrities and locate small animals and plants – even down to dandelions and a butterfly!



▲ A couple on their holiday have been stopped by the police and taken to the weighbridge in the railway yard to determine whether their Carlight Continental (an Oxford Diecast model) has been loaded over its permitted weight. The driver figure is based on a certain television presenter who is known for his dislike of caravans... The weighbridge office was constructed from the Metcalfe Models card kit that was supplied free with the December 2017 edition of *RAILWAY MODELLER*.



▲ One of the back yards along the row of terraced houses is occupied by a group of musicians having an impromptu session, watched by Twiggy. The group includes Jimi Hendrix, Francis Rossi and Rick Parfitt of Status Quo, and trumpeter Roy Castle.



▲ Parked in the factory yard is a Land Rover Lightweight Hard Top belonging to Fred Dibnah. The famous steeplejack can be seen on the factory roof (inset), making his way up the chimney to begin its demolition. The vehicle is an Oxford Diecast model.



▲ The famous Belgian detective Hercule Poirot stands outside the local pub. A Midland General Bristol Lodekka (an EFE die-cast model) passes by, bound for Clay Cross. The pub yard (inset) has the usual clutter, including a washing line. Buses are appropriate for the late 1960s and for the area west of Nottingham.



▲ Beer barrels are being rolled along the brewery's loading platform by none other than the comedy duo Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy. The barrels are destined for loading in the adjacent van, emblazoned with 'S Laurel Co Ltd' branding. The limited edition model was commissioned from Dapol by Buggleskelly Station. The brewery itself is a detailed Metcalfe Models card kit. Note the Marmite lorry in the background.

Waiting at the bus stop ▶ are characters from three classic television shows: Private Godfrey, Private Pike and Sergeant Wilson from *Dad's Army*; Boss Hogg from *The Dukes of Hazzard*; and 'Blakey', Stan Butler and Jack Harper from *On the Buses*. Model figures for a wide array of famous celebrities and fictional characters are available from suppliers including Buggleskelly Station (see the range at www.buggleskellystation.com), www.scalesceneryandfigures.co.uk and Osborn's Models (www.osbornmodels.com). The Leyland Titan PD1 bus is an EFE die-cast model in the Barton Transport colour scheme.



The allotment plots ▶ are having trouble with rabbits, as a certain young wizard has been called in to make them disappear using a vanishing spell. Pre-made and kit-based products for modelling vegetables in various scales are obtainable from suppliers including Busch, Noch and Gaugemaster.



See Burch Green at Birstall show

The layout is booked to appear at the 2026 Syston Model Railway Society Exhibition, which is taking place on **17 & 18 January** at Birstall Social Club, 16-18 Wanlip Lane, Birstall, Leicester LE4 4JS (see Societies & Clubs for further details). With Syston MRS being Chris's former club, the layout is appearing there in his memory.

Readers' Letters

We can only consider for publication letters which are accompanied by the writer's full name and address (although we do not publish the latter except in the case of appeals). This also applies to all correspondence received via electronic means including email to: editorial@railwaymodeller.co.uk

Correspondence for forwarding to any of our contributors must be addressed to them c/o RAILWAY MODELLER, Underleys, Beer, Seaton, Devon EX12 3NA.

All correspondence published here represents the opinions of the authors only and not RAILWAY MODELLER.

Churchward Star build in O gauge – a postscript

It is always a pleasure to hear that a reader has enjoyed one of my articles, in this case the David Andrews 7mm scale kit of the GWR Star Class 4-6-0 (RM November & December 2025). Following a request for a bit more information about how I painted the model, here are a few notes on how I went about the finishing stages.

I always try to make the model as free as possible from solder and glue 'blobs' and any scratches or damage caused during construction. Then, I clean the model thoroughly using a domestic cleaner, such as Cif, applied with an old toothbrush. This sorts out any weak attachments, so do it over a washing-up bowl to catch any small parts that fall off. I then use lots of hot water to rinse the model thoroughly and get rid of any Cif deposits. After this, I leave it for at least a day in a warm place.

I use Halfords car paints to form a foundation for the paintwork, starting with a flat primer. I prefer red primer, but grey is equally effective. Using car paints means that quite a lot of paint comes out of the nozzle, so you have to be quick. I leave it to dry and then apply another coat if I have missed bits. You sometimes get runs or slumps, and these should be cleaned off. I use a glass fibre pencil brush, obtainable from most model shops, to take the slump back to bare metal.

I then use a base coat of Halfords Matt Black – though Satin is also OK. I also use a car paint as a ground colour for the final finish. In the case of

GWR or BR green locomotives, I use Halfords Brooklands Green. I use ordinary masking tape to mask off the black parts I want to retain, and it is a matter of choice how detailed you make the masking. I use a craft knife to shape and cut the masking round edges and details. I then spray the car paint on the exposed parts.

I prefer Phoenix Precision railway colours – but for some liveries I am happy to use Humbrol or Revell enamels. For the Star, I used Phoenix GWR Green 1906–23. I always apply the main finish with an airbrush – I have both Iwata and Paasche brushes, and they need to be kept clean or they clog up using enamels. I mix the paint 50:50 with thinners and never use quick-drying thinners because this can cause the paint to dry prior to contact with the model, resulting in a stippled 'orange peel' effect on the paintwork. Usually, I give a model two coats of railway colour.

I remove the masking, and go over the whole model with black or GWR green enamels, applied with a fine brush on edges, chips and other blemishes.

For lining, I always use a spring bow drawing pen – an instrument that dates from before computer drafting was invented. Essentially it is a twin-bladed pen that holds the paint in tension between the two blades. The paint flows out from between the tips of the blades, which are adjusted with a screw to regulate the width of the line. For lining models, this instrument is



▲ John Cockcroft's O gauge model of Great Western Railway Star Class 4-6-0 No.4067 Tintern Abbey, featured in the November and December 2025 issues.

flexible, adjustable and very easily cleaned. Because lining on a model is always going to be thicker than scale, I use toned-down paint to avoid it being too glaring. In the case of GWR locos, I use Humbrol No.9 (a dull orange colour) and Humbrol No.85 Coal Black. The most important thing to aim for is to make the lining even, with no blobs or smudges, so take your time. I have a spring bow nib on a compass, which I use for following edges, such as around splashers and cab windows, and tender raves. For sharp corners, such as on GWR panels, I use very fine pointed bristle brushes to extend the straight lines drawn using the pen. If you make a mistake or a blob (which you will!) you can use a fine brush with a little thinners on it to tidy the edge of the line. I use HMRS Pressfix transfers for most models and Diane Carney or Severn Mill etched plates.

A most important final task is the varnish coat. All the work above does leave some irregularities and variations in finish that look a bit tatty. I use commercial gloss polyurethane varnish such as Ronseal (it should say on the tin that brushes etc. should be cleaned with white spirit, not water). I tone down the gloss with Phoenix Precision Matting Agent and that is mixed to achieve a satin or eggshell finish. I always mix the varnish 50:50 with thinners and apply carefully with an airbrush. Two coats are usually enough to give a lovely even finish – make a note of how much matting you used so that you can either gloss it up or matt it down to taste.

That finishes the painting, but you may wish to weather the model – that is another story!

JOHN COCKCROFT

A prototype for everything?

Reading the December issue of RAILWAY MODELLER, I came across the word 'prototype' when referring to two production vehicles.

First, p997 showed a BR Class 104 Diesel Multiple Unit and stated that 304 units had been built. Second, p1012 showed a picture of Class 91 electric locomotive 91 150, many other examples having been built.

They both had this word 'prototype' associated with them, so can you

please explain why these production vehicles are called prototypes? A definition of prototypes says: "A prototype is an early sample or model of a product created to test a concept or process before full-scale production. It helps evaluate designs and identify improvements by allowing users to interact with a tangible version of the idea." So, in the truest sense of the word, it refers to a one-off or two examples for evaluation and not for

304 units or tens of Class 91 electric locomotives.

Excuse my ignorance, but this word does appear to be over-used and slightly inappropriate in most cases in magazines.

JOHN KULAS

[Ed. Although we acknowledge that it can sometimes cause confusion, the word 'prototype' has long been used in RAILWAY MODELLER as a way of referring to the original form of something – as in

the real-world version upon which a small scale model is based, whether that is a locomotive, item of rolling stock, building or track plan. By extension, the term 'prototype practice' is commonly used when referring to how certain things are undertaken on the real railway, such as signalling or operational procedures, whilst 'prototype inspiration' is a term widely used by modellers when referring to the study of the real railway.]

Free backscene feedback

I write with reference to the free gifts of photographic backscenes that you occasionally give away with copies of RAILWAY MODELLER – most recently, with the January 2026 issue.

Whilst I cannot fault the quality of these items, it is incorrect to state that the backscenes are 1600mm long. If the two sections were designed to be butted together, this would be true. In practice, they are not – they're actually designed to overlap (by all of 7mm – I checked). This means that modellers intending to make use of these backscenes need to take this into account when measuring and cutting the backboard to size, otherwise they will have an unsightly gap on the backscene where the sheets don't quite cover the backboard.

KEVIN RUSSELL



A fun layout project for Christmas using a Hornby Santa's Express train set

I recently purchased one of the Santa's Express train sets by Hornby, as reviewed in the December 2025 issue of RAILWAY MODELLER. The price seemed very reasonable and I intended to use it as the basis of a small layout, for eventual display at the Christmas Fayre at Landguard Fort in Felixstowe (where I am a volunteer).

The supplied track is plain white, so first I dry-brushed the sleepers a light brown, then painted the rail sides a rust colour. That way, the track stood out against the snow. The track was stuck down onto a board using Copydex.

The street lamps are in fact battery-operated items that I had purchased previously from The Range. These were stuck to the board, with the wires buried underneath polystyrene, this having been first shaped with my hot wire cutter.

The polystyrene was then covered with plaster bandage, painted with white undercoat and then, whilst the paint was still wet, Woodland Scenics snow scatter was sprinkled on top of it. The building is the Wills Craftsman Farm Cottage kit (ref.CK10), which has a small bulb in it powered by a 9V



battery hidden in the nearby shed. The trees were a bargain pack bought from Orwell Model Railways (my local model shop), whilst other bits and pieces were saved from previous years' Christmas cakes!

The layout was finished in time for the Christmas Fayre, where it managed to operate all day despite only having an advertised battery life between charges of 2½ hours. I really enjoyed making this fun little layout and it was well received by the visitors.

LAURENCE HENDRY

An engine shed – the Bilteezi way

I was interested to read Ian Nuttall's *An engine shed for Mallerstang Junction* article in the December 2025 issue.

A few years ago, I built a similar shed, but based on three of the old Bilteezi card shed kits. As supplied, these have flat, 2D sides, with the relief detail drawn on.

For my model, I photocopied the sides a few times. On the first paper copy, I cut out the main sides and stuck these onto a card backing. I then cut out where the walls were drawn in recess.

For the next paper copy, I again stuck this onto card, but cut out the windows and then the recessed wall parts, plus about ¼" around the edges. I changed the building from stone to brick using building papers on the first and second copies, then glued the recessed parts behind the main walls.

The third copy was printed onto clear plastic copying film. I cut out all the windows (with an excess all around) and glued them behind the openings. Doing this creates translucent windows that let light through, but with the weathered appearance that you would see on an old steam



shed. Although I didn't do this with my model, you could repeat stages one and two and glue these parts on the inside too. This would create the impression of interior detail and also give extra thickness for strength.

I hope the above will be a help to modellers. Bilteezi kits are old but are so useful and cheap for all kinds of modellers, kit-bashers and scratch-builders, to create buildings and scenes on their layouts.

JOHN HARRISON

Model show will go on in Jamie's memory

Many thanks for printing the news item on p80 of the January edition of RAILWAY MODELLER (under the heading, 'Model clubs to combine for show benefiting teenage cancer appeal').

Since we started the planning of this exhibition, this is one letter we had hoped we would never have to write. It is with great sadness that we have to advise that dear Jamie died on Sunday 30 November. Needless to say, everyone concerned is desperately upset by this heartbreaking news.

It is the wish of Jamie's family that we continue with our exhibition, with all proceeds being donated to the Teenage Cancer Trust in Jamie's memory. Therefore, our team of Graham Hobbs, Alan Hancock, John Gillet and myself, with the support and backing of our club, Market Deeping MRC, along with Sleaford MRC, March & District MRC and the NG34 Model Railway Society, together with everyone else who is involved with the show, have all agreed to continue with the exhibition so that

there can be hope for other children in the future.

BILL SOWERBY
Market Deeping MRC

[Ed. We wish to express our condolences to Jamie's family for their loss. Please refer to Societies & Clubs for further details about the event, which will be taking place at St Michael and All Angels Church, East End, Langtoft PE6 9LP from 10:00-16:00 on 24 January 2026.]

Catch of the day!

Many thanks to yourselves and Metcalfe Models for the free card kit that was supplied with printed copies of the December issue of RAILWAY MODELLER. I have already made great use of this kit on my new 4mm scale layout (*Somerby-on-Sea*) as can be seen in the accompanying picture. It's opening day for the chippy and a nice queue is forming!

TIM LANGTON

Here is a photo of my completed Metcalfe Models chip shop kit, which came free with the December edition. It was a very enjoyable little building to put together, with just a little bit of weathering added and some touching in with paint around the window and door frames.

GARY DIXON



Snippets... Memories of the Rev. Awdry

Further to the Talking Points feature in the January issue, my abiding memory of the Reverend Awdry is being handed Thomas The Tank Engine and nearly dropping it! It must have been crammed with lead. We were at the Gloucester Model Railway Club some time in the 1970s. Wilbert's chairmanship, involvement and commitment to GMRC was inspirational. The present clubhouse is called the Awdry Building and I believe Reverend Awdry contributed money to make its construction possible. I had moved away by then.

COLIN TANNER

Oily fish?

Whilst volunteering on the South Devon Railway some years ago, I noted that the fishplates along the track were oiled regularly. Yet I don't recall seeing this depicted on a model railway. Accordingly, I have marked all my fishplates on my layout using matt black paint.

RICHARD J HANKS

A model shop backwater?

I noticed the advertisement opposite the editorial page of the January issue of RM encouraging readers to support their local model shop. The nearest urban centres to where I live – Croydon, Redhill and Sevenoaks – no longer have a model railway shop, and I would say this area of south London and north-east Surrey feels like a backwater as far as the trade is concerned. Perhaps someone will come to our rescue and open a shop, which I am sure will be well patronised.

CHRISTOPHER DEAN

Cyril Fry article

In an otherwise excellent publication, I was surprised to read the statement on p99 of the 2026 RAILWAY MODELLER Special: "Cyril [Fry] also pioneered a system of smoke generators which he later sold as an idea to Tri-ang". This contradicts the standard reference on p47 of *Tri-ang Railways, The Story of Rovex, Volume 1* by Pat Hammond, which states that, "Fry wanted £1,000 to remove the body from a loco to reveal his device", and that, "Richard Lines, who also went over to Ireland to see Mr Fry's puffing engines, felt this was too much and decided they would think the problem through themselves."

TONY BLACKMAN

[Ed. Our apologies for the error, which occurred as a result of misinterpreting notes that had been taken whilst undertaking research at the Casino Model Railway Museum.]

NEW PRODUCT REVIEWS

FROM **RAILWAY MODELLER** BY OUR EDITORIAL STAFF AND CONTRIBUTING MODELLERS

GB Railfreight Class 69 New from Bachmann in OO

Bachmann Europe plc has delivered its latest ready-to-run locomotive under its OO gauge Branchline brand, depicting one of the most significant developments in diesel traction in recent years – the GB Railfreight Class 69, plans for which were announced in the August 2021 *RAILWAY MODELLER*.

Produced under an exclusive agreement with GBRf, the tooling reflects the various detail differences of the donor Class 56 locomotives – depending on whether they were constructed by BR Engineering Limited Crewe, BREL Doncaster or Electroputere of Romania. Each is supplied either Digital Command Control ready, DCC Sound Fitted or with the manufacturer's Sound Fitted Deluxe option, with the latter featuring motorised radiator fans (operated by a dedicated motor and synchronised with the locomotive's sound files) and the firm's SFX auto-release coupling system, allowing for hands-free uncoupling with the press of a button.

The liveries being produced are: 69 001 *Mayflower* in GB Railfreight dark blue & orange with UK and USA flags on its sides (ref.35-776); 69 002 *Bob Tiller CM&EE* in GBRf 'heritage' BR large logo blue & yellow (ref.35-777); 69 003 *The Railway Observer* in GBRf dark blue & orange (ref.35-778); and 69 005 *Eastleigh* in GBRf 'heritage' BR green with late crest (ref.35-780).

In addition to this line-up, Bachmann has teamed up with GBRf to produce a special charitable colour scheme, representing 69 013 (ref.35-782) in its current black livery with 'Andy's Man Club' mental health charity branding – with proceeds from sales going to the

associated charity, which aims to encourage men to talk about their problems and so prevent male suicides.

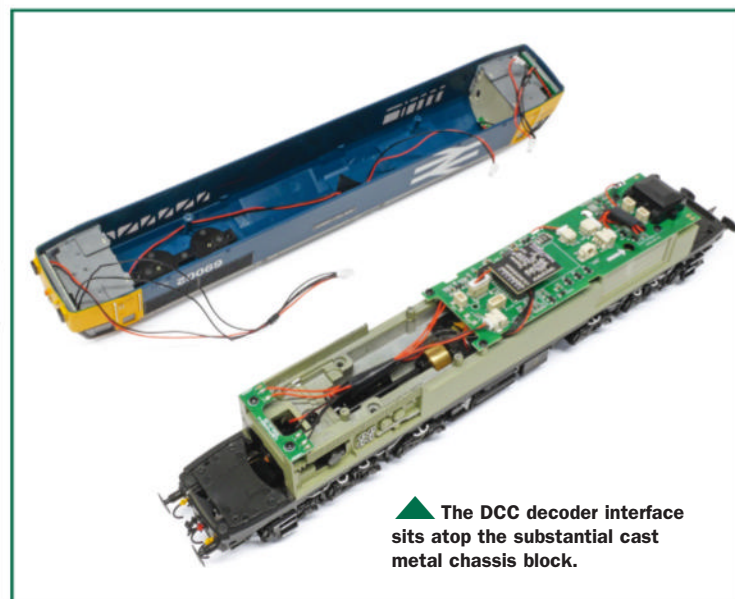
Our sample in detail

For review we received a sample of the second member of the class, 69 002 *Bob Tiller CM&EE* in GBRf 'heritage' BR large logo blue (ref.35-777). The real machine is derived from BREL Doncaster-built example 56 057, which originally entered service on 27 March 1979. It was refurbished and renumbered 56 311 in April 2008, and worked with freight operators such as DC Rail. Acquired by GBRf in June 2018, it became one of the first locomotives enrolled in the Class 69 programme, entering traffic alongside class doyen 69 001 (formerly 56 031) and receiving the name *Bob Tiller CM&EE* in a ceremony at London Waterloo station on 10 July 2021.

The application of the GBRf 'heritage' colour scheme is excellent, adorned with numerous small printed details, including crisp renditions of the overhead warning flashes, data markings, operator branding and BR large logos. Separation between the

main body colours is sharp, and complemented by a fine orange cantrail stripe around the circumference of the roofline. Etched versions of the printed cast nameplates are also provided, and have been fitted here for photography. Comparison between the model and

photos of the real machine shows that Bachmann has gone to great lengths to replicate the shape of the prototype, with the distinctive fabricated steel cab of the BREL Doncaster donor – with its telltale flat-top nose – captured faithfully. The flush faces of the nose



▲ The DCC decoder interface sits atop the substantial cast metal chassis block.



ends sport central high-intensity LED headlights, WIPAC light clusters (both featuring renditions of the individual LEDs as part of the glazing) and central AAR multiple working system sockets – similar to other Electro-Motive Diesel locomotives such as the Class 59, 66 and 67.

A full suite of bufferbeam details is supplied for the modeller to fit, the pack with our sample comprising: screw-link couplings; bufferbeam pipes (yellow main reservoir and red air brake pipes); air horns; and two styles of horn grille. These details have been fitted to the No.2 end for photography. It is worth noting that during the conversion process, the designations of No.1 and No.2 end were swapped, conforming to other EMD designs – the No.1 fan end (Class 56) becoming the



▲ The fan covers are formed of etched metal.



▲ The microswitches for the directional lighting.

No.2 end and vice versa. This resulted in the reviewer mistakenly fitting the grille with the additional housing for the radar to the wrong end. The fitting of these parts requires the removal of the NEM tension-lock coupling and pocket, held in place by a single screw.

The bodyside consists largely of plastic mouldings, with the grilles produced as separately fitted etched metal parts. Those on the body side afford views of the structural framework, with decorated depictions of the engine and ancillary equipment within formed as part of the internal metal chassis casting; this is enhanced further by the addition of machine room lighting (DCC operation only). Separate fittings, to name a few, include cab grab handles (formed from metal wire) and lamp brackets. Buffer heads are metal and sprung.

As part of the Class 69 programme, a large swathe of the main roof section between the two cabs was replaced, taking on a more angled appearance not too dissimilar to a Class 66. The cut-and-shut nature of this area is portrayed beautifully, particularly where the new flat panel sections meet the original curved cab roof at the No.1 end. The exhaust system for the EMD 710 power unit features a realistic matt dirty brown weathered finish, while commendably fine wire fan covers (also etched) provide a view of the fan detail underneath. Whilst the fans are purely aesthetic on DCC ready and Sound Fitted examples, the Sound Fitted Deluxe versions incorporate a separate motor assembly, programmed such that the fans rotate in sync with the engine sounds under DCC control.

The retained Class 56 bogies – which take the form of plastic mouldings – exhibit a very impressive level of depth and detail, with full-relief representations of the springs and secondary suspension, brake gear and axlebox covers. This attention to detail extends to the many separately fitted components such as brake cylinders, vertical dampers, and representations

of the bogie retention clips. Cab steps are also fitted separately.

Cab glazing is commendably flush, with extremely fine etched windscreen wipers, whilst a detailed representation of each cab interior is visible through the windows. Control desks are embellished with finely printed renditions of the dials and gauges, with a number of the controls picked out individually in the appropriate colours (some of these appearing to be separate fittings), and the bulkheads adorned with numerous printed information panels and safety notices.

Mechanism and performance

The chassis comprises a substantial metal casting, housed within which is a centrally mounted, twin flywheel-fitted five-pole motor that provides power to both bogies. All axles are driven and power is collected from all wheels, with all axles featuring brass bearings.

A printed circuit board sits atop the casting towards the No.1 end, equipped with a Plux22 decoder interface and a single factory-fitted 15 x 11mm 'sugar cube' speaker sited just behind the cab bulkhead. Sound Fitted and Sound Fitted Deluxe versions benefit from the firm's new dual fitted XL speaker system – incorporating a Tangband 75 x 24.5mm bass speaker in addition to the 'sugar cube'. All models – including our DCC ready example – are also equipped with the firm's new 'Back-up' stay-alive system, to smooth out any interruptions to the current collection when operating under DCC control.

The model is equipped with directional, cab and machine room lighting, but for 12V dc users this is restricted to just directional lights, which can be controlled via two on/off switches (one for each end) located on the underside of the chassis. A third on/off switch is also present for the 'Back-up' stay-alive system (not required for 12V dc operation). On DCC, lighting functions are: F1 – directional lights No.1 end (on/off); F3 – directional lights No.2 end (on/off); F4 – day/night mode (toggle); F5 – yard lighting mode (on/off); F9 – machine room light (on/off); F10 – cab lights No.2 end (on/off); and F11 – cab lights No.1 end (on/off). Function F2 is reserved for braking, with F0 providing global on/off control of the directional lighting.

Access to the decoder is via the removal of the locomotive body: this is straightforward, requiring the removal of four screws (two at each end) located behind the bogies – accessed through the frames between the centre and inner axles. Care is needed when lifting the bodyside clear, to avoid damaging the wires that connect to the lighting assemblies; these are simple plug and socket connections, of which there are three: two at the No.1 end and one at the No.2 (fan) end.

Weighing in at an impressive 656g, on test the Class 69 was capable of hauling 24 Pullman cars with ease around the Pecorama loft layout, with its 1 in 48 gradients and 3' radius curves.

PROTOTYPE VIEW GB Railfreight Class 69



▲ 69 002 Bob Tiller CM&EE arrives at Harmans Cross during a Swanage Railway gala event on 10 May 2024. Photo: Steve Haynes

Prototype information

In 2018, GB Railfreight purchased a total of 16 Class 56 Co-Co locomotives (in various conditions) from UK Rail Leasing.

A number of these locomotives (built between 1976 and 1984) were then subjected to an extensive rebuilding programme, undertaken by Electro-Motive Diesel at this company's Longport UK premises. This entailed removing the Ruston-Paxman RK3 engine and Brush control equipment, replacing these with new EMD 710 power units (with cleaner emissions) and electronic controls. The rebuilt locomotives were given the new designation of Class 69.

The power units and control systems of these rebuilt locomotives are nearly identical to the ubiquitous Class 66, whilst offering a similar performance capability. (GBRf initiated the Class 69 project as a result of its inability to procure further new Class 66s.)

The first Class 69 was completed in February 2021, with all 16 now in traffic (69 001-16), having been outshopped in a variety of colourful liveries, many inspired by 'heritage' BR guises.

Off 'Grid'

Bachmann is to be commended for bringing this latest development in UK motive power to the forefront for modellers in OO. With plenty of eye-catching and attractive liveries to choose from, we can see these being popular models for years to come.

It also can't be overlooked that the real machines (and therefore the models) share a number of common features with their donor locomotives – and so one does wonder if a fully

fledged model of the British Rail Class 56 could also be on the cards...

Sample supplied by

BACHMANN EUROPE Plc,
Moat Way, Barwell,
Leicestershire LE9 8EY.
www.bachmann.co.uk

PRICE
Ref.35-777 – £249.95



▲ The model replicates the distinctive new roof profile of the rebuilt Class 69s.

00 Rapido Port of Par Bagnall 0-4-0STs



It was reported in our January 2024 issue that Rapido Trains UK was to produce ready-to-run OO gauge models of the much celebrated Port of Par Bagnall 0-4-0STs *Judy* and *Alfred*, built in 1937 and 1953 respectively for shunting at Par Docks.

Supplied Digital Command Control ready or DCC sound-fitted, the models are available in two special twin packs: the first (ref.968001) depicting *Judy* and *Alfred* in lined dark green (circa 1960s condition), with the second (ref.968002) featuring the locomotives in lined light green, as currently preserved.

Two stand-alone versions are also available: *Judy* in 'as delivered' unlined dark green (ref.968003); and *Alfred* as preserved in the 1990s and 2000s in Port of Par lined yellow (ref.968004) – inspired by the yellow liveries worn by the fictional characters Bill and Ben, created by the Rev. Wilbert Awdry as part of The Railway Series.

An example of the 'as preserved' twin pack (ref.968002) was received for review, and is illustrated here.

A brief history

In 1829, mine owner Joseph Treffry began work on a new artificial harbour in the small cove of Porth, with the first ships arriving in 1833. Served initially by a canal (supplemented by horse and rope-drawn tramways), it gained a rail connection with the recently opened Cornwall Railway in 1860. However, it wasn't until 1912 that Par Harbour

finally got its first dedicated locomotive for shunting duties, in the form of a vertical boiler 0-4-0 built by Sara & Burgess; this was later joined by a more conventional Manning Wardle E Class 0-4-OST, No.713 *Punch*, in 1919, with a purpose-built Sentinel 0-4-0VBT (Works No.6520) *Toby* arriving in 1927.

During the mid-1930s, a new purpose-built locomotive was required. The design had to be capable of negotiating curves down to a 70' radius, and be able to pass under a low bridge carrying the Cornish main line (with a clearance of just 8'), that separated the port from the Par Moor clay dries – with the contract being awarded to W G Bagnall Ltd of Stafford.

What Bagnall delivered was a powerful yet compact 0-4-OST, featuring 10" by 16" outside cylinders with Bagnall-Price valve gear for ease of maintenance, 2' 9" wheels with a 5' wheelbase, and an impressive overall

height of just 7' 6" – achieved by dropping the cab floor down between the main frames.

Arriving in September 1937, the new locomotive (Works No.2572) was originally to be named *Chough* after a distinctive Cornish bird. However, the message was received by Bagnall as 'Cough', which they clearly felt didn't suit the engine, so it was sent to Par without a nameplate. It received the name *Judy* sometime around 1960, which was most likely a nod to its predecessor *Punch*.

With an increase in traffic in the post-war years, and the port's low-profile Sentinel *Toby* requiring replacement, an order for a second locomotive was placed with Bagnall. Delivered in January 1954, this locomotive (Works No.3058), although essentially the same design, had several small differences, the most notable being a flush-welded saddle

booklet by David Nelson-Brown, providing an in-depth study of the locomotives and the extensive internal rail system on which they worked. The models themselves are each cradled in plastic 'ice cube' style packaging, centred within a large foam insert.

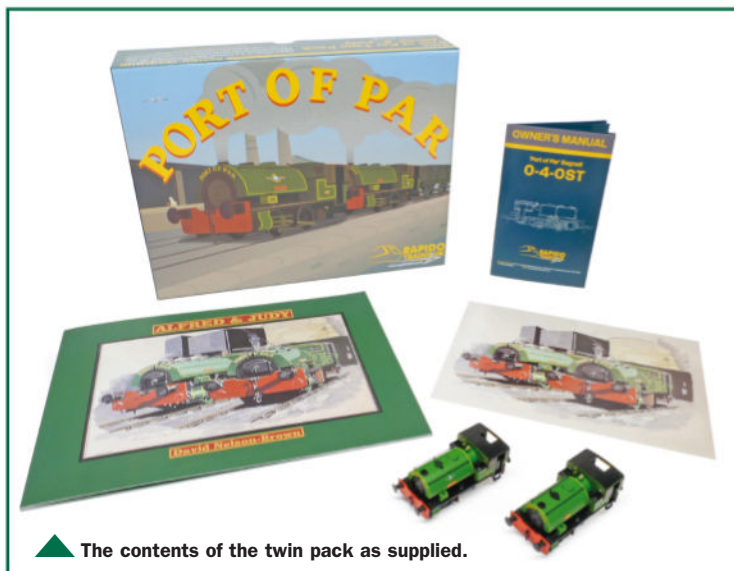
Upon releasing the locomotives from their packaging, the first aspect that strikes you is their small and compact size. Length over bufferbeams is 66mm, which scales out to 16' 6", with height from the rail head coming in at just a fraction over 30mm, scaling out at 7' 6" – both an exact match to the full-size machines.

Construction comprises die-cast metal for the chassis block, running plate (incorporating the bufferbeams) and lower portion of the boiler, along with the smokebox, while injection-moulded plastic accounts for much of the upper works – including the saddle tank and cab. The overall weight of each locomotive is 83g – an impressive figure considering their diminutive size!

The body tooling bristles with fine separately fitted details, including lamp iron, whistle and clack valves. Handrails are predominantly plastic, whilst buffer heads are turned metal and sprung.

As supplied, the models are fitted with short dovetail slimline tension-lock couplings, held in place by the base keeper plate. These can be swapped for the optional scale three-link couplings provided as part of the extensive accessory bag with each model, along with a set of bufferbeam infills: these slide neatly into the openings left by the tension-locks and can be secured with a dab of PVA glue. (The only minor detraction is the shade of red, which is deeper than the rest of the bufferbeam.) Scale coupling hooks without chains are also provided, along with a pair of vacuum pipes.

While the pair are referred to affectionately by many enthusiasts as 'twins', they are not entirely identical, with Rapido catering for many of the subtle (and not so subtle) differences between the two, including: riveted (*Judy*) or welded (*Alfred*) tanks; square (*Judy*) and rounded (*Alfred*) coal bunkers; pivoting (*Judy*) or hinged (*Alfred*) water filler lids; and two styles of tank handrails, each set at a slightly different height – to name a few. The firm has also gone to great lengths to replicate the Bagnall-Price valve gear. Although it is not fully functional due to restricted clearance between the parts,



▲ The contents of the twin pack as supplied.

tank with flat handrail mountings. It received the name *Alfred* after the then retiring harbour master at the time, Alfred Truscott.

Withdrawn in 1969 and 1977 respectively, they were among the last working steam locomotives in Cornwall, and were immortalised by Thomas the Tank Engine creator Reverend W Awdry, who included them in his Railway Series books as the yellow-liveried Bill and Ben. Both are preserved on the Bodmin & Wenford Railway, with *Judy* currently operational and an overhaul planned for *Alfred*.

Our sample in detail

The set comes presented in an exquisite card box, adorned with attractive artwork featuring the 'twins' at work on the quayside. Lifting the lid reveals a postcard-size exclusive Jonathan Clay print, a comprehensive manual and a lavishly illustrated

the presence of static representations of the motion – which sits between the coupling and connecting rods – truly adds a convincing sense of depth to the lower workings of the locomotive.

Despite their compact nature, the footplates have certainly not been overlooked, with a comprehensive array of backhead controls and fittings present – all of which can be fully appreciated as a result of the open roof ventilator and generous opening at the rear. The sliding wooden cabside shutters are fixed in the open position, with those for the rear supplied as separate fittings – allowing the modeller to pose them in the open or closed position. Cab doors are also provided – the fitting of which requires the removal of the cab (see Mechanism & performance section).

The light green colour schemes feature a pleasing satin finish throughout, with sharp renditions of the yellow lining. Crisply applied is the 'PORT OF PAR' lettering (complete with red shading) which neatly follows the curve of the saddle tank above the smokebox, with this fine level of printed detail extending to the pit & tip crests of English China Clays (with port rope & anchor motif) present on the tank of *Alfred* – a unique feature of this particular locomotive. Etched versions of the printed name and builder's plates are provided, with these having been fitted for photography.

Mechanism & performance

The model is equipped with a flywheel-fitted coreless motor, housed within the casting of the boiler barrel, providing drive to the rear axle. Current is collected via plunger pick-ups from all wheels, all of which feature brass bearings.

A printed circuit board sits atop the motor, equipped with an E24 DCC interface and a factory-fitted 15mm x 11mm 'sugar cube' speaker sited within the smokebox. All models – including our DCC ready samples – are also equipped with MoPower stay-alive capacitors, to smooth out any interruptions to the current collection when operating on DCC.

Access to the mechanism and decoder interface starts with removing the cab: this is held in place by two screws (one each side) located below the leading corners of the coal

bunkers, with an additional tab under the rear of the cab, above the bufferbeam. It's worth noting that the moulded coal loads in each of the bunkers are held lightly in place by a small amount of glue; on our samples, we found these bonds needed breaking to allow the cabs to be lifted away. The saddle tank is a much simpler affair, held in place by four clips (two on each side) – once these are disengaged, it can be lifted away.

On test, both models proved to be smooth and quiet runners through the speed ranges, down to prototypical shunting speeds. They were tested through large radius Peco Steamline code 75 bullhead points, with no hesitation despite their very short wheelbase.

Par for the course

Rapido deserves to be applauded for bringing these distinctive and characterful saddle tanks to market, with what must be one of the smallest OO ready-to-run locomotives to date. Indeed, it is difficult to think of many other similar low-profile designs worthy of a future release, though Peckett



▲ A 1969 view of *Alfred* outside its shed at Par Docks. The wooden rear cab shutters are in the closed position. Photo: Rail Photoprints

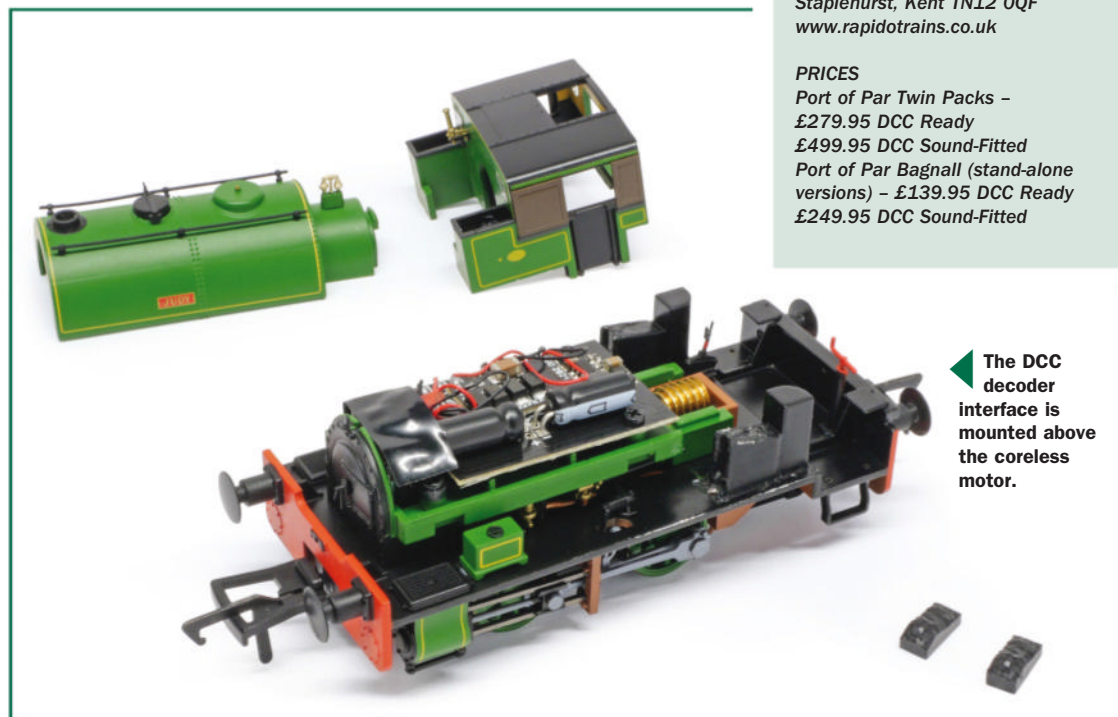
O-4-OST No.1900 – better known as 'The Flying Bufferbeam', with an overall height of just 5' 9" – would certainly make for an interesting model!

Sample supplied by

RAPIDO TRAINS UK LTD,
Unit 3, Clinton Business Centre,
Staplehurst, Kent TN12 0QF
www.rapidotrains.co.uk

PRICES

Port of Par Twin Packs –
£279.95 DCC Ready
£499.95 DCC Sound-Fitted
Port of Par Bagnall (stand-alone
versions) – £139.95 DCC Ready
£249.95 DCC Sound-Fitted



◀ The DCC decoder interface is mounted above the coreless motor.



▲ A rear view of the 'twins'; the rear cab shutters are supplied separately and can be fitted in the closed position or open, as shown here.

TT:120 Hornby Branch Line Freight Train Set



Hornby has expanded its range of TT:120 starter sets with the arrival of the Branch Line Freight Train Set (ref.TT1005M), plans for which were outlined in our June 2025 issue.

The set, which is configured for 12V dc analogue control, contains the firm's newly tooled and adapted version of the London & South Western Railway Adams B4 0-4-0T steam locomotive; two four-wheel wagons; a starter oval of track with third radius (353mm) curves;

controller; wall plug transformers; power connecting track; and railing ramp. The models, track and accessories are all supplied in sturdy cardboard trays, presented in a surprisingly compact, lavishly illustrated card box.

Locomotive & stock

The locomotive represents B4 No.96 *Normandy* in Southern Railway black with 'sunshine' lettering, which can be

found on the Bluebell Railway – one of two preserved examples of this class. Construction centres on a die-cast metal running plate, with injection-moulded plastic forming the chassis and bodyshell. The model utilises a number of simplified detailing and decoration methods to keep the train set within an entry level price range: the majority of the details are formed as part of the body tooling (with the exception of the buffer heads and Ramsbottom safety valves), and simplified connecting rods are fitted, minus the slide bars.

The model is equipped with a centrally mounted, flywheel-fitted coreless motor, providing drive to the rear coupled axle. Current is collected from all wheels via wiper pick-ups, with a six-pin Digital Command Control interface (compatible with the firm's range of HM7000 Bluetooth® DCC decoders) located atop the motor. There is no provision for sound.

Access to the mechanism and decoder is achieved by first removing the coupling assemblies, each held in place by a single screw. Two additional body clips are present, which are accessed by inserting an appropriate tool (such as a flat-headed screwdriver) into two small rectangular openings on the underside of the chassis, situated between the cylinders and under the running plate. Once these are disengaged, the body can be lifted away from the chassis.

The livery, though simplistic, is well executed, with the overall black colour scheme exhibiting a pleasing satin finish throughout. Details, such as the lubricators and the strap between the smokebox and boiler cladding, are picked out in a metallic brass colour, though some overspray was observed in places.

The Bulleid 'sunshine' lettering with its characteristic bold lined yellow typeface and green shading – which appears to have been applied using UV printing – stands up well from most viewing distances, but can appear a little fuzzy under closer inspection. The open-sided cab affords a clear view of the footplate, which features commendable renditions of controls and backhead fittings, though these details remain undecorated.

The wagons in the set comprise an open wagon in the red livery of Bestwood Iron Works, and a grey closed van with SR lettering. Both of these models are also from all-new tooling, and share the same common four-wheel chassis, equipped with extremely free-rolling metal wheelsets with pin-point axle ends. Like the locomotive, these are of simplified construction, with all details – such as the partial renditions of the brake gear – formed as part of the body/chassis tooling, with decoration applied by UV printing.

As with previous models in TT:120, both the locomotive and wagons are supplied with European-style couplings



TT:120 Hornby 'Terrier' in BR black livery

Following our initial review in the January 2026 issue, Hornby has received a further variant of its all-new London, Brighton & South Coast Railway A1X Class 'Terrier' 0-6-0Ts in TT:120. This example (ref.TT3040M) depicts the now-preserved *Stepney*, but in its 1950s BR lined black guise as No.32655.

Outshopped as No.55 in 1875, it was renumbered 655 on the LB&SCR duplicate list in 1901 and converted to push-pull motor train working in 1907. Rebuilt as an A1X in October 1912, it was loaned to the Woolmer Instructional Military Railway (the forerunner of the Longmoor Military Railway) in 1920, after which it

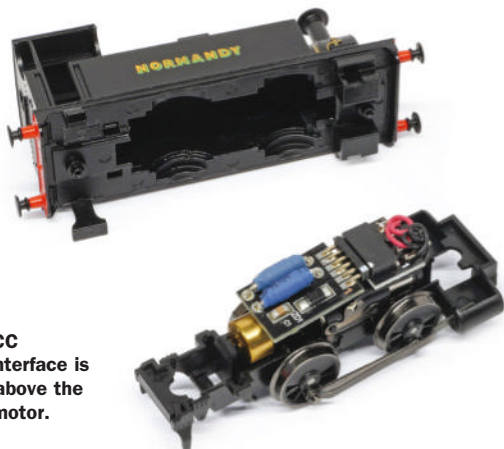
returned to service at Fratton.

Withdrawn from traffic in 1925, it was stored at Preston Park, deemed surplus to requirements.

Reinstated in 1927 as B655, it was fitted with vacuum brakes and London & South Western Railway mechanical pull-push gear, working the Lee-on-the-Solent branch until closure. Later postings took it on loan to the Kent & East Sussex Railway (by which time it had gained its Southern Railway identity as No.2655), and to the Hayling Island line.

Withdrawn from British Railways in 1960, it was purchased by the Bluebell Railway, running to Horsted Keynes under its own steam and subsequently





▲ A DCC decoder interface is mounted above the coreless motor.

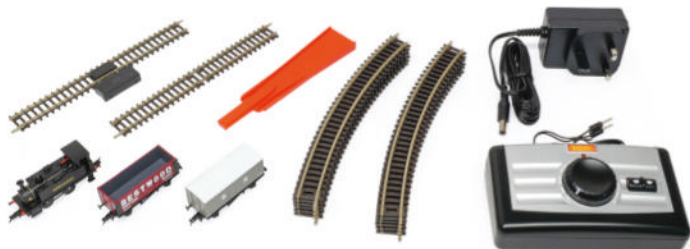
fitted as standard – mounted in self-centring NEM pockets, each with a good degree of sideways articulation.

Trackwork & performance

The assembled oval of track has a footprint of around 872 x 706mm. Further track extension packs are available separately, and allow for the creation of a double oval circuit with multiple sidings – with an overall footprint of 1371 x 914mm.

The sectional track simulates wooden sleepers and uses code 80 nickel silver flat-bottom rail, with all sections sturdy to handle and easy to connect together – ideal for those starting out in the hobby or scale. As with previous TT:120 train sets, upon

assembling the circuit, it was observed that the track sections did not sit level on a flat work surface. However, pinning the track parts to a baseboard should resolve this.

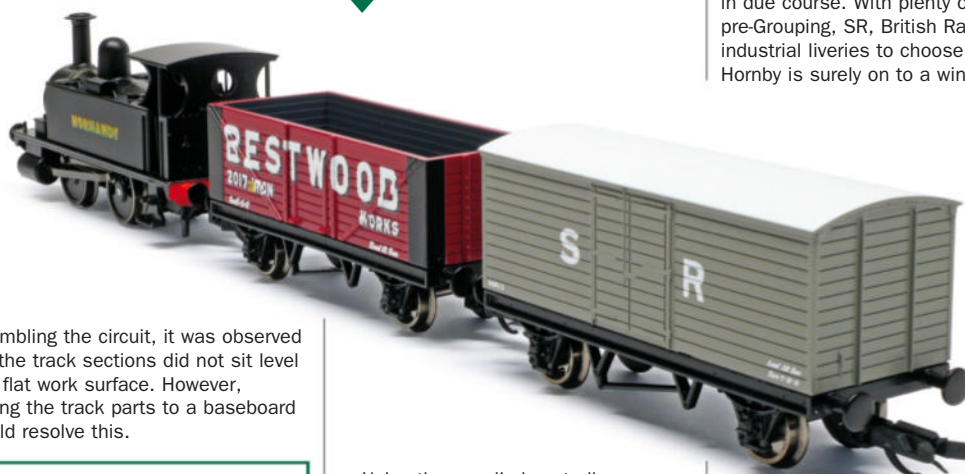


▲ The full contents of the set as supplied.



▲ A Private Owner wagon and Southern Railway van are included.

also to be commended, and hopefully will be available as a stand-alone item in due course. With plenty of colourful pre-Grouping, SR, British Railways and industrial liveries to choose from, Hornby is surely on to a winner!



Using the supplied controller, we found the performance of the little 0-4-0T under 12V dc operation to be quiet and smooth through the speed ranges in both directions, with modest slow speed performance achievable – in keeping with such small tank engines.

The perfect starter

With a Recommended Retail Price of £99.99, this set represents excellent value for money and is an ideal starting point for those new to TT:120, whilst clearly demonstrating the space-saving advantages of this scale. The B4 is

Sample supplied by

HORNBY HOBBIES Ltd
Westwood, Margate, Kent CT9 4JX
www.hornby.com

PRICE
Ref.TT1005M – £99.99



hauling the line's first public train on 7 August 1960 – cementing the Bluebell in the history books as the first preserved standard gauge steam railway in the world. It was later immortalised in the 18th book of The Railway Series – *Stepney the Bluebell Engine* – by the late Rev. W Awdry in 1963.

The Hornby model portrays *Stepney* in its BR service condition, with era-specific features including: Marsh boiler with riveted, extended, saddle-mounted smokebox; Stroudley capped chimney; cast iron brake blocks; tall running plate-mounted lamp irons; and original small bunker fitted with coal rails to increase capacity.

As per our two previous samples, construction and decoration is flawless – the black paintwork exhibiting a silky satin sheen, with no noticeable

variation between the myriad of die-cast metal components and the few plastic fittings present. The BR grey, cream & red lining has been applied with great finesse, with the early emblems and numbers all applied faultlessly. For further details of both the model and prototypes, see reviews, January 2026, and Scale Drawings, September 2025.

Sample supplied by

HORNBY HOBBIES Ltd
Westwood, Margate, Kent CT9 4JX
www.hornby.com

PRICE
Ref.TT3040M –
£159.99 DCC Ready

N

Graham Farish LNER V2 2-6-2

Bachmann Europe plc has delivered on its promise of a completely new model of Sir Nigel Gresley's London & North Eastern Railway V2 Class 2-6-2 in N, released under its Graham Farish brand. Designed afresh from the ground up, these all-new models owe nothing to their 2004 predecessors – which were the first new steam locomotive models released by the brand since its 2000 takeover by Bachmann – and follow the latter firm's equivalent 4mm scale release in its Branchline range (see reviews, RM November 2021).

Supplied Digital Command Control ready or DCC sound-fitted, the initial releases cover five members of the class, comprising: No.4791 in LNER lined green with green cylinder covers (ref.372-610); No.4843 *King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry* in LNER green with black cylinders (ref.372-611); No.60845 in BR lined black with early emblems (ref.372-612); plus No.60964 *The Durham Light Infantry* (ref.372-613) and No.60847 *St Peter's School* (ref.372-614) both in BR lined green with late crests. A model of class pioneer *Green Arrow* in LNER green, as preserved, has also been produced – exclusive to Locomotion Models.



Our sample in detail

For review we received a sample of No.60964 *The Durham Light Infantry*, which emerged from Darlington Works in 1943 as LNER No.3676. Allocated briefly when new to Heaton shed on 26 January 1943, it moved to Gateshead on 28 March 1943, and would spend the entirety of its working career there, until withdrawn on 8 May 1964. It received its name at Durham station on 29 April 1958, in a ceremony commemorating the regiment's bicentenary, with the name later passing to English Electric Type 5 Deltic D9017 on 29 October 1963.

The model is correct for the period between 29 April 1958, when named, and its visit to Doncaster Works for general overhaul on 1 December 1959,

when it had its original monobloc cylinder casting replaced with separate cylinders with outside steam pipes.

The livery has been replicated commendably, and its application is crisp throughout. The orange & black lining has been applied straight and evenly, with no visible fuzziness – although our sample has some breaks in the thin orange lining on the running plate valances. The numbers, lettering and BR late crests are also well applied, whilst the printed nameplates take the form of separately fitted mouldings. The firebox backhead fittings are picked out in appropriate colours.

The model has been manufactured using a combination of different materials: injection-moulded plastic for

the majority of the locomotive body and tender (including the boiler barrel, cab, running plate, cylinders and tender); metal wire handrails and sand pipes; etched fluted connecting rods, front frame sections and lower front lamp irons; and turned brass for the buffers (not sprung). This, combined with the die-cast chassis block, gives the model an overall weight of 74g.

The flowing running plate is adorned with a wealth of separate fittings, including fine depictions of the mechanical lubricators, sandbox fillers and oil trays – the latter picked out with the firm's signature brass paint (along with the whistle and safety valves), giving these parts, at a glance, the appearance of real brass! Cab roof ventilators (which are part of the cab



N

Rapido Trains UK 'Not-Quite-Mink' vans



Rapido Trains UK has scaled down another of its existing OO models to N gauge – the Great Western Railway Diagram V6 'Iron Mink' van, of which over 4,000 were built between 1888 and 1901 – with the OO gauge release reviewed in our May 2023 issue. Produced as triple packs, the models cater for three types of door and end ventilator, as well as three different brake gear arrangements.

11 triple packs are being offered in a choice of early, inter-war and wartime guises, in addition to a range of 'Not-Quite-Minks' – carrying a variety

of liveries to represent the similar gunpowder vans operated by many pre-Grouping railways and cement companies. The latter include (in true Rapido form) the entirely fictional, but extremely popular G. Fawkes

gunpowder van, with the running number 1605 – available as a stand-alone model.

Received and illustrated here is an example of 'Not-Quite-Minks' triple pack ref.961010, comprising a trio of

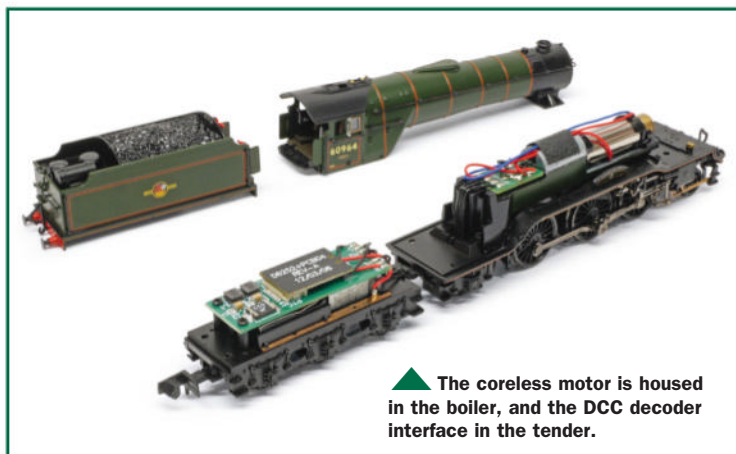


tooling) are moulded in an open position, with a hinged etched fallplate resting neatly between the locomotive and tender when on the track. The trailing Cartazzi truck has been manufactured as a pivoting unit, complete with flanged wheelset. NEM knuckle couplings (front and rear) are fitted as standard.

Supplied as separate details for the purchaser to fit are decorative coupling hooks, Automatic Warning System protector plate, guard irons, cylinder drain pipes, and cab doors. These items were fitted to the model for photography, although it should be noted that the attachment of some of these parts is dependent upon the removal of the front knuckle coupling



The model depicts No.60964 in 1958/59 condition.



The coreless motor is housed in the boiler, and the DCC decoder interface in the tender.



(which simply unclips from the pony truck) and/or layout curvature. Without these embellishments, the model is rated for use around curves of no less than second radius (263.5mm).

Mechanism & DCC provisions

The model is equipped with a flywheel-fitted coreless motor, housed within the boiler, providing drive to the centre coupled axle. Current is collected from all coupled and tender wheels, with the loco and tender electrically connected via a non-adjustable drawbar. The rear coupled wheelset is factory-fitted with rubber traction tyres to increase adhesion, but a substitute plain wheelset is provided; step-by-step instructions are enclosed for fitting this wheelset (for which a ref.MM027 ModelMaker crank pin spanner is recommended).

A Next18 DCC decoder interface and factory-fitted 15mm x 11mm 'sugar cube' speaker are located within the tender, access to which is gained by removing the tender body, which is held in place by three screws; these are positioned either side of the coupling at the rear and directly behind the drawbar.

Though no specific instructions are provided for doing so, the locomotive body can be separated from the chassis (leaving the running plate in place) with the removal of four screws: two situated either side of the frames between the cylinders, with the remaining pair located under the cab.

A welcome upgrade

This model really demonstrates how far N gauge modelling has come in recent years, with the resulting model a worthy successor to the manufacturer's previous iteration of these celebrated LNER mixed traffic machines, and one which will no doubt be well-received by the N gauge fraternity.

Sample supplied by

BACHMANN EUROPE plc,
Moat Way, Barwell,
Leicestershire LE9 8EY.
www.bachmann.co.uk

PRICE
Ref.372-613 – £219.95



The trio of 'Not-Quite-Mink' cement vans.

cement vans in Ferrocrete yellow, British Portland Cement Manufacturers Ltd grey and Blue Circle Cement yellow; these vehicles all feature end vents, double-sided four-shoe brakes and standard iron doors, with the models supplied in a neat lidded card box, cushioned within a foam insert.

A sample of the G. Fawkes gunpowder van (ref.961012) was also provided; this model features plated end vents, double-sided four-shoe brakes and GPV-style doors, and is presented in its own bespoke stout

card box with matching burgundy colour scheme and lettering.

Detail and appearance closely mirror their larger 4mm scale counterparts, each model being predominantly an injection-moulded assembly, detailed with fine plastic and turned metal parts, and equipped with free-rolling spoked metal wheelsets with pin-point axle ends. NEM knuckle couplings are fitted as standard, housed within removable NEM kinematic sockets attached to the underside of the chassis by a single screw.

All of the eye-catching Private Owner colour schemes have been completed to the highest of standards. Lettering, running numbers and tare markings are clean and crisp, extending to the fine printing of the various ornate return markings – all of which are legible under a glass. Worthy of note is the 'Return empty to Old Palace Yard, F.R.' on the G. Fawkes van – a tongue-in-cheek reference to the location in the Palace of Westminster where the Gunpowder plotters were ultimately caught!

Samples supplied by

RAPIDO TRAINS UK LTD,
Unit 3, Clinton Business Centre,
Staplehurst,
Kent TN12 0QF.
www.rapidotrains.co.uk

PRICES
'Iron Mink' triple pack – £69.95
G. Fawkes gunpowder van –
£24.95

0 Heljan Class 153 single-car Super Sprinter



The Heljan O gauge Class 153 viewed from the No.1 cab end – this was the original cab when the units were built as two-car Class 155s.

It was first reported in our October 2023 issue that the Danish manufacturer Heljan was to develop models of the Class 153 single-car Super Sprinter in O. Originally built as two-car Class 155 multiple units in 1987/88, the sets were converted into the single-car Class 153s during 1991/2, for use on rural branch lines and to provide back-up capacity for other two-car Sprinter units.

Five versions form the initial suite of releases: 153 301 in Regional Railways white & blue (ref.53201); 153 311 in East Midlands Trains Stagecoach dark blue with red & orange end stripes (ref.53241); 153 351 in Northern Rail 'swoosh' purple, blue & white (ref.53251); 153 906 in Transport for Wales silver-grey & red (ref.53271); and 153 356 in London Midland City two-tone green &

off-white (ref.53291). A further example has also been produced as part of the Gaugemaster Collection, depicting 153 380 in GWR green (ref.GM7240701) – available either direct or through its dealer network. Each model is available Digital Command Control ready or with factory-fitted DCC sound.

Our sample in detail

For review we received a sample of 153 356 in London Midland City two-tone green & off-white (ref.53291). Supplied mounted on a wooden plinth, construction of the vehicle centres on a substantial metal casting, with injection-moulded plastic accounting for the bogie frames, underframe equipment – including renditions of the engine and transmission – and much of the upper works. As supplied, the model is equipped with scale dummy BSI couplers, mounted in sprung self-centring NEM sockets independent of the bogies. These details can be swapped for the provided magnetic coupling bars, allowing for multiple working with additional 153s.

The British Leyland bodyshell is moulded beautifully, capturing the distinctive riveted panels of the prototypes – which gave rise to one of their many nicknames amongst rail enthusiasts, 'Tin Rockets'. Corridor connections – complete with etched metal lamp irons – are formed from separate mouldings, with details such as the windscreen wipers and nose-end grab handles also produced as

separate fittings. Horns, snowploughs and NRN radio roof pods are provided for the modeller to fit – all of which have been fitted here for photography.

The hopper ventilators and window frames are picked out in aluminium, with some of the former moulded in the open position. The glazing – which has a light smoke tint – affords a clear view of the unit interior, with the passenger compartment furnished with renditions of the tables and bus-style seating, and the driving cabs featuring depictions of the control desks. However, the depth of these fittings is somewhat restricted by the floor height, which has been raised to accommodate the chassis casting and mounting points for the bogies. Unfortunately, wiring runs for the lighting are also present in the aisle – these being particularly conspicuous against the grey floor, something which is further exacerbated by the presence of interior lighting.

On the subject of lighting, the 153 boasts several lighting functions, including directional (marker/tail), interior (cab/saloon) and door locking lights; the latter, which include illuminating door buttons, are synchronised with a sound sequence mimicking the opening/closing of the doors on DCC sound-fitted models. The destination blinds within the driving cabs also illuminate, with that at the No.1 end displaying Bedford and the No.2 end Bletchley. Under 12V dc operation, a selection of these lighting functions can be controlled by a bank of four on/off microswitches, concealed



The No.2 cab, added when the units were rebuilt as single-car Class 153s, is noticeably smaller than the original.



alongside the 21-pin decoder interface, located within the luggage/toilet area at the No.2 cab end – access to which is gained by removing the body.

The application of the bold London Midland City colour scheme – with its straight edge and rounded borders – is to a very high standard, with only some minor fuzziness observed around the edges of the yellow cab ends. Printing of the operator branding and the plethora of information/warning labels is particularly sharp – the majority of these smaller printed details being fully legible under a glass, with those above the door buttons reading: 'Caution – Do not attempt to enter the train when the doors are closing'.

Mechanism and performance

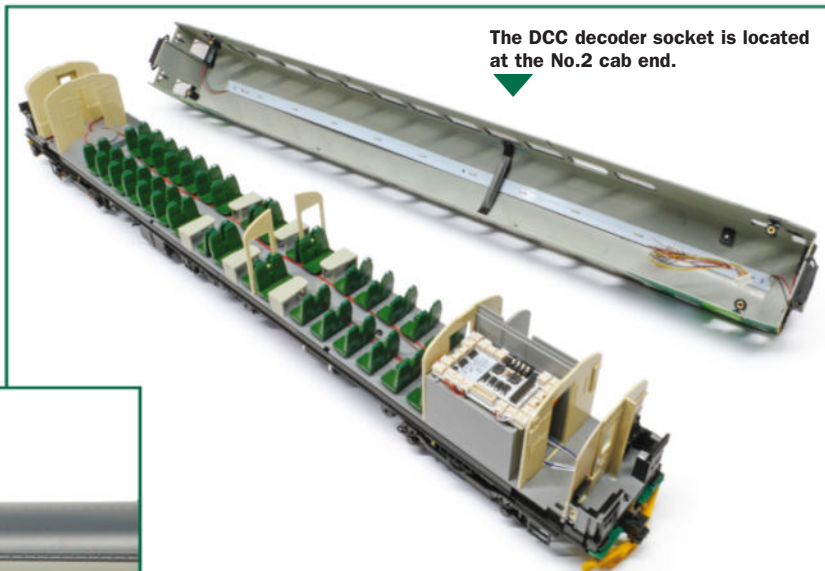
The model is driven by a single motor bogie at the No.2 end: the motor within provides drive to both axles, with current collected via wiper pick-ups from all wheels (both bogies), all of which sit in metal bearings. The model was smooth under power on analogue control; the mechanism was audible, but not obtrusively so. Recommended minimum radius is 1,028mm, with the model weighing in at 1,873g.

Provision for DCC is via a printed circuit board with 21-pin decoder socket within the aforementioned luggage/toilet area at the No.2 cab end. Body removal to access this is achieved with the removal of four screws (two at each side) located just below the outer corners of the doors. Care is needed when lifting the body to avoid snagging the wire for the interior/cab lighting – this being a single plug



▲ The real 153 356 leads a Great Malvern-Birmingham New Street service away from Malvern Link on 4 July 2019.
Photo: Raymond Coates

connection towards the No.2 end. An enclosure for an aftermarket speaker is incorporated as part of the underframe equipment, with sound-fitted models featuring a speaker installed as standard.



▼ The DCC decoder socket is located at the No.2 cab end.



▲ The model features full underframe and interior detail, plus interior lighting.

Ideal for compact layouts

To this day, these railcars are a staple of many rural routes across the country. Their wide field of operation, and being self-contained units, make them the ideal candidates for compact modern-era layouts in O gauge.

Heljan is also currently developing versions of the Class 153s and the two-car BR/Leyland Class 155 Super Sprinters – the units from which the 153s derive – in 4mm scale. We hope to bring you a full review of these models in due course.

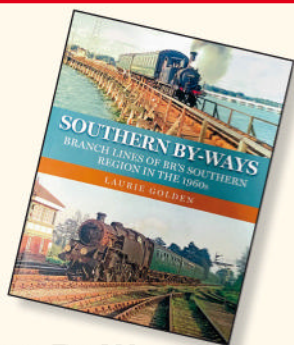
Sample supplied by

HELJAN A/S,
Rebsagervej 6, DK-5471
Søndersø, Denmark.
www.heljan.co.uk

UK office for spares and retailer returns – Gaugemaster House,
Ford Road, Arundel,
West Sussex BN18 0BN.
www.gaugemaster.com

PRICES
£399.00 – DCC ready
£519.00 – DCC sound-fitted

Book Reviews



Southern By-Ways

Branch Lines of BR's Southern Region in the 1960s

Laurie Golden

Always a popular modelling subject, Southern Region branch lines are a particularly prominent topic of late, with the release of the new Hornby 'Terrier' 0-6-0Ts in TT:120. This book provides an outstanding portrait of such routes in their twilight years.

All the photographs are from the author's own collection and in colour, covering most of the Southern Region – thanks to his possessing a lineside pass for that area's non-electrified lines. It takes a metaphorical journey from east to west, starting at Tunbridge Wells and travelling over what is now the Spa Valley Railway, the 'Cuckoo Line' to Eastbourne and the routes to Oxted, and Three Bridges via East Grinstead.

It's not just branch lines, for secondary main lines are also covered, including the Reading-Redhill route with its wide variety of motive power: Great Western Railway Manor 4-6-0s, a London & North Eastern Railway B1 4-6-0, and the Maunsell Moguls for which it was one of the last stamping grounds. It might well become an attractive prototype to model in the coming years, with the impending production of the first ready-to-run U Class 2-6-0 by Rapido Trains UK, these being one of the staple classes on the line (though the author seems to have been greeted by their smaller-wheeled N Class cousins, modelled by Bachmann, on most of his visits!).

Even bigger engines, up to and including Bulleid Pacifics, appear with diverted expresses travelling over the Mid-Hants line, before we reach the Hayling Island branch with its surviving 'Terriers' (Hornby would do well to produce BR Mk.I suburban coaches in TT:120 next...), finishing up on the Lymington and Swanage branches, and the Somerset & Dorset line.

The photography is truly excellent – there isn't a bad picture in here, with each one well composed and well reproduced on good quality paper, and the winter scenes of the Reading-Redhill line in the snow being particular highlights – though not for the first time, one can't help thinking that they deserve a larger format than this. The author chose his lineside locations well, too: many are very familiar, such as Langstone Bridge or Corfe Castle, but there are a couple of angles on the S&D – including one near Masbury Summit with Glastonbury Tor in the distance – that I don't recall seeing before. Captions are concise, but well-written and informative, with only a few errors – all of which, to be fair, could simply be typos.

For anyone who is interested in the Southern Region, has happy memories of it, models it, or is contemplating doing so, this will be a very worthwhile purchase.

TJ

Amberley Publishing
The Hill, Merrywalks, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 4EP
Tel. 01453 847800
www.amberley-books.com

234mm x 165mm, 96pp
Softback, £15.99
ISBN 9 781398 112575

Railway Atlas – Then and Now

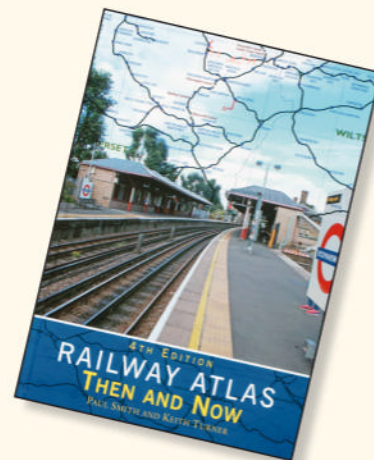
4th Edition

Paul Smith and Keith Turner

Rail atlases are rightly popular, and a single date publication grabs a snapshot in time. In this instance, the less common route is taken by grabbing two dates and drawing a comparison between the two. The first date is 1 January 1923, on the cusp of the Grouping when it could be said that the British railway system was at its height. However, even at this point things were still fairly fluid; rail line closures were not purely the preserve of the infamous Dr Beeching. The second date sits in the middle of last year at 1 June 2025, and therefore is just about as up-to-date as book publishing generally allows.

The book opens with a single page introduction, followed by an explanation of what is about to follow, then a very positive preface to what could be a very negative overview of rail closures, giving almost a whole page of new stations opened (or reopened). At the foot are just three recent closures, but I note that at least the first of these has been out of public use for years anyway. The meat of the atlas is 45 pairs of map sheets presented in a left-hand/right-hand A/B format – the left pages showing the 1923 lines, the right the 2025 situation. It should be noted that the closed lines are not simply removed on the later maps, but change in two ways: either greyed out if completely gone, or green if there has been a change of use such as a footpath/green lane. Some of the grey variety are marked with a road number (e.g. A283) showing that at this point the trackbed has been fully or partly used as the route for a subsequent road development.

The maps are presented in the common road map style, but on the 1923 sheets the parent pre-Grouping or Big Four companies are not indicated; oddly, the counties are on the 1923 side, but absent on the modern versions. The rail lines on the earlier maps are all single colour dark grey, with the exception of minor non-public or already closed lines, which are marked in red. The expected inset maps are included here at the same 6.7 miles to 1 inch scale – for instance, the tip of Cornwall. The oddity is the Isle of Man, which gets sheets of its own that are more than 75% water! I wondered if this could have been more efficiently resited to sheet 28 where



there is space. London, South Wales, the West Riding, Derby/Nottingham and Liverpool/Manchester get their own sheets due to the greater density of trackage.

At the foot of each sheet there are legend boxes in white and yellow shading – the former giving number details for space reasons, and the latter for the modern sheets giving the current information about various lines or stations. Where there is too much information, this is given in separate boxes at the rear of the atlas. This is a minor niggle, as you have to flip backwards and forwards to carry this information, though I can't see how else it could have been done. The atlas wraps up with a pair of gazetteers of stations for the two dates.

This is an interesting construct and the comparison between the two dates gives some fascinating browsing. Of course, for the modeller it will open up ideas for all those 'might-have-beens' that we all love to dream up.

CF

Crécy
1a, Ringway Trading Estate, Shadowmoss Rd,
Manchester M22 5LH
www.crecy.co.uk

305mm x 217mm, 128pp
Hardback, £20.00
ISBN 9781800353480

The Engine Driver's Manual

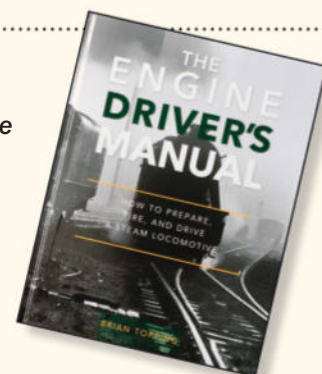
How to prepare, fire, and drive a steam locomotive

Brian Topping

There was a short discussion in the RM office about whether this was an appropriate book review for a model magazine. I wholeheartedly think it is. Much has been written in model articles about operation, but when it comes down to it, the controller knob is turned and the locomotive runs. Only that isn't how it happens in real life, and many steam-era modellers are blissfully unaware of how a steam locomotive either works or is driven. This book is the perfect way to find out.

You may have heard of brick arches and fusible plugs, but do you know what they are and what they do? Chapter One answers all this and more with a complete step-by-step breakdown of a steam locomotive, from the simple wheel arrangement designations, through boilers (and brick arches!), and finishes with the various valve gear assemblies and brakes. All this is explained in simple terms, and there is no excessively technical language used.

With all that out of the way, it's on to driving... only drivers started as cleaners and worked up, so cleaning is where we start as well. Then the next rung of fireman is discussed in Chapters Three and Four, with preparation, checks, firing techniques, and engine disposal. Only in Chapter Five do we get into driving, with parallel pre-departure checks and working practice. Chapter Six works through controls



– so, if you've ever wondered what all those details are on the perfectly formed plastic backheads of today's ready-to-run models, this will tell you. The final chapter is the shortest, and covers the actual driving, with braking and signal response.

Packed with monochrome photos and drawings, this really is a *tour de force* of information, and despite the early concerns, I believe that it is a must for any modeller's library, to be studied and absorbed. It'll certainly change the way you operate!

CF

Crécy
1a, Ringway Trading Estate, Shadowmoss Rd,
Manchester M22 5LH
www.crecy.co.uk

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Accurascale announces Class 73/9s in OO



Accurascale has revealed that the latest additions to its 'Exclusives' range are OO gauge models of the BR Class 73/9s, as modernised from the original 1960s Class 73s by Wabtec in collaboration with GB Railfreight (GBRf).

The rebuilds of the real locomotives transformed the original Southern Region electro-diesel Class 73s, with their third rail pick-up gear and Hastings gauge dimensions, into bi-mode units able to haul heavy freight and passenger trains such as the Caledonian Sleeper.

The Accurascale models, produced under a licensing arrangement with GBRf, focus on the 11 locomotives which were re-powered with 1,600hp MTU 8V4000R43L engines and extensively re-engineered by Wabtec at Loughborough, in a rebuild which involved everything from bodyside redesigns and new cooling systems to fully renewed electrical equipment and capacitor-based engine starting (CAPOS).

The model tooling also represents the detail variations between Phase 1 and Phase 2 locos, including differences in the front-end configuration and such features as the lighting, cab windows, roof equipment, body ventilation, third-rail fittings and snowplough arrangements.

The first batch versions being produced are, representing GB Railfreight locos: 73 962 *Dick Mabbutt* in early condition with GBRf blue livery; 73 963 *Janice* in early condition with full Europorte branding; 73 961 in its current condition following a 2024 GBRf repaint and with Network Rail monitoring bracket; and 73 965 *Des O'Brien* in its current condition with updated GBRf branding.

Models representing Caledonian Sleeper locos are: 73 967 & 73 968 in early Mk.V condition with drop-head Dellner automatic coupling and two-part snowploughs; 73 966 in its current condition with third rail equipment removed and with bodyside grilles; and 73 970 *W. S. Sellar* in current condition with updated roof and bodywork features.

Each version has tooling-specific body style, cab front, roof profile, exhaust, snowplough and fuel tank arrangements, and underframe details that reflect each locomotive's period of operation.

The models will be offered exclusively through the Accurascale website, with

DCC Ready versions priced at £179.99 and DCC Sound Fitted models priced £279.99. Pre-orders can be made now and delivery is expected in the fourth quarter of 2026.

In tandem with the Class 73/9s, Accurascale has announced a second run of its Caledonian Sleeper Mk.V coaches (see review, RM May 2023). However, the coaches will this time be available as individual models, with all-new running numbers. The models are available exclusively through the Accurascale website (priced from £59.45 per coach) and delivery is scheduled for the first quarter of 2027.

Early form Northern Ireland Railways Mk.IIs

For modellers of the Irish scene both north and south of the border, Accurascale Irish Railway Models has unveiled Northern Ireland Railways (NIR) Mk.II coaches for OO gauge in the original maroon & blue livery in which they first appeared for use on the cross-border 'Enterprise' service. The models are designed to complement the NIR Hunslet DL Class 101 Bo-Bo locomotives being produced by the manufacturer and announced in the December 2024 RM issue.

Built at Derby in 1970 to the Irish broad gauge of 5' 3", the eight Mk.IIb coaches were intended for use on the then new 'Enterprise' between Belfast and Dublin. Originally turned out in the maroon & blue guise, the coaches operated in push-pull formation with one of the three Class 101 locos. In 1978, however, they were refurbished in the silver-grey and blue centre stripe livery adopted for this flagship service.

Accurascale has previously produced a model of NIR Grill-Bar Car No.547 as

▲ Engineering samples of the forthcoming Class 73/9s from Accurascale, showing different front-end configurations.



▲ Livery artwork for 73 962 *Dick Mabbutt* in early GBRf condition (top) and 73 967 in the Caledonian Sleeper colour scheme.

later modified, but the manufacturer has now created tooling for this vehicle in its original form with a differing window arrangement on one side, appropriate for the blue & maroon livery. No.547 will also be offered in grey & blue livery in its unmodified form as it appeared before changes made in the early 1980s.

The new production run of Mk.II carriages in maroon & blue and light grey & blue will introduce new versions not included in the first production run, and taken from both the 1972 batch of vehicles built for NIR and also second-hand and regauged BR coaches acquired for use in the Emerald Isle in the early 1980s. This means four different roof vent styles have been replicated, along with the NIR pattern Mk.IIc roof without the hatch found in BR Mk.IIc cars.

Also included in the models are etched metal and plastic detail parts, and detailed interiors replicating the Second Class and First Class seating, such as 'winged' headrests for the latter. The vehicles also feature directional and interior lighting with stay-alive capacitors, and wider Irish gauge bogies for those who may wish to convert the carriages to 21mm gauge.

For the first time, these NIR Mk.II carriages will be offered for sale individually rather than in multi packs, at a price of £74.95 (€89.95) each for standard coaches and £84.95 (€97.95) each for the DCC Ready driving car. There are also multi-buy discounts. The models are available exclusively through the Accurascale website and delivery is expected in the fourth quarter of 2026.

www.accurascale.co.uk



▲ Mk.IIb First Open in Northern Ireland Railways 'Enterprise' maroon & blue.

Clark Railworks shows further progress with WD Austerity 2-10-0s in OO

Manufacturer Clark Railworks (part of Ellis Clark Trains) has revealed further information and images concerning the first decorated samples received of its OO gauge War Department Austerity 2-10-0s – its first locomotive models in 4mm scale.

The first samples received are Longmoor Military Railway blue-liveried No.600 *Gordon* (previewed in the RM January issue) and British Railways No.90774 *North British*, which is an exclusive model being produced for Rails of Sheffield.

The Clark Railworks team say they have a few adjustments to make to these models but otherwise they consider the livery colours are ‘spot on’, with the

matte paint effect of the smokebox and cab backhead detail being particularly noteworthy. They also report that the decision was taken earlier this year to refine the motor and gearbox of these

models to assist running at prototypically low speeds.

The specification of these DCC Ready models includes die-cast boiler, smokebox and chassis construction, brass axle bearings and firebox glow. Moreover, despite their hefty size, these engines will comfortably negotiate second radius curves courtesy of a second, slightly smaller set of front pony wheels supplied in the accessory pack and shown in the illustrations of the samples.

Other details include separately fitted pipework, differences between prototype locomotives such as left and right-hand drive, working sprung screw-link couplings, sprung buffers and metal cylinder linings. There are fully removable front and rear tension-lock couplings and a Next18 DCC decoder

socket, though factory fitted DCC Sound versions are available.

Other liveries planned are: No.73755 *Longmoor* as preserved in WD khaki green; No.90766 in BR plain black; Nos.90751 & 90772 in BR black with early emblem; No.90775 *The Royal Norfolk Regiment* as preserved in BR black with early emblem; Nos.90755, 90763 & 90767 in BR black with late crest; and WD No.3672 *Dame Vera Lynn* as preserved in WD khaki green.

These models are available to pre-order with delivery expected in the second or third quarter of 2026. DCC Ready versions are priced £295.00, while the price of DCC Sound models has yet to be confirmed but is expected to be in the £395.00-£425.00 bracket.

www.clarkrailworks.com



▲ Decorated sample of No.90774 *North British*.



▲ CAD render of No.73755 *Longmoor*.

Revolution reveals decorated samples of OO Class 175s and 180s

Revolution Trains has received decorated samples of its forthcoming OO gauge Class 175 Coradia and Class 180 Adelante units for assessment, plans for models of these Alstom-built trains in both OO and N gauges having been revealed in the April 2022 RAILWAY MODELLER.

The manufacturer, which previously released images of N gauge versions of the 175s and 180s (shown in the November 2024 RM), states on its website that the 4mm scale samples will be checked over and ready for a pre-order deadline of 31 January 2026 – then, once orders close, delivery is expected in the third quarter of 2026.

The 100mph Class 175s were built by Alstom in Birmingham between 1999 and 2001, and initially entered service with First North Western. After time with Wales & Borders, Arriva Trains Wales and Transport for Wales, they are at the time of writing being prepared for entry into traffic with GWR across its lines in Devon and Cornwall, with the full fleet

expected to be in service there by the end of 2026.

As for the OO gauge Class 175 models, Revolution is offering them in Arriva Trains Wales turquoise & cream, and Transport for Wales red & silver-grey – colour schemes in which they operated for two decades on Cardiff and Shrewsbury to Manchester and Holyhead Welsh Marches Line services, and elsewhere around Wales and north-west England, until withdrawal by TfW at the end of 2023.

The DCC Ready Class 175 models have a pre-order RRP of £225.00 for two-car sets and £270.00 for three-car trains. DCC Sound versions of the two-car Class 175, meanwhile, are priced £320.00 if pre-ordered and £365.00 for three-car versions.

All of these models come with a pre-fitted speaker, inter-car power couplers and working headlights, tail lights and interior and door lock lighting. One 21-pin decoder is needed per unit.

▲ Class 175s in TfW (left) and Arriva liveries.



The faster (125mph) Class 180 five-car trains share similarities with the Coradia units but feature aerodynamic cab ends. They were constructed for First Great Western expresses from London to South Wales and the West Country, but were not deemed a success on these lines and were redeployed to routes to Oxford and Birmingham. Later they were transferred to Grand Central, but most recently East Midlands Railway has also used them between London St Pancras, Nottingham, Derby, Sheffield and Corby.

Revolution is offering complete five-car trains in the following liveries: in First ‘Dynamic Lines’ blue, white & pink –

180 102 with First Great Western branding, and 180 109 with Hull Trains markings; in Grand Central orange & black – 180 108 *William Shakespeare* and 180 112 *James Herriott*, with green stripe on one driving car. Prices for each of these five-car trains are, for DCC Ready pre-ordered models, £350.00 (post-production MSRP £449.95); and for DCC Sound pre-ordered models, £445.00 (post-production MSRP £544.95).

In addition, two units – 180 109 and 180 113 – have been commissioned by Rails of Sheffield in the East Midlands Railway (EMR) guise of aubergine, grey & blue. Appropriately, these were launched as part of the Rails Sheffield Station Shop opening event reported on elsewhere in this RM News section. The exclusive EMR-liveried models can be pre-ordered direct from Rails, priced from the outset at £449.95 for DCC Ready versions and £544.95 for DCC Sound models, with delivery expected in the third quarter of 2026.

www.revolutiontrains.com
www.railsofsheffield.com



▲ Class 180s in Grand Central (nearest camera) and First liveries.

Exclusive 'Railway 200' Class 66s in N

Locomotion Models and Rails of Sheffield have announced that they have joined forces in commissioning, from Revolution Trains, two new exclusive N gauge Class 66 diesel locomotives in red GB Railfreight 'Railway 200' livery for the Railway Icons range.

The models are 66 710 *Karen Harrison* and 66 719 *Michael Portillo* in the livery of red body sides, yellow ends and grey roof, along with white GBRf and Railway 200 branding, in which they were first seen hauling the Network Rail 2025 anniversary 'Inspiration' exhibition train. This livery also features the crests



▲ Livery render of 66 710.

of one of each of the Big Four pre-Nationalisation railway companies in panels on the locos' cab sides.

The 'Inspiration' on-train exhibition was curated in partnership with the National Railway Museum, with which

Locomotion Models is closely associated, and the exhibition features displays on innovations throughout rail history, the science and engineering behind railways and professional roles and career opportunities on the rail network. Its tour

of the country began in July 2025 at the Severn Valley Railway and will continue in January, February and March 2026, with its final port of call being Hastings in East Sussex from 12-15 March.

Delivery of the Railway 200 Class 66 models is expected at the end of 2026, but pre-orders can be secured in return for a deposit on the Locomotion Models and Rails of Sheffield websites.

The price quoted for the DCC Ready models will be £159.99, with the DCC Sound Fitted models priced at £254.95.

www.locomotionmodels.com
www.railsofsheffield.com

Rails exclusive re-release of LMS 10000 in OO

Rails of Sheffield has announced a number of exclusive models that it has commissioned from Bachmann Europe plc for its Rails Limited range.

Firstly, the second quarter of 2026 will see a re-release of the retailer's previous exclusive model of LMS pioneer Co-Co diesel locomotive No.10000, first released in 2015 – reviewed in *RAILWAY MODELLER* November 2015. The LMS 'Twins' – Nos.10000 and 10001 – were the first main line diesel locomotives in the UK, with No.10000 built in December 1947, just before Nationalisation.

The previous Rails exclusive versions of both 'twins' had tooling covering their later BR careers, but the re-released version, again exclusive to Rails, showcases the pioneering No.10000 in its as-built guise. The original LMS black & chrome livery decoration has been enhanced and includes separately fitted LMS numbers and lettering, as well as separately fitted parts including handrails, horns, lamp irons and underframe relief detail, plus new engine room decoration and cab crew figures at one end.

The model has a five-pole motor with twin flywheels, directional lighting and cab lights, NEM tension-lock couplings,



▲ No.10000 in LMS black.

and an accessory pack with additional bufferbeam parts.

The DCC Ready version (ref.31-999Z), which has a 21-pin decoder socket, has an RRP of £209.95 while the DCC Sound Fitted model (ref.31-999ZSF) is priced at £339.95.

Rails RTC vehicles in OO

The second Rails exclusive model announcement sees the long-standing Bachmann BR Mk.I BSK (Brake Second Corridor) tooling being used to produce models of the BR Railway Technical Centre vehicles ADB975051 'Test Car 5' and RDB975136 'Laboratory 12' in Departmental red & blue livery.

Both prototypes were converted from standard Mk.I BSK coaches in 1972 and spent several years in service with the BR research department, some of them with the Advanced Passenger Train

(APT), Test Car 5 as a support coach and Laboratory 12 as an acoustics testing vehicle.

Due for delivery in the second quarter of 2026, the models can be paired together to re-create test and engineering trains – and Rails notes it has also commissioned, in the red & blue Departmental livery an exclusive Bachmann model of 'Test Unit Gemini', the experimental battery electric multiple unit, based on Derby Lightweight Diesel Multiple Unit tooling.

'Test Car 5' (ref.39-001S) and 'Laboratory 12' (ref.39-001V) are each priced £59.95.

www.railsofsheffield.com



▲ Mk.I BSK as Test Car 5.

Dapol invites expressions of interest for planned LMS 57' non-corridor stock in N

Dapol has announced it is inviting expressions of interest in plans for the manufacturer to produce N gauge models of LMS Period III 57', non-lavatory suburban coaches.

The historical background to the project is that from 1933, using designs by Stanier, the LMS began building several series of non-corridor carriages for its suburban services. Built in large numbers between 1933 and 1950 in the early years of the nationalised British Railways, the final examples of these vehicles were withdrawn in 1967.

The diagrams Dapol is proposing to model are: non-corridor Thirds built to



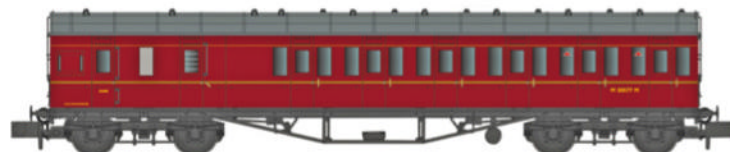
Diagrams 1906/1906A; Composites built to Dia.1921/1921A; Brake Thirds built to Dia.1907; and Driving Brake Thirds built to Dia.1856.

Four livery versions are planned: LMS Period III Crimson Lake of the c.1934-47 era; BR unlined crimson of c.1949-56; BR unlined maroon of c.1957-59; and

BR lined maroon of c.1959-67. It is further proposed that the models will have pin-point axle pick-ups, and with bogies able to negotiate second radius curves as a minimum. They will also have a sprung close coupling system and interior detailing, as well as fittings for a light bar which will be sold separately.

The proposed price per vehicle is £39.95. In its invitation for expressions of interest, Dapol states that a decision on whether to proceed with the project will be made before the end of February this year. For further details, visit the manufacturer's website:

www.dapol.co.uk



Historic celebration of model railways at Manchester Christmas show

Words and photos by Craig Tiley



Manchester Model Railway Society exhibited its ever-popular 4mm layout, *Dewsbury Midland*, which was featured as Railway of the Month in the December 2000 issue and went on to win that year's RM Cup. The opportunity was taken to run this impressive London & North Western Railway train, formed of coach models scratch-built by the late Brian Metcalfe in the 1970s, and now in the care of the LNWR Society. The stock was used originally on *Rugeley Trent Valley*, a 4mm layout by Crewe Grammar School Railway Society, of which MMRS Exhibition Manager Philip Sweet was once a member.

Visitors in their thousands attended the Sugden Centre over the weekend of 13 & 14 December 2025 for the annual Christmas show staged by Manchester Model Railway Society. Although final figures were not available at the time of going to press, the organisers did confirm that advance ticket sales prior to the event were up by more than 50% on last year, with footfall over the two days expected to have exceeded that of recent years.

With this running of the event acting as a spectacular finale to a year-long celebration of the society's hundredth anniversary, there was an impressive line-up of high-quality – and in some cases historic – layouts on display. One visitor commented that, in his opinion, this was the finest gathering of layouts he had

Over 400 years' worth of railway modelling history, seen here being paraded on Tony Gee's *Grimethorpe* layout, which was making its debut at the show, having been built to original EM gauge standards, as set out by members of the MMRS in the 1960s. The locomotives are (anticlockwise from nearest to the camera): Furness Railway 2-2-2WT No.57 by Ross Pochin (see RM December 1968); 1960s-built Midland Railway 4-2-2 No.115 by Sid Stubbs; LMS 4F 0-6-0 No.4547, built by John Langan and pictured on his *Presson* layout in the December 1962 RM; 1947-built Great Central Railway Pollitt 4-4-0 No.269 by Peter Denny; Coal Tank 0-6-2T No.7721 built in 1948 by Alex Jackson; and an LNWR Problem 2-2-2, also built by John Langan and dating from the late 1950s.



seen since he had attended the fabled exhibition staged by *Model Railway Journal* at Westminster Central Hall in 1990.

Showcasing the history of the hobby were layouts by a number of celebrated modellers, including *The Ffarquhar Branch* by the Rev. Wilbert Awdry, a section of the *Craig & Mertonford Light Railway* by P D Hancock, and *Trevice* by Iain Rice. Examples of work by past masters were also on display, including scratch-built locomotives by pioneers such as Peter Denny, Alex Jackson, John Langan, Ken Northwood, Ross Pochin and Sid Stubbs.

It was fitting that Peco Publications was in attendance, many of the layouts and exhibits having featured in past editions of *RAILWAY MODELLER* – albeit some far more recently than others! Furthermore, amongst the individuals and organisations exhibiting layouts were recipients of nine previous

The Model Railway Club brought its 2mm masterpiece *Copenhagen Fields*, and took the opportunity to run, in parallel, models of a 1930s 'Coronation' express and a current LNER Class 800 Azuma IET.



As well as exhibiting *Terice* by the late Iain Rice, Jerry Clifford also brought a display of artefacts relating to the modelling of the late Ken Northwood, whose OO gauge *The North Devonshire* layout featured in the October 1962 edition of RM.

RAILWAY MODELLER Cups: Pete Goss (2008, 2015 & 2022), Gordon & Maggie Gravett (2019), Peter Kirmond (2023), Graham Nicholas (2024), Manchester Model Railway Society (1991 & 2000) and The Model Railway Club (1980).

Just some of the many show highlights are illustrated on these pages, including a number of the awards that were presented during the course of the weekend.

The 2025 MMRS Christmas Show is sure to live long in the memory for those who were there. Indeed, Warners Group Publications has a tremendously hard act to follow when the next event takes place later this year, which the company will be running as a commercial enterprise in conjunction with MMRS.



Part of P D Hancock's *Craig & Mertonford Light Railway*, now in the custody of Edinburgh & Lothians Miniature Railway Club.



Gordon & Maggie Gravett exhibited their brand new French 1:50 scale layout *Port de Crozon*, as featured in the December 2025 edition of our sister magazine, *CONTINENTAL MODELLER*. The layout scooped two awards – the first for 'best in show' as judged by members of MMRS, and the second for 'best scenic feature'. Gordon and Maggie are seen here with MMRS Exhibition Manager Philip Sweet (left) and MMRS Chairman Doug James (right).



At the 2024 MMRS Christmas show, visitor Anita Shepherd suggested an award for 'best small layout' as voted for by the public. Accordingly, she was invited back to present this new award, which went to *Bred Albin* (see RM December 2025). Anita is pictured with the layout's builder Alisdair Macdonald (left) and his fellow operator Graham Heald (right).



The award for 'best large layout in show' (and receiving the most votes overall from visitors to the exhibition) went to *Copenhagen Fields*, and is seen being presented by MMRS Chairman Doug James to Tim Watson (left) on behalf of The Model Railway Club.



In contrast to the many old and historic layouts on display, there were several newer additions to the exhibition circuit, including *Three Cocks Junction* – an exquisite EM gauge layout built by Richard Evans, which depicts a Cambrian Railway station in the pre-Grouping era.



Two RM Cup-winning layouts (*Copper Wort & Co.* by Pete Goss and *Grantham – The Streamliner Years* by Graham Nicholas) are lost amongst the crowds.

EXHIBITION FOCUS

Southampton show to feature 20 layouts plus a multi-gauge test track

Southampton MRS will stage the Southampton Model Railway Exhibition on Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 January at Barton Peveril College in Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh SO50 5BX.

The event, which will feature over 20 layouts in a variety of scales and gauges, will be open from 10:00-17:00 on the Saturday and 10:00-16:30 on the Sunday, with the cost of admission £10.00 for adults and free to under 16s, and with disabled access to all areas.

Layouts due to appear include: *Colorado Springs* (G scale Playmobil in café area); *Netherton, Sherton Abbas, The Essence of Ventnor, The Parlour Railway* (O); *Rathmelton* (County Donegal Joint Committee Railways/Londonderry & Lough Swilly Railway 7mm scale Irish 3' narrow gauge, model 21mm gauge);

Brink Valley Tramway (O9); *Ryburn, Wantage* (P4); *Express Daisy Sidings, Three Cocks Junction, Sundown Lane* (EM); *Botleigh Old North Road, College Halt, Drive-a Train, Gara Bridge, Oak Lane, Seaton Junction, Tellindalloch* (OO); *Selborne, Tittesworth* (OO9); *Kaninchenbau* (HOe); *Barnwood, Smalldale Quarry, Tropical Wonders* (N); and *Lego World* (L).

New for 2026 will be a large multi-gauge Test Track (EM, OO, TT, N, 2mm Fine Scale & Z) for visitors to run their own stock. There will also be demonstrators, trade & society stands, and in the children's area, an SMRS Thomas layout.

Barton Peveril College is about 1½ miles from the M3 Junction 13 or M27 Junction 5 and will be signed from shortly after both junctions (use SO50 5BX for satnav). There is free car parking on site.



▲ **Barnwood in N by Andrew Fardell, which was featured in the May 2024 RM. Photo: Paul Bason**

In addition, the Southampton & District Transport Heritage Trust (website www.sadtht.co.uk) will be providing an approximately half-hourly free bus service from around 09:30 between Eastleigh and Southampton Airport Parkway stations. The venue is about a 25-minute walk from both stations and local area buses on Bluestar route 2 (Southampton-Eastleigh-Fair Oak) from Eastleigh station stop in Derby Road near Tennyson Road.

For further details about the event, see the Societies & Clubs pages in this issue, or visit the Southampton MRS website:

www.southamptonmodelrailwaysociety.co.uk

15 layouts for Midlands Garden Rail Show 2026

Saturday 28 February & Sunday 1 March will see the 2026 Midlands Garden Rail Show taking place at Warwickshire Event Centre, near Leamington Spa.

The venue is on the junction of the A425 and B4455 (postcode CV31 1XN) but the visitor car park entrance is off the B4455 Southam Road (satnav CV31 1FE). Opening times are from 10:00-16:00

each day, with last admissions one hour before closing. Entry prices are: adults £13.00, senior citizens £12.00 and children aged five to 14 £5.00.

This annual event generally attracts nearly 2,000 enthusiasts from all over the UK and offers visitors the opportunity to see around 15 layouts in the larger gauges and scales from Gauge 3 down to O,

with a number in 16mm scale, G scale and Gauge 1. There will be also be society stands and nearly 40 specialist suppliers will be attending.

For further details, see the Societies & Clubs listings pages in this issue, and for additional information and to book tickets visit:

www.midlandsgardenrailshow.co.uk

Scenic workshop at Lord & Butler

The Cardiff-based model railway retailer, Lord & Butler, is to host a scenic workshop on Saturday 31 January 2026.

Led by experienced railway modeller Rob Gunstone, there will be practical demonstrations on topics including the application of static grass; creating a water feature; and enhancing Peco trackwork with painting, weathering and ballasting, using a variety of techniques. Rob will also have his OO gauge layout *Ewe* (pictured) on display.

Established in 1998, Lord & Butler Model Railways is the business



partnership of modelling enthusiasts Adrian Butler and Peter Lord. The well-stocked shop (located next to a distinctive former pumping station) carries a wide range of modelling products, with brands

including Hornby, Bachmann, Peco, Kato and Gaugemaster.

Opening hours are Monday-Saturday 10:00-16:30 (closed on Sundays). Refer to the website for further details:



Lord & Butler Model Railways
The Old Warehouse, Penarth Road,
Cardiff CF11 8TT
Tel: 029 2066 7225
www.lordandbutler.com

New Irish EMU from Murphy Models in OO

Murphy Models is in the process of developing OO gauge ready-to-run Irish-outline models of Alstom X'tropolis

five-car bi-modal EMU/BEMUs, with an engineering prototype recently received, as illustrated here.

The new models are based on the replacement for the ageing DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) fleet of suburban Electric Multiple Units, which are now 41 years old. The basic design caters for both 25kVA operation only or bi-modal operation when battery

power is used to cover track not supported with overhead wires.

The model consists of a powered end unit driving both bogies, with a low twin-shaft motor. On-board DCC provision is linked to sound and lighting functions. As per the prototype, the other four cars 'piggyback' onto the leading car, with a single bogie per car.

The bogies have been designed so that modellers can adjust the wheelsets to 21mm gauge (equivalent to Irish 5' 3"), or fit their own. Overhead pantograph detail is non-working, whilst the model's



lighting is currently being revised to include end and side signage displays.

Prices and delivery information are still to be confirmed.

www.murphymodels.com



Dumb buffer wagons for 4mm from DR3D Models

DR3D Models has revealed it has released two new 4mm scale 3D prints of dumb-buffered five-plank Private Owner wagon models, based on examples produced by the Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Co.

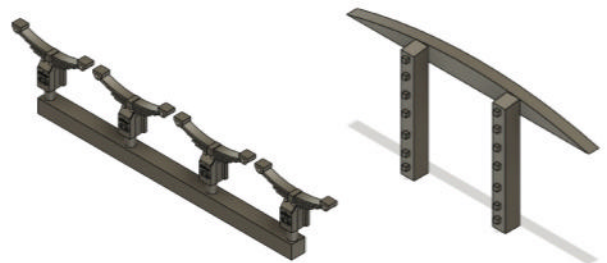
As these wagons have dumb buffers, they are suitable for main line layouts set in the era from the late 19th century up until 1914, when such wagons were banned from the system – although these types of vehicle lasted much longer on internal user lines or industrial systems not covered by the Railway Clearing House (RCH) agreements.

The 3D-printed models come in two varieties, with either square raised ends (ref.4POW-004) or rounded raised ends (ref.4OW-005). Purchasers will receive a body print complete with a choice



of wooden-shoed or iron-shoed brake gear, and separate axlebox and spring assemblies with a choice of W-irons. It is also left to the builder to decide whether to build a rigid or compensated chassis. The wagons can be built to OO, EM or P4 gauges and the prints are priced £15.00 each.

▲ GRCW Co. dumb-buffered wagon with square raised ends.



▲ Wagon spring detail (left) and an alternative end for Hornby wagons.

Also available are 3D-printed alternative ends designed for turning Hornby three-plank wagons into versions with raised round ends (ref.4MISC-007), and packs of 16 GRWC axlebox and

spring units (ref.4MISC-008). Further information can be obtained by emailing dr3dmodels@outlook.com, whilst the wagon prints can be ordered via: www.DR3D.uk

Fourdees releases new kit version of Tallyllyn *Dolgoch* in 1860s condition for 009

Narrow gauge specialist Fourdees Limited has announced a new variant on its OO9 kit for the Tallyllyn Railway Fletcher Jennings 0-4-0 well tank *Dolgoch*, in what is a significant year for the TR as it marks the 75th anniversary of becoming the world's first preserved railway in 1951.

Previous Fourdees versions of *Dolgoch* have covered the four main guises of the locomotive during the preservation era. However, for the latest version the manufacturer wanted to represent the loco as built at the Fletcher Jennings works at Lowca, Whitehaven, in 1866. For this the firm was able to enlist the help of the TR Media Creator, Assistant Guard and Heritage Volunteer Luke Ryan (see also the Rev. Awdry blue plaque unveiling feature in the Talking Points feature of the January RM issue) in creating the closest representation of the loco in that era.

Using a well-known engraving, photographs of *Dolgoch* in its later years and images of similar machines built at Lowca in the same era, Fourdees has been able to piece together the most likely arrangement of fittings and such features as the fully open cab, original flap-style smokebox door, early profile chimney, repositioned whistle and pressure gauge, and Giffard injectors under the cab floor. The kit also includes a set of decals to replicate the original livery, with the manufacturer recommending Tamiya TS-33 Dull Red as closest to the shade in which Fletcher Jennings productions were outshopped. The model kit is available to purchase at £29.99 from the Fourdees eBay store.

Plus new Corris Railway Tattoos 4 & 7

Fourdees has also made another OO9 kit announcement relating to a prototype which joined the Tallyllyn Railway loco stud in the early 1950s, but began its working life 30 years earlier on the neighbouring Corris Railway: the Kerr Stuart Tattoo 0-4-2ST carrying No.4 on both the CR and TR but named by the latter *Edward Thomas*.

A previous Fourdees kit portrayed this locomotive in the era after the CR was taken over by the Great Western Railway, but the new kit depicts it in early 1920s modified condition, when the original Kerr Stuart locking pegs for the smokebox door had been replaced by a simple dart, two deflector plates had been fitted



▲ *Dolgoch* with original open cab.



▲ Kerr Stuart Tattoo 0-4-2ST in 1920s condition.



▲ *Dolgoch* lined out with the new decals.

under the saddle tank to help protect the motion from Welsh 'liquid sunshine' and a sleeve and clamp had been fitted to the base of the chimney after it was caught by a fallen branch.

To coincide with this new release, Fourdees has created a set of decals for Corris Railway livery that will fit both this model and the 1930s version. Two full sets are included in a pack, which is priced at £11.99 (with free UK postage).

Another new loco kit brings the Kerr Stuart Tattoo design right up to date, as it represents the Winson Engineering new-build No.7 constructed for the Corris Railway Society revival scheme, which was itself modelled on No.4 in its modern-day Tallyllyn Railway guise with features such as buffers, air brakes and an enlarged cab. It also has its air pump, lubricator and running plate all fitted on the left-hand side.

Again, an appropriate set of decals has been developed with which to line out the locomotive in the red livery it has carried since it entered service – Fourdees states that its painted sample has been finished in Humbrol No.19 Gloss Red. The decals are again available in a double set for £11.99.

As with the other kits in this range, a static chassis is included with both the Corris Railway 1920s No.4 and 2000s No.7, along with lamps to fit if desired. Each kit is priced £29.99 from the Fourdees eBay store and a donor Bachmann Peter Sam chassis is required to motorise each model, with this requiring no modification.

Lining decals for Tallyllyn Railway liveries

Fourdees has also announced new Quick Fix decals for adding the yellow & black lining to Tallyllyn Railway bronze green-painted models of both No.2 *Dolgoch* and No.4 *Edward Thomas*.

For No.4 there are also black & white lining decals appropriate for the Kerr Stuart works grey livery currently worn by the prototype.

These traditional waterslide decal sets are sized to fit the Fourdees kits, with markings to help identify where they need cutting to clear spectacles and handrails. Each set again includes a spare of each panel should the purchaser make a mistake when applying decals.

The sets for *Dolgoch* are priced at £9.99 and for *Edward Thomas* £11.99, both with free postage to UK addresses. For further details, refer to the manufacturer's website:

www.fourdees.co.uk

Golden Valley to stock 2mm scale Railtec transfers

Accessories importer and wholesaler Golden Valley Hobbies has announced it is expanding its range of model rail transfers supplied by Railtec to include 2mm scale/N gauge items.

The retailer states that this decision has been taken because N gauge modellers are not catered for as extensively with transfers as is the case with other scales. It adds that all the Railtec transfers are spot printed and have no superfluous carrier film, or

are even completely film-less. This makes it easier and faster to apply the transfers to achieve a good result, especially in smaller sizes.

Golden Valley Hobbies will provide these waterslide decals for 2mm Fine Scale and N gauge modelling to the retail trade and direct to customers through its website. For further details go to:

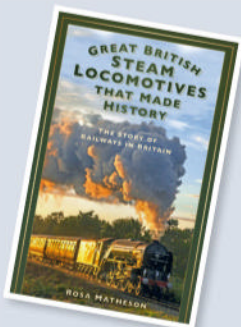
www.goldenvalleyhobbies.com

RAILWAY MODELLER binding arrangements

Readers who wish to have their 2025 issues of **RAILWAY MODELLER** stitched and case bound, complete with index, should make their orders prior to Friday 20 March 2026. Binding is priced at £75.00 without the covers and advertisements, or £80.00 to include the covers and advertisements (both prices including VAT and P&P). Please remove all unwanted pages before sending the volume to: **Peco Publications & Publicity Ltd, Underleys, Beer, Seaton, Devon EX12 3NA.**

New book tells the story of railways in Britain

A new hardback book by railway historian Rosa Matheson examines the stories of steam locomotives that made history, from favourites such as *Mallard* and *Flying Scotsman*, through to lesser-known examples. With contributions from many individuals across the railway industry, including railway workers and enthusiasts, this 232-page production includes 42 illustrations and is available priced £14.99 from the publisher's website: www.thehistorypress.co.uk



Portreath model railway show in support of school

Sunday 15 February 2026 will see the recently formed Camborne Railway Modelling Group holding a model railway show in support of Portreath Pre-school in The Millennium Hall at 3 Penberthy Road, Portreath TR16 4LP. The event will be open from 10:00-16:00 and the cost of entry is £3.00, but under-fives can enter free of charge and all proceeds will go to the running of the school. The show will feature a number of layouts covering a variety of scales and eras, as well as local trade support. Refreshments will also be available. For further details contact the organiser, Wayne Sharrocks:

Tel: 07469 944 847

Email:

cambornerrailwaymodellinggroup@gmail.com

Celebrity opening for new Rails of Sheffield station store



▲ Pete Waterman and Jools Holland open the new store...

Model retailer Rails of Sheffield has announced that the grand opening of its satellite store at its home city's railway station – with celebrity guests Pete Waterman and Jools Holland performing the honours – led to a record weekend for sales.

The launch of the new shop in the Grade II-listed station building, with a ribbon cutting by the two pop music stars and model railway enthusiasts on Saturday 29 November 2025, also coincided with the retailer's Black Friday Weekender event – and more than 500 individual passenger journeys were made on a classic Leyland Tiger coach linking the new outlet with the main Rails store in Chesterfield Road, Heeley.

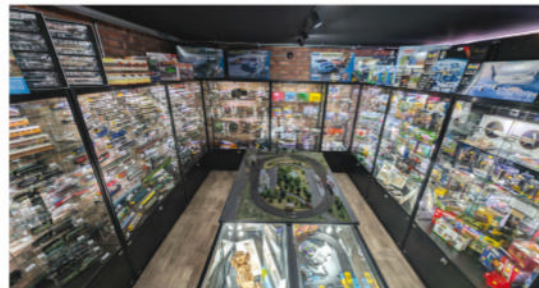
The official ribbon-cutting ceremony was attended by hundreds of customers and even saw Pete and Jools giving visitors an impromptu double act musical performance using the station's public piano. Also attending the launch were representatives from model railway manufacturers including Hornby, Bachmann Europe, Accurascale, Heljan, Revolution Trains and Cavalex.

The new station outlet is part of the retailer's expansion plans and the event saw a record sales weekend for the company, far surpassing revenue earned on any day in its entire 55-year history.

Rails also notes that, during 2025, it created tens of new jobs locally – including front-of-house retail assistants and



▲ ...and give an impromptu musical performance!



▲ Part of the extensive stock displays in the new shop.

warehouse staff roles. For further reflections on the evolution of Rails as a business and on the opening event for the new store, see the Talking Points feature in this issue.

The new Sheffield Station Shop, in Sheaf Street, Sheffield S1 2BP, will be open seven days a week from 10:00 to 18:00, while the main Rails store at 21-29 Chesterfield Road, Heeley, Sheffield S8 0RL is open five days a week from 09:00 to 17:00. For further details visit:

www.railsofsheffield.com

Variations on the Corris Railway Falcon 0-4-2STs from Miniature Modellers Hub

Continuing the Corris and Talyllyn railways OO9 theme from the previous page, Miniature Modellers Hub, via the Team Immersion online store, has released a new variant of Corris Falcon 0-4-2ST 3D-printed body kit depicting the 1878-built Nos.1, 2 & 3 as they appeared in the era from the early 1900s to the line's closure in 1948 – as well as the condition in which No.3 first steamed when acquired by the TR, becoming *Sir Haydn* (see CAD renders below).

This Corris Railway Falcon Hughes (late) OO9 Body Kit is listed on the website at a price of £24.49, with options for purchasers to choose variations such as original wheel or late dart smokebox

door handles, and different cab styles: Nos.2 & 3 with open cab rear; No.1 with open cab rear and taller cab; Nos.2 & 3 with later sloping cab rear; and No.3 with latter-day stepped cab rear.

Purchasers can also choose which chassis they would like the model to fit – either the Bachmann USA Percy 0-4-0 chassis (in which case they can ask for a set of rear pony wheels to be included with their kit for an additional £3.00), or the new 0-4-2 chassis from the Bachmann Sir Handel model inspired by the Reverend Wilbert Awdry's Railway Series character based on these Corris locos. The body kit has been designed in Fusion 360 to fit these chassis.



Other options listed are inclusion of footplate chests and boxes for an additional £1.00 or inclusion of a dummy chassis (with no moving parts) for £4.00.

The kit is printed in grey resin and includes the cab roof, smokebox door, wire for the roof if an open-cab version, and wire to use for optional OO9-compatible couplings. Assembly of the kit involves carefully clipping away support material from the underside of the footplate, bufferbeams and saddle tank, at which point the remaining support material can be removed. For further details follow the links to the Miniature Modellers Hub online store:

www.teamimmersion.com/shop



New batch of OO9 AGR Models exclusive Peco red bogie mail vans

Retailer AGR Models is releasing a second batch of an OO9 vehicle it previously commissioned from Peco and which then sold out some time ago.

The bogie mail van is an exclusive red-liveried version of the Peco Lynton & Barnstaple Railway van No.23 model, with the word 'MAIL' written in large letters on the centre doors in ochre lettering shaded in black & white, matching centre and cantrail lining plus small 'GUARD' and load weight lettering and vehicle number 13, also in ochre.

This 'AGR Special' model (ref.GRC001) is priced at £41.95 plus shipping. For further details visit the retailer's website.



▲ Livery artwork for the bogie mail van.

AGR Model Railway Store, 9 High Street Mews,
High Street, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 1EA
www.agrmodelrailwaystore.co.uk

Constructive talks mean David Clarke Model Railway will stay open

As briefly revealed in the Editorial to the January 2026 issue of **RAILWAY MODELLER**, there has been a change of heart regarding the imminent threat of closure for the OO gauge, radio-controlled David Clarke Model Railway reported in the News section of the December 2025 magazine.

The Trustees of the Shuttlewood Clarke Foundation, the charity which runs the premises where the layout is housed at Ulverscroft Grange in Whitwick Road, Ulverscroft, Markfield, Leicestershire LE67 9QB, announced back in October that the layout would have to close on Friday 19 December because of a need to use the area in which it is housed to increase the site's revenue-earning retail space.

However, the volunteers who have run the fully signalled, GWR-themed layout were devastated by the decision and pointed out that suggestions for the layout to be broken up and moved elsewhere were unrealistic given its size and method of construction. They therefore set about contacting media and model railway organisations and high-profile enthusiasts to highlight its plight, while also stressing that the layout had been built by the charity's founder, David Clarke, to further its aims of creating activities that encourage a sense of wellbeing.

Now, in the light of constructive discussions held with the model railway volunteers – and the messages of support for the layout received



from the public and model railway enthusiasts around the country – the charity trustees have announced that the David Clarke Model Railway will remain open for the foreseeable future, and alternative plans have now been submitted to meet the Foundation's requirements.

In a statement issued following the new agreement, Barry Martin, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, said: "It was always the Foundation's intention to preserve the railway, if at all possible, and the fact that we plan to be able to keep it as part of the Foundation will be welcomed by all, especially given its unique place in the model railway world. We are grateful for the dedication and passion shown by everyone involved, which has been instrumental in reaching this positive outcome. The Trustees would like to

extend their thanks to the volunteers for their ongoing commitment and flexibility during this period of transition."

Speaking on behalf of the Ulverscroft Grange Model Railway volunteers, Alan Godber said: "This is the best possible news, and we are grateful to have had the opportunity to sit down with the trustees and discuss ways in which the railway could be saved and enhance the facilities at Ulverscroft Grange. The support received from the model railway community and the public has been heartwarming, and we look forward to working with the trustees to ensure that David Clarke's pride and joy continues to thrive, and to maintaining this legacy for all to enjoy."

www.shuttlewood-cl Clarke.org/
ulverscroft-grange/model-railway

FARSAP signalling archive provides useful resource for modellers

After 12 years of volunteer effort recording the evolution of railway signalling, the Film Archive of Railway Signalling And People (FARSAP) is today thriving and still growing.

A great resource for railway modellers and enthusiasts, its film archive and new website covers well over 200 signalling locations in Britain and Northern Ireland, along with the art and technology of railway

signalling and advances made in it. There are also reminiscences from signallers explaining how the job used to be done using more traditional equipment, and how safety is ensured using modern signalling today.

Mike Peart of the FARSAP team, Friends of the National Railway Museum and Signalling Record Society, says that there is more material to be added, including films of conventional lever signal boxes,

power boxes, panels, signalling centres and heritage railway signalling.

He also notes that the welcome co-operation of Network Rail has helped to get the archive to where it is today, with FARSAP providing a comprehensive archive of signalling films for professionals, enthusiasts and modellers alike.

For further details visit the project's website:
www.farsap.co.uk

Coming next month

March 2025

Out Thursday 12 Feb.

Chilcompton Tunnel
Remembering the celebrated
Somerset & Dorset in OO



Bowater's Paper Mill
Industrial narrow gauge
in 7mm scale



Dochard Distillery
A Scottish cameo in OO



plus all the regular features ...

SAVE 50p ON NEXT MONTH'S RM!
Use the coupon printed on p38a of this issue to save 50p on the cover price of the March 2026 edition of **RAILWAY MODELLER**, when purchased from a Peco stockist.

Societies & Clubs

The following announcements are included in good faith from information provided by the organisers. As cancellations are sometimes inevitable, anyone travelling to a listed live event should contact the organiser first. The publishers cannot accept any responsibility for cancellations or errors. RAILWAY MODELLER is published on the second Thursday of the preceding month, and notifications sent via email to clubs@railwaymodeller.co.uk are required six weeks prior to publication date. Entries must include the organiser's email or website and/or a telephone number.

APRIL 2026 issue deadline: FEBRUARY 1st

LIVE EVENTS

Saturday 10 January

BEAMINSTER, Dorset

Organiser: Bridport & District MRC.

Venue: Beaminster Public Hall, Fleet Street, Beaminster, Dorset DT8 3EF.

Open: 1000-1600

Admission: adults £5.00, U16s free. Card payments accepted.

Amenities: free parking, full disabled access. Light refreshments all day.

Features: 12 layouts plus demonstrations and trade stands.

Contact: Ken Banks, 07484 213267.

Email: kbbnewhaven@hotmail.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/1926159614193211/

Saturday 10 January

HEYWOOD, Lancashire

Organiser: Heywood Model Railway Group.

Venue: Unit 4, River Street, Heywood, Lancashire OL10 4AB.

Open: 1000-1600

Admission: £3.00 per adult, accompanied children free. Donations welcome.

Amenities: free parking. Wheelchair access. Refreshments.

Features: open day for club test tracks in N, O09, O0 and O gauge. Run own locos. Shop.

Contact: Phil Evans by emailing: phil_evans@sky.com

Website: <https://www.hmrng.net/>

Saturday 10 January

SWOONS OPEN DAY

ILTON, Somerset

Organiser: South West O09 Society (SWOONS).

Venue: Merrifield Hall, Ilton, Somerset TA19 9HG.

Open: 1000-1600

Admission: £3.00 per person.

Amenities: car parking & disabled access. Refreshments available.

Features: layouts including: *Nethercombe Quarry* (O-16.5); *Welford Coppice* (O0 & O09); *Sylvasprings Watercress* (O0n6.5); *Elsie's Yard*, *Gosodiad Bach*, *Great Pearl Mine*, *Juniper Hill*, *Sutton Chancellor*, *Tan-y-Bryn* (O09); *Conifer Valley River Route* (H0n30). Plus O09 sales stand & other traders.

Email: treasurer@009society.com

Website: www.009society.com/news/exhibitions-events/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/009Society/

Saturday 10 January

MAIDENHEAD, Berkshire

Organiser: Marlow, Maidenhead & District MRC.

Venue: Cox Green Community Centre, Highfield Lane, Cox Green, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 3AX.

Open: 1000-1630.

Admission: adults £6.00, children (5-14) £3.00, U5s free, family (two adults plus two or more children) £15.00.

Amenities: free but limited parking on site. Refreshments available.

Features: 8 layouts, plus a Pendon Museum display, a demonstrator and 5 traders.

Contact: use contact section of club website.

Email: juliansaxtonmmdmrc@btinternet.com

Website: www.mmdmrc.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MarlowMaidenheadDistrictModelRailwayClub/

Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 January

FELPHAM, Bognor Regis, West Sussex

Organiser: Bognor Regis MRC Ltd.

Venue: Felpham Community College, Bognor Regis PO22 8EL.

Open: Saturday 1000-1700

Sunday 1000-1600

Admission: adults £7.00, children (age 6 and over) £3.00, U6s free. Card payments accepted. Advance tickets available (with ticket-source.co.uk booking fee) via club website.

Amenities: free parking. Public transport on Stagecoach bus service No.700. Disabled access. Refreshments available.

Features: layouts including: *Boxall Lane*, *Hayling Island* (O); *Sindon Vale* (O-16.5); *Chalton Depot*, *Elbow Lane*, *Halden Lane*, *Junior Club Layout*, *Merrybrook Pathway*, *Sussex Vintage MRC* (O0); *Church Lane Halt* (O09); *Jubilee Lane* (3mm); *Ambleton Vale*, *Ashborough Junction*, *Royal Albert Bridge*, *Two Towers Brewery* (N); plus exhibitors and trade & society stands.

Contact: use club website contacts section.

Website: www.brmrc.org.uk/annual-exhibition.html

Facebook: www.facebook.com/bognorregismrc/

Sunday 11 January

UFFCULME, Devon

Organiser: Culm Valley Model Railway Club.

Venue: Old Well Garden Centre, Waterloo Cross, Uffculme, Cullompton EX15 3ES.

Open: 1000-1600

Admission: free but donations welcome.

Amenities: garden centre with parking located close to Junction 27 of M5 just off A38. 'Railway Room' is adjacent to top car park.

Features: early 1960s era steam and diesel traction on *Tiverton Junction* (30' long O0 gauge model) plus *Soldor*, home to a little blue engine, driven by visitors. Club layouts.

Website: www.cvmrc.weebly.com/tiverton-junction.html

Saturday 17 & Sunday 18 January

BLACKBURN, Lancashire

Event: ELMRO 19th Annual Charity Model Railway Exhibition.

Organiser: East Lancashire Model Railway Charitable Organisation.

Venue: St Marks Conservative Club, Preston Old Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 2SS.

Open: Saturday 1000-1700

Sunday 1000-1500

Admission: adults £5.00, concessions £3.00, children £3.00, family £12.00.

Amenities: paid parking on site and free parking nearby. Mill Hill (Lancashire) and Cherry Tree railway stations are around half a mile from the venue, and Blackburn station one and a quarter miles away.

Features: layouts and trade stands – details not yet confirmed at the time of writing.

Contact: 07585 762627.

Email: elmro1@virginmedia.com

Website: <https://elmro.org/>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/elmrocharity/

Saturday 17 & Sunday 18 January

CANTERBURY, Kent

Organiser: City of Canterbury Model Railway Society supported by Doug's Model Trains & Tools and Invicta Model Rail Ltd.

Venue: St Ansels School, Old Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 3EN.

Open: Saturday 1000-1700

Sunday 1000-1600

Admission: adults £8.00, children (5-15) £1.00. All U12s must be accompanied by an adult. Cash or card payments available.

Amenities: visitor parking is at New Dover Road Park & Ride next door or on street nearby. Regular Stagecoach buses Nos.12, 15, 16, 17 and 89 pass the school. Only limited disabled parking is available on site. Disabled access to both halls. Hot & cold refreshments available.

Features: around 14 layouts including: *Northport Quay* (7mm scale Irish, 36.75mm gauge); *Brook Street*, *Fairfield Priory*, *Holmeshurst*, *Queen Charlotte Dock* (O); *Dinsdale 1830*, *Fence Houses NCB*, *Helland Wharf*, *London Road Sidings*, *Narrowden*, *Rampage* (O0); *Blackmoor* (O09); *Ospringle St Peter & Water Lane* (N). Plus outdoor train rides (subject to weather conditions), demonstrations and numerous trade stands.

Contact: Exhibition Manager Jeremy Kennett, 07443 658102 evenings only.

Email: ccmrs.shows@gmail.com

Website: www.ccmrs.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ccmrs1/

Saturday 17 & Sunday 18 January

LEICESTER, Leicestershire

Organiser: Syston Model Railway Society.

Venue: Birstall Social Club, 16-18 Wanlip Lane, Birstall, Leicester LE4 4JS.

Open: Saturday 1000-1630

Sunday 1000-1600

Admission: adults £5.00, acpd U16s free, unacpd young people under 16 £4.00.

Amenities: plenty of car parking close to and at the venue. Arriva bus No.127 is a 10-minute walk away from venue linking Leicester city centre with Loughborough. Main hall is wheelchair friendly but access to clubroom is up a staircase. Refreshments available in social club & hot food upstairs in clubroom.

Features: 12 layouts incl: *Bessie's Bulls* (4mm scale); *Burch Green*, *Effingham Street*, *Fried Egg (Friday) Bridge*, *Lochgorm*, *Lydd on Sea*, *The Electric Tramway* (O0); *Burgedorf* (H0e); *Crawford Bridge* (won best in show at the Elizabethan Show), *Spion Kop* (N); and *Mine-all Mine*. Plus trade support downstairs and upstairs.

Contact: 07878 661025.

Website: www.systonmrs.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/systonmrs

Saturday 24 January

LANGTOFT, Market Deeping, Lincolnshire

Organiser: Jamie's Quest – Teenage Cancer Fundraising, supported by Market Deeping MRC, Sleaford MRC, March & District MRC and the NG34 Model Railway Society.

Venue: St Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, East End, Langtoft PE6 9LP.

Open: 1000-1600

Admission: adults £5.00, acpd U16s free. Proceeds in aid of Jamie's Quest – Teenage Cancer Fundraising charity (see Letters).

Amenities: on-street parking, disabled access, refreshments.

Features: 10-plus layouts plus demonstrations and Trains4U trade stand.

Email: bill.sowerby@hotmail.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/Jamies-Quest-for-lifesaving-cancer-treatment-61565582260764/

Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 January

THAMESMEAD MODEL RAILWAY

EXHIBITION 2026

ERITH, South East London

Organiser: Erith Model Railway Society.

Venue: Harris Garrard Academy, Yarnton Way, Thamesmead, nr Erith DA18 4DW.

Open: Saturday 1000-1700

Sunday 1000-1600

Admission: advance ticket prices (book via www.ticketsource.co.uk/erith-model-railway-society/): adults £9.00, juniors (12-17) £4.50. On the day ticket prices: adults £10.00, juniors £5.00. Acpd U12s free.

Amenities: venue can be reached: from the M25 (A282): leave at Jct.1a and join the A206 (Bob Dunn Way, Thames Road, Northend Road, South Road and Queens Road) towards Erith; at the end of Queens Road, take the second exit on the roundabout to join the A2016 (Bronze

Age Way and Picardy Manorway); at the end of Picardy Manorway, take the second exit on the roundabout to join Yarnton Way; finally, at the second mini-roundabout, take the third exit for entrance to the Academy.

From the A2: leave at the Black Prince interchange and join A220 (Gravel Hill, Erith Road and Bexley Road) towards Erith; at the end of Bexley Road, take the first exit on the roundabout to join the A2016 (Bronze Age Way and Picardy Manorway) towards Thamesmead; at the end of Picardy Manorway, take the second exit on the roundabout to join Yarnton Way; at the second mini-roundabout, take the third exit for the entrance to the Harris Garrard Academy. The venue is within the ULEZ boundary, so check that your vehicle is compliant. Venue has sizeable free on-site car park – be aware of signs and car parking marshals.

Nearest rail station is Abbey Wood (served by Southeastern, Thameslink and Elizabeth Line services), a 10-20 minute walk to the venue or catch either No.180 or No.B11 bus from Bus Stop C to the venue. Transport for London buses Nos.180, 401 & B11 stop outside the venue; TfL buses Nos.177, 229, 244, 301, 469 & 472 stop on nearby A2041; TfL Super Loop service SL3 stops at Abbey Wood station. Venue is fully accessible and has a disabled toilet. Extensive range of hot and cold food and drinks, and plenty of seating in refreshment area.

Features: 32 layouts including: *The LB&L Line* (G); *Glenfinnan Station*, *Hursley Quay*, *Jaspers Green*, *Lockes Down*, *Queen Charlotte Dock* (O); *Hillston*, *Solomon's Dock* (O-16.5/NG7); *Bulldog Quay*, *Columbia Wharf* (EM); *Aberlinton*, *Albert Street Parcels*, *Cicely Bridge TMD*, *Durston*, *Halden Lane*, *Oxley Heath*, *Slades Green* (*Children's Have-A-Go Layout*), *Windmill Hill* (O0); *Wilmington Grammar School for Boys* (O09); *Whiz Bang Corner* (O09/H0e); *Beijiao*, *Vine Street Riverside*, *Water Run* (H0); *Anglo-German Project* (*Modular Layout*), *Bocksley Town*, *Butler Central*, *Choates Lane*, *N E Where* (*Modular Layout*), *Quarry Falls*, *Rocky Mountain Rails & Mini Rocky Mountain Rails*, *Scratchwood* (N). Demonstrators, exhibitors, trade & society stands.

Contact: Exhibition Manager Paul Plummer, 07736 560956.

Email: erithmrs@gmail.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/944711410190204/

Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 January

IRVINE, North Ayrshire

Organiser: Kilmarnock & District Model Railway Club sponsored by Lathalmond Models.

Venue: Scottish Maritime Museum, Linthouse Building, Harbour Rd, Irvine KA12 8BT.

Open: Saturday 1000-1700

Sunday 1000-1600

Admission: adults £7.00, concessions £5.00, U16s free (up to three children with one paying adult/concession). Entry to exhibition includes free access to the Maritime Museum exhibits.

Amenities: to reach the museum by road, follow signs for Harbourside from Warrick Interchange on the A71 to Merryvale Roundabout, then A737(S) towards the BMW garage. At the mini roundabout follow signs for Maritime Museum (full directions on club website poster). Venue has ample free parking. Irvine rail station is on the Ayrshire Coast Line from Glasgow – on leaving the station head west through the underpass, then follow Montgomery Street towards Harbourside. Turn left at junction with Gottries Road/Linthouse Vennel and follow latter to the museum. Venue has ample free parking and is disabled accessible. There will be food and beverage outlets with a number of options close by, plus craft stalls.

Features: layouts, model displays & traders. Also interactive *Thomas* layout – 'Try your hand at train driving', children's activities and access to the Maritime Museum.

Contact: use contact form on website below.

Website: www.kilmarnockmrc.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/KDMRC71

Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 January

KENDAL, Cumbria

Organiser: Kendal Model Railway Club.

Venue: Kendal Leisure Centre, LA9 7HX.

Open: Saturday 1000-1700
Sunday 1000-1600
Admission: adults £6.50, children (6-15) £2.50.
Amenities: small charge for car parking. The leisure centre is fully accessible for disabled people and has Changing Places disabled toilet facilities. Light refreshments available from Leisure Centre café.
Features: layouts including: *Kettlewell* (Skipton area 1920s, P4); *Bred Albin* (Scottish 1960s – featured in RAILWAY MODELLER December 2025 issue), *Bridge Road* (somewhere in the UK), *Dalehead* (Yorkshire 1930s), *Rumbling Bridge* (Scottish Devon Valley 1960s-70s), *Shepherdswell* (East Kent 1960s), *Trinity Dock Street Bridge* (Hull 1939) (OO); *Brusio Viaduct* (RhB Bernina Line, Swiss-Italian border, HOm); *Alston* (Cumberland late steam/early diesel era), *Lisworth Bay* (Railway of the Month in RM July 2022 issue) (N). Plus *Funville* (entertaining layout for children) as well as demonstrations and numerous trade & society stands.
Contact: Ian Conway, 01539 733844.
Website: www.kendalmrc.org

Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 January
PONTEFRAC, West Yorkshire
Organiser: Normanton & Pontefract Railway Modellers Society.
Venue: Pontefract Racecourse, Park Road, Pontefract WF8 4QD.
Open: Saturday 1000-1700
Sunday 1000-1600
Admission: adults £10.00, acpd U16s free (card payments accepted).
Amenities: to reach venue by road, use M62 Jct.32. What3Words: bump.spoken. chose. Venue has disabled access. Refreshments will be available through the Racecourse's catering facility.
Features: over 20 layouts in various scales and gauges plus demonstrations, a wide selection of traders, club second-hand stall and charity tombola.
Contact: via Facebook page – see below.
Email: secretary.nprms@gmail.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/people/Normanton-and-Pontefract-RMS/100064793586427/

Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 January
SOUTHAMPTON 60TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION 2026
EASTLEIGH, Hampshire
Organiser: Southampton Model Railway Society.
Venue: Barton Peveril Sixth Form College, Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh SO50 5ZA (with satnav use SO50 5BX for front entrance).
Open: Saturday 1000-1700
Sunday 1000-1630
Admission: adults £10.00, acpd U16s free.
Amenities: venue is around 1½ miles from M3 Jct.13 or M27 Jct.5 and will be AA signed from shortly after the junctions. Limited free parking on site so for other parking options see SMRS website. Both Eastleigh & Southampton Parkway rail stations are about 1¼ miles from venue. A free heritage bus service provided by the Southampton & District Transport Heritage Trust will operate between these stations and the college on both days from 0930, running approximately every half hour – see SMRS website for timetable. Also Bluestar local buses No.2 & No.5 stop near college. Venue will have a children's zone and full catering.
Features: layouts including: *Colorado Springs* (G scale Playmobil in café area); *Netherton, Sherton Abbas, The Essence of Ventnor, The Parlour Railway* (O); *Rathmelton* (County Donegal Railways Joint Committee/Londonderry & Lough Swilly Railway 7mm scale Irish 3' narrow gauge, model 21mm gauge); *Brink Valley Tramway* (O9); *Ryburn, Wantage* (P4); *Express Daisy Sidings, Three Cocks Junction, Sundown Lane* (EM); *Bottleigh Old North Road, College Halt, Drive a Train, Gara Bridge, Oak Lane, Seaton Junction, Tellindalloch* (OO); *Selborne, Tittesworth* (OO9); *Kaninchenbau* (HOe); *Barnwood, Smalldale Quarry, Tropical Wonders* (N); *Lego World* (L); plus test track (EM, OO, TT, N, 2mm Fine Scale & Z); SMRS Thomas layout in children's area. Also demonstrators and trade & society stands.
Contact: use contact form on website.

Website: www.southamptonmodelrailwaysociety.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/Southampton-Model-Railway-Society-100054627512434/
Sunday 25 January
UFFCULME, Devon
Organiser: Culm Valley Model Railway Club.
Venue: Old Well Garden Centre, Waterloo Cross, Uffculme, Cullompton EX15 3ES.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: free but donations welcome.
Amenities: garden centre with parking located close to Junction 27 of M5 just off A38. 'Railway Room' is adjacent to top car park.
Features: 60 years of steam and diesel traction on *Tiverton Junction* (30' long OO gauge model) plus *Soldor*, home to a little blue engine, driven by visitors. Club layouts.
Website: www.cvmrc.weebly.com/tiverton-junction.html

Saturday 31 January
SHIREHAMPTON, Bristol
Event: Shirehampton MRC Annual Model Rail Exhibition.
Organiser: Shirehampton Model Railway Club.
Venue: Shirehampton Public Hall, Station Road, Shirehampton, Bristol BS11 9TU.
Open: 1000-1630
Admission: £6.00 per person, family (up to 4 people) £8.00. (Cash or card accepted).
Amenities: there is a public car park in Waverley Road, 5 minutes' walk away. The No.13 bus stops outside the door, and routes Nos.11, 3 and 4 stop 5 mins' walk away at the village green, while the Portway Park and Ride bus stops at Station Road, also 5 mins' walk away. Shirehampton rail station is 10 mins' walk away. Main hall ground floor is fully accessible and disabled friendly but there is no disabled access to balcony. Venue is close to local shops, services and cafés.
Features: layouts including (confirmed at the time of writing): *Charlton Rd West* (O); *Dent* (OO), *Brimscombe, Binegar, Bridge Street, Calderbridge* (N), plus weathering demonstration by Phil Harris and trader Keiths Model Railways.
Contact: use contact form on website or email address below.
Email: Shirehamptonmrc@gmail.com
Website: www.shirehamptonmrc.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/ShirehamptonMRC/

Saturday 7 February
CLEVELEYS, Lancashire
Event: Club Rail Day.
Organiser: Blackpool and North Fylde MRC.
Venue: Cleveleys Community Centre, Kensington Road (off Beach Road), Cleveleys, Lancs FY5 1ER.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: adults £5.00, seniors & juniors £4.00.
Amenities: ample local parking. Venue has easy access for disabled visitors. Light refreshments available.
Features: club & members' layouts in various gauges plus demonstrations, trade support and club sales stand.
Contact: use contact form on website or email club secretary using address below.
Email: bill.w.calm@gmail.com
Website: https://livewyre.wixsite.com/bnfmrc/
Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/Blackpool-North-Fylde-MRC-100066398330690/

Saturday 7 February
HILLINGDON, West London
Event: Test Track Public Open Day.
Organiser: Hillingdon Railway Modellers.
Venue: Yiewsley Baptist Church Hall (side entrance), 74 Colham Avenue, Yiewsley, Hillingdon, London UB7 8HF.
Open: 1000-1500
Admission: £6.00 per person.
Amenities: nearest railway station is West Drayton (12 minutes' walk) and local bus Nos.222, 350, U1, U3 & U5 stop nearby. Refreshments will be available all day.



▲ **Feòrag**, featured in the June 2025 RAILWAY MODELLER, will appear at the Bournemouth show on 14 & 15 February. Photo: Andrew Burnham

Features: modellers can bring along their O, OO or N gauge locos and trains to run on the club's three separate test tracks, with dc and DCC available, but sorry, no live steam. This is not an exhibition, but a chance to meet fellow modellers, chat and test models. Expert help is on hand for anyone having problems with models.
Contact: Peter Storey, 020 83 684090.
Website: www.hillingdonrailwaymodellers.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/Hillingdon-Railway-Modellers-100064718916905/

Saturday 7 & Sunday 8 February
FEBEX
ALTON, Hampshire
Organiser: Alton Model Railway Group.
Venue: Eggars School, London Road, Alton, Hampshire GU34 4EQ.
Open: Saturday 1030-1700
Sunday 1030-1600
Admission: adults £8.00, acpd U16s free. (Payment can be made by cash or card).
Amenities: there is extended free parking as well as an enlarged area for disabled drivers near the show entrance plus wheelchair access to all areas, with help available if required. For those arriving by public transport, there will be a free vintage bus from Alton railway station. Hot and cold refreshments will be available both days.
Features: layouts including: *Fareport, Tony's Forest* (O); *Express Daisy Sidings, Hungerford* (EM); *Canute Road Quay, Fairdon, Swanage Under Construction, Tidworth, Wiveliscombe* (OO); *A Bygones Weekend at Tan-y-Bwlch Station* (OO9); *Broken Creek* (HO); *Stedham Mill* (3mm); *Ashwood End, Bramble Lock, Hinksey Yard* (N); as well as demonstrations of: weathering techniques; building, painting, weathering and detailing MDF kits; scenic modelling; etched kit soldering techniques. Plus trade & society stands.
Contact: Mark Pretious, 07508 613690 or use contact section of website.
Website: https://febex.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/AMRGFebEx/

Sunday 8 February
HALIFAX, West Yorkshire
Event: Open Day.
Organiser: Halifax Model Railway Club Ltd.
Venue: 2-4 Deal Street, Halifax HX1 1QE.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: adults £3.50, concessions £2.50, children (aged 5-16) £1.50, family ticket £7.00.
Amenities: plenty of car parking nearby. Unfortunately, due to circumstances outside the club's control, no lift is currently available and access to the clubroom is by stairs only. Kitchen and Parcel Office Café are now open, with refreshments available all day, and lunch served 1200 to 1400.
Features: around 15 layouts in O, OO, OO9 & N gauges plus trade stand and bring & buy stall. All of the club layouts have been having much-needed refurbishment and the members are continuing to improve their own layouts.
Contact: use email address below or contact form on club website also shown below.
Email: halifaxmodelrailwayclubltd@gmail.com
Website: www.halifaxmodelrailwayclubltd.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/Halifax-Model-Railway-Club-LTD-100080012250488/



▲ **Rumbling Bridge, re-creating the Devon Valley line in Scotland, is due to attend the Kendal exhibition on 24 & 25 January. Photo: Steve Flint**

Sunday 8 February

UFFCULME, Devon

Organiser: Culm Valley Model Railway Club.
Venue: Old Well Garden Centre, Waterloo Cross, Uffculme, Cullompton EX15 3ES.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: free but donations welcome.
Amenities: garden centre with parking located close to Junction 27 of M5 just off A38. 'Railway Room' is adjacent to top car park.
Features: 60 years of steam and diesel traction on *Tiverton Junction* (30' long OO gauge model) plus *Soldor*, home to a little blue engine, driven by visitors. Club layouts.
Website: www.cvmrc.weebly.com/tivertonjunction.html

Friday 13 & Saturday 14 February MODEL RAIL 2026

SOUTH SHIELDS, Tyne & Wear

Organiser: The Salvation Army, South Shields.
Venue: The Salvation Army, Wawn Street, South Shields, Tyne & Wear NE33 4EB.
Open: Friday 1300-2000
 Saturday 1000-1700
Admission: adults £5.00, all U16s free (please note this is a cash-only venue – Salvation Army is a Christian Church and registered charity, and this exhibition helps to raise funds to enable it to carry out community work in the local area).
Amenities: venue is near Hedworth Hall, 5 mins from Chichester Metro station. Disabled-friendly event with level access to all areas of the building. Refreshments available in the café with a wide range of food and drinks.
Features: annual event has been held every year since 2000. There will be a wide range of layouts in different scales and sizes that will interest all ages, including a battery-operated layout that youngsters can run. Plus traders selling model rail accessories and equipment.
Contact: 01914 553710.
Email: south.shields@salvationarmy.org.uk
Website: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/south-shields
Facebook: www.facebook.com/SouthShieldsSA/

Saturday 14 February

BIGGLESWADE, Bedfordshire

Organiser: East Bedfordshire Model Railway Society.
Venue: Stratton School, Eagle Farm Road, Biggleswade SG18 8JB.
Open: 1000-1630
Admission: adults £7.00, concessions £6.00, children £3.00, family £17.00, U5s free. Note cash only for entry.
Amenities: free parking. Nearest station is Biggleswade, which is 15 mins' walk from the venue. Refreshments available.
Features: over 15 layouts of various gauges, plus trade support and society stands.
Contact: Bob Harrold, 01462 732978.
Email: aigill@hotmail.com
Website: www.ebmrs.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/247083403306778/

Saturday 14 February

HEYWOOD, Lancashire

Organiser: Heywood Model Railway Group.
Venue: Unit 4, River Street, Heywood, Lancashire OL10 4AB.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: £3.00 per adult, acpd children free. Donations welcome.
Amenities: free parking. Wheelchair access. Refreshments.
Features: open day for club test tracks in N, OO9, OO and O gauge. Run own locos. Shop.
Contact: Phil Evans by emailing: phil.evans@sky.com
Website: <https://www.hmrg.net/>

Saturday 14 & Sunday 15 February

BOURNEMOUTH, Dorset

Organiser: East Dorset N Gauge Group.
Venue: Kinson Community Centre, Pelhams Park, Millhams Road BH10 7LH.
Open: Saturday 1000-1700
 Sunday 1000-1600
Admission: adults £8.00, U16s £1.00.
Amenities: free car parking with dedicated disabled parking bays, or there is street parking nearby if the car park is full. Venue is also served by More bus routes 5, 5A, 6A, 11, 14, 32 & 36, with the stop two minutes' walk from the community centre. There is disabled access to all areas. On-site café is available offering hot & cold refreshments.
Features: a selection of layouts, including: *Gothorn* (7mm scale); *Awreville Diesel Depot*, *Box Metals*, *Brewery Lane*, *Croscombe* (O); *Gamma Silo Rotatory* (On30); *Bristol Harbour*, *Carlyon Dock*, *Ditchat Junction*, *Milford on Sea*, *The Depot at the End of Time* (OO); *Feòrag*, *Llanfair Rhyd* (OO9); *Autenbak* (HO); *Buxton* (2mm scale); *Benbridge*, *Ins & Outs*, *Karlisle*, *Lisworth Bay*, *Moor Boxes*, *Penworth*, *Sarah's Falls*, *Sillhurst*, *Sturminster Newton*, *Thomas and Friends*, *White Meadow Quarry* (N).
Email: eastdorsetng@outlook.com
Website: www.bmre.org.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/Bournemouth-Model-Railway-Exhibition-61571859624412/
www.facebook.com/p/East-Dorset-N-Gauge-Group-100087045083109/

Saturday 14 & Sunday 15 February

CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH, Derbyshire

Organiser: New Mills & District Railway Modellers (NMDRM)
Venue: Chapel-en-le-Frith Leisure Centre, Long Lane, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Derbys SK23 0TQ.
Open: Saturday 1000-1700
 Sunday 1000-1630
Admission: adults £8.00, acpd children free.
Amenities: free parking, wheelchair access. Refreshments available.
Features: 17 layouts plus four demonstra-

tors as well as trade & society stands.

Email: exhibition@nmdrm.co.uk

Website: www.nmdrm.co.uk

Saturday 14 & Sunday 15 February

WESTON-SUPER-MARE, North Somerset

Organiser: Burnham & District MRC.
Venue: Priory Community School, Queens Way, Weston-Super-Mare BS22 6BP.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: adults £8.00, children free.
Amenities: free parking, step-free access, on-site catering and light catering.
Features: 20-plus layouts including: *G scale demo* (45mm gauge); *Clement Street*, *Crossways Wagon Works* (O); *Yard No.2* (P4); *Clevedon WCPR*, *Quarry Lane* or *Western Loading* (TBC) (EM); *Beggarwood*, *Gorton Lane*, *Hagbourne Road*, *Iron Mould Lane*, *Lockdown Fen*, *Nictun Borrad*, *Rocket*, *Tellindalloch in Autumn* (OO); *Devil's Bridge*, *Hergest*, *A Bygones Weekend at Tan-y-Bwlch Station*, *Tarrant Valley Railway* (OO9); *Horse Creek*, *Nucor Steel* (HO); *Kleine Albula* (HOM); *Bridge Street*, *Corrour Moor* (N); plus *Inglennook Shunting Challenge*; also EM Gauge Society stand and 12 other trade stands.
Contact: Exhibition Manager Mark Savage using email address below.
Email: burnhammrcshow@gmail.com
Website: <https://bdmrc.co.uk/weston-super-mare-2026/>
Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/Burnham-Model-Railway-Club-100086744415846/

Sunday 15 February

'WARLEY AT HOME' WINTER OPEN DAY OLDBURY, West Midlands

Organiser: Warley Model Railway Club.
Venue: The Clubrooms, Unit 1F Pearsall Drive, Oldbury, West Midlands B69 2RA.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: free, but donations welcome.
Amenities: light refreshments are usually available to purchase & seating is available.
Features: annual winter Open Day of the Warley Club, featuring working layouts in most popular scales, hopefully including some members' layouts, layouts under construction, the Club library, demonstrations, a members' bring and buy stand and the opportunity to see the facilities available to members, and to meet with the members within the home clubroom.
Email: thesecretary@warley-mrc.org.uk
Website: www.warley-mrc.org.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/warleyatstafold/

Saturday 21 February

DEREHAM, Norfolk

Organiser: Mid-Norfolk Railway Preservation Trust.
Venue: Dereham Memorial Hall, 62a Norwich Street, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1AD.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: adults £6.00, concessions £5.00, accompanied children free.
Amenities: free parking at Dereham station (5-min walk away). Refreshments available.
Features: layouts in a variety of scales, a range of trade and society stands, model engineering displays and modelling demonstrations. Full size trains also operating from Dereham station for additional charge.
Contact: James Oakley via email address.
Email: james.oakley@mnr.org.uk
Website: www.midnorfolkrailway.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/midnorfolkrailway/

Saturday 21 February

RISEX 2026 MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION

PRINCES RISBOROUGH, Buckinghamshire
Organiser: Risborough & District MRC.
Venue: Wades Centre, Wades Park, Stratton Road, Princes Risborough HP27 9AX.
Open: 1000-1630
Admission: adults (18-plus) £7.00, children (5-17) £1.00.
Amenities: disabled access to venue. Light refreshments available.
Features: local layouts plus demonstrators, club stand, trade support & society stands.
Email: risexmanager@rdmrc.org.uk
Website: www.rdmrc.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/Risborough-District-Model-Railway-Club-100068939964862/?locale=en_GB

Saturday 21 February

KENAVON (EAST READING) MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION

READING, Berkshire
Organiser: Kenavon Railway Society in support of the Cholsey & Wallingford Railway.
Venue: The Warehouse, 1a Cumberland Road, Reading RG1 3LB.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: adults £5.00, seniors £4.00, children £2.50, families £11.00.
Amenities: limited parking in the church car park off Norwood Road, or 3 hours' free parking is available at Palmer Park Stadium (10 mins' walk away) or in the pay and display at the Hope and Bear. Reading Buses route Nos.4, X4, 12, 13, 14, 127 & 128, Carousel 850 (Henley/Marlow/High Wycombe) and Rail Air RA1 all stop nearby. The hall is wheelchair accessible. Refreshments available.
Features: around 18 layouts including: *Quarry View* (O – featured in RAILWAY MODELLER February 2025); *Express Daisy Sidings* (featured in RM November 2025), *Horsebridge Wharf* (EM); *Egham Hill*, *Rossiter Rise* (London Underground layout), *Wallingford* (OO); *Klein Schmalitz* (HO); *Falschzahne* (HOe); *Los Tanimals* (N); Plus layouts from North Downs Model Railway Circle in the café area. Also several trade stands.
Contact: Richard Standing, 0776 0285383.
Email: standing_richard@yahoo.co.uk
Website: <https://standingrichard.wixsite.com/kenavon/exhibition-copy>

Saturday 21 February

TONBRIDGE, Kent

Organiser: Tonbridge Model Railway Club.
Venue: Angel Centre, Angel Lane, TN9 1SF.
Open: 1000-1700
Admission: adults £8.00, acpd U16s free.
Amenities: venue is located next to Sainsbury's, just off the High Street, 5 minutes from Tonbridge main line station. There is council car parking at Angel Centre, buses through adjacent High Street, disabled access into and through Centre (except for the stage of one hall), and refreshments provided on site.
Features: 22 layouts across various scales and gauges, including: *Haydon Square E1* (O); *Wittenden (TMRG)* (O-16.5/NG7 & O9); *Ouse Wharf* (P4); *Express Daisy Sidings*, *Lochty*, *Surrey Arms* (EM); *Albert Street Parcels*, *Dublinham Goods Station*, *Ettington Verso*, *Fence Houses NCB*, *Folly Lane*, *London Road Sidings*, *Penmaenbach*, *Roshven*, *Tellindalloch*, *The Victory* (OO); *Lochtern Quay* (OO9); *Neuhausen* (HO); *Hallam Town* (2mm); *Brunswick*, *Moors View* (N). Plus two hands-on layouts and several trade & society stands.
Contact: 01959 523840.
Website: www.tonbridgemrc.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/tonbridgemrc
Instagram: [instagram.com/tonbridgemrc](https://www.instagram.com/tonbridgemrc)
X/Twitter: x.com/tonbridgemrc

Saturday 21 February

YALDING, Maidstone, Kent

Organiser: Kent Area Group of the Scalefour Society.
Venue: Yalding Station, Hampstead Lane, Yalding ME18 6HN.
Open: 1000-1700
Admission: free but donations welcome.
Amenities: the model group has permanent use of a room for its large layout at Yalding railway station on the Medway Valley Line, 38 miles from London Charing Cross via Paddock Wood, with the station situated between Beltring and Watlington. The station and all trains that call are operated by Southeastern. For motorists there is also parking available. As the open day is on the same date as, and held in connection with, the Tonbridge show (see above) both events can be visited on the same day. Teas, coffees and cakes will be available – donations for these will be appreciated.
Features: the group will exhibit its P4 model *Eridge*, a station on the London-Uckfield-Lewes line with the layout set in the 1950s/1960s period. The layout is to exact

scale and is 26' long plus fiddle yards. Members operate an intensive service based on the late 1950s timetable and have extensive stock based on prototypes from the Brighton, SE&CR, Southern and BR periods.
Email: simoncbass@hotmail.com
Website: www.scalefour.org/areagroups/kent.htm

Saturday 21 & Sunday 22 February HIGHBRIDGE, Somerset

Organiser: Sedgemoor Gauge O Group.
Venue: The King Alfred School & Academy, Burnham Road, Highbridge, Somerset TA9 3EE.
Open: Saturday 1000-1630
Sunday 1000-1600
Admission: adults £7.00, acpd U14s free.
Amenities: free car parking plus level site for visitors with limited mobility. Refreshments available.
Features: 10-plus layouts as well as trade stands.
Contact: Barrie Baker, 07843 623161.
Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/925593368340302/

Saturday 21 & Sunday 22 February LINCOLN

Organiser: Lincoln & District Model Railway Club sponsored by ttdiecast.com, Bomber County Models & The UK Model Shop Directory.
Venue: Country Assembly Rooms, Bailgate, Lincoln LN1 3AR.
Open: Saturday 1000-1700
Sunday 1000-1600
Admission: adults £5.00, U16s free with a paying adult.
Amenities: venue is located in the stunning cathedral quarter of Lincoln. Plenty of parking available around the city. Walk and ride bus available from the railway station, which is in the centre of the city.
Features: 17 layouts in various scales, some of them new ones making debuts at this exhibition. A wide range of traders will also be attending, along with a couple of demonstrators as well as society stands.
Email: sean.exhmanager.ldmrc@outlook.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/418194484977137/

Saturday 21 & Sunday 22 February TENTERDEN, Kent

Organiser: Ashford Model Railway Club.
Venue: Homewood School, Ashford Road, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6LT.
Open: Saturday 1000-1700
Sunday 1000-1600
Admission: adults £6.00, concessions £5.00, children £3.00, U5s free, family of 4 £15.00.
Amenities: free parking & disabled access available. Refreshments.
Features: show under new management with two halls of layouts and trade stands.
Contact: 01233 647066.
Email: info@ashfordmrc.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.comAshfordMRC/

Saturday 21 & Sunday 22 February YORK AGAINST CANCER MODEL RAILWAY SHOW

YORK, North Yorkshire
Organiser: Ebor Group of Railway Modellers.
Venue: Holy Trinity Church Hall, Melrosegate, Heworth, York YO31 0RP.
Open: Saturday 1000-1700
Sunday 1000-1600
Admission: adults £5.00, children free.
Amenities: on-street parking nearby. Limited disabled access but venue has toilet facilities. Refreshments by the York Against Cancer team.
Features: around 7 layouts in various gauges, including a children's interactive 00 gauge layout, with layout design by Paul Lunn. Plus demos, trade stands and Ebor Group shop.
Contact: Show Manager John Farrall, 07899 861943.
Email: farra159@btinternet.com
Website: www.yorkeborgroup.simdif.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/700974833267966/?locale=en_GB

Sunday 22 February HEANOR, Derbyshire

Organiser: Ilkeston (Woodside) MRC.

Venue: Heanor Miners' Welfare, Ilkeston Road, Heanor, Derbyshire DE75 7DT.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: adults £5.00, acpd U16s free.
Amenities: event will be signposted and venue is off the A6007 Ilkeston-Heanor road. There is free car parking and disabled access, plus a café and a bar.
Features: numerous layouts including: Lochgorm, Shauns Layout, Thomas & Friends, Wagon Repair Sidings (00); Hampshire Hills Tramway (HO); plus trade support, club stall and free magazines plus a warm welcome.
Contact: Event Organiser Pete Abbott, 07930 909571.
Website: www.ilkestonwoodsidesmrc.co.uk

Sunday 22 February UFFCULME, Devon

Organiser: Culm Valley Model Railway Club.
Venue: Old Well Garden Centre, Waterloo Cross, Uffculme, Cullompton EX15 3ES.
Open: 1000-1600
Admission: free but donations welcome.
Amenities: garden centre with parking located close to Junction 27 of M5 just off A38. 'Railway Room' is adjacent to top car park.
Features: 60 years of steam and diesel traction on Tiverton Junction (30' long 00 gauge model) plus Soldor, home to a little blue engine, driven by visitors. Club layouts.
Website: www.cvmrc.weebly.com/tiverton-junction.html

Saturday 28 February-Sunday 1 March HARDEN, West Yorkshire

Organiser: Keighley Model Railway Club.
Venue: Woodbank Garden Centre, Harden BD16 1BE.
Open: Saturday 1000-1630
Sunday 1000-1600
Admission: adults £10.00, children £5.00, family (2+2) £25.00.
Amenities: garden centre attractions.
Features: around 20 layouts in scales from N to G, including Selby Bridge (0). Playmobil mats and miniature steam train rides for young visitors, plus trade support.
Website: www.keighley-mrc.org.uk

Saturday 28 February-Sunday 1 March MIDLANDS GARDEN RAILWAY SHOW LEAMINGTON SPA, Warwickshire

Organiser: Meridienne Exhibitions Ltd.
Venue: Warwickshire Event Centre, A425, Southam Road, Leamington Spa CV31 1FE (on the junction of the A425/B4455 – Southam Road visitor entrance sat nav CV31 1FE).
Open: both days 1000-1600 (with last admission one hour before closing).
Admission: adults £13.00, senior citizens £12.00, children (5-14) £5.00. (Tickets available in advance via the website or can be purchased on the day from the ticket office).
Amenities: free visitor car park, designated parking area for Blue Badge holders. Disabled facilities. Restaurant & coffee shop.
Features: regarded as one of the leading events dedicated to garden railways, it features the larger gauges of G scale, 16mm scale, Gauge 1, 0 and more. There will be over 15 layouts including: Blackgang IOW (Gauge 3); Streetly Road Short Heath (1:16 scale model trams); G Scale Publicity Layout, Thomas's Trackway, Loft City Central Railway (Vintage Playmobil) (G); Rhydyrgwernen, 16mm Association Modular Layout (SM32); Carding Road, Gauge 1 Vintage Tinplate Trains Group Layout (Gauge 1); Lough Motive Power Depot (7mm finescale); Barley End, Halesfield TMD (0); plus nearly 40 specialist trade supplier & society stands. Check website for layout updates.
Website: www.midlandsgardenrailshow.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/MeridienneEx/

MEETINGS

Thursday 8 January – 1930

South East Essex Railway Society
Test-Track night – N, TT, OO, O and 1 – help to set up from 1900 welcome as always.
Venue: Friends' Meeting House, 18 Dundonald

Drive, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 1NB.
Details from: www.seers-rail.org/programme.html or seers.rail@gmail.com

Thursday 8 January – 1330

Stephenson Locomotive Society
'Diesels 1954-1967: Photos from the C J B Sanderson Collection' by David Dunn.
Venue: The Conference Room, 1st floor (access via Black Swan Court Yard), Newcastle Arts Centre, 67 Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1SG.
Details from: www.slsnewcastle.org.uk

Thursday 8 January – 1930

The Great Central Railway Society (Sheffield branch)
'Virginia Wanderings' by Bob Gellatly.
Venue: The Farm Road Sports & Social Club, Farm Road, Sheffield S2 2TP.
Entry: £4.00 donation is requested.
Details from: Bob Gellatly 07519 011213 or gcrs@talktalk.net
Website: www.gcrsociety.co.uk

Monday 12 January – 1930

Lincoln Railway Society
'Six of the Best' by Graham Lightfoot.
Venue: St Hugh's Church, Harewood Crescent, North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 8JG.
Entry: £4.00. Non-members welcome.
Contact: Publicity Member, 01522 698085 or email grahamlightfoot1948@gmail.com

Tuesday 13 January – 1930

Wells Railway Fraternity
Members' Talks – 'Lynton & Barnstaple Update' by David Edwards and 'Modelling Our Local Station' by Andrew Tucker.
Venue: Wells Town Hall, Market Place, Wells BA5 2RB.
Entry: £4.00 non-members, free for members.
Details from: Andrew Tucker, 01749 830695.
Website: www.railwells.com

Wednesday 14 January – 1915

Stephenson Locomotive Society
'Railway Operations in North America' by Martin Elson.
Venue: Abbott Hall Social Centre, Dowker Lane, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 4DN.
Details from: martyn.hill4472@hotmail.com

Thursday 15 January – 1930

Lutterworth Railway Society
LRS Model Running Evening.
Venue: The Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Coventry Rd, Lutterworth LE17 4RB.
Entry: members £2.00, non-members £5.00.
Details from: Alan Bilton on 01455 207996 or 07771 756013.
Website: www.lutterworthrailwaysociety.co.uk

Thursday 15 January – 1930

Marlow & District Railway Society
'A Career in Railway Photography' by Jack Boskett.
Venue: Bourne End Community Centre, Wakeman Road, Bourne End SL8 5SX or on Zoom.
Entry: £3.00 non-members, free for members.
Details from: Martin Stoolman, 07954 849390.
Website: www.mdrs.org.uk

Saturday 17 January – 1400

Stephenson Locomotive Society
'The Highland Railway – part 2' by Bill Jagger.
Venue: The Friends' Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS.
Details from: 0161 442 6178.

Tuesday 20 January – 1400

Stephenson Locomotive Society
'Rails Across the North Riding – part 4' by Richard Barber.
Venue: Langdon Square Community Centre, Coulby Newham TS8 0TF.
Details from: 01429 270591.

Wednesday 21 January – 1930

The Grimsby & Cleethorpes Railway Group
'The Schools of the Southern Railway' by Bob Gellatly.
Venue: The No.1, Station Approach,

Cleethorpes DN35 8AX.
Entry: small entrance fee.
Details from: Stuart Blackburn, 07745 961538 or sc.blackbourn@ntlworld.com

Thursday 22 January – 2000

South East Essex Railway Society
'The Spirit of Sandringham', an update on progress in building the B17 by John Pearson of the B17 Steam Locomotive Trust.
Venue: Friends' Meeting House, 18 Dundonald Drive, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 1NB.
Details from: www.seers-rail.org/programme.html or seers.rail@gmail.com

Monday 2 February – 1930

Peak Rail Association (Sheffield Branch)
'The Royal Train – the Inside Story' by Geoff Griffiths.
Venue: The Farm Road Sports & Social Club, Farm Road, Sheffield S2 2TP.
Entry: £5.00 donation is requested.
Details from: Dave Sharp, 07487 685306 or davidsharpsheffield@gmail.com
Website: www.peakrail.co.uk/sheffieldbranch

Tuesday 3 February – 1930

South East Essex Railway Society
Test-Track night – N, TT, OO, O and 1 – help to set up from 1900 welcome as always.
Venue: Friends' Meeting House, 18 Dundonald Drive, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 1NB.
Details from: www.seers-rail.org/programme.html or seers.rail@gmail.com

Tuesday 3 February – 2000-2200

The Enfield Transport Circle (TETC)
'The History and Development of Engines – Part 4 (Illustrated)' by Peter Moore & Kenneth Crane of TETC.
Venue: First Floor Meeting Room, Enfield Drill Hall Sports Club, 1 Old Park Avenue, Enfield EN2 6PJ.
Entry: £6.00 donation on entry (visitors' first visit is free).
Website: www.tetc.chessck.co.uk/Meetings

Thursday 5 February – 1930

Lutterworth Railway Society
'Bring a Transport Related Thing' for LRS members.
Venue: The Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Coventry Rd, Lutterworth LE17 4RB.
Entry: members £2.00, non-members £5.00.
Details from: Alan Bilton on 01455 207996 or 07771 756013.
Website: www.lutterworthrailwaysociety.co.uk

Thursday 5 February – 1930

The Great Central Railway Society (Sheffield branch)
'The Settle & Carlisle Line in the 1980s' by Keith Marshall.
Venue: The Farm Road Sports & Social Club, Farm Road, Sheffield S2 2TP.
Entry: £4.00 donation is requested.
Details from: Bob Gellatly 07519 011213 or gcrs@talktalk.net
Website: www.gcrsociety.co.uk

Friday 6 February – 1900

Stephenson Locomotive Society
'A Cinder Path Leads to the Shed' by John Hunt.
Venue: Nunthorpe Methodist Church, Connaught Road, Nunthorpe TS7 0BP.
Details from: 01429 270591.

Monday 9 February – 1930

Lincoln Railway Society
'On The Lines of Duty (Part 2 – UK and Europe)' by Alan Stennett.
Venue: St Hugh's Church, Harewood Crescent, North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 8JG.
Entry: £4.00 non-members welcome.
Contact: Publicity Member, 01522 698085 or email grahamlightfoot1948@gmail.com

Tuesday 10 February – 1930

Wells Railway Fraternity
'HSTs at Fifty' by Roy Kethro.
Venue: Wells Town Hall, Market Place, Wells BA5 2RB.
Entry: £4.00 non-members, free for members.
Details from: Andrew Tucker, 01749 830695.
Website: www.railwells.com

Wednesday 11 February – 1915

Stephenson Locomotive Society

Speaker and topic to be announced.

Venue: Abbott Hall Social Centre, Dowker Lane, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 4DN.

Details from: martyn.hill4472@hotmail.com

Thursday 12 February – 1930

South East Essex Railway Society

Test-Track night – N, TT, OO, O and 1 – help to set up from 1900 welcome as always.

Venue: Friends' Meeting House, 18 Dundonald Drive, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 1NB.

Details from: www.seers-rail.org/programme.html or seers.rail@gmail.com

Thursday 12 February – 1330 for 1400

Stephenson Locomotive Society

Centre AGM and Members' Presentations.

Venue: The Conference Room, 1st floor (access via Black Swan Court Yard), Newcastle Arts Centre, 67 Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1SG.

Details from: www.slsnewcastle.org.uk

Tuesday 17 February – 1400

Stephenson Locomotive Society

'One Man's View of the East Coast Main Line – Part 2' by Malcolm Paul.

Venue: Langdon Square Community Centre, Coulby Newham TS8 0TF.

Details from: 01429 270591.

Wednesday 18 February – 1930

The Grimsby & Cleethorpes Railway Group

'Writing about the Railways of NE Lincolnshire' by Paul King.

Venue: The No.1, Station Approach, Cleethorpes DN35 8AX.

Entry: small entrance fee.

Details from: Stuart Blackburn, 07745 961538 or sc.blackburn@ntlworld.com

Thursday 19 February – 1930

Lutterworth Railway Society

'Exploring Mongolian Railways' by Steve Morris.

Venue: The Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Coventry Rd, Lutterworth LE17 4RB.

Entry: members £2.00, non-members £5.00.

Details from: Alan Bilton on 01455 207996 or 07771 756013.

Website: www.lutterworthrailwaysociety.co.uk

Thursday 19 February – 1930

Marlow & District Railway Society

'The Story of China Clay and the Railways' by Mike Walker

Venue: Bourne End Community Centre, Wakeman Road, Bourne End SL8 5SX or on Zoom.

Entry: £3.00 non-members, free for members.

Details from: Martin Stoolman, 07954 849390.

Website: www.mdrs.org.uk

Saturday 21 February – 1400

Stephenson Locomotive Society

'Furness Railway Adventure' by Paul Salvason.

Venue: The Friends' Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS.

Details from: 0161 442 6178.

Thursday 26 February – 2000

South East Essex Railway Society

'The Great Western Rapid Charge train' – the story of the electric rapid charge D78 conversion and its use on the Greenford branch, by member Dan Fosdike.

Venue: Friends' Meeting House, 18 Dundonald Drive, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 1NB.

Details from: www.seers-rail.org/programme.html or seers.rail@gmail.com

CLUB NEWS/ NOTICES

Bedfordshire 16mm Narrow Gauge Modellers

meet on the first Sunday of the month 1030-1600 at Eaton Bray Village Hall, near Dunstable. New members welcome. Two layouts for 16mm live steam and electric locos in 32mm and 45mm gauges. Go along, visit www.bag16mm.org.uk or email membership@bag16mm.org.uk

Berkshire N Gauge Society meets at 1900 on Thursdays at West London Aero Club, White Waltham Airfield, Maidenhead SL6 3NJ. New



members welcome. Email: tornado.gr.1@hotmail.co.uk or percy.richard1946@gmail.com

Bilton Grange Model Club is a recently formed group in east Hull, with members interested in OO, Tri-ang TT and O gauge plus military modelling, aircraft, tanks, ships and Warhammer. The group meets every second Tuesday in the month from 1900-2100 at the Bilton Grange Community Association building opposite The Grange pub in Grange Road, east Hull. Call 07748 406806 or email biltongrangemodelclub@yahoo.com

Bridgend Model Railway Group meets weekly on Thursdays at 1900 upstairs at the Laleston Gardener's Club, Cliff Cottage, Wind St, Laleston CF32 0HN. Group has two layouts in 7mm and one in 4mm. Visit www.bridgendmodelrailwaygroup.co.uk or email bridgendmodelrailwaygroup@protonmail.com

Group for anyone interested in railway modelling and/or railways meets in **Bubwith Leisure Centre bar, Main Street, Bubwith, Selby YO8 6LX** at 1930 on the last Monday of each month. Email: steve.grantham1@btinternet.com

Camborne Railway Modelling Group is a new club in Cornwall meeting every Wednesday 1700-2100 at Camborne Community Centre, 9 South Terrace, Camborne TR14 8SU and welcomes members of all abilities and ages (but U18s must be acpd by a responsible adult). Members can bring their own projects or help with the club layout. Charge of £3.00 a visit for room rent & refreshments. Email cambornerrailwaymodellinggroup@gmail.com or telephone Wayne on 07469 944847.

The **Derby & District Area Group of the N Gauge Society** meets (normally) on the 4th Monday of each month (excl December) between 1900-2100 at St Stephen's church hall, 311 Sinfine Lane, Derby DE23 9GP. The group runs a growing T-Trak modular layout and new members are welcome. Charge of £4 per visit to cover venue hire and refreshments. Email either Chris Prior (cmprior@gmail.com) or Phil Atkinson (familyatkinson@talktalk.net). Facebook page (Derby & District N Gauge Area Group) can be checked for changes to dates.

East Sussex Gauge O Group – Interested in modelling O gauge or 7mm narrow gauge? This group's meetings at Pett Village Hall (just outside Hastings) are held on the 2nd Friday of each month from 1900-2000. The test track can run both fine and coarse scale two or three-rail, dc or DCC rolling stock. See Gauge O Guild website or email mikeh.reeves@tiscali.co.uk

Haverfordwest Model Railway Club, formerly Pembrokehire Model Railway Club, meets on Wednesdays at 1915 upstairs at Haverfordwest Menshed, at The Old Print Works, Castle Square, Haverfordwest SA61 2AA. Visit www.facebook.com/groups/1448793075977538/ or email: wordpress@pmrc.welshbrook.com

Kingsway Model Railway Society welcomes new members when it meets every Tuesday from 1900-2100 at the Kingsway Centre, 130 Kingsway, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 2HF. Visit website www.kmrs.org.uk, visit Facebook Kingsway Model Railway Society or send an email to secretary@kmrs.org.uk

Launceston Model Railway Group holds drop-in meetings on the 3rd Saturday of each month 1000-1400 at St Stephen's Church Hall, Roydon Road, Launceston PL15 8HL. All ages welcome but children must be acpd. O, OO and N layouts in dc & DCC. Call 07974 893172 or email Alan & Sally Barriball at: furzepark@hotmail.com

Leyland Model Railway Club meets at Hillthorpe Farm, Knoll Lane, Little Hoole PR4 4TB every Monday and Wednesday (except Mon bank holidays) from 1900-2200. Layouts in OO and N plus others being built. Call 07796 130295.

Morecambe & Heysham Model Railway Club meets at 9 Morecambe Street West, Morecambe LA4 5HE on Tues and Thurs from 1900-2100 and open days on second Saturday of each month from 1000-1600, with last admission at 1530. Small admission charge but children free. Layouts in O, OO (one DCC), N & O-16.5. Venue has a disabled accessible toilet and a kitchen for open days. Gerry Blaikie, 01524 425523.

New Forest Model Railway Society is offering 3 months' free membership to readers of RAILWAY MODELLER. Offer runs until the end of Feb 2026, with no obligation to join. Members meet Tues evenings at Brockenhurst Village Hall, with layouts in N & OO, dc & DCC. Visit www.nfmrs.org

Northampton and District Model Railway Club now meets at Roade Village Hall, Bailey Brooks Lane, Roade, Northampton NN7 2LS on Friday evenings from 1900-2200. Club welcomes new members. For details visit www.ndmrc.org

North Wales Small Scale Model Railway Club meets at the Sea Cadets Hall, Deganwy, Conwy, on the first and third Monday of each month at 1830-1900. Call 07796 640131 or email oakleygrange@hotmail.co.uk

Poole and District Model Railway Society has opened a larger clubroom off Poole High Street. Includes OO gauge Sterte Bay (under construction), British/American N gauge layout and OO & N test track. Bring locomotives and/or stock to try out. Workshop and refreshment area. Tuesdays 1900-2200. See www.pdmrs.com

Romiley Methodist Railway Modellers meet from 1400 onwards every Wednesday in clubroom behind Romiley Methodist Church. Wide range of layouts in N to O gauge. See mrmclub.com or contact mrmhonsec@yahoo.com

Seaton Carew Model Railway Club welcomes new members and enthusiasts, meeting on the

▲ **Quarry View in O gauge, which will be at the Reading show on 21 February.**
Photo: Mark Pollard

third and fifth (where applicable) Saturday of every month at Salvation Army Hall, Park Road, Hartlepool TS26 9HT from 1200-1700 with OO and N gauge layouts plus OO, TT and N gauge test tracks. All welcome (U16s should be acpd by adult). See <https://seatoncarewmrc.byethost8.com> or email contact.scmrc@gmail.com

Sidmouth Model Railway Group welcomes enthusiasts to its meetings and has layouts (N, OO and O) in progress for all wishing to be part of an active group. Visit www.sidmouthmrg.com or email: sidmouthmrg@gmail.com

Stockton & District Model Railway Club is a friendly group of all ages, skills and interests, and anyone is welcome to bring items to run on the O or OO layouts. Members meet every Monday & Wednesday from 1830 at Elmwood Community Centre, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 5EP. Contact John Madden on 01642 614253 or email secretary.stocktonmrc@outlook.com

Tamar Valley Model Railway Club meets at Bere Alston Bowling Club, Bedford Street, Bere Alston PL20 7DZ, on 3rd Wednesday of month, Jan to Nov, and on 2nd Wednesday in Dec, 1000-1600. Launceston & Cornwall N Gauge Enthusiasts attend. N, OO, OO 3-rail and O layouts. Members can buy tea, coffee & home-made cakes and cooked lunches. Les Whaley, 07972 333202.

Tonbridge Model Railway Club welcomes new members with meetings at the Christ Church Centre, High Street, Tonbridge from 1900 each Thursday. Access by rear church entrance (opp. petrol station). Parking in the main car park outside Sainsbury's, TN9 1SF. Layouts in O and O.16.5/09 plus 4mm scale. Next exhibition 21 February 2026. Find club@TonbridgeMRC or email tonbridgemrc@yahoo.co.uk

West Midlands N Gauge Club is in its 30th year and is seeking new members. The club meets on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays in the month at Tipton Green Methodist Church, Park Lane West, Tipton DY4 8LD, 1400-1700, including coffee and cake. There are four working layouts and two new projects are under way. For photos and further details visit www.wmngc.co.uk

Wisbech Model Railway Club, formed in 2005 by Brian Baylis, is marking 20 years of modelling history. Members meet on Thursdays at 1900-2100, now on the ground floor of Wisbech Social Club and Institute, 15 Hill Street, Wisbech PE13 1BA (through the front door to the left). New and returning members of all skill levels welcome; U16s must be acpd by a parent or guardian. Two N gauge club layouts and OO gauge layout, all in dc. Contact chairman Jack Daniels at jack_daniel5@icloud.com or layout manager Richard on 07702 644066.

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Swapmeets • Sales • Fairs

The following announcements are included in good faith from information provided by the organisers. As cancellations are sometimes inevitable, anyone travelling a long distance should telephone before doing so. All advertisements include the organiser's town and telephone number. The publisher of RAILWAY MODELLER cannot accept any responsibility for cancellations or errors.

January 2026

18 January (Sun) 9.45am-1.15pm
BROMLEY – Bromley High School, Blackbrook Ln, BR1 2TW. KRJ VINTAGE TOYFAIRS. Tel: 07977 646 386 & 07889 901 729

18 January (Sun) 10am-3pm
NEWTON ABBOT TRAIN & TOY FAIR, Newton Abbot Racecourse, Devon TQ12 3AF. Admission £3. Superb venue, free parking, refreshments. 100+ tables. Organised by RAY HEARD. Tel: 01823 480 097, email: rayheard66@btinternet.com

18 January (Sun) 10am – 2pm
SPALDING, Springfields Events & Conference Centre, Camelgate, Spalding, PE12 6ET. Adults (16+) £3.50, accompanied children 15 and under free. Catering and Free Parking. J & J Fairs. Tel: 01522 880 383 www.j-jwebbtoyfairs.com jandjairs@gmail.com

25 January (Sun) 10am – 2pm
LINCOLNSHIRE, Lincolnshire Showground, Lincoln, LN2 2NA. Adults (16+) £3.50, accompanied children 15 and under free. Catering and Free Parking. J & J Fairs. Tel: 01522 880 383 www.j-jwebbtoyfairs.com jandjairs@gmail.com

February 2026

1 February (Sun) 10.30am-3pm
BOLTON STADIUM – MORE THAN 250 STALLS. The Premier Suite, Bolton Stadium, Bolton, Lancashire BL6 6JW. Adults £4.50, Senior Citizens £4, Children £1. OO and O gauge for sale from dozens of specialist dealers. Tel: 01604 846 688 www.bpfairs.com

1 February (Sun) 10.30am-2pm
KIDDERMINSTER, Kidderminster Harriers Social and Supporters Club, Stadium Close, Hoo Rd, Kidderminster DY10 1NB. Admission £1.50. TONY OAKES FAIRS. Tel: 01270 652 773 & 07825 631 323.

1 February (Sun) 10am-2pm
POTTERS BAR TOY & TRAIN FAIR, Elm Court Youth and Community Centre, Mutton Lane, EN6 3BP. Telephone Colin on 01279 301 407 or Joe 07866 641 215.

5 February (Thurs) 7pm-9pm
THEYDON BOIS, Theydon Bois Village Hall, Coppice Row (B172), Theydon Bois, near Epping, Essex CM16 7ER. Close to M25 J26 and M11 J5. Admission £1. Contact JOE LOCK. Tel: 07866 641 215.

7 February (Sat) 10.30am-2pm

LUDLOW RACECOURSE Bromfield, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 2BT, (off A49), admission £2. TONY OAKES FAIRS.

Tel: 01270 652 773 & 07825 631 323.

8 February (Sun) 10.30am-3pm

BUXTON – 150 STALLS, The Pavilion Gardens, St Johns Road, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 6XN. Adults £3.50, Senior Citizens £3, Children £1. Many stalls full of OO and O gauge trains.

Tel: 01604 846 688 www.bpfairs.com

8 February (Sun) 9.45am-1.15pm

DITTON, Ditton Community Centre, Kilbarn Road, Ditton, Kent ME20 6AH. KRJ VINTAGE TOYFAIRS.

Tel: 07977 646 386 & 07889 901 729

14 February (Sat) 10:00 to 14:30

ENFIELD TRANSPORT & TOY COLLECTORS BAZAAR. St. Stephens Church Hall, Village Road, Enfield EN1 2EY. Short distance from Enfield Town. Buses 329 & W8 stop outside. £3

Details/bookings Email ttbazaars@btinternet.com or call/text 07753 146674 or 07508 152754.

15 February (Sun) 10.30am-3pm

COVENTRY – 160 STALLS, The Connexion, Ryton on Dunsmore, Coventry, CV8 3FL. Lots of stalls full of new and used model railways – many at bargain prices. Adults £3.50, Seniors £3, Children £1.

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15 February (Sun) 9.45am-1.15pm

RAYLEIGH ESSEX, The Swayne, Park School, Sir Walter Raleigh Drive, off London Road, SS6 9BZ. Adults £2.50, under 16 free, refreshments on site. KRJ VINTAGE TOYFAIRS.

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21 February (Sat) 10am-2pm

DERBY (TRAINS ONLY) SWAPMEET, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Centre, 36 Utttoxeter Road, Mickleover, Derby DE3 9GE. Admission £2, free car parking, refreshments available. Contact: PETER STANTON.

Tel: 07798 858 532,

email: peterstanton1000@gmail.com

21 February (Sat) 10.30am-3pm

SANDOWN PARK – 500 STALLS, Europe's No1 Toy Collectors Fair, Sandown Exhibition Centre, Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9AJ. Adults £7.50, Senior Citizens £7, Children £2. Hundreds of stalls selling everything you want in model railways, come and see why Sandown is Britain's best loved toy show.

Tel: 01604 846 688 www.bpfairs.com

22 February (Sun) 10am-2pm

IPSWICH, Copdock Village Hall, London Road, Copdock, IP8 3JN. Light refreshments, good lighting. Telephone: PHIL COOPER for bookings on: 01787 372 559 or BILL BOURNE on: 01787 280 452.

22 February (Sun) 10.30am-2.30pm.

LLANELLI/LLANGENNECH TOY & TRAIN SALE. Llangennech Community Centre, Llangennech, Nr Llanelli, Carm. SA14 8TH. One mile from J48 of M4. 45 tables. Parking, Cafe. Email: pauldean020658@gmail.com

22 February (Sun) 10am – 1pm

LOSTWITHIEL TOY FAIR, Lostwithiel Community Centre PL22 0HE

Admission £2 per Adult, U16 Free.

Email: auctionfindssouthwest@gmail.com

24 February (Tues) 5pm-8pm

GARSTANG TOYFAIR – Catterall Memorial Hall PR3 0HR (at junction of A6 and A586. Refreshments, £1 entry. EMANUEL FAIRS.

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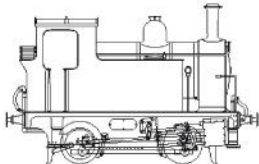
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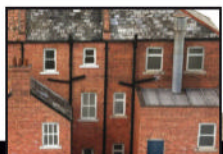
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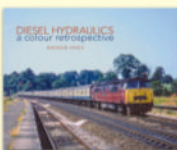
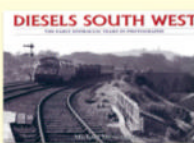


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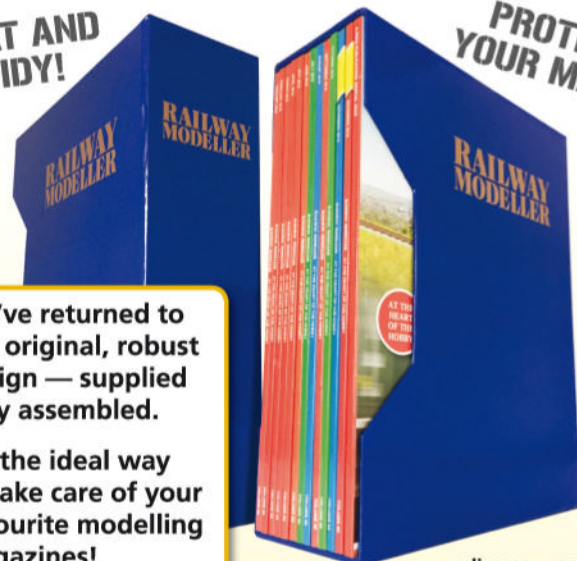
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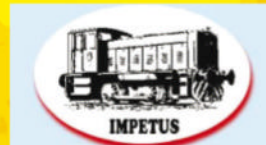
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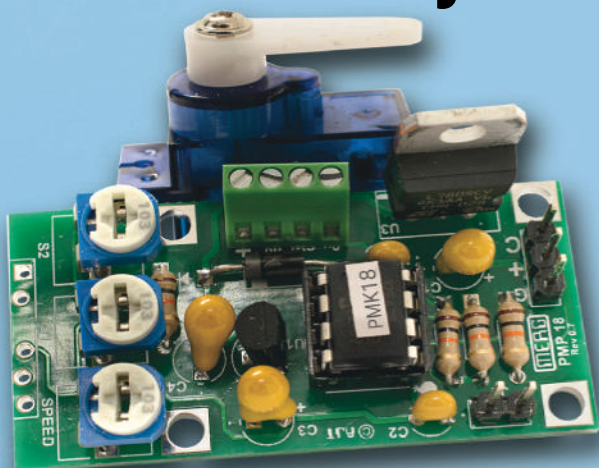
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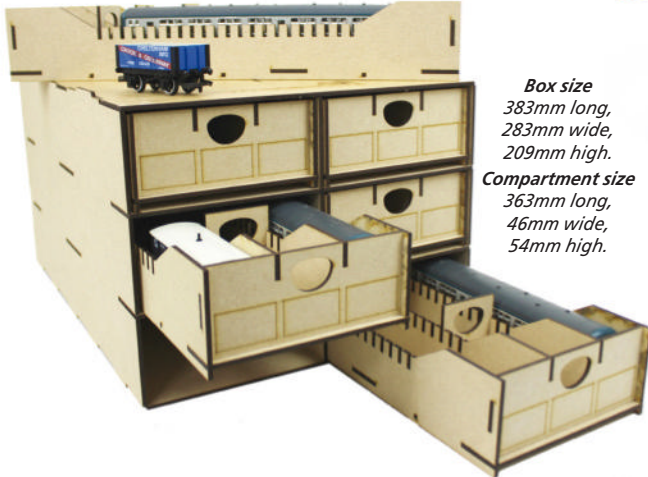
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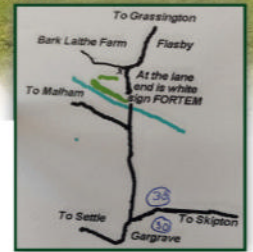
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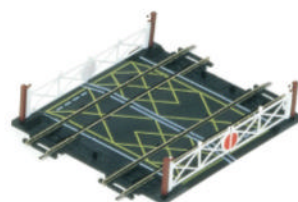
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DCC06

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This package offers all the features of the **DCC01** and the **DCC05** combined. Switch between handset or app control, or add a **DCC71** adapter to allow use of both at once.



DCC05

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DCC07

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Most Suitable For: O, OO, HO, and N Scale

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DCC04

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Most Suitable For: O, OO, HO, and N Scale

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- DCC52** Prodigy Wireless Receiver
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- DCC71** Prodigy DC Adaptor Plate and Decoder Tester
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Hitachi Class 800/3 GWR

10-1672 9-Car Set

1:148
N
Scale

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Headlight Taillight Motor R282 1,580mm DP 11-211/11-213 DCC



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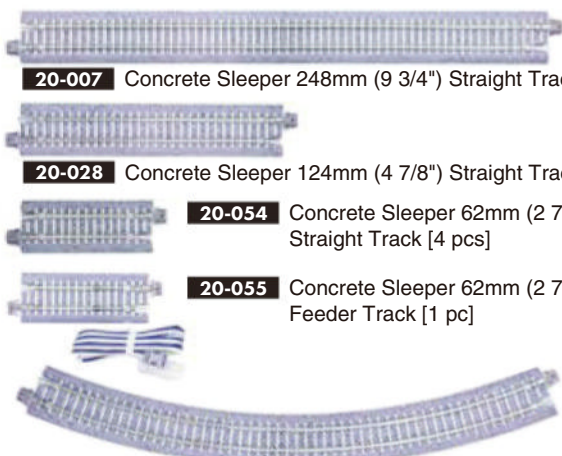
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Icons - Specification

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------|-------|
| Headlight | Taillight | Motor |
| Minimum Curve Radius | Overall Length | |

Icons - Option

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Interior Light (See item no.) | DCC-friendly |
|-------------------------------|--------------|

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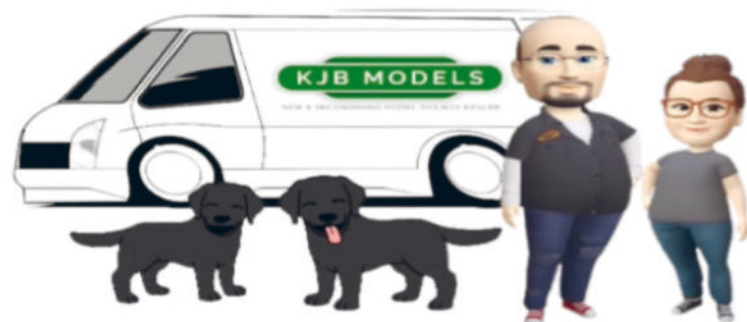
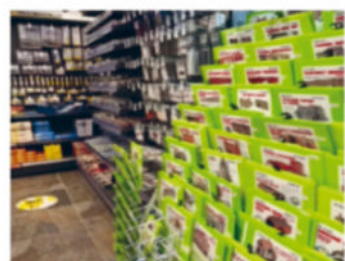
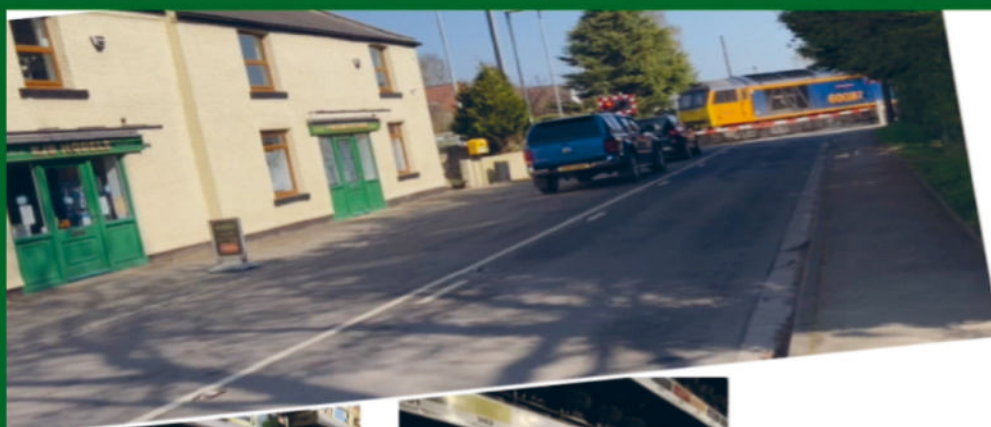
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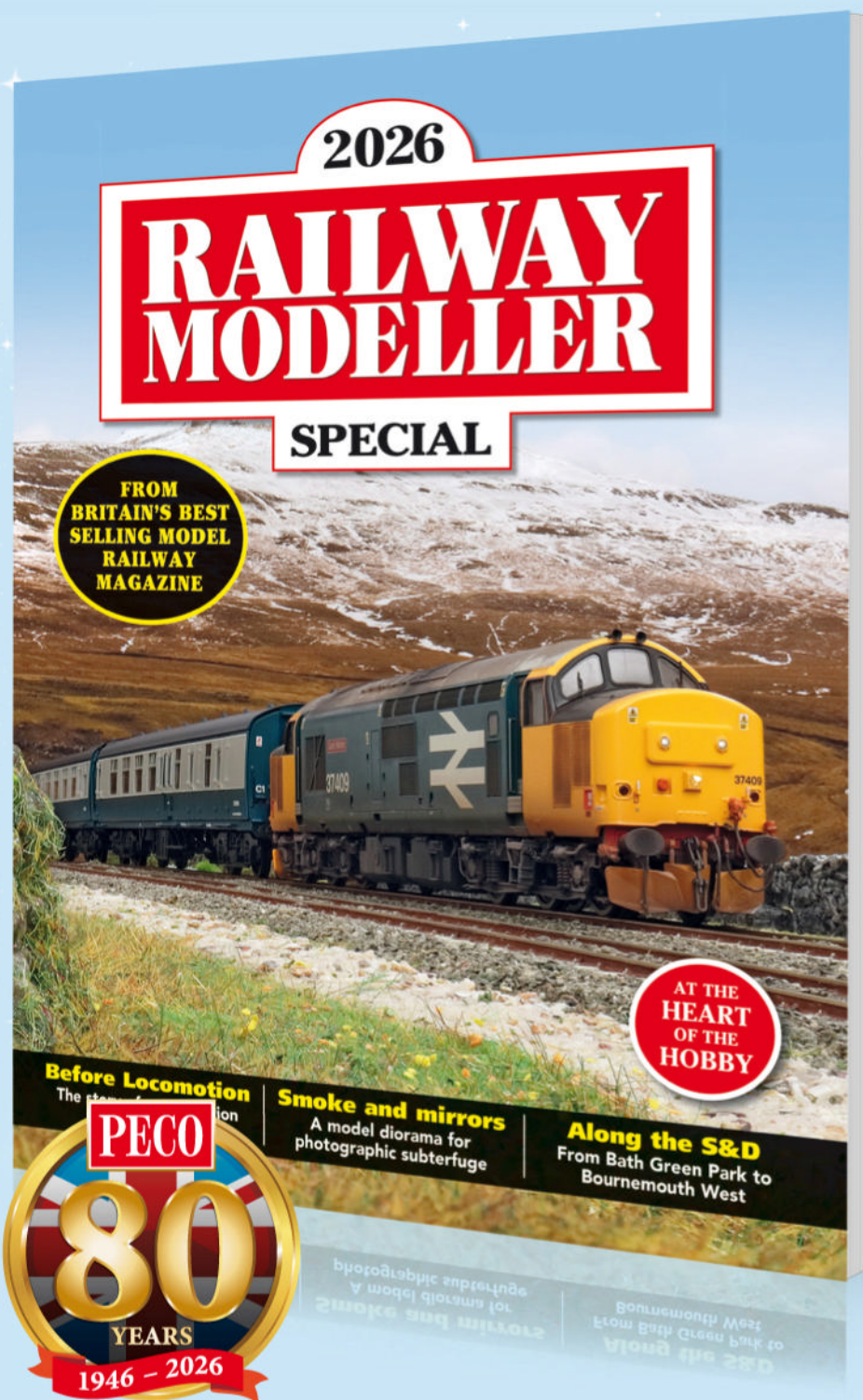
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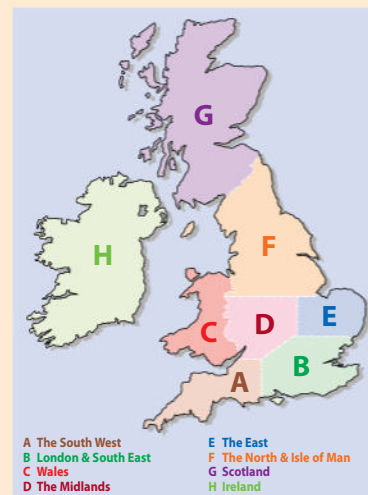
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