Association of Shrewsbury Railway Modellers

JOURNAL

No.6 June 2026

Editorial

Recently, I spent a very enjoyable weekend at ABRAIL, the model railway show, organised by the Abingdon & District Model Railway Club. It's advertised as Oxfordshire's largest model railway exhibition and certainly lived up to that claim, the college hosting the event was jam packed with layouts, traders, and most importantly, good old Joe Public. I've never been to such a busy do, although that might have something to do with the fact that it wasn't all in one hall but spread out everywhere with a layout or two in each classroom on two floors across three separate buildings! A rabbit warren of treats requiring one and all to squeeze back and forth down corridors hunting out the goodies certainly made if feel busy.

My reason for being there was to assist with unloading, setting up, running, dismantling, and finally reloading back into the hire van Blackfriars Bridge, a P4 layout set in 1873 depicting the London, Chatham & Dover Railway station on the south bank of the Thames. It's a fabulous layout but I can say that without being immodest as I had nothing to do with its construction, rolling stock or scenery (except for the platform benches). In between driving turns, marshalling detailed kit and scratchbuilt trains in one of the fiddleyards, and talking to punters, I stole away to have a look at some of the other layouts on show. They ranged from a Thomas the tank engine based roundy-roundy affair which provided no end of excitement for the children (*although I'm not sure what the Thomas theme tune relentlessly played on a loop did for the other exhibitors mental health*), through a variety of continental themed scenic displays, to finescale works of art both large and small. In fact, my favourite was probably the smallest there: Rye Sands by Will Lloyd, a stunning and brilliant example of just what can be achieved without breaking the bank and/or needing a massive shed in the garden. Finescale? Nope, it's OO gauge! (see photos further on).

What struck me is that model railway layouts seem to fall into two categories: a model railway as a three-dimensional historic record of what once was, Pendon being the really obvious example, and a model railway for model railway's sake. In other words, there are those that relish the endless research, meticulous attention to realistic detail, and close adherence to prototypical practice, and those who just love making things go up and down, back and forth, round and round, lighting things up, making things chuff, toot, whirr, and clank. Personal preference determines that I try to ensure my own modelling falls into the former camp, but the enjoyment I get from seeing some of the more creative and imaginative work is very real. Of course there are the clichés, the bloke welding with strategically placed flashing LED, the workmen around the flickering orange brazier, the half-naked lady in the bedroom window, you know the sort of thing. But we must remember that such details are a celebration of what we all strive to do: create a miniature world in which we can escape, often for hours on end. Be it a study in historical accuracy or a thoroughly entertaining and jam-packed extravaganza, they're all essentially the same thing, little worlds in which we can lose ourselves, entertain others, and encourage the next generation. With the way the world is at the moment, long may it continue!

Thank you to all the contributors to this edition of the Journal, your articles, photographs, and archive discoveries are always very welcome. Deadlines for Journals in 2026 will be the last week in August, and November. To assist with my task of editing, please could contributions be in the form of a simple email or an attached Word document with all images as separate jpegs (not embedded in the text). If you have a lot to send and/or the file size is large, then file transfer tools such as WeTransfer.com are free and easy to use and save clogging up the email system.
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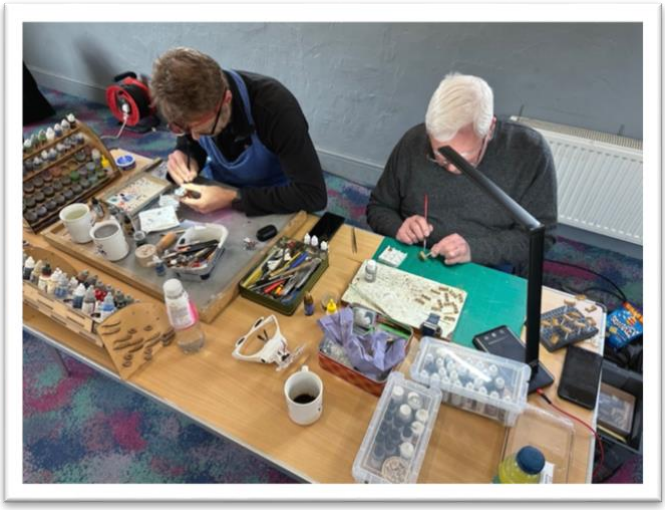
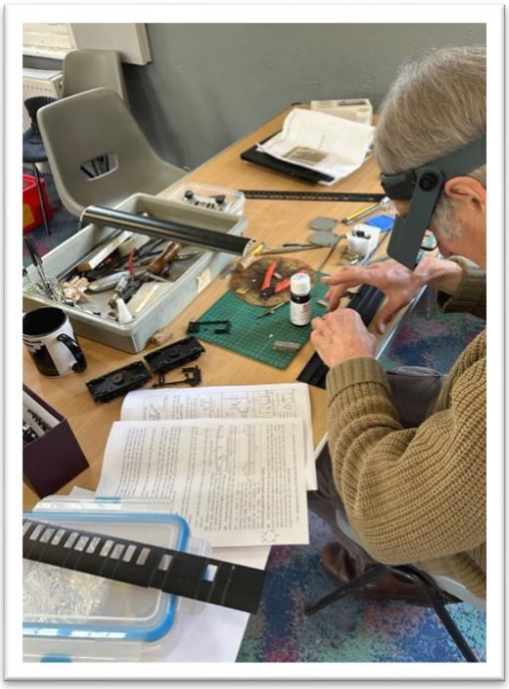
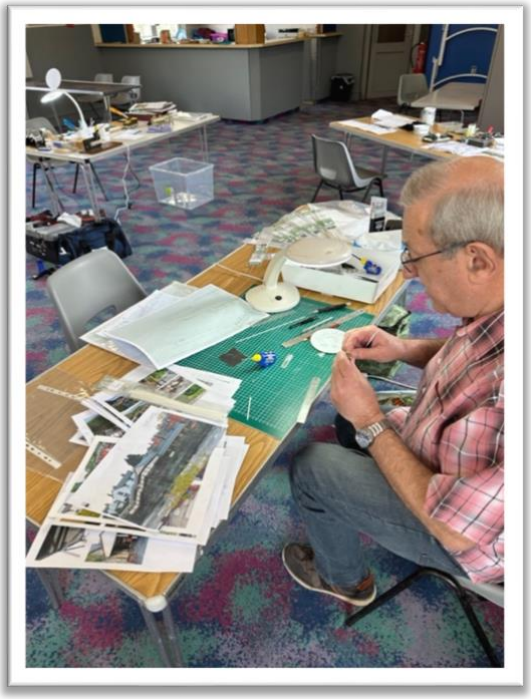
Coalbrookdale Modelling Day, April 18th 2026

A few images from a well-attended modelling day at Coalbrookdale. The money raised has been donated to Macmillan Cancer Care so a huge thank you to all who contributed. We still have space for more keen modellers should you wish to give it a try, and the next one will be Saturday 25th July.



Davies & Son Ltd., hard at work painting, and Tim Lewis assembles his 17th… yes 17th turnout!





Our secretary Nick Coppin tackles a 7mm coach kit, and Dave Gotliffe makes progress with his superb Llangollen in 2mm scale (*see Dave's article in this issue*).

Chris Kapolka is on the mend!

Your editor is delighted to be able to feature some superb photographs from the lens of Chris Kapolka now that he is finally on the road to recovery.

Finally making a recovery ...lots to catch up on at home. I found time to see A2 class 4-6-2 No. 60532 *Blue Peter* coning past Whitchurch ...I rode on this loco back in 1966 when it was a regular on the Glasgow Buchannan Street Station working the Aberdeen express trains alongside the last of the A4s.

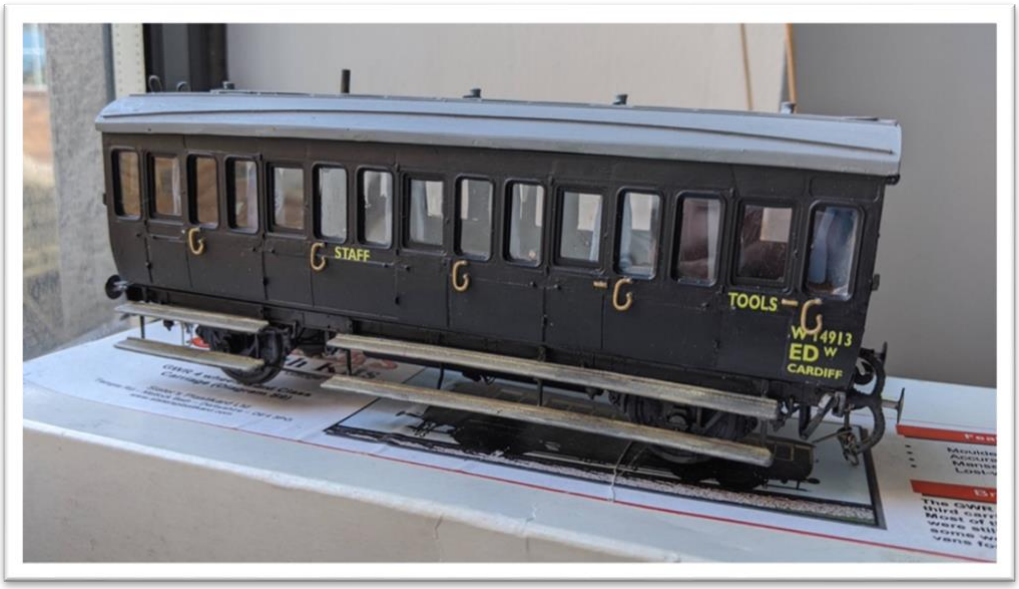
5043 at Beeston

Taken at Bewdley on the Severn Valley Railway a good few years ago, I had been asked by the 2857 Society if I would arrange a night shoot. It was a great opportunity, and I prepared a few sketches of how I wanted the train and people posed. I provided the lighting and great fun was had by all who attended.

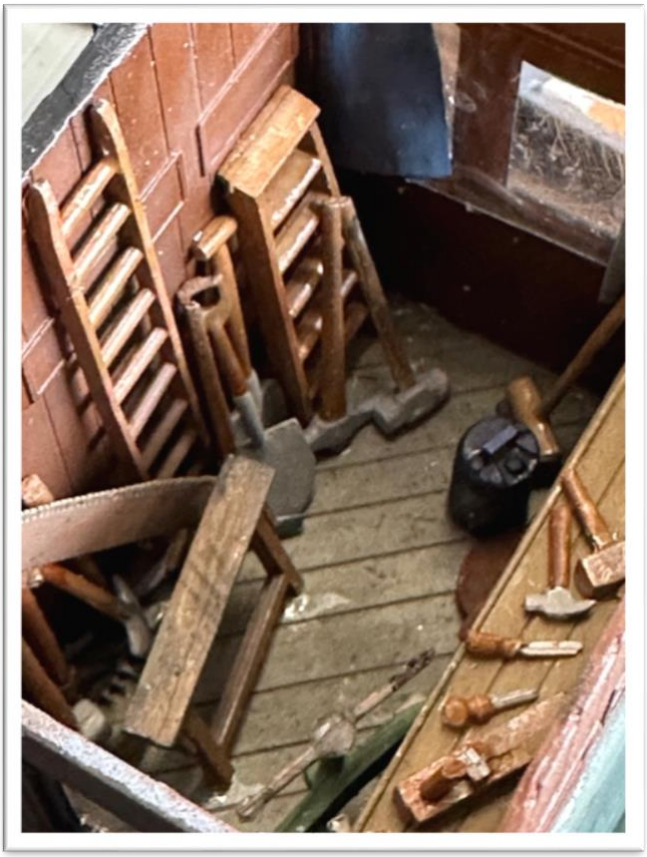
Chris Kapolka

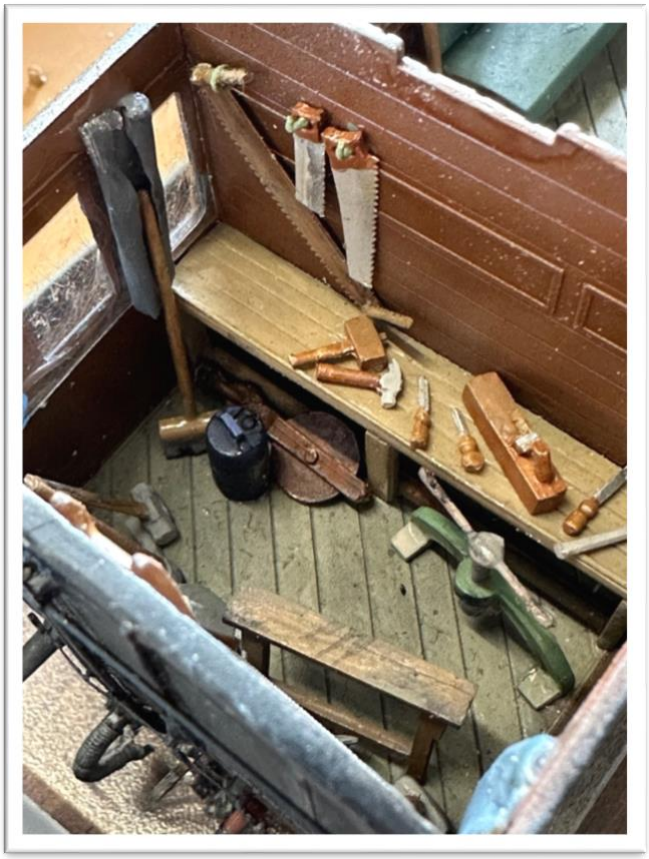
A 7mm scale tool van

The images you see here are of an O gauge Slaters 4 wheel all 3rd coach that has been adapted to be a Signalling and Telegraph (S&T) Tool and Mess coach. The inspiration for the model was a picture in one of the Cheona Publications books, the volume dealing with Departmental vehicles.



Interpreting from the original photo it was clear there was a small single seating bay area in use as a workshop, and a larger area with a stove in the rest of the coach which was the mess area for the gang. This the coach provided a mobile mess and workshop on site where S&T work was required.





What you see are two pictures of the workshop area with a scribed and scratch built bench with some tools stored and other in use as part of a job. I intend to park this up in a siding with the gang working nearby. The third is through the window at the bench in the mess area holding the essential caddies for a mash once the kettle has come to the boil on the stove.

The project was one that I dipped into every now and then over many years. The outer wooden panelling of the prototype had been partly patch repaired in steel sheet and on the model this took a fair bit of filling and patient rubbing back. The chassis also needed adaptation to include an exterior handbrake which needed some thought and research about how it might have looked on the side not visible on the photo.

The final impetus to finish it came with the enforced time available for modelling during lockdown. I ordered a wide variety of white metal tools and artefacts from Invertrain model shop (now sadly defunct) online, some sight unseen. A workbench in the tool area, and a tea bench, table and seating were added to the mess area and various items glued in plausible positions after painting and where required, a little distressing to show use.

The final details added were ones clearly seen in the original picture. The work gangs jackets hanging up on a hot day seen through the windows. These were made from the foil recovered from wine bottle necks, folded and embossed to show buttons/buttons holes and lapels once painted. The roof is removable to make all the effort visible.

I probably wouldn't have done much of this extra detail, but for the extra modelling time that came with the COVID lockdown of Spring 2020. In fact, I managed to finish a sleeper and ballast wagon and a Permanent Way (PW) brake (with interior details) at the same time to help complete a G(WR) P Way train I had been working towards for some years.

Neal Cooper

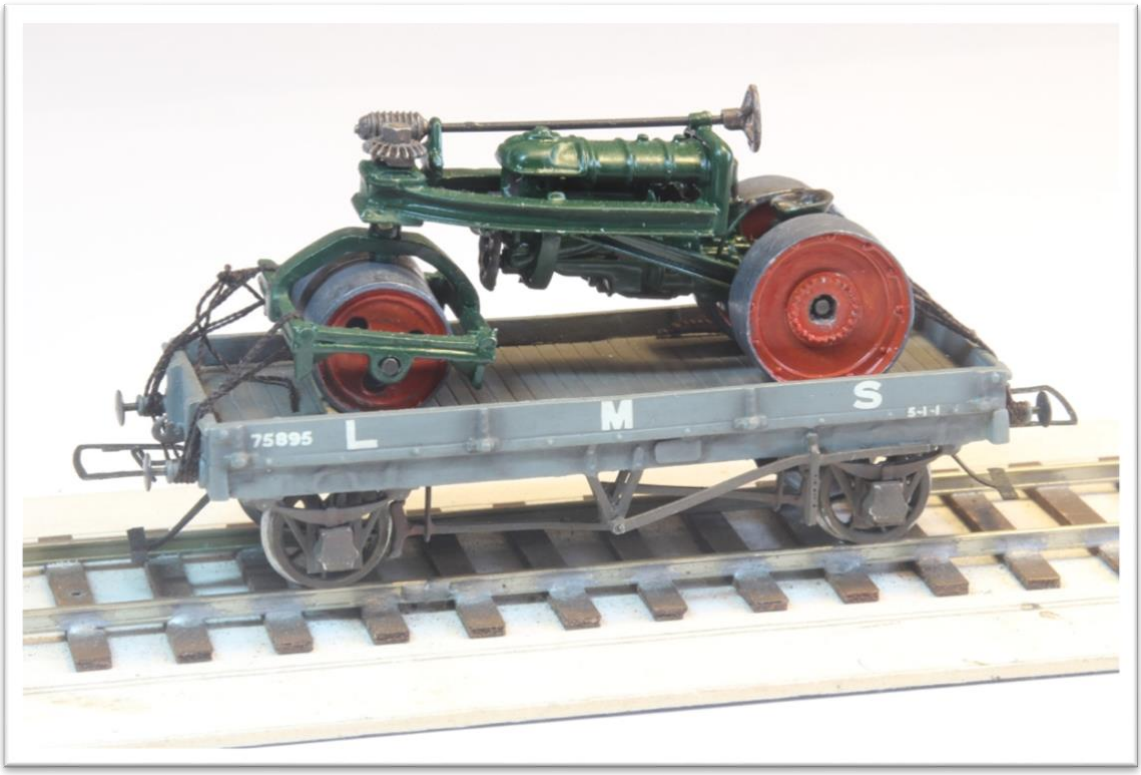
‘Paint your wagon’ AGM challenge

I had planned to attend this year’s AGM and bring along some items for the “Paint Your Wagon” challenge. In the end, I was unable to make it to the meeting so here are some photos and notes of my wagons.

Over the years, it is inevitable that one accumulates items which are impulsive purchases or which may have been gifted but never see the light of day for whatever reason. Wagon kits are definitely in this category. I have several white metal wagons which I had never got round to building so I decided to finally have a go. Assembly is low melt solder and finishing with Halfords primer followed by Precision paints for the main body colour and Humbrol for woodwork and undrerframe. Transfers are some very old but still perfectly useable PC Pressfix transfers (predecessors to HMRS). Finally, a brush coat of matt varnish to create a bit of texture on the wooden bodies.
Weathering is Carr’s weathering powders. The couplings are FS (Fleetwood-Shaw) which have not been available for many years now, but fortunately I have a reasonable stock of them.

Midland Railway Long Low Wagon – Diagram 336

This is a venerable Model Wagon Company kit but I think is very similar to the one produced by Wizard Models. I used replacement Studiolith W-irons with one end pivoted to provide an element of compensation due to the long wheelbase. Built to EM gauge using Ultrascale Wheels. Finished in LMS standard grey livery.
The load is a Langley Models auto-roller based on a Fordson E27n tractor. This proved a bit of a task as all the axles and shafts are white metal, so I replaced them all with brass rod and tube in an effort to get it to sit correctly and square. It’s probably 90% there.



Midland Railway 10Ton Low Sided Goods Wagon – Diagram 818

A K’s (N & KC Keyser) kit, marketed as an LMS 3 plank wagon, and judging by the packaging which has the old Tubbs Road, Willesden address, probably dates from the 1960s!
These wagons were originally built with brakes and lever on one side only. Some were later fitted with levers on the other side by the simple expediency of a cross-shaft, V hanger and left facing lever. Midland Wagons Volume 1 by Bob Essery - Plate 71 shows just such a wagon so I took this as my prototype. Although carrying LMS lettering, it appears to be in a darker shade of grey so as LMS Wagon livery appears not to have been standardised until the late 1920s, I assumed this might be MR “Smudge”. EM gauge using Ultrascale Wheels.
The load is loose stone as per the photo although not quite such fine grade. Maybe I need to revisit this!

LNWR 10Ton Open Goods Wagon (4 Plank)– Diagram 84

Another Model Wagon Company kit, this is the same prototype as the LNWR Open Wagon recently produced by Rapido. The body was a relatively straightforward assembly and the kit does allow for alternative LNWR and LMS headstocks and brake levers. However, I found the fine white metal brake levers impossibly fragile so replaced them with Wizard models etched parts. These were themselves a fiddly assembly and it took several goes to get them looking somewhere near right but much better than the original white metal ones.
Studiolith replacement W-irons again and Ultrascale open spoke wheels.
The load is two large packing cases made from cast plaster, marketed by Castaways who were from Stafford. Judging by the packaging, these are probably 40ish years old. They fit nicely as the body is a generous 18'.

LNWR 10Ton Low Sided Goods Wagon – Diagram 103

Similar to the LNWR Open Wagon, this is another Model Wagon Company kit. Most of the comments about the open wagon also apply to this low sided wagon.
The load was inspired by a photo of a wagon of the same type in LMS Wagons Volume 2 by Bob Essery – Plate 148. The load is very simply three blocks of balsa wood, covered with a tarpaulin sheet, one of the excellent Unique Models sheets marketed by H&A Models. They come packaged flat so they have no un-prototypical pre-formed creases and there is a wide range of sheet numbers available. They are probably a little more fragile than some of the other sheets available but with a little patience, I think produce a reasonable result.

I have a few more white metal wagon kits in stock, mainly GWR and LNER group / pre-group types, so maybe that's next winter's project.

Dave York

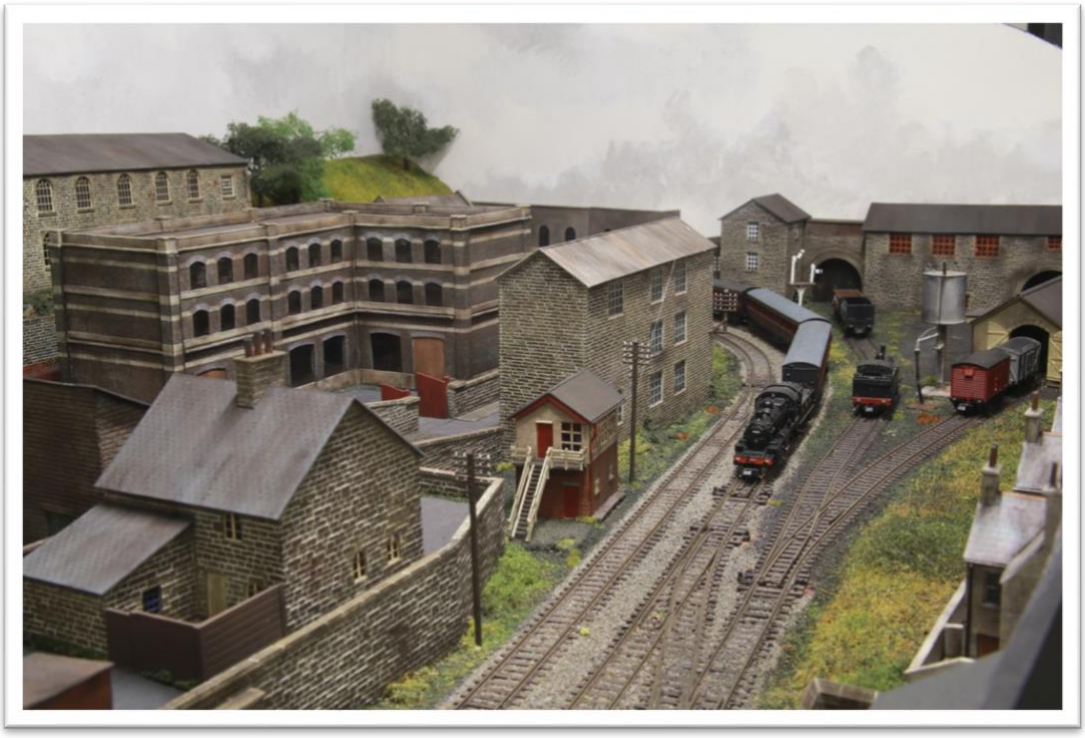
Ragham Junction

Inspired by fellow ASRM members at the 'table top' display event I decided to construct my own layout over the last two winter periods. The final outcome is RAGHAM JUNCTION in N scale.

The layout is built onto an 'off the shelf' Grainge and Hodder 1200mm x 900mm laser cut baseboard. Whilst the Grainge and Hodder product is excellent and one I can recommend, I'm afraid I cannot

recommend their customer support from which I have never received a reply to enquiries. As they also say on the BBC, “other products are available” where I will be looking for my next project.
The layout is exactly what its title suggests, a junction. It has no station. What it does have is a double track with a branch line junction, two sidings with a goods shed and town edge scenery of an industrial location.

The scenery is built up onto varying layers of 25mm thermal insulation, similar to Kingspan, allowing tunnel entry/exit for the tracks into a rear fiddle yard. Painted paper mashie covers the undulations with static grass and Woodland Scenic products applied for the general vegetation cover. Trees are the usual twisted electric wires covered with liquid latex to form an armature. The finer branches are from Woodland Scenics ‘Poly Fiber’ as demonstrated by George Williamson last October, and leaves applied using cheap hairspray.



Buildings and architectural items are a mix of adapted ‘Scalescenes’ products and plasticard scratch built structures including bridges, tunnel portals, factories, roads, retaining walls and a water tower.

The back and side boards do have a sky background painted on which I intend to revisit, just to darken the gloomy northern skyline.

Trackwork is all PECO code 55 fine scale with points operated by SEEP solenoids, and wired in natural sections. Full operation is from the rear control panel using Gaugemaster handheld speed controllers. I will be running it as an analogue DC layout, even though DCC is possible, but my wallet has eventually closed in that direction for now.

The frontal display has a raised name sign providing illumination for the layout and also two push button switches. One for the up line and the other for the down line. These enable visitors to operate the trains and hopefully should provide added interest to our younger viewers.

The first booking for RAGHAM JUNCTION is at the Telford Steam Railway event on Sunday 26 July at Horsehay Village Hall: Model Railway Exhibition - Telford Steam Railway

Graham Betts

Modelling the wagons of the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway in 4mm scale

Part One

Over the last couple of years or so, with lockdowns and retirement, I have finally got around to building the stash of wagon kits that have been clogging up the drawers under my workbench for the last decade and more. The final push came with my commissioning of 4mm transfers for said wagons from Fox Transfers (available through the Colonel Stephens Society). With all that in mind I thought I would share my experience of producing the S&MR's wagon fleet; where to source ready to run models (don't get your hopes up!), which kits are, or were, available, which have to be modified and how, and which have to be scratch built. Please note that not all models listed are currently available. Where possible I'll throw in images of the actual wagons and provide, if useful, views of my own wagons. My modelling skills can best be described as competent rather than skilled. On the plus side, perhaps this will give encouragement to those like me who won't be displaying their layouts at the next Scaleforum exhibition. I model in 'fine scale OO' using 'Sprat & Winkle' couplings for rolling stock. My layout is set in the 1920s, so the rolling stock shown here hasn't reached the level of decrepitude that is seen in old photos most of which date from the 1930s or later.
It is assumed that modellers will refer to photos of the individual wagons they are making in order to get the finer details and exact positioning of rivets, lettering etc. correct.

Lastly, I would like to profusely thank Jon Clarke and Brian Janes of the Colonel Stephens Society. Without their help I wouldn't even have got started. This account is intended as a modelling guide rather than a history and readers are directed to Brian's excellent article on S&MR rolling stock on the museum website. Membership of the Colonel Stephens Society is strongly recommended for anyone interested in the S&MR and other light railways. Back issues of The Colonel magazine are available online Colonel back numbers | colonelstephenssociety.co.uk I would also like to thank David Postle of Kidderminster Railway Museum for his invaluable help sourcing images of MR cranes. Every effort has been made to seek permission for the reproduction of images. However, this has not proved possible for a small number. Full credit will be made in due course if further information comes to light.

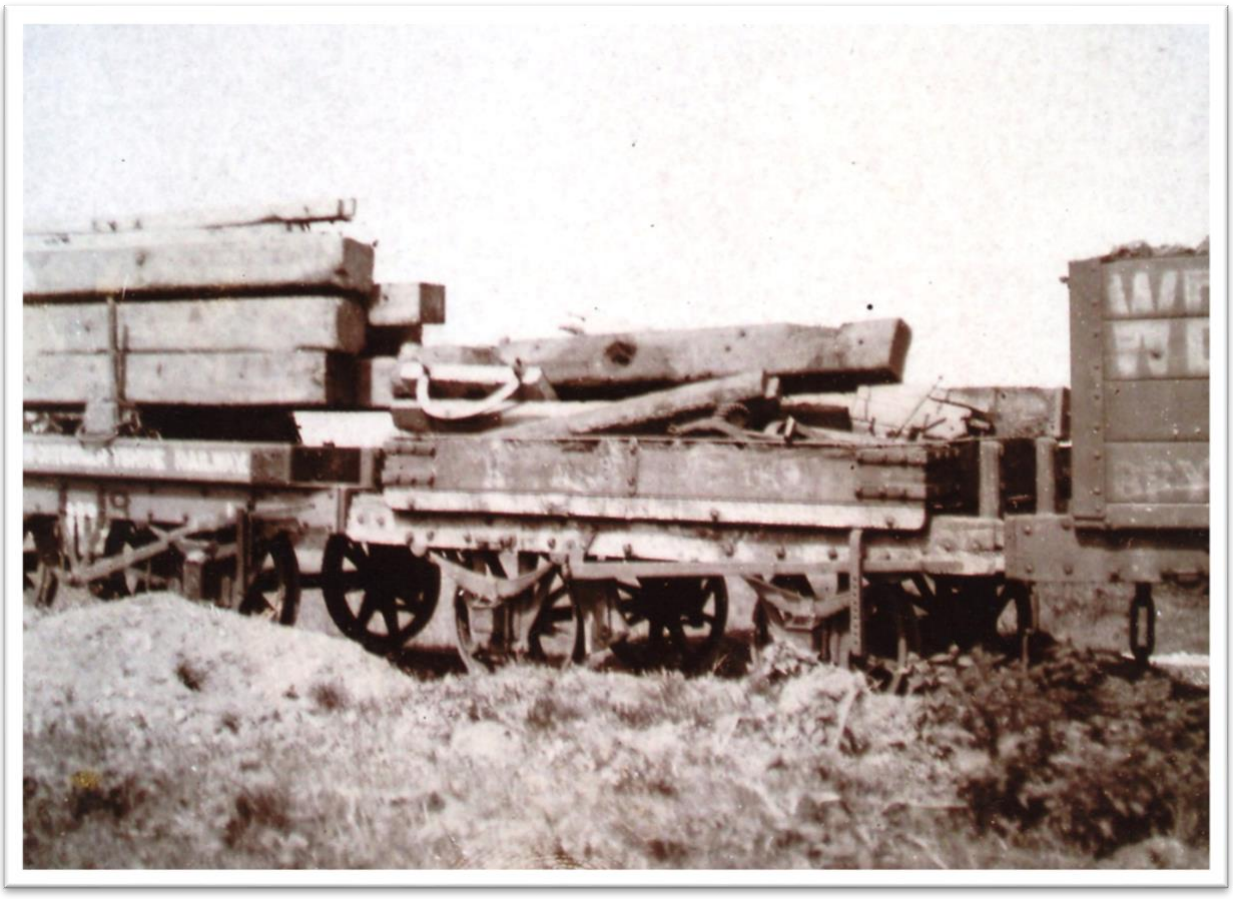
PS&NWR wagons

The Potteries, Shrewsbury & North Wales Railway operated a large wagon fleet largely built by the Midland Railway Carriage and Wagon Company consisting of open, cattle, and lime wagons as well as

brake vans and a mobile crane. Sadly, very little is known about the appearance of these wagons as no image has come to light of any of them in service. A 'best guess' model of the lime wagons used could be Pre-Grouping Models (PGR-114) built around the same time by the same manufacturer for the Cambrian Railway. One open wagon survived the auction of the stock in 1888 and was later used by the S&MR.

Ex-PS&NWR 6-ton open wagon

The sole survivor of the PS&NWR stock, brought back into service by Col. Stephens. See Brian Janes' article in The Colonel 148 for more details.
Model: No kit available but use a Chatham kits LBSCR Long wheelbase ballast wagon, Cat. 4F10 (marketed by Roxey Mouldings) as the basis for a kit bash. Open-spoked wheels from Alan Gibson Make into a single plank wagon by filling in the groove lines on this 2-plank kit. The height of the, now single, plank then looks right. File the top planks on the curved ends flat. Add two bands of metal strapping to each corner and shorter lengths between dumb buffers and ends (Alan Gibson Cat. 4MM33). The rectangular coupling plate came from an MJT etch (cat. 2299 compensating wagon w-irons (RCH/GWR type). Modify the kit's single brake block and lever or replace (Wizard/51L Cat. BLGVH) to match that in the photos.
Scrape off the wagon manufacturer's plate on the brake side but leave on other side. There is no image of it, but Brian Janes is fairly sure that there would have been a plate there and that it now resides in the Col. Stephens Museum. Use Archer's or Railtec rivets on solebars to match positions seen on photos.
Painting: Uncertain but looks light-medium grey in one photograph and two tones of grey in a later one, heavily weathered. No lettering.



Ex-PS&NWR 6-ton wagon in use by the S&MR. To the left MR Diagram 388 Dumb buffered timber wagon (see below) c.1911 CSRM SMR.1151

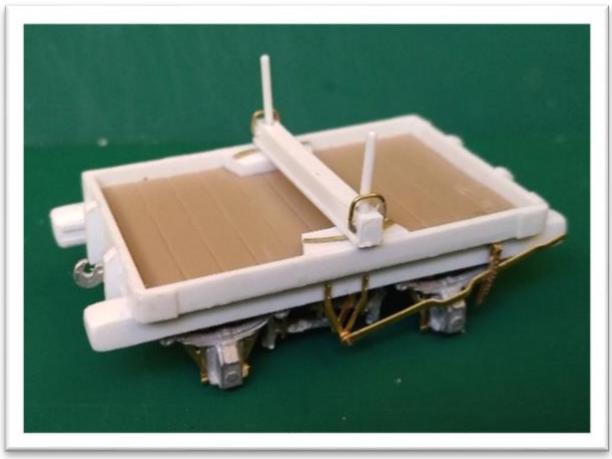
MR Diagram 388 Dumb buffered timber wagons

Nos. 1-3 (in a separate series) obtained in 1910 from JF Wake.
Model: The only option is to scratch build. Plans are available in Bob Essery: An Illustrated History of Midland Wagons Vol 1 (OPC) p115. Digital callipers and a 4mm scale rule help to convert the plans into scale wagon parts.

Create base of a scale 7'6" x 11'11" from .020" styrene sheet. Add wagon sides to top edges of base from .100" x .040" styrene strip (Evergreen 145). Insert thin scribed planked flooring to fit or scribe directly onto base. Solebars from .080" x .156" styrene sheet (Plastruct 90767). Laminate short strips of the same at each end to make the dumb buffers. The solebar/dumb buffer combination should now be applied to the underside of the wagon floor inset by 1.25mm. Add stanchions to headstocks from .060" square strips (Evergreen 153). Corner plates from 0.010" styrene sheet.
Standard V hangar Wizard 51L (BLGVB) and long brake lever (Wizard/51L BLGVH). The lever needs to be bent to slot around the axle box. 'Cut and shut' brake gear (Wizard 51L UC060) to fit a 7' wheelbase.

Apply MR 8A axle boxes (MJT 2249) to brass W irons (MJT 2299: Compensating wagon W-irons (RCH/GWR type)). Using waisted bearings helps to line the axle boxes up but are otherwise redundant as wheels with pointed axles are too wide to fit between the solebars underneath the floor of this rather narrow wagon. For the same reason you will need to snap the W irons off from the compensating unit which otherwise won't fit in. The solution is to treat the W-iron/axle box combination as a cosmetic feature rather than having a practical use. Instead, for functionality use freestanding RTR compensation units (MJT 2290: Wagon compensation unit RTR) between the solebars and cut the pointed axle bars off so the wheels can fit in. To line up the axle boxes with the now truncated and unconnected axle ends, rest the RTR unit on .060" styrene card to get the correct height. A Brassmasters axle spacing gauge is an invaluable tool for getting the axles lined up correctly with each other and with the axle boxes.

Make bolster beam (scale 7'6" wide) from .100" x .125" styrene strip (Evergreen 176). I initially inserted styrene rods for uprights, but when these proved too fragile replaced with brass. Add 'hoops' from brass and attach a chain – those making the Mike's Models crane (see below) will find plenty left over. Create beam plate from a wedge of styrene with a semi-circular length of brass strip on top. A diagram of this in Bob Essery's book (qv) p17 shows this feature well. After painting a primer coat, apply Archers or Railtec rivet transfers. Positions are very clearly shown in Essery's book. Painting; light – medium grey with black corner plates. The full SHROPSHIRE & MONTGOMERYSHIRE RAILWAY was used for early lettering. The ex-PO wagon lettering from the Fox Transfers sheet seems about the right height but space it out to match the length shown on the photo. When seen in 1931, S&MR letters were in use with the S& and MR centrally placed either side of the beam. These are provided as 'extras' to the main Fox Transfer sheet whilst the numeral '1' is on the latter. S&MR wagon plates were fixed to the right-hand end near the corner with this later livery. The numeral used on the earlier version can't be seen but would be either 1, 2 or 3. With the earlier lettering on ex-MR 3 plank wagons this was preceded by the letters 'No' and could have been the same here.



MR Diagram 388 Dumb buffered timber wagon with later style lettering Image from 1931 film

Cattle Wagons

There were two types used; six were ex-NER K1s (Nos.30-33 and 41-42) and one was an ex-GWR W2 (No.43) mostly obtained from JF Wake in 1911 except 41 and 42 bought from the NER and 43 from the GWR in 1921.

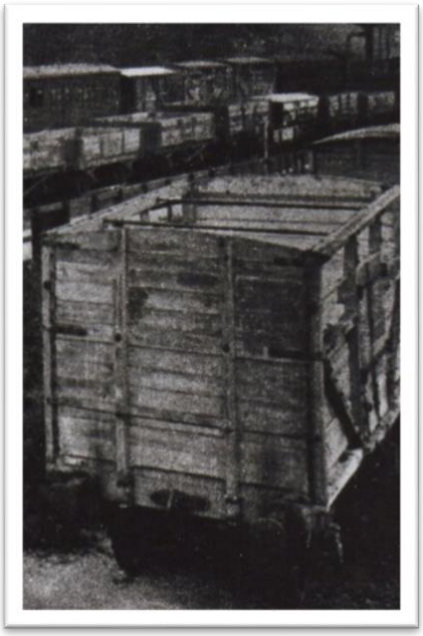
NER K1

Model: White metal kit by Wizard/51L. Cat. NERDK001 (formerly produced by D&S Models Cat.DS154), or Pre-Grouping Models PGR-77 3D printed kit. Open-spoked wheels by Alan Gibson and screw link couplings by Accurascale (cosmetic).

Build Wizard 51L kit mostly as per instructions but fit NER No.6 grease axle boxes (Wizard/51L Cat. NERC002A) to replace those provided in the kit.
Build Pre-Grouping Models kit as per instructions but fit NER No.6 grease axle boxes (Wizard/51L Cat. NERC002A) to replace those provided in the kit.
Each wagon had a Wright-Marillier partition locking bar (WMPLB) below the metal bars at one end on both sides, not included in the kits. Make these from styrene strips adding grooves for the partition slots. There is no evidence in photos of the actual use on the S&MR of a partition board inside any wagon, so those are omitted.

The position of rivets etc. on the solebars is different from the kits so scrape off those provided and substitute with Archer's or Railtec rivet transfers or thin slices of plastic rod.
At least one cattle wagon, No.32, had a V hanger mounted on the solebar rather than recessed. Others had it recessed behind the solebar as per the Wizard 51L kit.
The number and position of brake levers vary. In my descriptions of individual wagons below, I identify this position by assuming the WMPLBs are situated on the right-hand side when viewed. The position of the lettering also varies.

Four wagons were modelled where these variations were relatively obvious.
Painting: Cattle wagons acquired in 1911 appear to have been left in a rather scruffy state, perhaps for years, probably in their former NER light grey paint scheme and with that company's lettering rubbed off. No S&MR lettering or numbers seem to have been applied in the early period of operation on the line.



Early views at Kinnerley. (Left) partial view of S&MR cattle wagon minus lettering, possibly pre-1914 CSRM SMR.416. (Right) temporarily roofless cattle wagon minus lettering in foreground with two others in background. Wildings postcard 1913-14.

Eventually, the cattle wagons were repainted light-medium grey with S&MR lettering. Slight physical variations between each and of roof colours.

No.32 Single brake lever far side, handle other end from WMPLB, no V hanger near side. V hanger on top of solebar (make from brass strip). Lettering; S and R on outer panels, & and M on central doors. Numerals 32 in LH panel. No.33 Brake levers on both sides, handles on both sides at same ends as WMPLB so not 'handed'. Lettering; S and &, M and R all on outer panels, no lettering on central doors. Numerals 33 prefixed by No in same panel as M and R. Note 'o' is underlined. V hanger almost certainly recessed behind solebar.
No.41 Single brake lever near side, handle same end as WMPLB, no V hanger far side. Lettering; S and &, M and R all on outer panels, no lettering on central doors. Numbers 41 in LH panel. Very small numbers 6.18 to right of 41 in same panel. Position of V hanger, whether on top of or recessed behind solebar is unknown.
Note that all ex-NER K1 cattle wagons had a S&MR wagon plate third plank up on right hand side apparently on both sides. I cropped the plates from a photograph, resized them and printed on paper.

Ex-NER K1 and ex-GWR W2 cattle wagons used for storage 1950s CSRM SMR.632

GWR W2

Model: White metal kit by ABS/Fourmost Cat. F292 (formerly produced by D&S Models Cat. DS503). Spoked wheels by Alan Gibson and instanter couplings by Roger Smith.

Build largely as per kit instructions. However, the version used on the S&MR had three cross bars each side not two as provided in the kit with the lowest ones at one end obscured by the partition locking bars. The top and bottom bars had bigger diameters than the central ones. I used 0.7mm and 0.45mm brass rods. The oil axle boxes provided with the kit will need to be replaced by grease ones (MJT 2245) or reshaped using thin styrene sheet.

Resin kit from Smallbrook Studio (SKU 438). The modifications mentioned above would also be needed for this and additionally a steel underframe would have to be created to replace the wooden version provided.

Painting: Dark grey. Lettering; S and &, M and R all on outer panels either side of X framing, with no lettering on central doors. Number 43 top plank below bars LH side. Italicised lettering *8 tons tare* on top plank below bars on RH side and *tare 6* in italicised lettering in the bottom left corners of the ends. Additional S&MR lettering and numbers on each end of wagon either side of central framing in upper panels. Number 43 2nd plank above central framing LH side. A S&MR wagon owner plate was on the bottom plank right hand side slightly right of centre again probably on both sides. Again, I cropped the plates from a photograph, resized them and printed on paper.

Note: As with all cattle wagons, it was the custom to use limewash as a disinfectant for the insides of such wagons. The leaking out of this wash left a distinctive white area around the lower parts of cattle wagons. From the mid-1920s, this practice ceased as it was found to cause pain to the animals. I have seen one aerial view of c.1926 where this limewash is visible on one S&MR cattle wagon, but two adjacent cattle wagons lack it. It may be that they had been repainted or perhaps that only one or two of the S&MR cattle wagons were actually used for transporting cattle.

MR 8-ton 3 plank drop-side wagon D305

Nos. 1-10 obtained from JF Wake in 1910.
Model: Plastic kit by Slaters. Cat. 4029. Mousa Models 3D printed resin kit Cat. BWK1707/4. Open-spoked wheels by Alan Gibson.
Slater's kit: Build mainly as per kit instructions. The kit is provided with 10A axle boxes which are incorrect for S&MR wagons. Cut off lugs and reshape into 8A axle boxes. Shave off numberplate, builder's plate and label clip from solebars. Remove both inner V hangers. Outer V hanger and brake on one side only. Nb. A good article on improving Slater's MR wagons appears in Model Railway Journal No. 286.
Mousa Models kit: Build as per kit instructions.

Painting: Light – medium grey. Lettering; Originally the wagons seem to have had the full 'SHROPSHIRE & MONTGOMERYSHIRE RAILWAY' lettering. On one poor quality photo the number 5, or possibly 6, is seen on the lowest plank in the LH corner prefixed by lettering 'No' with the 'o' underlined. The lettering is along the top plank. With wagon No.9 it was almost certainly along the middle plank which was probably the case with No.7 too. Unfortunately, the lettering provided on the Fox Transfers sheet for the ex-GNR wagons is too large to also be used for the early lettering on these 3-plank wagons. I used 1.5mm high letters commissioned from Railtec. Note that each section of lettering was spaced differently with 'MONTGOMERYSHIRE' the most squashed together and 'RAILWAY' the least. I have also guessed a suitable tare weight to add to the LH corner.

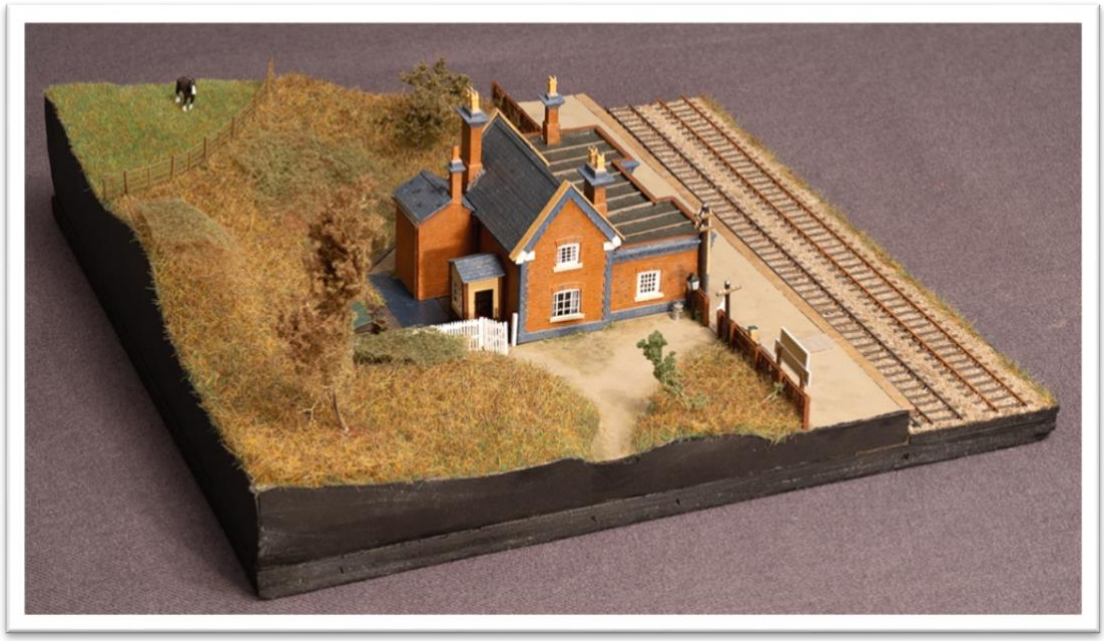
3-plank open at Criggion quarry c.1920. "Memories of Shropshire Quarries": Facebook

Later lettering style; S and R letters in outer panels & and M in centre. Numbers in LH corner. Wagon 9 however has prefix of 'No.' with small, underlined 'o' all in RH corner.

Phil Scoggins

Dawley & Stirchley Station Diorama

Keen readers of these pages will recall Vernon Larcombe's detailed article back in Journal No.4, December 2025, covering his extensive research to recreate Dawley & Stirchley station. The following images show just what a superb job he has done, it is hard to believe it's 2mm scale!



Llangollen Station Footbridge

In Journal 4 (December 2025) I described the order in which the principal structures for my small Llangollen layout needed to be built. The station footbridge is likely to be the key structure on the layout, partly because of its location at the centre, and partly because of its highly unusual and distinctive construction. While in some respects a standard GWR design, the footbridge is unique because of the station's proximity to the River Dee, which forced the builders to extend the steps leading to the Down platform (Platform 2) over the river. The bridge is still in place and in regular use on the now heritage Llangollen Railway; readers who know Llangollen will no doubt be familiar with it.

Although keen to start building my model of the footbridge I first needed to build the down platform, the road bridge and the long retaining wall, the latter providing the anchor for the cantilevered beams that support the gantries and the landing of the footbridge steps leading to Platform 2. These all needed to be built in a specific order, as I explained in my earlier article, so that they fit together correctly. This was my priority earlier this year and you can see from the photo below, which is essentially an updated version of December's photo, that Llangollen Bridge (i.e. the road bridge) is now complete and that the low-level retaining wall has been built and installed.

Llangollen in N Scale, photographed in April 2026 following installation of the low-level retaining wall. The recess at the centre is to accommodate the landing platform for the footbridge steps.

During Chris Cox's modelling day at Coalbrookdale on 18th April I finally started work on the footbridge. I had already calculated the basic dimensions; these were critical as the bridge must cross the tracks at precisely the correct height and the apex of the footbridge roof must join the station building directly below the apex of its roof, while on the south side the gantries supporting the steps must straddle the retaining wall precisely and the landing must be located at the exact point at which its recess on the retai

The station footbridge at Llangollen; note how the steps extend over the River Dee, supported by gantries and a landing platform, which themselves are supported on steel beams cantilevered out from the retaining wall.

I started with the top deck of the bridge, which passes over the tracks. The first step was to study the original in detail to work out how to construct its component parts.

Although the bridge is covered, the top third of the sides is open. The roof is held up by a series of steel pillars, which I had assumed extended from the base and also formed the joins between the side panels. However, closer inspection of my photos showed that while this is correct for the steps it is not the case for the top deck, where the side panels support an upper ledge, to which separate roof beams are bolted, offset from the joins between the side panels. This suggests that the footbridge was originally uncovered and that the roof was added later. Do any of our readers know if this was the case?

The top deck of Llangollen Station footbridge. In these photos the separate beams supporting the side panels and the roof are clearly visible.

B y the end of the 18th April modelling day I had completed the top deck apart from the beams forming the gantry that supports the top landing, which were added later at home as I needed to ensure that the inner beams met the down platform adjacent to the retaining wall. Almost the whole of the footbridge is made of my go-to material, styrene. I considered brass for some of the components, especially the gantry beams, but the gantries comprise a large number of small parts of varying profiles, which would have made them expensive, and in any case styrene strip brings a further advantage in that it is easy to cut, which makes it possible to cut the various pieces by trial and error until a perfect fit is achieved. The engineers among our readers will no doubt scoff at such an approach, but in the absence of professional-quality measuring tools and the accompanying skill set this approach has worked for me in the past and continues to do so! The only exception to styrene are the two metal pins at the station end of the deck, which fit into two corresponding holes drilled into the station building.

The top deck of the footbridge, as built at Coalbrookdale on 18th April, apart from the gantry beams, which were added later.

I spent the following month constructing the stairs leading to the down platform, including the supporting gantries and landing platform. This turned out to challenge my limited modelling skills to the maximum. By this stage the dimensions of the steps had been determined by the dimensions of the rest of the structure. The steps needed to be 19mm wide, representing 9'6" in N Scale. This seems reasonable as the steps on the original are quite wide, and the top landing looks about right at this width. The steps needed to rise 24mm from platform level to top deck, using 24 risers each of 1mm height, representing 6" in scale terms, which is just about perfect. Each riser needed a tread depth of about 2mm (1 scale foot) – again just about right. There being nothing commercially available to fit the bill, I built my own steps from scratch from various styrene sheet offcuts. Unfortunately, errors crept in during the construction, which you will see on the last photo of this article, resulting in the tread depths being far from perfect.

With hindsight, as most of the steps will be largely hidden by the roof I could have omitted them altogether apart from the bottom four or five, which will be visible. But at least it means I don't need to worry unduly about the uneven tread depths further up the stairs.

The stairs, including the gantry supporting the intermediate landing, consist of 90 separate pieces, painstakingly joined with my usual Revell Professional poly cement. The completed structure was then test-fitted in order to determine the exact points at which the intermediate gantry and lower landing stage are fixed to the beams which in turn are fixed to the retaining wall.

The beams were constructed from Evergreen H beam girders, fronted with decorative pieces which I curved on the lower edges, to follow the originals, by hand. As with the top deck of the footbridge, these were fixed to the retaining wall by two metal pins which fit into two holes drilled into the wall. In both cases, the beams and the position of the fixings had to be adjusted several times before the joins were perfectly aligned – a further example of my trial-and-error approach.

Llangollen Station Footbridge, as at 25th May 2026. The stairs now fit correctly onto the intermediate and lower landing platforms. Fortunately, the inconsistent tread depths will be hidden by the roof.

I am pleased with the continuing progress, and I think my little layout is now starting to look like Llangollen. The next phase will be the equally difficult construction of the footbridge roof, which in turn will bring creating the River Dee ever nearer to the top of the to-do list.

Dave Gotliffe

Fare Dinkum!

One of the two station pilots based at Liverpool Street Station in the 50's, J69 No.68619 in O gauge. Not exactly the first place you'd look for such a loco, but found on ebay, after 25 years in Gundaroo N.S.W. Australia. Seen here on a visit to the 'Tenbury Oval' on Thursday afternoon. As one might expect, she's sturdy, loud and a little brash and certainly left the neighbours in no doubt, she's back home now!

Scale Sale

As a result of my recent gauge related crisis, I have a large quantity of mint condition OO gauge stock I no longer require.

The 40 or so locos are of the late steam, early B.R. diesel period, mostly classes found on former LNER & LMS lines (with some exceptions) and as you know, standard class steam locos ran all over the network, as did a lot of early diesels and dmu's. All are DC, most being DCC ready as manufactured within the last 20 years by Hornby, Bachmann, Heljan and others. They are all in original boxes and in as new condition having seen little use. This also applies to the 60 or so Gresley, Thompson, Stannier, BR Mk1's, K type Pullman coaches and the many mineral wagons, conflats and covered vans.

I'm in the process of preparing detailed lists of all the stock so as to obtain competitive quotes from dealers. But, before I send them the lists, if there are any ASRM members who would like copies, or who have a particular request, please get in touch promptly at; arbutle@gmail.com Competitive prices will be available to most ASRM members.

Andy Butler

Tales from the dining room table

Your editor has been busy working towards completing Coventry 1839, at least enough to be fit to exhibit at the Shrewsbury Festival of Model Railways on 13th June. This has meant bringing the layout up to a standard that at least looks finished (even if it isn't) and having more than one operational loco!

4mm scale, scratch built Bury 2-2-0 No.7 has just entered traffic and posing it with a first-class up train has given me a little more confidence that I am, perhaps, finally getting there.

And finally…

Some images from Abrail 2026 of Will Lloyd's stunning Rye Sands, 4mm scale, OO. Very simple but so effective, when modelling crosses the line into the art world!