



ASSOCIATION OF SHREWSBURY RAILWAY MODELLERS

NEWSLETTER No. 27: MARCH 2024



'Wind, Rain and Steam.' 60103, Flying Scotsman, approaches the summit of Ais Gill at the head of a northbound special on the Settle & Carlisle line.

Photo by Chris Kapolka

Welcome to Issue 27 of the ASRM Newsletter.

I think a large part of the appeal of our hobby – and of our Association - lies in the many ways in which we can approach railway modelling, and in seeing how other people go about exercising their skill, art and enthusiasm in engaging in our fascinating hobby, from acquiring a collection of ready-to-run commercial products to hand-building a live steam locomotive. Once again, our Newsletter contains a typical variety of interpretations of how to create a model railway. I hope you will enjoy reading it.

With Stafford having moved its annual exhibition from February to September there have been few local exhibitions this year so far, but some are coming up, which you might like to put in your diaries – Wombourne on Saturday 2nd March, Redditch on 2nd and 3rd March and the Model Railway Weekend at the Severn Valley's Engine House, Highley, on 4th and 5th April. Nearer to home it's like waiting for the proverbial bus: you don't see any for ages, then two come along at the same time! On Saturday 1st June the Craven Arms show will take place at Ludlow Racecourse, while on the same day the Shrewsbury Model Railway Show will be held at St Mary's Church in the town centre. Journalistic impartiality prevents me from favouring one show over the other (although I would mention that our own Chris Cox will be exhibiting his wonderful Coventry 1839 layout at Craven Arms, and I am the Secretary of the Craven Arms club!).

Meanwhile, our AGM will take place on Wednesday 3rd April. This will be followed by the Make a Building Challenge, so I hope you are all busy preparing your model railway buildings. We hope to see a wide variety of entries, whether a Portaloo or Waterloo, and whether shop-bought, kit-built or hand-made, in order to demonstrate once again the diversity of railway interests within the group.

Dave Gotliffe

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1. CATS AND DOGS AND ONLY THE BARKING

Chris Kapolka



***'Steam, Speed and a soaking.'* Another shot of Flying Scotsman approaching the summit of Ais Gill.**

Following on from the last newsletter I have made further sorties to the Settle & Carlisle line to shoot that shot of Flying Scotsman in action. Filthy wild weather, traditional to the area, was the order of the day on my first trip. Only the 'barking' would be out in those conditions... I seemed to be the only person out there that day! ... it was a Drench coat event! Knowing the line, I chose the short length of embankment just short of Ais Gill summit for the northbound shot, so that I could shelter in the warm comforts of my Land Cruiser till the last moment, when I could see the plume of steam in the distance in the driver's side mirror. Then I could leap out and give the lens a few seconds to adjust to the temperature and humidity change, a quick wipe with the lens cloth, check the settings and take my chosen position. And yes, it was worth it, capturing the essence of this bleak rugged route - not your chocolate box image but much more the harsh reality of the area.

On a further trip I bagged a couple of action shots, but as my schoolteachers wrote in my report, "*Christopher could do better!*"



Flying Scotsman flying!



Flying Scotsman in the dusk

I don't go far for diseasels ... but there have been exceptions. There is a place where winter weather really is just the best for train photography - 'Down Under'! Whilst doing work for Air New Zealand's in-flight magazine I hit lucky with an all-expenses trip across Australia and a journey on both the Ghan and the Indian Pacific. I rode with the drivers of the eastbound Indian Pacific across the 297-mile Nullarbor Straight, and even had the train stop exclusively for me to take pictures. Here is the 18-vehicle train on its 2,704-mile 3-day trip from Perth to Sydney. It was pleasantly warm out there - the drivers told me that I wouldn't have lasted a minute in the heat of summer! Working the second longest train journey in the world, they had some tales to tell!



Eastbound Indian Pacific east of Cooke

Some years before, Flying Scotsman had been down along this way...



Cab View on Nullabor ... The endless view is enough to drive you around the bend!

Chris Kapolka

2. A BRIDGE NOT TOO FAR ... (4 hrs roadworks permitting!) *Chris Kapolka*

It was back in 2018 that I started a double page spread in the Bluebell Railway news journal to promote our hobby of model railways. The idea was to focus on products that relate to the Bluebell Railway in an easy-read, anecdotal style of a short story.

I started the quarterly features with the then new Hornby 00-gauge H class 0-4-4T model and built an appropriate photo set piece. Some five years later I am about to feature the Hornby Adams Radial class 0415 4-4-2T. The feature is to coincide with their major event of this year, which will be the steaming and entry into service of the replica new build 'Brighton Atlantic' 4-4-2 No 32424 **Beachy Head**.

With the 'Beachy Shed' now vacant, the team will now restore the sole surviving LSWR Adams Radial back to working order, as well as the Adams B4 'Normandy'.

For the opening picture of the feature, I am building a small Lyme Regis branch cameo based on a photograph taken by S. C. Nash and a painting by Phil Hawkins. The bridge still exists at the location which has been developed with housing, but it is hemmed in with vegetation. Dimensions of this very narrow bridge were formulated by guesstimation but I feel it's pretty close. A 00-scale old-time Messy Ferguson tractor can just squeeze its way across.

My structure is built of card, using mounting board to create the carcass and then built up with layers of Shreddies packet overlays. Stone detail is drawn up with an 0.003 fine-point pen and then textured with PVA wood glue dabbed on with a cocktail stick. To make the job less tedious I added a grid which helped to guide the stone courses on a level, in the same way a bricklayer uses a string to set out his work. The landscape work will follow soon, with my favourite technique of using corrugated card boxes cut into formers and dressed with papier- mache.



The bridge as it is today ...



... and as modelled by Chris Kapolka

Chris Kapolka

3. DETAILING AT CALDER BANK POWER STATION

Graham Betts

The December meeting of ASRM proved very fruitful for me for a number of reasons: I picked up some useful items from other members, and my raffle ticket won a voucher for Severn Models, kindly donated by Andy.

[Severn Models - Etched Brass Model Kits](#)

Amongst the items picked up, Nick Coppin gave me some 4mm scale lineside diesel refuelling pipework which, as a steam locomotive enthusiast, got me thinking about an application.

Both have been used to add to my Power Station model.

From the Severn Models catalogue I selected a lineside hut, which is now finished and fitted as an 'overspill' workshop-storage facility, with a few added items in its vicinity. From the photo I will definitely need to deal with one workman's 'shiny shoulder'. Don't you just love new tins of Humbrol enamel!



Nick's pipework has now been painted red and is fitted as a 'dry riser' fire system on the external wall of the turbine hall, and two more are fitted to the Boiler House. These can be externally operated with valves without entry into a potential fire.



Graham Betts

4. A LITTLE BIT OF LLANGOLLEN

Dave Gotliffe

Over the past four years I've done a lot of work on the Craven Arms club layout, and also on the Wadebridge layout being built by my friend Phil Herdson. My contributions to both layouts have consisted mainly of constructing and refurbishing buildings, as that is my main area of modelling expertise, such as it is.

Over the past year I've been considering a new modelling project for myself. It will need to be small, as I have neither the finances nor the space for a large layout. This year's ASRM Challenge was the catalyst to get this under way, my intention being to construct the layout and its buildings simultaneously, in order to have a building ready to take part in the Challenge at the April meeting.

I spent much of last year considering various places on which to base a micro layout. I almost settled on Dymock, in Gloucestershire (on the long-closed Daffodil Line between Ledbury and Gloucester) – which I still think would form the basis of an excellent micro layout. But I finally chose Llangollen. Three factors in its favour made it stand out above other locations: firstly, the station complex still exists in a more-or-less unchanged state since steam days; secondly, it's easy to get to in order to take photos and measurements (as well as making a pleasant day out); and finally, the arrangement of station, signal box, river, bridge and roads in a very compressed space makes a very pleasing aspect on which to base a layout.

Some time ago Nick Coppin lent me a copy of Iain Rice's excellent book on cameo layouts. The compressed picturesque location of Llangollen Station seemed to lend itself to such a layout, so my plan is now to construct a cameo layout of Llangollen set in around 1960. The term "cameo" has been borrowed from its theatrical definition – "a short sketch or portrait," but for railway modellers a cameo layout has come to mean a small layout enclosed in an open-fronted box.

There are several aspects of Llangollen that take the project into new territory for me:

- The box has to be carefully designed in order to ensure that its proportions look right - including, importantly, its height;
- The layout must be built on several levels, requiring careful measurements to ensure that the roads and pathways on each level flow seamlessly to the next;
- In order to create the different levels, some form of open-framework baseboard construction will be required;
- The river Dee forms a prominent feature at the front of the layout, requiring the creation of realistic looking water;
- In 1960, before its original closure, Llangollen was a through station. This means that lengthy accommodation tracks will be required at each end, the format of which needs to be carefully considered (fiddle yard, traverser, cassettes, etc).

The layout will be built in N Scale, and the main enclosure will have a footprint of 1200mm x 450 mm. The following photos show the area that will be modelled.



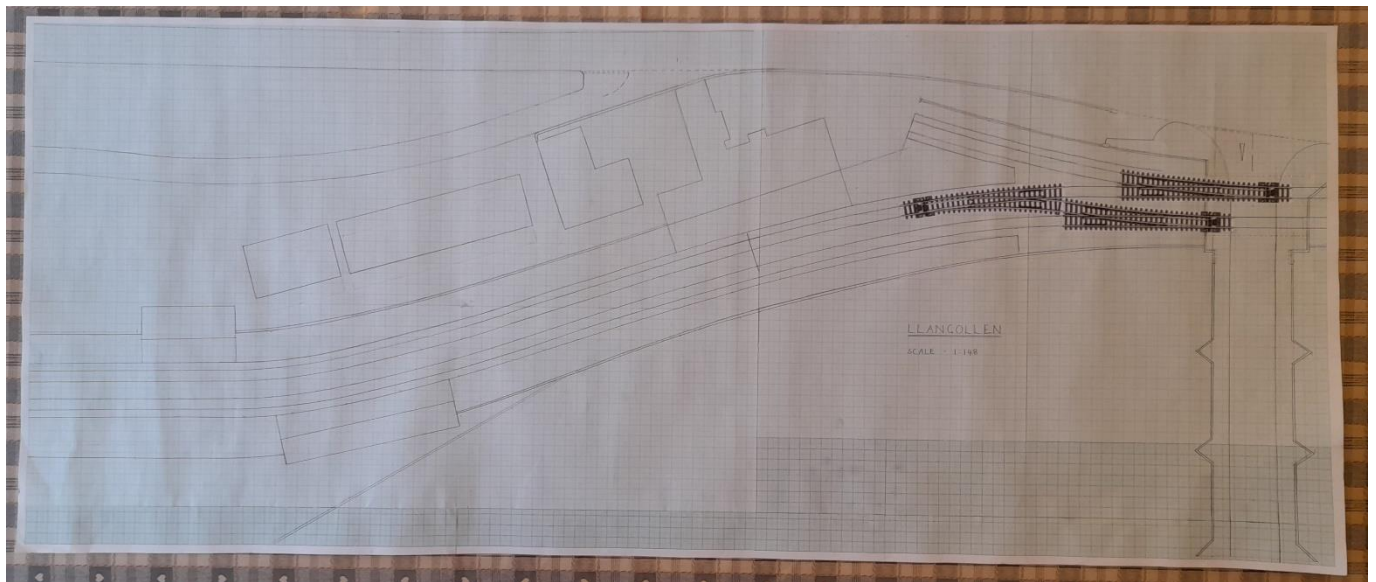
From the air ...



... and from Llangollen Bridge

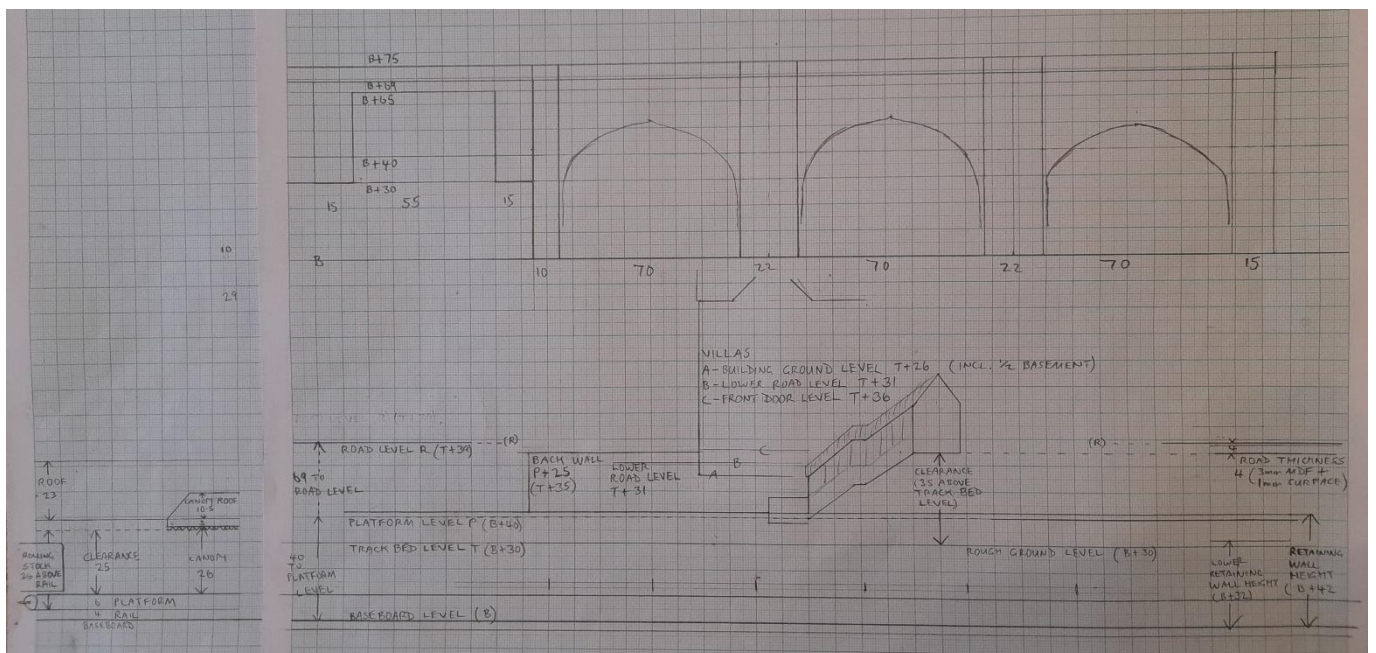
I have spent an unprecedented amount of time in producing preliminary drawings for the layout, due to the many different ground levels and the complexity of how the station building and the unusual footbridge fit together. In addition to many photographs available on the Internet, Chris Kapolka provided a very helpful track plan of the station before its original closure in 1965, and Andy Butler provided some useful additional source material. I supplemented these with a visit to the Llangollen Railway (now a heritage line) on 11th November, the last day of the 2023 season, at which I took over 100 photographs from as many angles as possible.

Using all of the above source material, I used a combination of actual and estimated measurements to produce a full-size layout plan (which I brought to the January ASRM meeting).



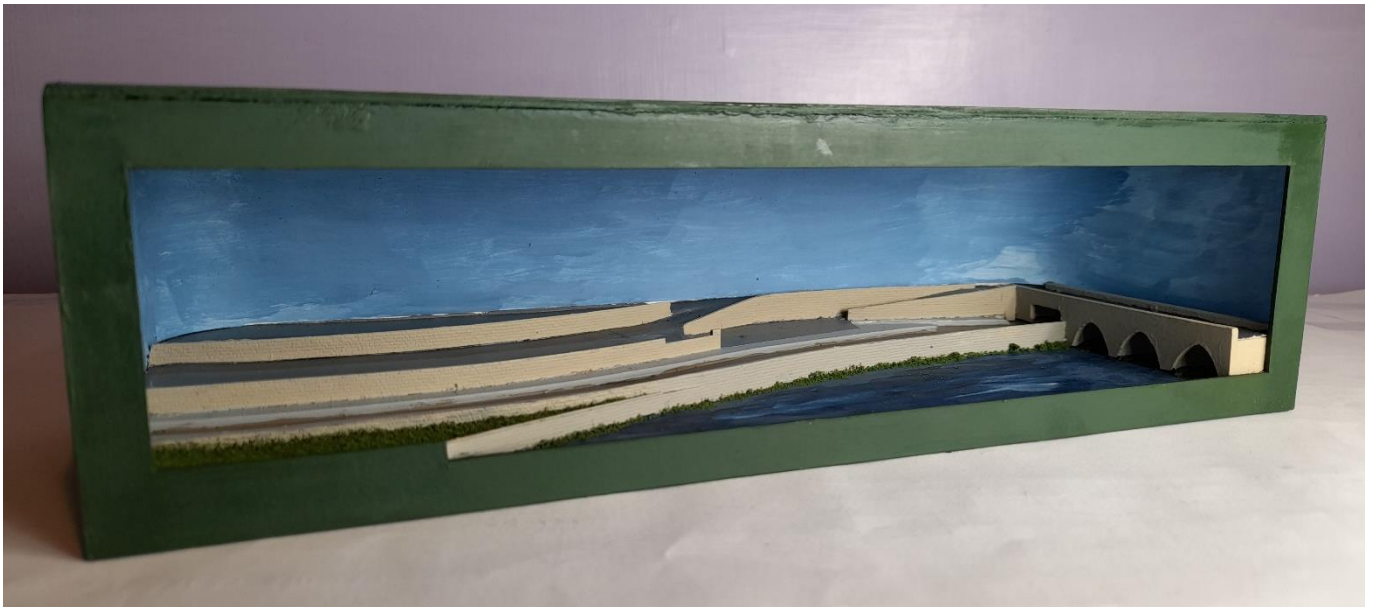
Plan of the proposed layout. Its footprint will be 1200 x 450 millimetres.

I also produced full-size drawings of the principal buildings and the iconic road bridge, together with the heights of the various base levels (river, track bed, platforms, road bridge and various roads at the back of the layout behind the station).



Llangollen Bridge plus the exact heights of the base levels and clearances of the structures on the layout.

I know that some layout builders always build a 3D mock-up of their proposed layout at this stage. For my previous projects I have always thought this to be unnecessary, but in this case, owing to the complex relationship between the various structures built at varying heights, I decided to build a mock up, using thin card, 1.5mm art board and Slaters embossed stone Plastikard.



The 3D mock-up of the proposed cameo layout of Llangollen. With a length of 240mm it is a 1:5 scale model of the proposed layout, or 1:740 scale in relation to the prototype. The mock-up is crude, but all relative dimensions are correct.

The mock-up has proved very useful, and has led me to conclude that:

- the proposed location will work as a cameo layout;
- the relative dimensions produced from my drawings look about right;
- the layout will need to be well-lit in order to present it in the best light (no pun intended!); and
- the enclosure needs to be a little taller in relation to its length and depth than the mock-up.

It also shows that the colour of the enclosure box is important. Most cameo layouts I have seen are enclosed in a box painted matt black. To my mind, it works in some cases but not in others, and won't work for Llangollen as the model itself will contain a lot of dark colours due the amount of stone retaining walls, grey road surfaces and track bed. I tried a medium green for my mock-up, but I don't think this works either. I'll continue to experiment.

I've not yet decided about the backscene; low-relief buildings blended into a photographic backscene would be nice, but plain sky will help to keep the scene light, so I will probably settle for the latter. But, again, the final colour will need to be lighter than the very rough sky colour of the mock-up

The next step will be to build the full-size version of the box and internal structure of the layout, which will be constructed from plywood and MDF.

Meanwhile, the station building is under construction, and I look forward to presenting it, and to seeing everybody else's entries, at the ASRM Challenge on 3rd April.

Dave Gotliffe

5. REDISCOVERING LIMONENE

Dave Gotliffe

Apart from thinking about baseboards and enclosure boxes, I have started to build the Llangollen station building. So far, I've made the shell of the main building and I am now working on inserts for the many doors and windows in the building.

Some of you may remember our May 2019 presentation "Modelling Buildings in Plastikard". At one point the presenter, Geoff Kent, described the adhesives and solvents he uses to construct his buildings. One of the specialist products he uses is Limonene. This is a chemical solvent, similar in appearance to Mek-Pak and Plastic Weld – even to the extent of being sold in similar bottles. As the name suggests, Limonene is based on a natural oil occurring in lemons and oranges. This becomes obvious when opening the bottle, as it gives off a strong citrus smell.

Broadly, Limonene has one disadvantage and one advantage over Mek-Pak and Plastic Weld:

The disadvantage is that it takes several hours to achieve maximum strength. This means that work has to be set aside carefully after assembly in order to achieve a strong bond;

However, Limonene is claimed not to cause clouding on clear styrene – in fact it is marketed to the modelling community as a "mild solvent for clear and thin polystyrene". This is obviously a big advantage when creating windows and for other clear styrene applications.



Following Geoff's presentation, I bought a bottle of Limonene from Hobby Holidays - one of only a handful of UK stockists. I didn't seem to have much success in getting it to bond. However, at the time I hadn't appreciated the long curing time. So for the last four years it has sat in a drawer, unused.

Llangollen station has a fully-glazed door at the rear, for which I needed to bond two layers of clear styrene together (so that the top layer would fit into a pre-cut door recess), add a third layer of Downsglaze glazing bars, and finally add a very thin microstrip frame in order to complete the door.

So out came the Limonene, which was applied to each layer carefully with a small paint brush, and the whole structure was then set aside to cure for 24 hours.

All layers appear to have bonded well, and there is minimal clouding. This is a very pleasing result, on a door with three layers of solvent applied to it. And I suspect my results will improve with experience.



The fully glazed door at the rear of Llangollen station, loosely fitted for the time being, awaiting tidying-up and painting. There is minimal clouding on the clear styrene door, which consists of three laminated layers and a microstrip frame. Not too bad for a first attempt.

I am now planning to use Limonene to construct the remaining windows and doors on Llangollen Station.

Limonene can be obtained from Hobby Holidays at £8 for a 100ml bottle (enough for several large projects) plus £5.25 for postage & packing:

<https://www.hobbyholidays.co.uk/proddetail.php?prod=LIMONENE>

Dave Gotliffe

6. THE ZERMATT TO GORNERGRAT RAILWAY

Mike Bennett

A short while ago I was able to escape for a month and take myself off to Switzerland. The object of the trip was to 'conquer' 22 mountain passes, by road I hasten to add, and also to ride and photograph some of the wonderful Swiss Railway lines together with the scenery through which they pass.

One of the most memorable trips was to catch the early morning train from Visp, where I was staying, to Zermatt and then to transfer to the Gornergrat Mountain Railway. This is one of the highest cogwheel railways in Europe and affords stunning views of the Matterhorn. The distance from Zermatt to Gornergrat is just over 5.5 miles and the station stands at an altitude of 10,135ft. Opening in 1898 the line is one of the oldest in Switzerland.

I had learned very quickly that it pays dividends to travel first class in Switzerland if you wish to avoid the foreign tourists. This is a bit unfair because I was myself, a foreigner. The photo below shows the first-class coach – just one other antisocial bloke and myself as passengers at that time. Regrettably this is only possible as far as Zermatt. From there up to Gornergrat I had to rub shoulders with the hoi polloi. Mind you, looking at them and their expensive ski wear and accessories I rather think it was me that should have travelled in the cattle truck.



The First-Class coach on the Matterhorn Gotthard Bahn, which transported Mike as far as Zermatt, where he transferred to the Gornergrat Mountain Railway for the final climb to the summit of the line at Gornergrat.

The Gornergrat Mountain Railway was the world's first fully electrified cog railway and today it is equipped with regenerative braking such that for every third downhill run enough electricity is generated for a "free" run back up. Zermatt is at an elevation of just over 5,000ft and so the climb, which takes the train 33 minutes, is roughly another 5,000ft.



One of the Gornergrat Railway's Bhe 4/8 railcar sets

It traverses bridges, passes through tunnels and galleries, all the time in dramatic scenery, to reach the top. With an astronomical observatory and hotel at the top it claims to run 365 days of the year. A railway that runs all year round? How about that Network Rail!



A Gornergrat Railway set approaching the summit station at Gornergrat



The summit station at Gornergrat, with the Matterhorn in the background.



Another view of Gornergrat station. The building in the background is the Kulm Hotel, with its astronomical observatory built into its upper floors.

Taking the [very] early train from Visp meant that on the return many tourists were still coming up so not only did I miss the crowds up, but it meant that the early afternoon trains down were pretty empty and so I was able to look through the driver's cab and see the track ahead together with the passing trains - just like a little boy all over again.



A driver's eye view of the Gornergrat train heading back down the mountain towards Zermatt.

Text and all photographs by Mike Bennett

7. SER 'COFFEE POT' No.126

Chris Cox

The following article is a reproduction of an article originally written by Chris in May 2020, shortly after completing this wonderful 4mm-scale model of the unique SER 'Coffee Pot'.

This diminutive little locomotive was built at Bricklayers Arms in 1848 but remained unfinished. There was some disagreement with William Bridges Adams over patent infringement which may have delayed progress, but in 1850 (coincidentally the year Adams was declared bankrupt), the engine was sent to Ashford works where it was completed. Apparently it carried a plate which gave some credit to Adams, but it is not believed that he was paid for his contribution.

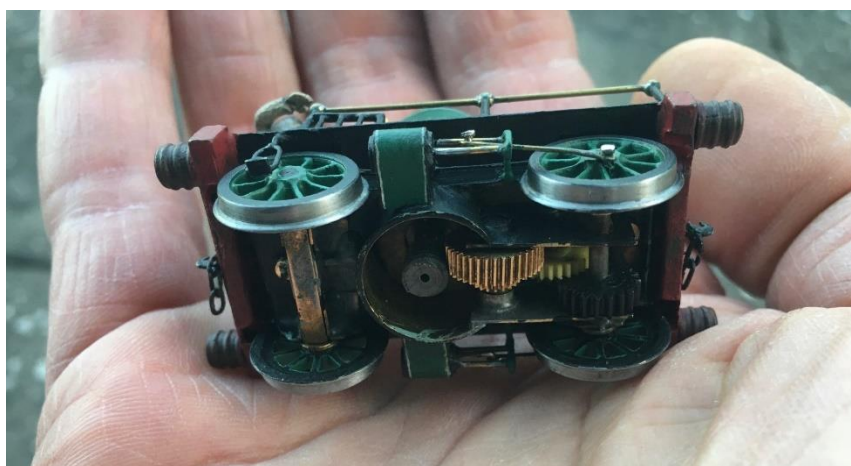
It made itself useful on line inspection duties and was withdrawn from service in September 1866. Conversion to a stationary engine was carried out in February 1877 and it was sent to Redhill to pump water. In 1888 the worn out remains were sold to a scrap dealer in Newhaven for £26-18s-6d.

The model is based on a very simple line drawing published in the 'Locomotive Magazine' as part of a series on the history of the locomotives of the SE&CR.



The body and chassis were scratchbuilt from brass and a tiny motor hidden inside the vertical boiler.

The motor lifts out if necessary since the top of the boiler is only held on with Blu-Tack, this sounds crude but is remarkably effective and convenient.



The gear train underneath the footplate was cobbled together from the scrap box. I built the model back in 2016 but have only recently had the opportunity of taking some half decent photographs of it against the background of Greyhound Place, Bricklayers Arms, Bermondsey

Chris Cox, May 2020



8. MODEL RAILWAY COLLECTION FOR SALE

Ian Perrin

I have been asked to sell the model railway collection of a friend who sadly died last year.

The collection consists of a large amount of OO Gauge model railway items, together with a collection of road vehicles. It is all in good condition, most of it in original packaging, and much of it unused and unopened.

The collection includes a large quantity of Peco and Hornby track, Langley Models, card buildings, various plastikard, brick papers, fencing, and many more items to rummage through.

A few photos of the collection are shown below; more photos can be viewed on the Newtown MRS's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/NewtownMRS>.

If anybody is interested in any of the items, or would like a more complete list of items available, you can contact me on 07951 707634, or at ian_perrin@hotmail.com. I can bring specific items to our meetings at Bayston Hill if required.

Ian Perrin

