

# **Association of Shrewsbury Railway Modellers**



## **July 2020 Newsletter**

Welcome to the July 2020 Newsletter. A big thank you as always to all contributors. It's very pleasing to see so many of our members continuing to carry out such a wide diversity of modelling activities.

We are now starting to think about when and how we might resume our regular monthly meetings at the Priory School. A summary of a recent committee meeting on the subject is included below. Meanwhile, we will be delighted to continue to receive contributions for our Newsletters on your current projects, or any other railway-related subject you think might be of interest to the members.

The August Newsletter will be edited by Peter Cox; please send your contributions to Peter at . We are building up a panel of editors in order to produce the Newsletter in a variety of styles. If you would like to edit a future issue, please contact our Secretary Nick Coppin at .

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## **Back to School**

### ***The ASRM Committee's current thoughts on resuming meetings at the Priory School***

The committee meets twice a year to discuss subjects such as the programme for future meetings, the annual modelling challenge, the website, seeking new members and our Christmas social evening. Our latest meeting was held on 11<sup>th</sup> June, and unsurprisingly the main topic of discussion was when and how we should resume our monthly meetings at the Priory School.

We are in regular contact with the school; they don't yet know when our room will be available but they hope to be able to confirm this during the summer.

We concluded that the regular programme of formal speakers should be cancelled for the remainder of 2020; our current thinking is to restart on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (subject to consultation with the members and assuming we are allowed to do so). We will of course understand if members do not wish to attend meetings until the Covid-19 situation has fully stabilised or a vaccine is available.

For the remainder of 2020, no meetings will take place in September or October. We may hold meetings on 4<sup>th</sup> November and 2nd December, again subject to consultation and the room being available; we think it would be good for us to get together again if we feel comfortable doing so by then. If the November meeting goes ahead we will invite participants in the Plastikard Challenge to present their entries. The December meeting would be the usual Christmas Quiz, raffle, bring-and-buy sale and mince pies (and, if we are lucky, Ryans pork pies!). If the December meeting does not take place we will hold the Christmas Quiz online; there will be a prize for the winner.

The new subscription year currently starts on 1<sup>st</sup> October. However, this year we will automatically extend everybody's membership without charge until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. We will propose formally moving the annual subscription date to 1<sup>st</sup> April at the next AGM.

We will keep you informed of developments, and in any event we will consult with you all before restarting our meetings.

Meanwhile, the committee extend our very best wishes to all our friends and fellow members of the ASRM.

**Peter Cox, Chairman**

**Nick Coppin, Secretary**

**David Gotliffe, Treasurer**

**Scott Stephenson, Web Editor**

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## **Modelling Challenge III**

### **(Son of son of modelling challenge)**

***Peter Cox***

Following the great enjoyment which I think we all derived from the Diorama Challenge and then the Plasticard Challenge, whether from taking part, or from seeing the excellent models produced by other members, or both, your committee are suggesting a new challenge for next April's AGM Meeting. (We are assuming, hoping, intending that we shall all be back in action by then.) We hope this will give you something to work towards - though to judge from the contributions to the monthly news letter many of you are already modelling away with great enthusiasm in any case.

The suggestion is that we construct something motorised - other than a prime mover. In other words, not a locomotive, railcar or tram, but something not on the tracks. It might be a crane, a carousel, level crossing gates, coal tippie, etc. We hope that you will be inspired to build something that may be of use on your layout, or something that you could in future use on your layout, or just something that you have always wanted to try constructing.

We hope you think this is good idea (and a useful incentive) and look forward to seeing your efforts next April, though we very much hope of course, that we shall be meeting again before then.

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## Newtown MRC

### *Trevor Hughes*

Many of us will be familiar with Newtown Model Railway Club's excellent annual exhibition at Welshpool Town Hall. Our friend and fellow ASRM member Trevor Hughes is also the exhibition manager for the Newtown MRC. The Newtown exhibition has a reputation for attracting outstanding layouts from around the country. Trevor has informed us that sadly the club has decided to cancel it's 2020 exhibition, which was to have taken place on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October.

We look forward to the exhibition circuit restarting, and I am sure Trevor can count on the support of ASRM members at Newtown MRC's next exhibition, which hopefully will take place in October 2021.

## Local Exhibitions in 2020

*At the time of writing, the following exhibitions have been cancelled:*

<i>18<sup>th</sup> July 2020:</i>	<i>Kidderminster – LNWR Open Day</i>
<i>25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> July 2020:</i>	<i>Stoke on Trent – St John's School</i>
<i>8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> August 2020:</i>	<i>Ellesmere – Ellesmere MRC</i>
<i>15<sup>th</sup> August 2020:</i>	<i>Ludlow – Craven Arms &amp; District MRC</i>
<i>29<sup>th</sup> August 2020:</i>	<i>Birmingham- Bourneville MRC</i>
<i>4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2020:</i>	<i>Welshpool &amp; Llanfair – Steam Gala</i>
<i>19<sup>th</sup> September 2020:</i>	<i>Birmingham – European Railways Association</i>
<i>24<sup>th</sup> October 2020:</i>	<i>Welshpool – Newtown MRC</i>
<i>7<sup>th</sup> November 2020:</i>	<i>Rodington – Rodington MRS</i>
<i>28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> November 2020:</i>	<i>Birmingham, NEC – Warley MRC</i>

*Cancellations have not been announced to date in respect of the following exhibitions. We will need to check the model railway press before their exhibition dates to establish if they will be going ahead:*

<i>19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> September 2020:</i>	<i>Redditch – Redditch MRC</i>
<i>26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> September 2020:</i>	<i>Bala – Bala Lake Railway</i>
<i>3<sup>rd</sup> October 2020:</i>	<i>Llangollen – Llangollen Garden Railway Festival</i>
<i>3<sup>rd</sup> October 2020:</i>	<i>Telford – Telford MRG</i>
<i>10<sup>th</sup> October 2020:</i>	<i>Cradley Heath – Cradley Heath MRC</i>
<i>17<sup>th</sup> October 2020:</i>	<i>Wombourne – Wombourne Autumn MR Show</i>
<i>5<sup>th</sup> December 2020:</i>	<i>Rodington – “Steam at Rodington” Show</i>

## Shrewsbury Model Railway Shops

We are sad to note that Ian Morton has decided to close Modelscape, based at Roden, due to illness and the resulting uncertainty over the lockdown. We offer Ian and his wife our best wishes for the future.

On a happier note, we are pleased to see that Toby Pedley has reopened Salopian Models, based in the Shrewsbury Indoor Market. We offer our best wishes to Toby during the current difficult trading conditions.

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## London Trams

### Phillip Yeend

*Phillip recently sent us a message saying “**Love the tram!**” He was referring to Michael Glover’s London County Council tram car no. 106, as featured in the June 2020 Newsletter. Phillip has now followed this up with an article about his own collection of trams.*

... I have a similar one (LCC B class) made in O gauge from a Chris Cornard etched brass kit. I motorised this using a David Voice brass kit.

It runs well, but I must get round to finishing my baseboards for it and my other trams to run on. My biggest challenge will be to create an efficient working trolley reverser. These can be very tricky (just as they were in real life!) since every tram has to work on it successfully, and each may have a slightly different length of trolley pole.



**LCC B Class “Claymore”**

Friends have suggested to me that I could represent the London conduit system of current collection, which would mean converting all my live overhead trams to two-rail. To my mind the whole attraction of a tram is its ability to take power from the overhead and not opt for the easy but un-prototypical option of two rail.

My other trams in this scale are a Wistow brass London E/1, which was followed later by a Walthamstow six window four-wheel balcony top car.



**London Transport E/1 “Bisto”**



**Walthamstow Four-Wheel Tram**

The Walthamstow tram was made using a pewter "scratch aid" lower deck supplied by Paul Coles (KW trams) with the rest finished in plasticard. I used a Terry Russell drawing and mechanism. I found building in this scale a real pleasure, and detailing the interior was possible too. In this scale it is also possible, I found, to model figures using Milliput. Other figures I purchased were adapted from the railway range of Aiden Campbell on a visit to Warley.

My last 0 gauge tram was made using card only, and I am quite pleased with the result. This represents a car of Leyton Council, whose green and primrose livery is very pleasing to the eye. These cars were overhauled and maintained by the LCC until replaced by "real" LCC E/3 cars in the early thirties.



***Leyton Council Tram***

My fleet of working 00 gauge trams is currently sitting in the display case waiting for a new portable layout to be constructed. Even with lockdown there isn't enough time!! In this scale there is the pitfall of spending more time on the model to the detriment of the backscene. I have noticed this especially in larger scales, where even more time is spent - quite rightly - on producing a fine model, and then there is little attention paid to the street scene. Of necessity more time needs to be devoted to buildings which, because of their size, will take longer to produce. So I have many projects - as most of us have, I suppose.

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## **Making use of partial, surplus and damaged items:**

### **Graham Betts**

*At our meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020, members were invited to bring 'Something from our Workbench'. You may remember Graham presenting a selection of old, partial and damaged locomotives given to him by a dealer not interested in doing anything with them. Graham was in the process of bringing these back to life, using a combination of his own substantial stock of spare parts, bought-in items, new fabricated items - using his considerable modelling and painting skills - and a great deal of ingenuity.*

*The fleet of restored locos is now nearing completion, and the result is an impressive array of beautifully-presented OO Gauge locomotives. An article on the project, together with a selection of photographs, appears in the June 2020 issue of Railway Modeller.*

*Graham has now used similar principles in respect of a selection of buildings, which we present as a further entry in the ASRM 2020 Plastikard Challenge. Graham's photographs of the buildings are shown below, together with Graham's narrative on the buildings and their construction.*



"Based loosely on the original at Burley in Wharfedale on the Otley and Ilkley Joint Railway operated by the Midland Railway and North Eastern Railway, this 4mm Goods Shed is made from recycled Ratio Plastic retaining wall pieces given to me from an old redundant layout. I also had some Midland Railway windows available. The roof, trusses internal platform and sliding doors are all made from Plasticard plain or embossed sheets.





"This Goods Office is based on a photograph of the one still standing on the site of the station at Hawes in Yorkshire, where the former Goods Shed is open as a visitor centre. I made this one the opposite hand of the original. The colour scheme is more suited to MR/LMS than the yellow/green the original is now painted. Their weathering is good though!



"A small Signal Box based around that located at Menston Junction on the Otley & Ilkley Joint Railway, consisting of a single Midland Railway unit. I understand that the Midland simply used a standard unit in whatever multiples were required for any particular location. I had surplus MR windows leftover from a Ratio signal box kit. I also had a go at making the internals, rather than buying the Ratio kit available, half of which would have been wasted."



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## On My Workbench: June 2020

**Stephen Duffell**

It was time to finish some of my UFOs, including one that had been started in 1993 that ought to have been completed long ago. In that year the *Model Railway Journal* ran a project to scratch-build a locomotive in 4mm scale. The author was Paul Bernstein, a famous New Zealand loco builder. The series ran in 5 parts into 1994. A set of key components were provided for the chimney, motion and other parts.

The subject was a Manning Wardle 0-4-0T of the F class. The first F class was built in 1869 and the last in 1926. 150 locomotives were built, 137 of which were standard gauge.

The MRJ articles detail a cab for their build, using Wantage Tramway number 7 as the prototype. I built my loco with an open cab as one had migrated from being a contractor's loco to being owned by the Midland and South Western Junction Railway for use by the engineers on the line.

In the mid 1990's I got the chassis built, and there the project stalled for 25 years. The body had been started, and there were various attempts at making the smokebox and water tanks in the project box. What was needed was an idea of what the various bits of pipework and operating gear were and how to fit out the backhead, as the lack of the cab made this highly visible. This took a while to understand but I think I've got the right bits in the right places. The body was packed with lead and the overall weight is 75 grams, but the hardest job was finding room to fit in the wires for DCC operation.

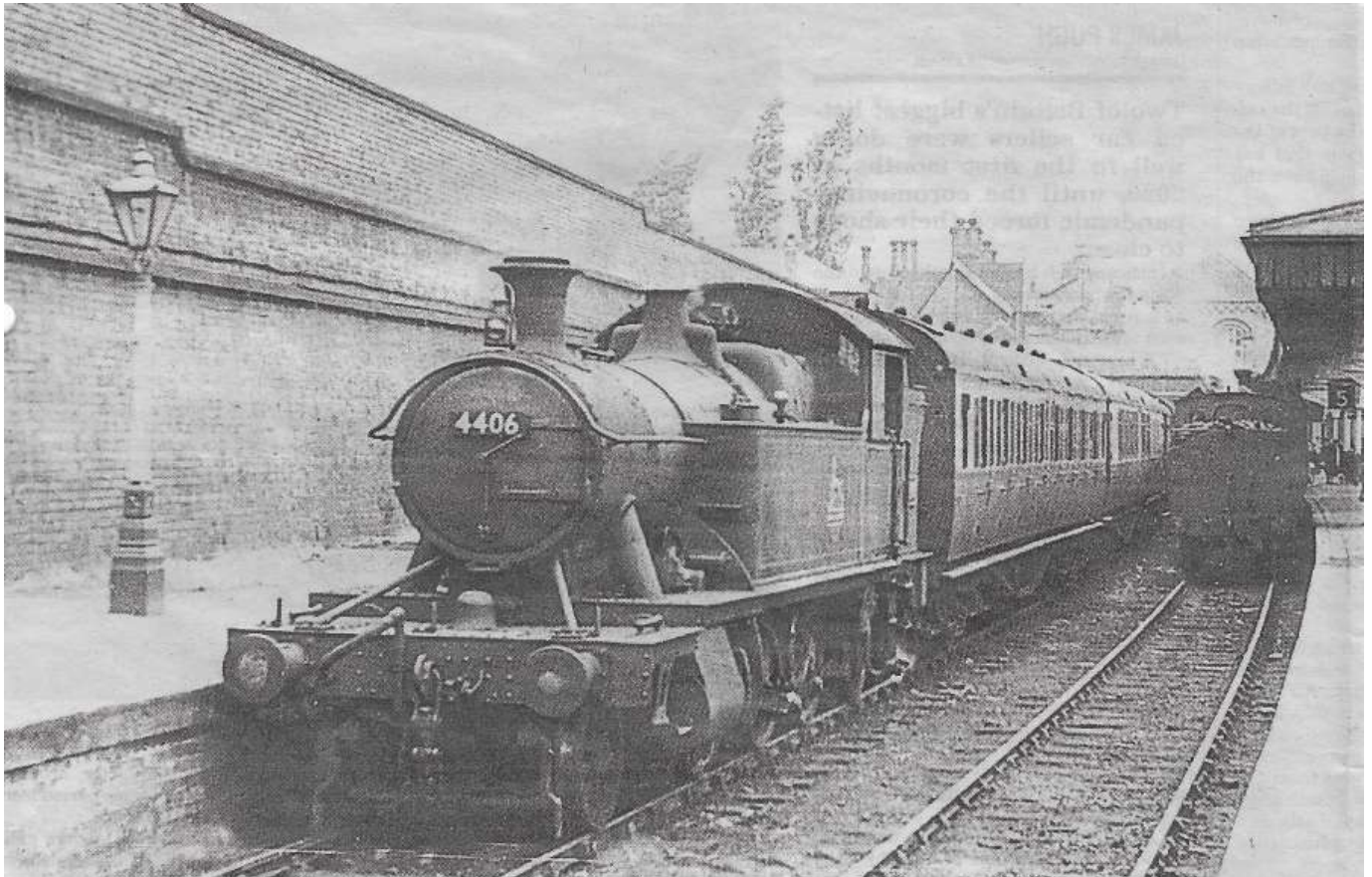
***The Manning Wardle F class 0-4-0T in front of an LSWR 4-4-0 T9 to show its diminutive size. The Backhead details are open for all to see.***



## The Wellington to Craven Arms Railway: a Brief History

*Howard Mainwaring*

Recently, I saw a photo in our local newspaper of a 4400 class steam tank engine waiting to leave Wellington Railway Station. The caption at the bottom of the photo said: "One for the steam buffs to enlighten all as to what date the photo was taken, and where the engine was about to set off to"



A week later the newspaper was back with the following information: "We have been informed that the photo of Tank Engine 4406 was taken at Wellington Station, and it was to work the 4.30pm to Much Wenlock in July 1950."

I have often wondered what the history of the Wellington to Craven Arms Railway was, so I decided to try to find out what I could about its existence and when it ended.

My first thoughts were to find out what I could about the 4400 class engines that were in use at the time of the photograph. It appears that this class of steam tank engine was introduced to duties on the Wellington to Craven Arms line from 1935. By 1952 only no. 4406 was left at Wellington.

The 4400 class was designed by George Churchward, who was Chief Engineer at the Great Western Railway from 1902 to 1922. The class was introduced in 1904 for work on small branch lines. The 4400s were particularly used in hilly districts

and branch lines with tight curvatures, and were an ideal engine for the Wellington to Craven Arms line at the time.

#### **4400 Class specification.**

Configuration:	Whyte. 2-6-2T <i>The Whyte notation is a classification method for steam locomotives, and some internal combustion and electrical locomotives, by wheel arrangement. It was devised by Fredrick Methvan Whyte, and came into use in the early Twentieth Century.</i>
Gauge	Standard gauge
Driver diameter	4ft 1½ in
Loco weight	56 long tons 13cwt
Boiler Pressure	180 lbs/sq in (1.24MPa)
Cylinders	Two, outside
Cylinder size	17in x 24in (432mm x 610mm)
Tractive effort	21,440 lbf
Operators	GWR; British Railways, Western Region
Power Type	Steam
Designer	George Jackson Churchward.
Total Produced	11
Builder:	Wolverhampton Works, Stafford Road (10) Swindon Works (1) <i>Wolverhampton Works closed in June 1964, after 115 years of Shrewsbury and Birmingham Railway, and GWR (Northern Division) history.</i>
Building Date	1905-1906, 1914

#### **Station and Line details for the Wellington to Craven Arms Railway**

<b>Wellington</b>	On the Shrewsbury to Wolverhampton through line.
<b>Ketley</b>	Opened in 1861 and closed in 1962.
<b>Ketley Town Halt</b>	Opened in 1936 and closed in 1962.
<b>New Dale Halt</b>	Opened in 1934 and closed in 1962.
<b>Lawley Bank</b>	Opened in 1861 and closed in 1962.
<b><i>Heath Hill Tunnel</i></b>	59yd. long.
<b>Horsehay and Dawley</b>	Opened in 1861 and closed in 1962. Then reopened in 1976 as part of Telford Steam Railway.
<b>Doseley Halt</b>	Opened in 1932 and closed in 1962.

**Lightmoor Junction** This is a branch off the Wellington to Coalbrookdale line, to Madeley Junction then on to the Shrewsbury to Wolverhampton line, situated between Shifnal and Telford Stations.

This branch line remained open after 1962, for coal trains to leave the Shrewsbury to Wolverhampton line at Madeley Junction, and go through to Buildwas Power Station.

Power Station A opened in 1932 and closed in 1981. Power Station B opened and started feeding power into the National Grid in 1969. In the later period of 'B' life, it used Biomass fuel, and finally closed in 2015.

## **Lightmoor**

**Lightmoor Platform** Opened in 1907 and closed in 1962.

**Green Bank Halt** Coalbrookdale. Opened in 1934 and closed in 1962.

## **Coalbrookdale Viaduct**

**Coalbrookdale** Closed to passenger use from 1962. The line then continued for freight to Buildwas Power Station.

**Albert Edward Bridge** The Albert Edward Bridge carries the double line of the Wenlock Railway over the River Severn. It is similar to the Victorian bridge near Arley on the Severn Valley Railway.

## **Buildwas Power Station B**

**Buildwas Junction** Opened in 1862 for the Severn Valley Railway. Shrewsbury via Cressage, Ironbridge and to Bridgnorth and Kidderminster. Also Wellington to Craven Arms Railway.

## **Buildwas**

**Farley Halt** Opened in 1934 and closed in 1962.

**Much Wenlock** Opened in 1862 and closed to passenger use in 1962.

The line from Much Wenlock to Presthoke was opened for goods and mineral traffic in 1864, enabling limestone from Wenlock Edge to be taken to Coalbrookdale. The cutting of a tunnel through Wenlock Edge and the remaining 11 miles of line to Craven Arms was completed by the end of 1867.

**Westwood Halt** Opened in 1935 and closed to passenger use in 1951.

**Presthoke** Opened in 1867 and closed in 1951.

**Easthoke Halt** Opened in 1936 and closed in 1951.



## ***Easthope Tunnel***

The Tunnel is 207 yards in length.

Photographs taken inside this Tunnel suggest that it may still be in a reasonable condition, but it is fenced off for safety reasons.

## **Longville**

Opened in 1867 and closed in 1951.

## **Rushbury**

Opened in 1867 and closed in 1951.

Apparently, in 1892 a 15-lever signal box was added at the end of the platform. The station was manned with two members of staff, a station master and a signal man.

## **Harton Road**

Serving Eaton-under-Heywood. Opened in 1867 and closed in 1951.

## ***Marsh Farm Junction***

Onto the Shrewsbury to Hereford main line north of Craven Arms.

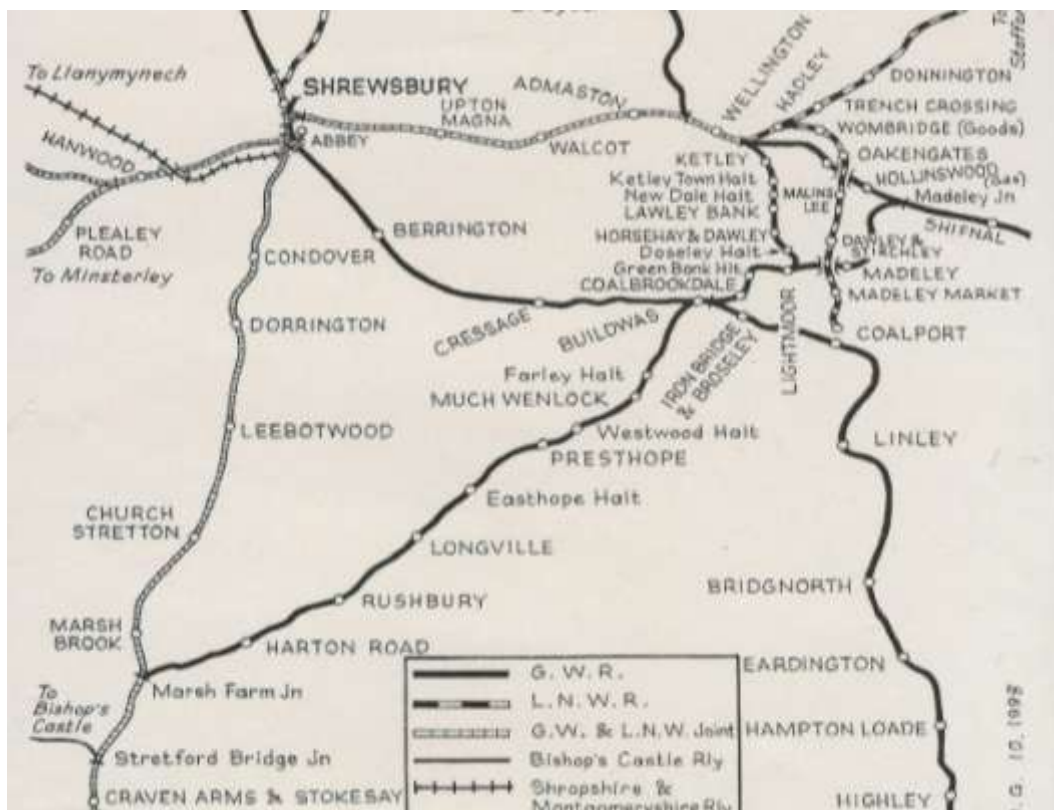
## **Wistanstow Halt**

## ***Stretford Bridge Junction***

## **Craven Arms and Stokesay**

So named until 1974; then renamed "Craven Arms" to the present time. This station was already in existence, serving the Shrewsbury to Hereford and Newport South Wales main line.

It has been a very interesting experience to find out what I could about the 4400 class Tank Engines, and the history of the long-gone Wellington to Cravens Arms Railway. I know this is only a precis of the railway line history, and hopefully some will find it an interesting read, to pass away some lockdown time.



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## Gospool to Liverpool Phase1

*Gerry Willsmore*

Remember back to those halcyon days of January when we were allowed to commune with our fellow enthusiasts? At that meeting we were asked to bring in whatever we had on our workbench. Slightly embarrassed that I only had the shell of a Scalecast resin house which was, compared to some of the fantastic work of other members, a little simplistic but was all that I had which I could transport.

After the meeting I spent a few happy hours casting more resin tiles, supergluing them to my fingers, spray painting and weathering the completed building. Thus numbers 5 and 7 Railway Row were mounted on a base, the garden landscaped and placed on the baseboard next to the Wonkey Donkey Pub.



**5 – 7 Railway Row**

This was the final building on phase 1 of the layout and my plan was to progress Phase 2, extending and ballasting the rails over the river and on to the end of the line. Unfortunately Scalecast announced a number of new and exciting moulds and, naturally, I had to try them out, with the result that I produced Robs Cars which is now fitted to the baseboard near the level crossing before the river.



***Rob's Cars***

I have cast a number of tiles from the Bus and Fire Station moulds but have now disciplined myself to get back to the plan and finish the track work so that I can run trains over the full length of the layout.

Hoping to see everyone again in the not too distant future.

## **More on Baseboard Building**



## **Mike Bennett**

At the time of the last newsletter the main part of the layout had been mechanically joined to form a continuous run and I forecast that if test runs were successful further construction would be delayed owing to the overwhelming desire to run trains. The L-beam that had had warped by 2mm was able to be corrected with the judicious use and gradual application of G-cramps and secured by screwing into an adjacent timber. Whilst this obviated the need to remove too many baseboards others had to be removed in order to position and paste the backscene - a total length of 34ft and spanning one and a half patio doors. I choose to use Gerry Freestone's sky paper which is not overpowering, suits all parts of the layout, comes in 32ft rolls and costs a mere £10.

Before electrically connecting it became painfully obvious that some of the tracks that crossed boards were slightly out of line vertically and/or horizontally. The vertical adjustments were easily resolved using varying thickness of plasticard as packers. [This use of plasticard would not have won any prizes in our recent 'plasticard challenge']. In all there are 78 tracks crossing 8 board joints so I suppose having to adjust just 9 was acceptable after so long in storage. Most horizontal misalignments were easily rectified by re-soldering to the copper clad, but there is always one! And this was where the copper clad had parted and so I had to resort to that tried and tested panacea - super glue. None of the misalignments exceeded 0.5mm representing 3" in N gauge. And 3" on the real railway would likely as not prove as disastrous as 0.5mm in N.





To test I assembled a motley assortment of wagons (which the Rev Wilbert Awdry so aptly referred to as “troublesome trucks”) behind a Hymek and some high speed non-prototypical shunting at scale speeds of up to 70mph was undertaken. A photograph depicts this short train in which I selected modern fine scale (RevolutionN Trains), deep flanges (original Graham Farish), a kit built tanker (Peco) and 3 rather lightweight kit built wagons (N gauge Society) together with a long wheelbase 4 wheel CCT van (Bachmann Graham Farish).

Testing took the best part of a day shunting back and forward over all the sidings, but I continued to resist the urge to start 'playing' as I knew that would be the end of production for a long time. I therefore turned my attention to the supports for both the MPD and the link between this and the main layout. In this I continued with the previous philosophy to have as few legs as supports as possible and the whole was accomplished with just one additional leg. I constructed an I-beam and a T-beam for the long spans of 7'0” and 9'6” from 3”x1” timbers. As it is difficult to fix wood precisely to drilled holes in walls I first affixed 3”x2” CLS timbers and onto these I was able to very precisely screw 3”x1” layout supports with the help of my 'beautiful assistant'. This also had the advantage of bringing the timbers to support the baseboards away from the wall.





Amazingly the two boards comprising the MPD aligned perfectly across all 17 tracks. With all track laid and all points connected and mechanically working by way of wire-in-tube (GEM) via slide switches, the amount of wiring to connect to the tails will clearly benefit from a visit by some friendly Post Office Engineer.



I then felt justified in positioning the card models, connecting up DC and AC circuits, loading the track with stock and running trains again after a two year break. I cannot claim that this went without incident but I do blame the signaller who can get very confused after lunch. And that it is the current situation which leaves enough work for a lifetime, or perhaps longer. The next priority is to construct a cabinet to house transformers, controllers and other widgets neatly and safely. For this a friendly farmer backed his tractor and trailer in the other day and tipped a load of MDF off-cuts, some of which were substantial and so the cabinet can be made at no cost – always a plus!

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## A Home-made Rail-bender

**Peter Cox**

Some of you, having seen my trestle viaduct model, will know that I never make life easy for myself. That was complicated by being on a grade as well as a curve. I have, however, designed my current track layout around Peco code 83 rail and their available standard points because life is too short to build everything from scratch. Space is always at a premium though, and I have completed my design with no less than three diamond crossings (Americans seem very fond of them!), none of them, you guessed it, standard. Two involve a 3 foot radius track crossing a straight track, and the third has two 3 foot radius curves crossing, all of which will have to be hand built. Fun, eh? I know many of you are busy laying your own track, and will not think much of this; and I was not too concerned about it myself (oh, happy innocence!).

Clearly code 83 rail can be soldered into a curved position, but the more I thought about it and the need for the little short pieces of check rails and the diamond also to be curved, the more I became convinced that it would be much easier to pre-curve the rail. A quick survey on the internet showed that this was likely to set me back upward of £50 to £80 and I did not feel that this was worth it. Further research suggested a home-made rail-bender was the answer, and an afternoon's work gave me just that for £0.00 - excluding my hourly business rate of course.

The simple principle involved is to have three wheels; two fixed, and a third, adjustable, to push up against the rail between them. I hope the photographs make this clear. I realised that I had some nice little ball-races in the junk box, but I think any form of pulley or wheel would do. The rest was scrap wood, a few bolts and washers at hand, and a wing nut. I drilled out a slot in the adjustable middle piece so that it would slide backwards and forwards to vary the radius of the curve.

Here is the framework on which the two fixed wheels are mounted; the adjustable piece with the middle wheel; and the two mounted together:-





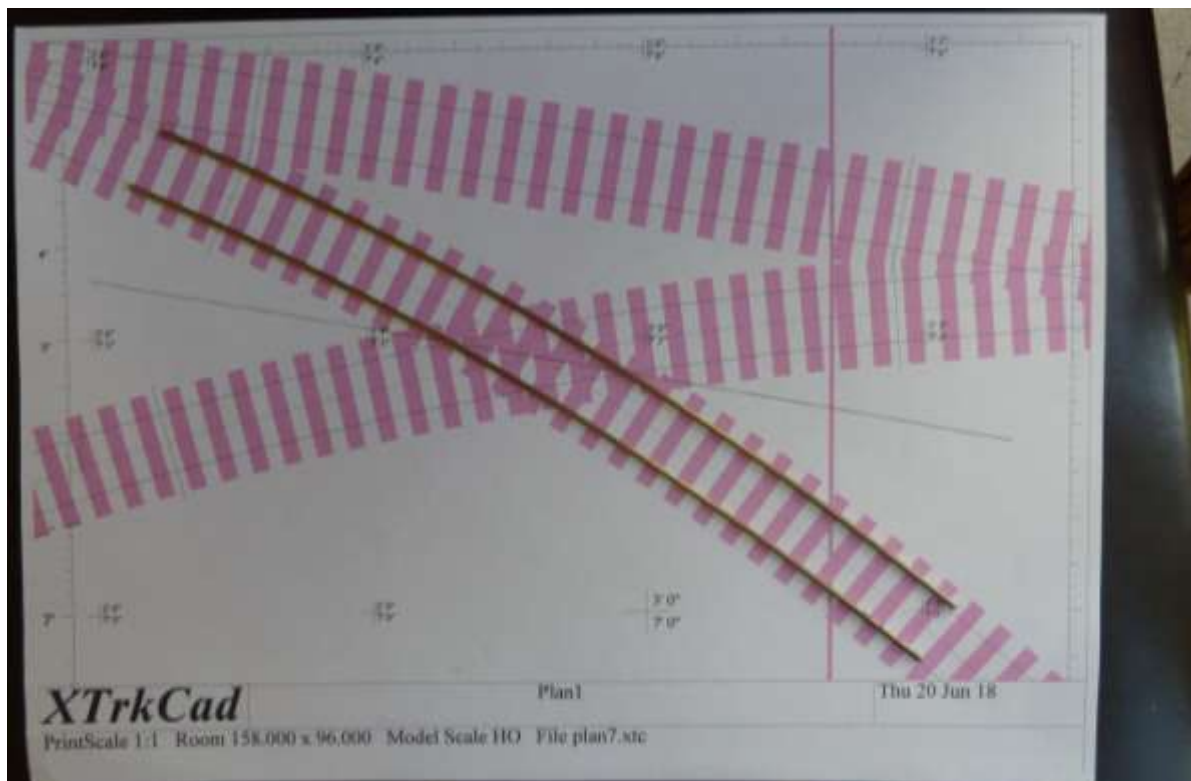


The wing nut tightens the sliding middle piece in the required position. You can see the 2mm scale I pencilled onto the wood to give me a reference. (I may remake the sliding piece with a screw adjustment, as the graduations needed are small, but this seems to do the job pretty well.) You need to mount a washer below each wheel in order to allow the web of the flat-bottom rail to slip under the wheel. All you need to do now is push (not pull) the rail through the gap between



the three wheels. Code 83 slides smoothly, and I think this could be used for much heavier gauge rail as well.

***So, does it work? Yes it does, as shown in the photos below!***



***And here are the resultant curved rails sitting accurately on my XTrkCad plot of the crossing:-***

I am confident that this will make my construction task much easier, and I hope it may encourage some of you to make one for yourself. (Or you could always borrow mine!)

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## **Field Gun & Limber Carriage, on modified WDLR Class F Wagon**

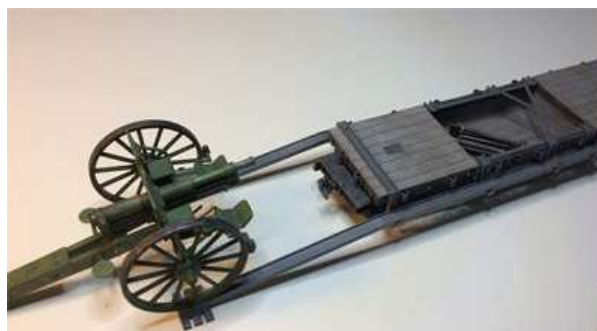
**16mm to 1 foot scale, 32mm gauge**

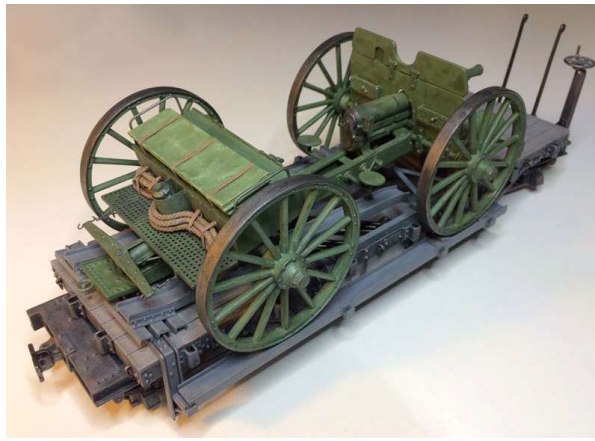
***Andy Vaughan***

In WW1 there was extensive use of the narrow gauge War Department Light Railway to supply the front with all the necessary equipment, rations, ammunition and men needed. As the road conditions deteriorated, new ways were devised to transport more items via the rails instead.

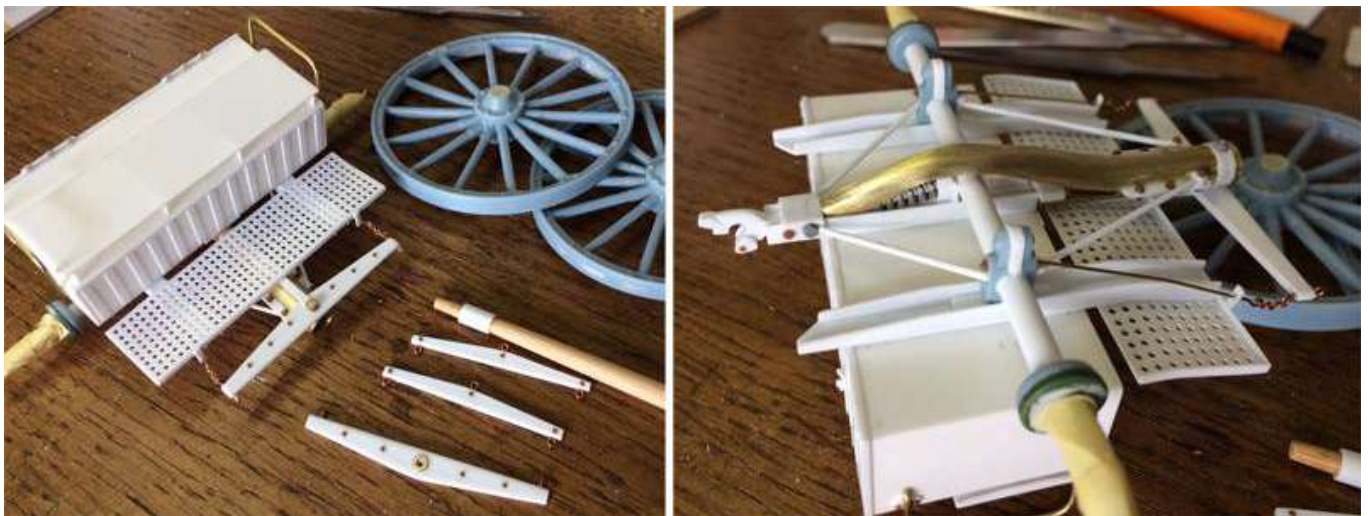
One such innovation was to make a cradle that fitted over existing Class F wagons that would carry field guns to their forward positions. The cradles were fabricated from sections of steel beams and angles, and included ramps for loading & unloading.

The field gun and limber (ammunition carriage) are an American M1902/1905, and is of the type that the US forces brought with them when they joined the war. Not many were brought as they quickly adopted a newer French gun instead. I am still researching to see what the British narrow gauge deployed of the US equipment to the front - there was a lot of collaboration but not many records or photos. But even if they didn't actually carry this particular gun, it is indicative of the methods used by the railway troops to carry heavy guns around.





The ramps hook onto the wheel channels for loading, then are stowed under the cargo ready to use again to unload at the destination.



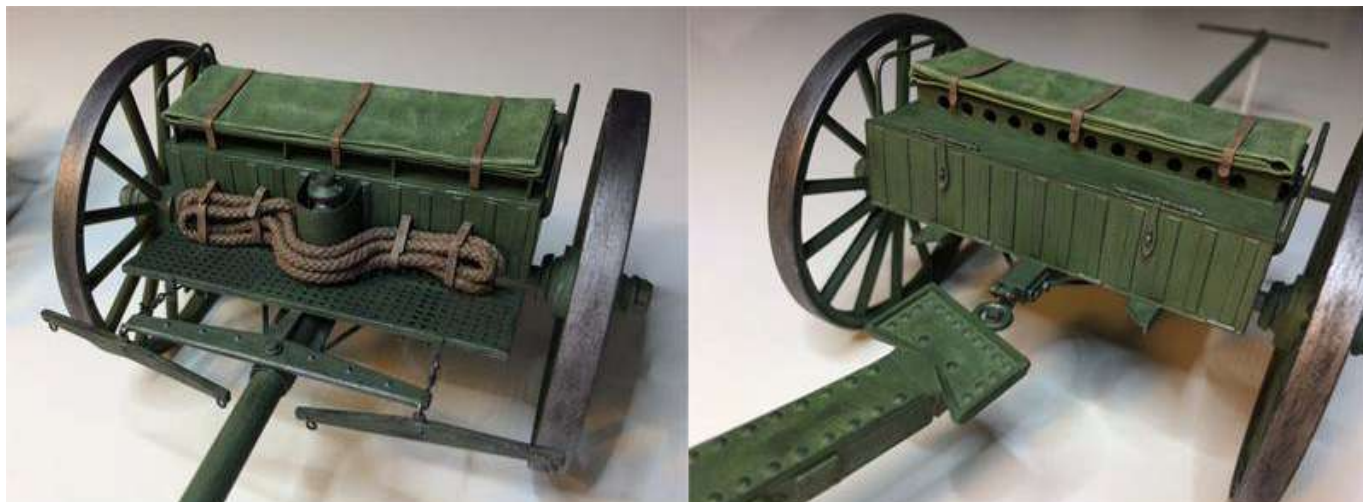
The limber carriage is scratch built from plasticard sheet and strips, but on wheels from a field gun kit. The pole is a re-shaped chopstick with horse bridle yokes from plasticard with brass wire hooks and chains. The tarpaulin folded as a seat is silk fabric, soaked in dilute PVA glue and folded up so it has the creases and edges, and shows a scale-canvas looking texture.

The rope is some hefty string, shaped bit by bit with drops of superglue to set it in shape, then painted brown then ink washed to show the texture up.

The leather straps are thin card, glued into place then stiffened further with drops of superglue.

There is a small oil lamp in the holder in front of the seat. The lamp itself started life as a jewellery charm (pennies from ebay) then modified with styrene tube parts to add the fuel canister and top cowl so it looks like the correct style. The U shaped lamp holder is formed from laminating thin plasticard around a tube.





The field gun is a modified 30-year-old styrene kit from ebay, which I bought for a few pounds to see if the scale was anywhere near. I was able to find online a scale drawing of the real one and by pure luck it scales out very close to 16mm to 1 foot - within 1mm on the wheel diameter which at this scale I deemed close enough! Some of the kit detailing looked a bit wrong so I modified some to improve it, especially at the seat railings, and I added the brake lever setup with plasticard strip and brass wire.

The wagon itself is a modified resin kit from Swift Sixteen. A few adjustments so the cradle would fit, and it only has one brake wheel stand rather than brakes on both bogies.

The cradle that fits over it and the loading ramps are made from plasticard strips and sections, with styrene rivet and bolt heads added in the right places. The styrene sections can be a bit over-thick even at this scale, so I filed down a lot of edges and ends so they didn't look too bulky.

I seem to spend longer making cargo than I do making rolling stock, but then the rolling stock only exists because of the cargo so I find it is just as worthwhile to model it. It has certainly made for an interesting and varied project to research and build.





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## Rotting Railways

*Mike Wakefield*

The top section of my garden line is a loop, plus various sidings, laid on the decking that surrounds one of our small ponds. The decking is itself laid on sleepers some 8" high and 4" wide, either 4 foot or 8 foot in length. Along one side of the decking is 6 foot high trellis with well-established honeysuckle and clematis growing all over it. The sleepers (from Woodland Timber Products near Haughmond Hill) have been in place for some 11 years, although much of the decking (from the local Wickes) was replaced about 4 years ago, again from Wickes.

Back at the beginning of May, when I was test running a new (to me) steam loco, it lurched to the right when half way along the track laid next to the trellis, although fortunately it stayed on the rails. Close examination as to the cause wasn't all that easy with the trellis was on one side and the pond on the other, but after a lot of swearing I found the decking under the track had moved upwards caused by what appeared to be the top surface of the sleeper expanding.

Being in the middle of lockdown I had a bit of time on my hands, so instead of merely fixing the bit of decking that had lifted, I decided it was time to remove the lot and see what the conditions were like underneath.

It took a couple of days to take up the track and model buildings, and then to lift the decking underneath. So what did I find? All the sleepers except the 8 foot length under where the track had moved, were still in good condition. The one that had failed was totally sodden and rotten in the centre, although the sides were still solid. Unfortunately the decking, although only 4 years old and allegedly pressure treated, was already rotting, and broke up when being removed. Clearly a rebuild was needed and was a good opportunity to simplify the track layout, as some of it was rarely used.

As nearly all of the original sleepers from Woodland Timber Products were in good condition after 11 years, I opted to source new sleepers and all the decking from them again. The replacement wood turned up earlier than expected, appearing neatly stacked on our front lawn only a couple of days after ordering.

One thing I did change was to lay the track directly onto the decking rather than on wooden strips, which themselves were screwed to the decking. I reckoned it would reduce the chance of moisture being trapped and so cause rotting.

Am I pleased with the result? In the short term, yes. It looks better and the locos and rolling stock go round without incident. In the long term however, only time will tell. Currently it's too bloomin' hot the run trains outside anyway.





***The new decking, before the track had been re-laid***



***Testing the new track before putting the model buildings back***



***Buildings back in place (1)***



***Buildings back in place (2)***





***Buildings back in place (3)***



***↑ Before ... and after ↓***



***↑ Before ... and after ↓***



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# The Shrewsbury Railway Modellers Website

Scott Stephenson

"Volunteers 1 Pace forward MARCH!" said the Chief Petty Officer, his voice ringing in my ears. Thinking back to what my Uncle Ken used to say, the old



'Never volunteer for anything' line sticking in my mind was some of the first advice I was ever given about a service career and so I remained rooted to the spot. Ken was in the REME back in the 50's and I had always held him in highest regard, a very clever man was Ken! I also remembered the last time I volunteered. A big rotund cruel Petty Officer at the gunnery school called Jock Thoburn had shouted down to us young gunners trying to get out of the wind and rain one morning, "Right you lot, I want 1 volunteer, who can ride a bike?" I shouted back quick as a flash, bright as a button, "I can ride a bike PO!" Without thought nor conscience big Jock Thoburn retorted "right, well get yer arse up to the Top Camp at the double and collect a package from stores!" Off I went at the double; of course there was no bike involved, the rain lashing down and the gale

force winds from the SW Approaches tried to push me to Salcombe. As this memory faded, there I was the volunteer again... as despite standing stock still and keeping quiet this time; every other man had stepped back leaving me proud at the front... Well, it's a similar story to how I ended up the website editor for our Association. When the call went out from Nick I just wasn't quick enough to step back and Peter collared me!

So, having agreed to be 'voluntarily press ganged' (an oxymoron) I wondered initially what we want our website to do. What is its function? Well as I see it, there are 3 primary functions of our website. Firstly, provide a hub of information that the membership can refer to. What's on, what the membership does and who to contact and maybe a Helpful Hints Section or Handy Reference. Secondly to provide a shop window for our activities; to anyone that may be interested, either in joining or just out of curiosity to see what we do. Thirdly, I would hope that it brings members together and improves engagement amongst the membership.

It's only as good as we make it..... So if you haven't done so lately could I ask you all to visit the webpage here <http://shrewsburyrailwaymodellers.co.uk/> have a browse and a think. Let me know at of any changes you would like to see or if there is anything you would like to submit for publication on the website.



There may be a different way of organising the information or something that you think should be there but isn't. Lots of layouts are featured, so please consider if you have anything to add or perhaps to update. Remember that a picture paints a thousand words! Let me know what you think.

## Social Media

Now, during the recent committee meeting (via Zoom – an internet meeting!) it was agreed that we should start engaging on Social Media. So, I have set up a Facebook group. You can find it either by clicking this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/shrewsburyrailwaymodellers/?ref=share> or when on Facebook just type in Shrewsbury Railway Modellers and the page below should come up in the search. This is a 'Group' and not a 'Page' which is more interactive with the aim of promoting activity amongst the publishers who will post (or publish) their own articles and pictures as and when they feel the urge to do so.



I think from our discussion at the committee that some people may not get the difference between the website and the Facebook group. In its most simplistic terms, our **website** is the **Filing Cabinet and the Office** whereas the Facebook group is the Daily Paper and the Pub. The website is more permanent, organised and stable. The Facebook group should be more fluid with its interaction of members ... a sort of brief show and tell ... or discussion if you like where pictures can be posted, questions asked, points made or memories recalled; whilst other members can 'chip in' with their thoughts on the subject before it inevitably becomes 'yesterday's papers'. There are many pitfalls in Social Media but rest assured I will keep a close eye on the comings and goings. At the moment there are only 7 members, some of whom are not actually members of the ASRM. This doesn't matter so long as they are interested in Model Railways as we intend to use this worm to hook more members! I will slowly share our page around other Model Railway Groups on Facebook in order to attract any members in the locality. Softly softly... catchee monkey as my grandad used to say. For now, if anyone has any questions please email me at and I'll get back to you. Some of you might just have questions but some of you may need a help in hand with navigating all this technology that comes down the electric string that the GPO installed many moons ago. Please do drop me a line and we can arrange to speak over the phone if that's easier.

Whilst I personally encourage everyone to get a Facebook account and use it, (There are lots of studies to suggest that those who move with technology live longer!) I do know that some will not or cannot do so. Just like the Royal Marines we leave no man behind and this should not hinder your enjoyment of the Association at all. We have every intention of keeping the website going and the News Letters rolling and as soon as we can do so safely, meetings will be re-introduced where we can all meet like real human beings and I look forward to this very much so!



