

Association of Shrewsbury Railway Modellers

Newsletter No. 28 : June 2024



A1 Pacific Blue Peter at Bridgenorth on trials on the Severn Valley Railway, 21st March 2024, before returning to the main line, after a long break away.

Photo by Nick Coppin

Many thanks to all who have contributed. It is, as always, very impressive and a great pleasure to see the remarkable variety of skills, knowledge, interest and expertise shown by members of our Association, and this edition, a bumper one, lives up to the very best of that tradition. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading it.

As I write this there is a thunderstorm raging and cats and dogs are hurtling down past the windows. The soaking weather of recent months must surely end soon: no doubt there will be a hosepipe ban in place in a couple of months. But let us at least hope that we have a dry day for our trip to Oswestry in July.

Peter Cox

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It is always a pleasure to welcome new members...

Photo by Andy Butler

Following on from our last newsletter I have been to the Settle & Carlisle on yet another mission and the weather was....well you guessed it....traditional! Both 70000 Britannia and 34067 Tangmere followed followed each other up Shap just minutes apart, in very dull light. Britannia was failed at Carlisle with a 'hot box', which left just Tangmere to head south down the Settle & Carlisle. It was running ahead of schedule by 20 minutes and it was pouring at the time. I had just parked up at my chosen location which was a lane just south of Kirkby Stephen station and switched the adjustable height control on my Land Cruiser Amazon to HIGH so that I could peer over the not so dry stone wall in the foreground. At that very moment Tangmere appeared racing south. Fortunately my camera was on the passenger seat and the driver's side window was open and I managed to point and shoot whilst still sitting in the driving seat - not quite what I had planned but got something. Another trip up there is on the cards.



Restored Bullied Battle of Britain class pacific 34067 Tangmere named in honour of the front line airfield that put up the Spits and Hurricanes in the Battle of Britain and later a hub for SOE Westland Lysanders hedge hopping under the radar to drop and collect agents organising the French Resistance.

I have been revisiting past images for a potential book on railway photography. I found this of a southbound Royal Scot equidistant from Ais Gill summit to my Scotsman shot near Ais Gill summit. Loco 46115 Scots Guardsman is pounding hard past Wild Boar Fell on the Thames Clyde Express albeit decades after that service had ceased. The beautiful glaciated valley is a favourite with photographers for southbound trains. Our 5am start from London was well worth it. I prefer 'brass monkeys' weather to a drenching!



Rebuilt Royal Scot No. 46115 Scots Guardsman climbs the last few yards to Ais Gill summit.

For three years my winter warmer had been an involvement in Peru who had provided the perfect excuse to bale out of the misery of long British winters. However her of high altitude had developed bad attitude so I found another from the same latitude... and together we popped down to Chile.

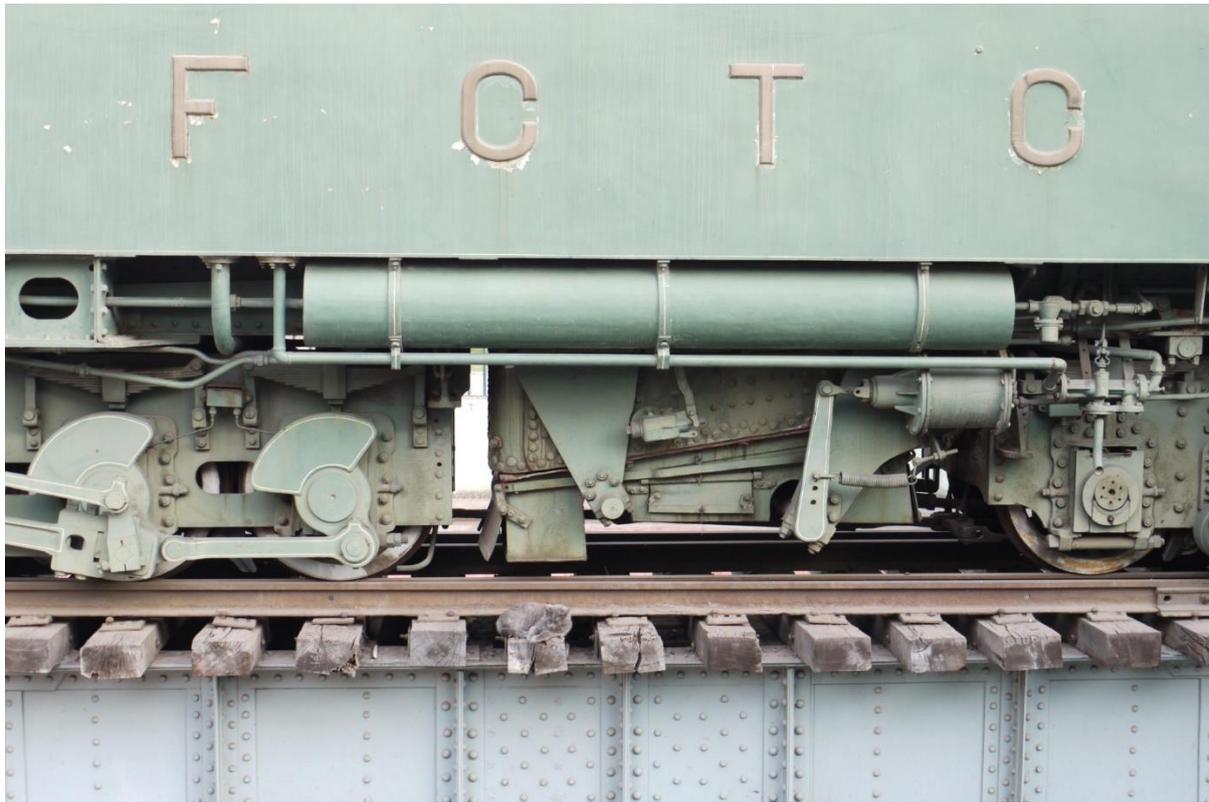
Cats and Dogs and Kitsons.

I've always had an interest in 'odd ball' steam locos particularly the Kitson Meyer contraptions. I had always wanted to photograph the 0-6-6-0Ts that worked part of the Taltal Nitrate railway in the Atacama. By the time Chile was Pinochet free that steam section had finished and the last loco No.59 survived to be plinthed. However, there were other similar beasts albeit no longer working. Seeing one was on my bucket list, so with my new Claudia we headed off from Lima for a four hour flight over the Atacama. We were too high to see the Nazca Lines, but I had flown over these in the past in a Cessna with the doors taken off for photography ...

scarey! Santiago and Valpairaso was real edge of the world stuff and yet also rather European. Unbelievably coincidental was the day we went to Santiago's Quinta Normal Park to see the Kitson Meyer which is the centrepiece of the railway museum and were informed that there was to be a meeting of 'aficionados' in the park buildings early that evening.



Kitson Meyer 0-8-6-0T No. 3349 built in Leeds in 1909 sits on the turntable in Quinta Normal Park Santiago, Chile. FCTC stands for Ferrocarril Transandino Chile.



Note the grey cat dozing on the sleeper... a purrfect location for a sleep on a sleeper!

We went along and were there mingling. Claudia was my translator. In the gathering was an elderly lady. She had come as a lone widow finding comfort in following in her late husband's passion for trains. She carried a book that belonged to him that she wanted to give it to someone. Claudia told her that I had come all the way from England to see what was left of the Chilean TransAndine railway. She smiled at me and insisted I should have the book as it was about the railway I had just come to see. It was a very touching moment, and I felt his spirit...

Chilean house red wine, from the Central Valley, was cheaper than a lemonade or a Coke and just the most exquisite wine I have ever savoured. That evening in the hotel bar after the meeting we became Plonk-quistadores as we guzzled a few. Next morning's hangover was serious. We had a taxi waiting for us, and I had a new digital camera to try and learn for the trip following the route of the railway. By the time we reached Los Andes, where the Chilean TranzAndino met the broad gauge network I had just about become familiar with the camera on switch! We parked up outside the former loco depot and made our way in. At first we weren't welcomed but soon that mellowed and we were given a guided tour. The railway had long been electrified but another of the Kitson Meyers was being renovated here. They had lasted so long because they could work the snow plough train in severe weather. A dog lay asleep in front of it. I had noticed the cat asleep by the front bogie of the loco in Santiago - it seems animals are comfortable in the company of Kitsons!



With no bone to pick a Canine enjoys a dog's life by Kitson No. 3348 at Los Andes.



Kitson Meyer No. 3348 rests under a patina of dust at Los Andes depot.

There was a mix of stuff including a real old time railbus in the roundhouse. I managed a few photographs and climbing into the cab of the Kitson I soon sobered up. How did they drive this??? There was also a steam driven rotary snow plough as snow had been a big curse for the railway. It reminded me of that scene in an early Bond movie where our hero Sean Connery was skilfully skiing speedily across the path of one of these snow ploughs just missing it ...his pursuer wasn't quite so lucky!



Steam Driven rotary snow plough at Los Andes.



Fancy a spin? Modellers take note of all that detail....

In reality the TransAndine was an isolated 1 metre gauge railway with a summit of 10,500 ft, paltry in comparison to some Andean railway summits, but with its latitude it was cursed with heavy winter snow. The section up to the Argentinian border was opened in 1910 and owned by a British owned company and hence the Kitson Meyer rack-adhesion locomotives built in Leeds. Inclines were as steep as 1 in 12 for long lengths and through a multitude of tunnels. A major landslip closed the railway for 13 years. It was electrified from Los Andes to the Argentinian border and the prime passenger train was the Internacional. A third Kitson Meyer exists at a railway museum at Mendoza, and one of the bigger Esslingen 0-6-8-0Ts lies at the bottom of a ravine. The route of the railway passes close to the Uspallata Pass infamous for several plane crashes including that which became the basis of the film Alive about the survivors from a plane carrying a Uruguayan football team that crashed on Friday 13th. October 1972.



A train of empty Copper gondolas heads up the remains of the railway which still operates a far as a huge copper mine...one of Chile prime exports.

The railway closed to all traffic in 1984 although a small section remains in use to serve a copper mine near Rio Blanco. It was a 3 bar Abt rack railway, and large sections still remain in situ. Proposals to reopen the route have come to nothing due to political disagreements between Chile and Argentina.



A copper train disappears into a tunnel close to a huge fissure in the rock.



A length of track hangs in mid-air after a wash out. Much of the track remains in situ.



A steel girder bridge remains in situ at Portillo just by a massive hotel. This lofty location was a favourite Ski location for the chic of South America.



A spectacular view from the track bed now absorbed into the hotel car park. This is the Laguna Del Inca which, at 9360ft. above sea level, is twice as high as Ben Nevis.

Whoopsy Daisy!

The Chilean Transandine was hazardous, not only for the investors, but also for the railwaymen.



This Esslingen 0-6-8-0T was really too heavy for the track. Try getting that monster back up the hill again!

Since the last newsletter, and an even longer time frame since the backscene boards were painted white, I have now painted them with a mix of blues and grey to mimic cloud formations. These I hope are typical of the latish summer skies when Len Hutton was racking up the runs for Yorkshire at nearby Headingley.

The paint used was nothing more than a can of old white emulsion, similar to the method used by Chris Cox for his London & Birmingham, Coventry project. This did the base white coat, some time ago and the more recent blues and greys were created by the addition of acrylic in very small quantities. This enabled various shades to colour the white emulsion.

Peter Cox kindly gave me some paper background images which I have used to date and these are loosely held against the lower backscenes. I would like to roam around the Dewsbury, Batley and Huddersfield areas with my camera to try and photograph whatever is left of pre 1948 buildings and create my own images. Maybe the next time I venture home!!!!



The other additions on the layout are an electricity sub-station with two transformers and a wooden storage shed.

Sub-station: Relatively easy to build, and the great advantage is – no windows to worry about. The styrene sheets are Wills, English Bond, with other plasticard used to fit in. Brickwork is painted in Humbrol 70, with water colour mortar and a good dose of weathering powder to finish.



Storage shed: This is all plasticard, either plain or embossed 1mm or 2mm planking with a corrugated sheet roof. Painted a random Humbrol brown or grey and again an application of weathering powder to simulate the filth of an industrial area.



My next job, unless I 'bottle it' is to reconfigure the goods yard.

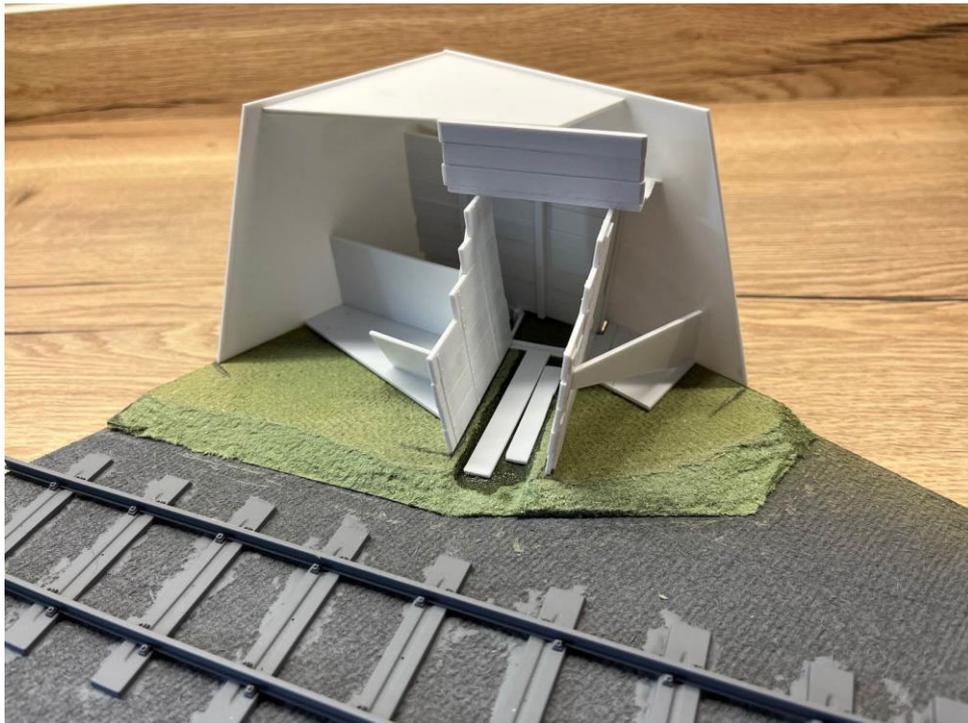
Westonhock Control Point Diorama

Andy Vaughan

16mm / 1ft : 2 foot narrow gauge (32mm)

For our recent 'make a building' challenge I did rather bend the definition of 'building' a bit and made a sandbag bunker, based on photos of Westonhock control point on the narrow gauge WW1 supply railways of northern France in 1918. I decided it would be a suitable display plinth for the Crewe Tractor (a Model T Ford on rail wheels) that I made last year as part of our previous challenge. Here are a few details of the build, and some photos.

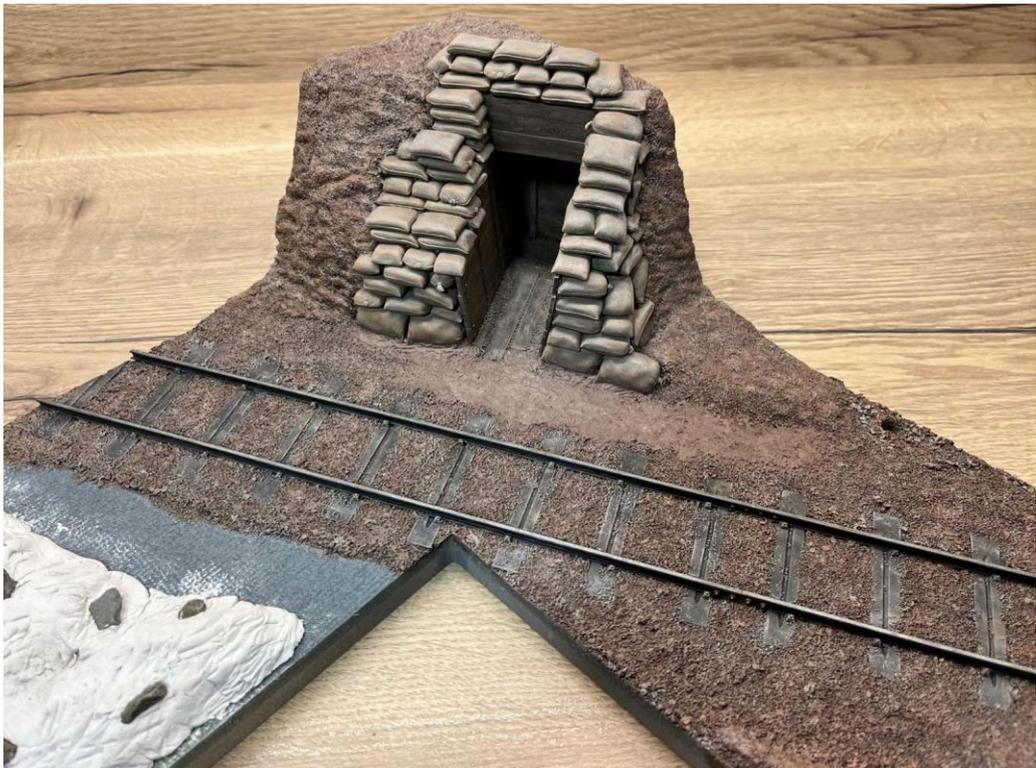
I made an L shaped base that fitted neatly in a corner on my model shelves, so the bunker could be in the corner with a length of track across the diagonal. The base is a piece of 9mm MDF, with a layer of 6mm soft fibre board glued on top. The soft fibre board is just underlay sheet for laminate flooring - it glues well with PVA and can be sanded or scraped away to give undulations in the surface to avoid it looking too flat. An extra layer of fibre was added under the bunker itself, then I cut out a couple of thin steps so the bunker has a dugout look about it.



The core of the bunker and planking is all made of Plasticard styrene sheets and strips, then the gaps were packed out some with cardboard strips with a hot glue gun. The sandbags are from a couple of plastic kits which in theory would stack neatly, but the shape of my bunker entry is neither flat, nor straight, nor square, so it took a fair bit of 3D jigsaw puzzling to make the blighters fit in a nice shape that vaguely represented my reference photo.



On top of the core build I added a layer of Das modelling clay to show the sloping walls of soil pushed up to the edges of the sandbags. A few 'rocks' are embedded in the clay in a few places, which are just selected bits of real gravel. To add some texture to the soil I added a layer of dried tealeaves, stuck with PVA, then painted over.



The track is my home made WW1 spec track as shown in a previous newsletter with its pressed steel sleepers, ballasted up to the soil surfaces with a bit of blending. A mix of fine and coarse Woodland Scenics ballast, with a few areas sanded off a bit flatter to hopefully look like the trodden route of the soldiers in and out of the bunker. Some of the WW1 track looks like it barely has actual ballast - in some photos it is pretty much just embedded in the soil, so I opted for ballast plus soil plus lots of brown and grey paint and several hours of drybrushing, and hoped for the best.



The junk pile on the corner is based on a photo of a location they nicknamed Oxford Circus, which was an interchange spot for small tramway wagons. There is a sign stating 'no dumping' - but it is embedded in a pile of dumped items - crates, sandbags, scrap wood, wire and bits of rail. Was the sign placed because of the junk? or the junk placed because of the sign? Either way it made a neat detail to finish off the end of my base board.



The grasses are a mix of static grass clumps, scatter glued to postiche fibres, and a few bits of dried garden plant stems with scatters added. The long grass is bunches of paintbrush bristles glued into short bits of tube, then scraped with a knife to taper and curl them, then painted with various greenish shades. The telegraph wire is a few strands of copper from the inside of an old kettle cable, painted black and drybrushed grey.



It's not finished though yet - it needs a railway troops soldier with a flag stood in the bunker entrance, and a driver for the Crewe Tractor. Maybe those can be my 2025 challenge project....





The Craven Arms Hotel, prior to installation on the Craven Arms & Stokesay layout

In the November 2022 Newsletter I described progress on my 4mm scale model of the Craven Arms Hotel, which at that time was under construction. It was eventually finished (more or less) and installed on the Craven Arms club layout in 2023.

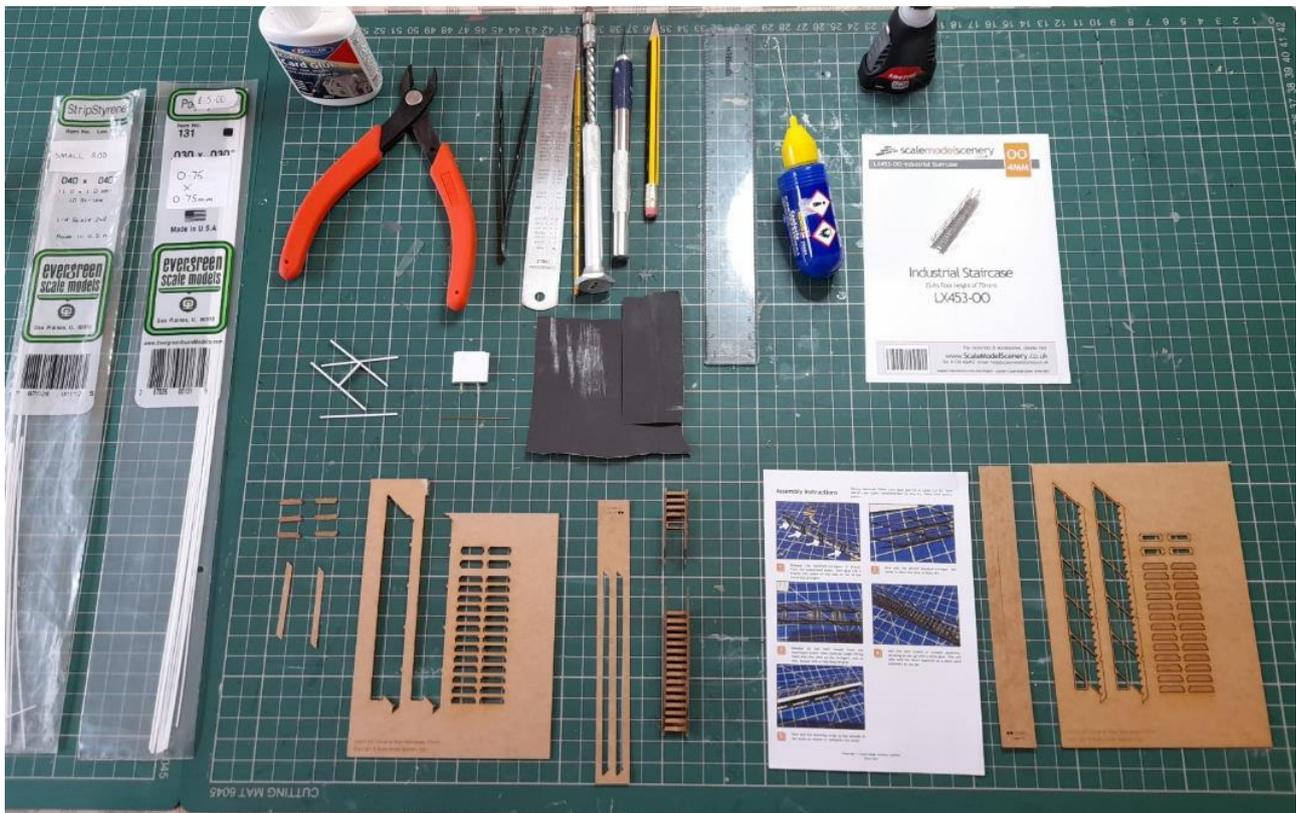


The Hotel, now more or less complete, installed on the Craven Arms club layout in 2023

I described it as “more or less” finished as there was one area of the building that required completion: the flat roof on the single-story outbuildings at the rear. Two factors prevented me from completing the job in 2023. Firstly, I needed to construct the fire escape, which comprised two sets of industrial-style metal stairs.

Scratch-building these was outside my skill set, and I couldn't find a suitable commercial product; secondly, I didn't know what else was on the roof, and no photographs were available. Earlier this year I finally managed to finish the job.

The fire escape was made from two packs of Industrial Staircases from the extensive range of products produced by Scale Model Scenery. They are supplied as single sheets from which all parts, including each individual stair tread, must be removed. At this stage they are very fragile and need careful handling, especially in my case as each staircase had to be cut down to size, and the upper staircase attached to a platform extending from the upper fire escape door.



The two sheets of SMS Industrial Staircases. The left-hand pieces have been removed from the fret; the right-hand fret is as it comes, straight out of the pack.

Each stair tread had to be glued to the stringers. This was a fiddly job, but the treads fitted perfectly into the pre-cut slots, which made the end result well worth the effort. SMS recommends either Deluxe Rocket Card Glue or Deluxe Laser Cut Glue for construction; I used the former, as I already had this in my tool box (which contains every type of glue known to man except Laser Cut Glue – another item to add to my list of things to buy!). I can highly recommend Deluxe Rocket Card Glue, which gives a near-instantaneous very strong bond to all types of card and paper, and this bonded the staircases perfectly.

Meanwhile, I constructed the top platform and first-floor railings from Plastikard sheet and microstrip. The completed structures were assembled and sprayed - with primer, and subsequently with dark grey metallic paint, which resulted in a realistic metallic appearance, despite being made of - either thick card or thin MDF (I'm not quite sure which).

Although the finished stairs are still rather flimsy, they are robust enough to be attached to the building without damage.

As for what's on the flat roof, I found this out by climbing up there one afternoon. As you can see, the answer is - not very much, apart from two square blocks, which I assume are some sort of vents.



The first test-siting of the completed fire escape, prior to painting.

The air-vent-things were constructed, again from Plastikard, and painted in a slightly different shade of grey to the other roof structures. The whole thing was finally attached to the building and installed on the layout on Friday 17th June 2024. It was near the end of the evening before anybody noticed, as – being at the back of the building – it is not very noticeable from the front of the layout.

But I know it's there – and I'm quite pleased with it!

(And so you should be. All that beautiful modelling - and nobody noticed it. Grr! Well at least we have had a chance to see it properly here. Ed.)



The completed flat roof at the rear of The Craven Arms Hotel, complete with fire escape and roof vents.

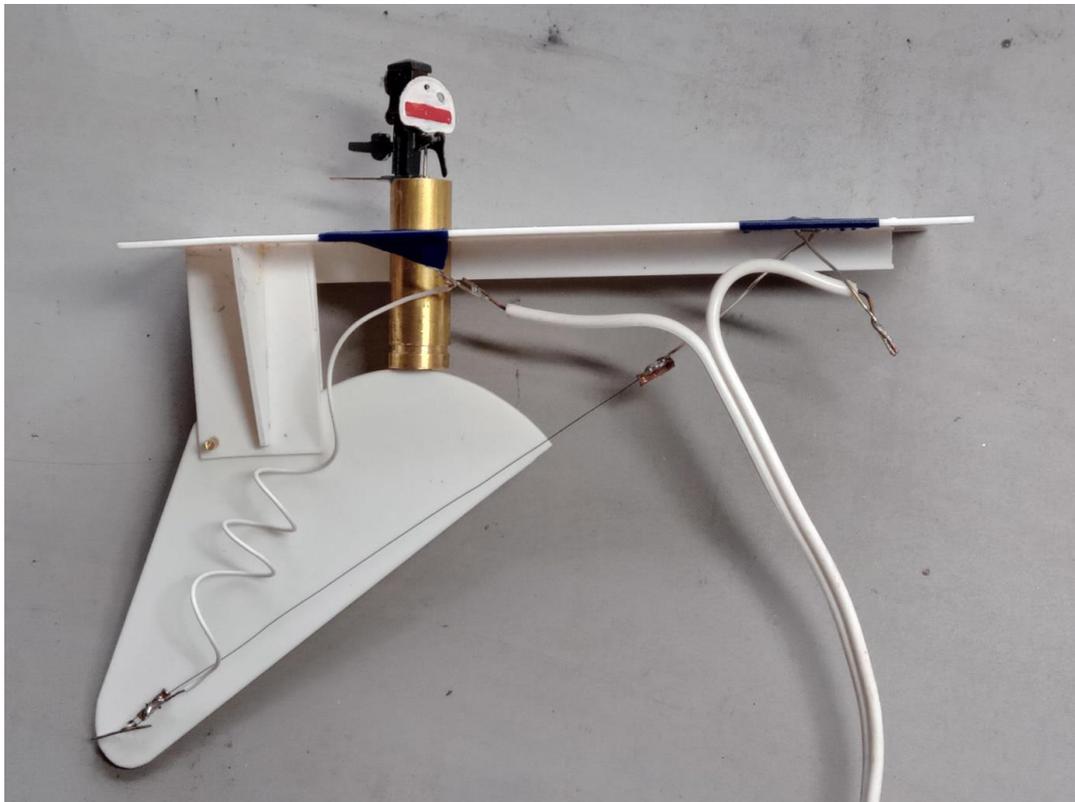
When I am not struggling to finish my Great Eastern tank engine or cutting the ever-growing hedge around the garden railway or even running trains, I am building a little, freelance BR Southern Region terminus in my study. It is just over nine feet long, which is small in 0 gauge and is therefore, much compressed. To add interest, I decided to include working signals and following consultation with Stephen Duffell and Neal Cooper, settled on two ground signals protecting the passenger run round loop and a starting semaphore signal, just off the end of the platform. I used Wizard Models etched brass kits for the Westinghouse ground signals and modified them with piece of 3/8" tube under the baseboard with a brass bar weight hanging inside it to pull the signal back to ON (danger).



To operate them, I made up an operating unit using memory wire. This is a simple plastikard construction mounted under the board with no connection to the signal. The brass weight of the ground signal rests on a lever which raises it to the OFF position. This means you can remove the signal from above the baseboard to fiddle with it or paint it, without unplugging wires etc.



The operating unit has a length of memory wire fastened between the underside of the base to the end of the lever. The two ends of the memory wire are connected to a power source; this could be batteries or a simple constant current generator. (I can send a circuit diagram to anyone interested.) The lever is kept down by the weight of the brass in the tube under the signal. When a current is passed through the memory wire, it warms up and shortens, lifting the arm and the signal weight. This changes the signal from ON to OFF.



In addition to the two ground signals, I made a Southern Railway rail-built semaphore signal, partly from scratch and partly from Wizard Models etches, including the ladder. Having made two memory wire operated signals, I wanted a

change so made a simple servo using one of those tiny motor/gearboxes from eBay and a microswitch. When a press switch is briefly pressed, shorting out the microswitch, the motor runs, driving two cams on a shaft. One had two cut-outs to turn off the microswitch when the signal has changed, the other is eccentric and lifts the weight under the signal, as in the ground signals, thus changing from ON to OFF. When the switch is pressed again, the cam turns and lets the signal weight down, changing back to ON. While the ground signals are silent, the semaphore makes a whirring noise! The advantage is that it only draws a current when operating, whereas the memory wire operating units draw a current all the time they are OFF. With this in mind, I have used a couple of rechargeable batteries to run it.



There is no picture of the servo as, unlike the movies when they say ‘no animals were harmed in making this picture’, I managed to bust one of the ground signals pulling it out of the baseboard to photograph it and I am not risking a similar accident to photograph the semaphore signal’s operating unit! Like the ground signals, there is no connection with the operating unit which allows me to remove the signal easily without disconnecting anything.

I used brass tube from K&S but turned the brass bar in my lathe. If anyone is interested in making a signal using this method, I would be very happy to turn weights for them on my lathe.

Canterbury & Whitstable Railway 0-6-0 Goods Locomotive by Tayleur in 4mm scale.
Chris Cox

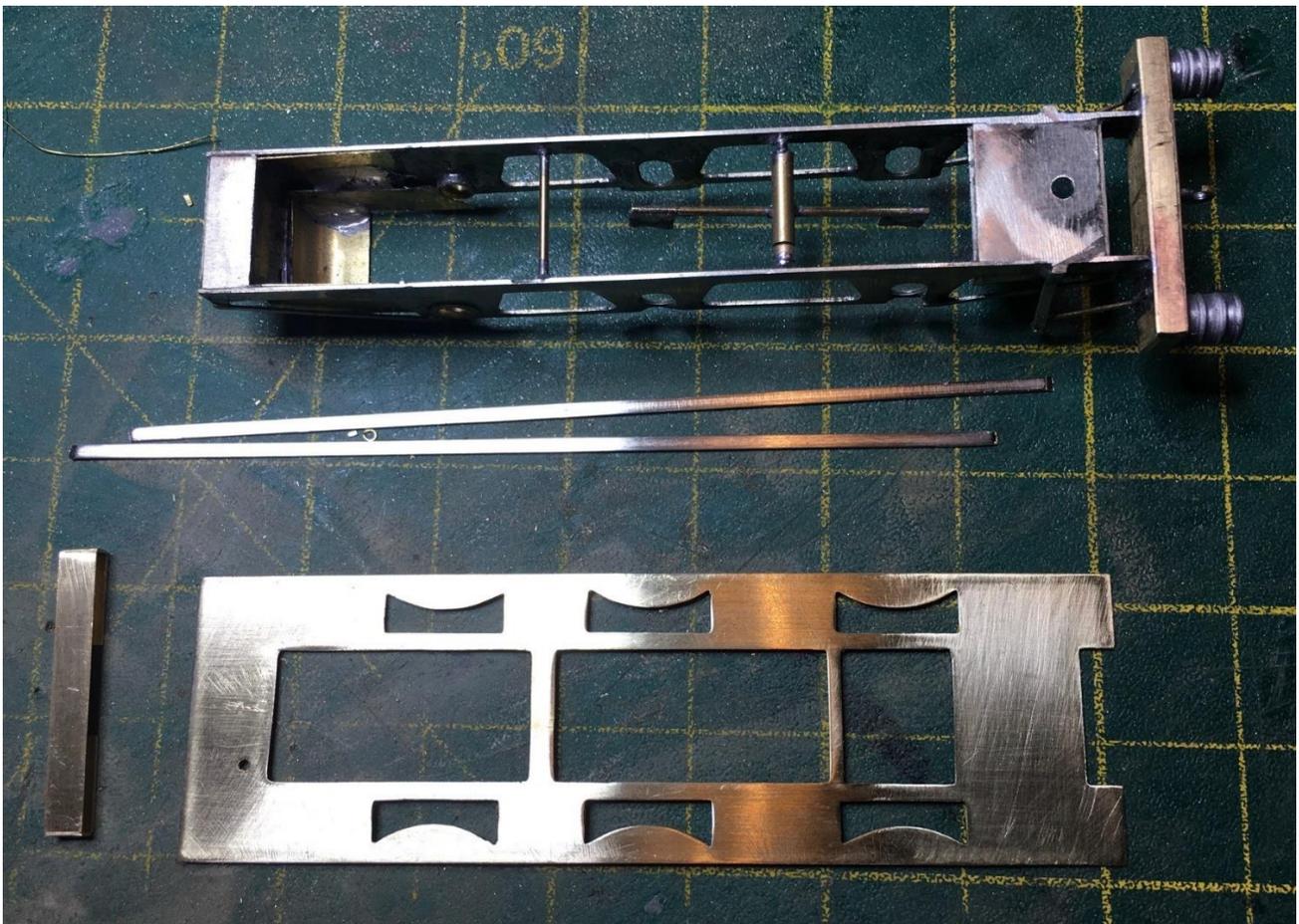
This article was written a few years ago now so some of the timeline is a little older than described, but I hope the content is still of interest.

The C&WR goods loco had been on my 'to do' list since discovering a drawing of it in the Vulcan Foundry archive online a few years ago. The challenge of the haycock firebox and the fact that I had six chunky Romford driving wheels of the correct diameter waiting patiently in my spares box made it a very tempting prospect. The final push was the co-incidence that in a recent *Invicta* there appeared an article covering just these engines. I had in fact already started the project and would have been quite happy for it to muddle along in the background as an in-between job, you know the sort, we've all got them! A further incentive was the timely availability of a Portescap motor and gearbox of which I am always rather partial. This was offered to me by a friend, happy to exchange three of them for kits and castings. The coming together of these various elements all in the space of a few weeks was enough to prompt me to get on with it. One final factor was injuring my foot and being instructed to stay at home and take it easy, on the one hand very irritating for a keen runner but perfect timing for my modeller's alter ego.



Starting the haycock firebox.

The first logical stage would have been to cut the coupling rods and frames, however I had already tackled the haycock firebox before anything else, just to see if I could do it. This was formed from two strips of 10thou brass sheet scribed with wooden lagging and formed into two hoops. The tops were then cut to a point and the two joined together, the edges were covered with 5thou brass strip rolled and tapped into position to take the curve. As I write this, I am mindful that it all sounds so simple and straightforward but, needless to say, it was not. However, I got there in the end. To maintain some degree of sanity, I allowed myself a little diversion in dismantling and re-assembling in reverse the Portescap gearbox. This would allow the motor to sit inside the boiler and the gearbox inside the lofty haycock, with the drive being at the motor end rather than the usual far end. Once this was complete the juggling act of assembling the frames, wheels and drive unit could begin. I must confess this did not go as well as planned and three full days were consumed by trial and error to get the thing running smoothly. However, in between all this I was able to build the tender and the engine from the footplate up.



Frames and footplate.

The tender went remarkably well and is responsible for keeping my spirits up on what turned out to be a challenging loco build. Some of the details are conjectural as the original drawing is both crude and sparse, and the photograph published in *Invicta* appears to be of a much later tender, perhaps paired whilst the engine

received a rebuild to increase capacity and stopping power. My intention had always been to model the class as near as possible to its original mid to late 1840's appearance. The trailing wheels run in pinpoint bearings inside the axleboxes and the leading and middle wheels are held in a weighted bogie pivoted back towards the rear axle. This enables some of the tender weight to be borne on the rear of the loco and the brake rigging for these wheels is also attached to the bogie. The brakes operate on both sides, which is perhaps a slightly ambitious arrangement as it is likely that they were on one side only, however it was easier to model them in parallel pairs and so the extra braking power can be blamed on 'in service' modifications. The brake blocks themselves were cut from black styrene so they can be mounted close to the wheels without any danger of shorting out.



General assembly to make sure everything runs freely.

A chimney was turned from copper, the base being a white metal casting from my own collection of random parts, and the boiler treated in much the same way as the firebox, rolled from scribed 10thou brass but annealed to make rolling much easier, a cut out enables it to slide over the motor. The smokebox door is an entirely frivolous diversion. Despite having a selection of cast smokebox doors to hand, 'sods law' dictated that not one of them would be the correct size, so I chose to fabricate one from 5thou copper sheet. A drill gauge was supported 5mm or so off the surface of my worktop. Then an oversize square of copper sheet was placed over the correct sized hole in the gauge and a medium sized glass marble rubbed firmly into the hole. The result was a perfect dish, which was then trimmed and filed to size. I highly recommend this method of smokebox door manufacture as it is extremely satisfying. Two fine strips made from the same material bent double over a 0.45mm brass wire formed two working hinges. The top and bottom ends of the wire were fitted with short handrail knobs and the smokebox drilled to accept them. Now I had made a rod for my own back, since a working smokebox door would require some detail inside the smokebox such as blast-pipe and tube-plate etc. These were made from copper wire and 10thou brass respectively and

soldered in place. The tube-plate only has 41 holes, in reality the locomotive would have had three times as many but drilling more than a hundred 0.5mm holes at 0.9mm centres all exactly in line through a small 10thou brass disc ... well, you try it! I have also omitted the pipes from the regulator to the cylinders as it was already getting pretty crowded in there and these would be obscured by the blast-pipe anyway. The door handle was formed from nickel silver strip bent and filed with a tee of brass soldered to the back to locate in a slotted bar and hold the door shut.



The completed loco photographed in the garden in direct sunlight just to highlight all the dodgy bits!

A 10BA screw at the front holds chassis to footplate and runs through into the smokebox to pin everything together whilst the rear of the frames simply hooks into the back of the footplate. Footplate detail is based on a photograph of a surviving Stephenson 2-2-2 of the same period. Although the image showed the reverser to be on the right-hand side, the photograph of the C&WR engine in Invicta

clearly shows the reversing rod running down the left so I have repeated that on the model. It seems to make sense with the tender brake on the right and allows room for a boiler feed pump control as well. Loco springs were made as a master and then cast in white metal to save having to spend too much time making six identical units. The springs appear to sit behind and below the top of the splashers, but clearance between the haycock and the trailing wheel splasher is nil and must have been very tight on the full size loco. Thus no room is left for the spring, so a little compromise has been made in that the bottom of the springs have been filed away in order that they might sit on top of the back of the splashers – it sort of works. Paintwork is good old-fashioned enamel over an etch primer. Whether the shade of green chosen is exactly correct for a Canterbury & Whitstable goods loco I know not, but I'm pleased enough with the outcome. One can always cite age, paint batch, weather etc., for variations in shade, and I'm quite content to hide behind such excuses. The lettering is hand painted, there being no available yellow transfers of suitable size and font and I am not a fan of transfers anyway, preferring to slog it out with a very fine brush and a glass of Port to steady the hand!



Photos above and below: No.121 runs light engine into Bricklayers Arms to collect the morning soil train. Clearly little Jack has no shame!



The build has been a good old-fashioned measure, cut, bend and solder exercise, just the way I like it. Although 3D printing is an extremely useful tool, I see it as just that, one tool amongst many and this loco has been pleasantly 3D print free. Such technology is of course an ideal supplement and certainly makes one-off builds easier and more accessible to the many which can only be a good thing, but I sincerely hope that the comparatively instant gratification provided by 3D printing doesn't eliminate traditional scratch building skills altogether. One last job will be to close my eyes and stick a pin in the long list of projects to see what comes next!



An atmospheric close-up of the ModelU crew in their white fustian.

Buildings and Signals at Woodsall

Dave York

Progress has been slower than anticipated this year but I have managed to (nearly) complete some of the LNWR company railway buildings for Woodsall. I just have the flashing to add and then weathering.

The trio of smaller buildings comprise a platform staff room, a small stores and a weighbridge office. They are based on photographs or drawings of actual buildings.



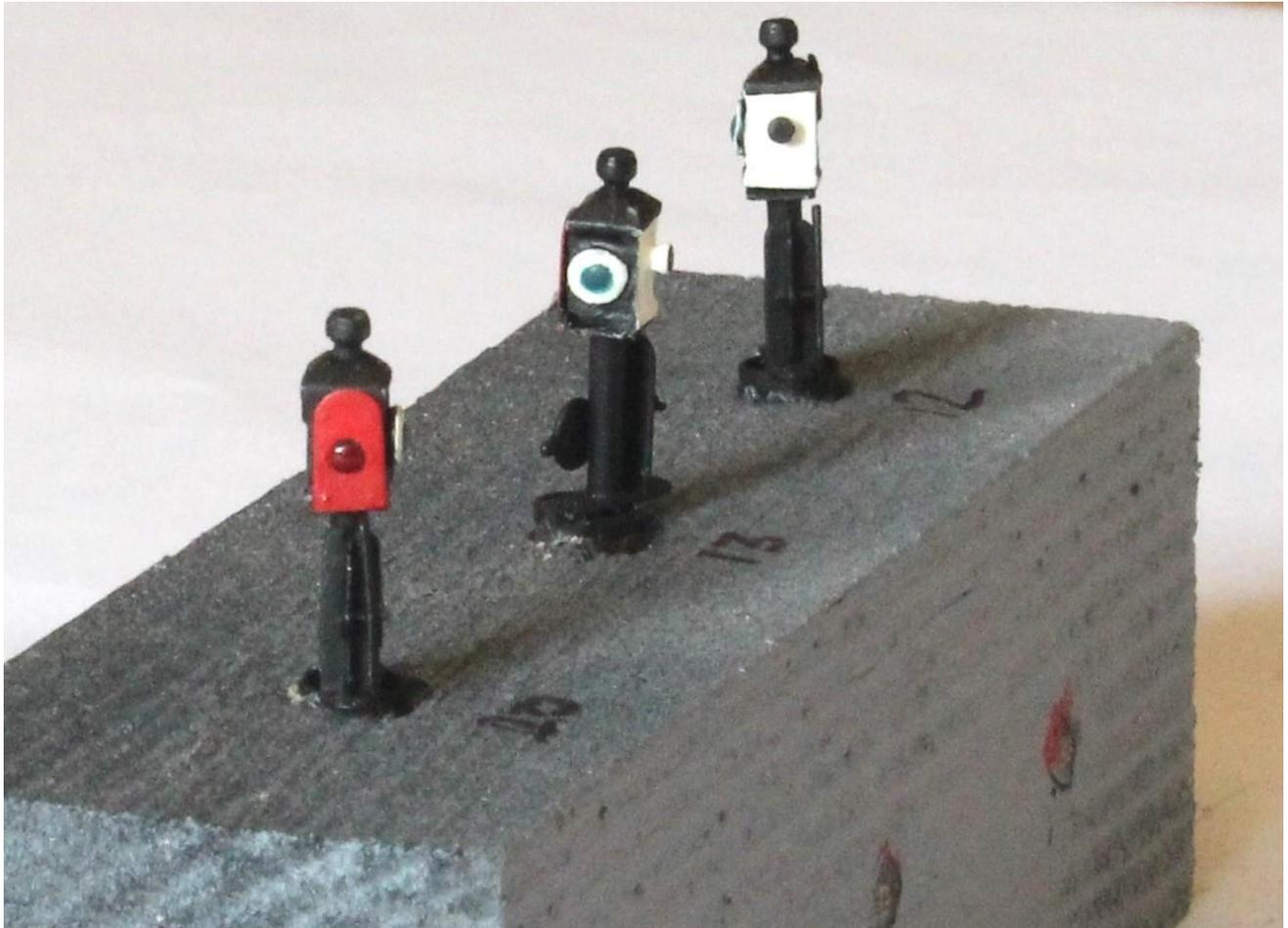
The staff room and stores are versions of the standard LNWR 8' wide hut which was adapted and used for a variety of purposes at many locations across the company. Construction is from Wills moulded planked sheets with York Modelmaking slates and adapted Alan Gibson windows. The brick chimney end of the staff room is plasticard overlayed with South Eastern Finecast brick sheet. The weighbridge office is similarly constructed from overlayed plasticard.



The station stables is a standard LNWR design, comprising three stalls and based on the example at Kenilworth. Construction is from Wills moulded English Bond brick sheet, again with York Modelmaking slates. The sawtooth brick course at the eaves and some of the details are scratch built. Windows are cut down Scalelink etchings.



The three LNWR rotating head signals showing two aspects and the rear face are built from Model Signal Engineering (now Wizard Models) components. They are designed to work, operated by SG90 servos mounted below the baseboard. These are a 2023 project and I hope to be able to bring them to the September meeting to show the construction more clearly.



For some time now. I have been trying to obtain a rake of ready built 32mm secondhand Brandbright coaches for my garden railway which would look good behind a freelance Roundhouse locomotive such as Lady Anne. Set up by the Longleys in the 1980s, Brandbright became one of the bigger 16mm traders producing a wide range of products including some very good quality kits using plenty of wood, brass and white metal. Part of their range included some very nice freelance carriages including bogie and four wheel varieties which as Brandbright literature states have a 'turn of the century (1900) authentic look'.

Although the original owners have now retired, Brandbright still exists and under new ownership is currently developing its range including rolling stock kits. Why, you might ask, do I not buy the kits and make them myself? With a few hobbies on the go and several Lynton and Barnstaple and Penrhyn kits still in their boxes, I am reluctant to add to that list. Brandbright carriages do appear on ebay but tend to be expensive, so I have been focussing on the annual 16mm Association National Garden Railway show checking out the member to member sales plus traders' stalls.

Visits to the Peterborough event in 2022 and 2023 drew a blank so I was not too optimistic at the recent 16mm show at Stoneleigh. Yet again Brandbright coaches seemed elusive but on a final sweep round the traders I saw three maroon and cream carriages being unpacked at a stall which aroused some interest from bystanders Quickly ascertaining that they were Brandbright and of particularly good quality, a deal was struck at a good price complete with a big wooden box!

On examining the coaches back at home, I was delighted with the purchase. The set is made up of a brake coach with duckets and 1st and 2nd Class compartments, a 1st and 2nd class compartment coach and a directors' saloon complete with kitchen and toilet! The standard of modelling is excellent with an impressive spray paint finish and the builder clearly paid attention to detail with items such as vacuum pipes and even a working tail lamp included. With wooden construction and the use of steel wheels and buffers the coaches come in at around 0.8kg each, a good weight for garden railway use. If I was to be a little critical of the purchase, I would have liked some people in the carriages as the roofs appear to be glued in! I would also swap the directors' saloon for an all 2nd class coach, more in keeping with the passengers using my line!

Dating these coaches is not easy and I am not sure that they are particularly old, possibly 10 years or so, but I do consider them 'heritage' vehicles. An important aspect of railway modelling is to recognise the work of modellers who have gone before and to ensure that examples of their work are preserved, conserved, but

also actively used and enjoyed. At this year's 16mm show the Gauge 1 fraternity as usual put on a good display with an impressive coal fired LNER V2 locomotive hauling a fine looking set of Gresley teak 1930s coaches which were probably scratch built in the 1960s. Talking with the operator, the coaches were a recent purchase and again this example emphasises the importance of preserving model railway heritage and making it accessible to the public.



Progress has been slow since the building challenge at the AGM.

The building is now substantially complete and has been primed ready for initial painting.

Before jumping in I have been doing some samples to try and get the brickwork looking right. Nearly there with the samples, just need to be brave and get on with it!

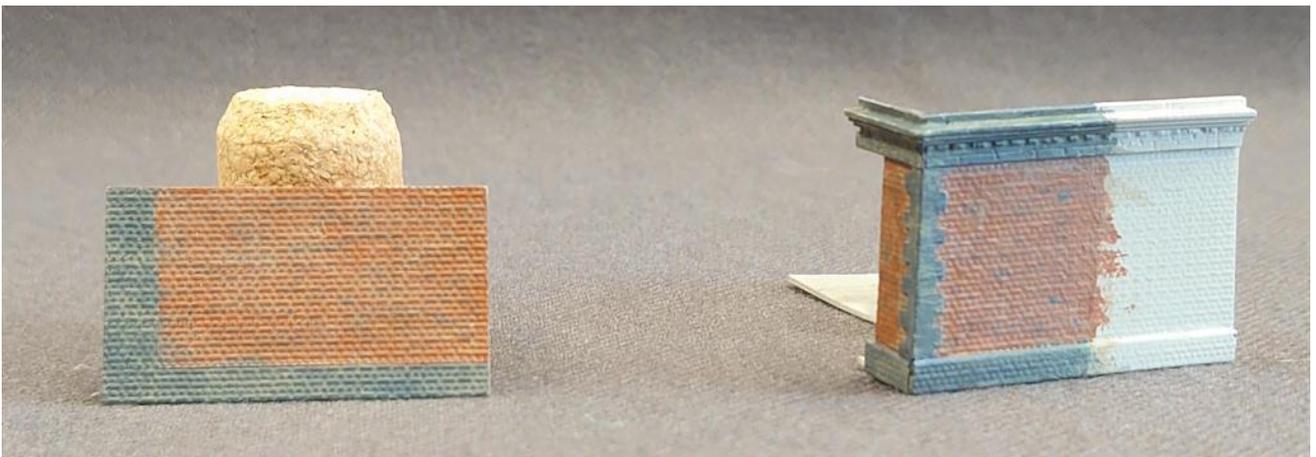
These four photographs show the model before priming:-



These two show the building primed:-



Finally, some samples of my brickwork experiments:-

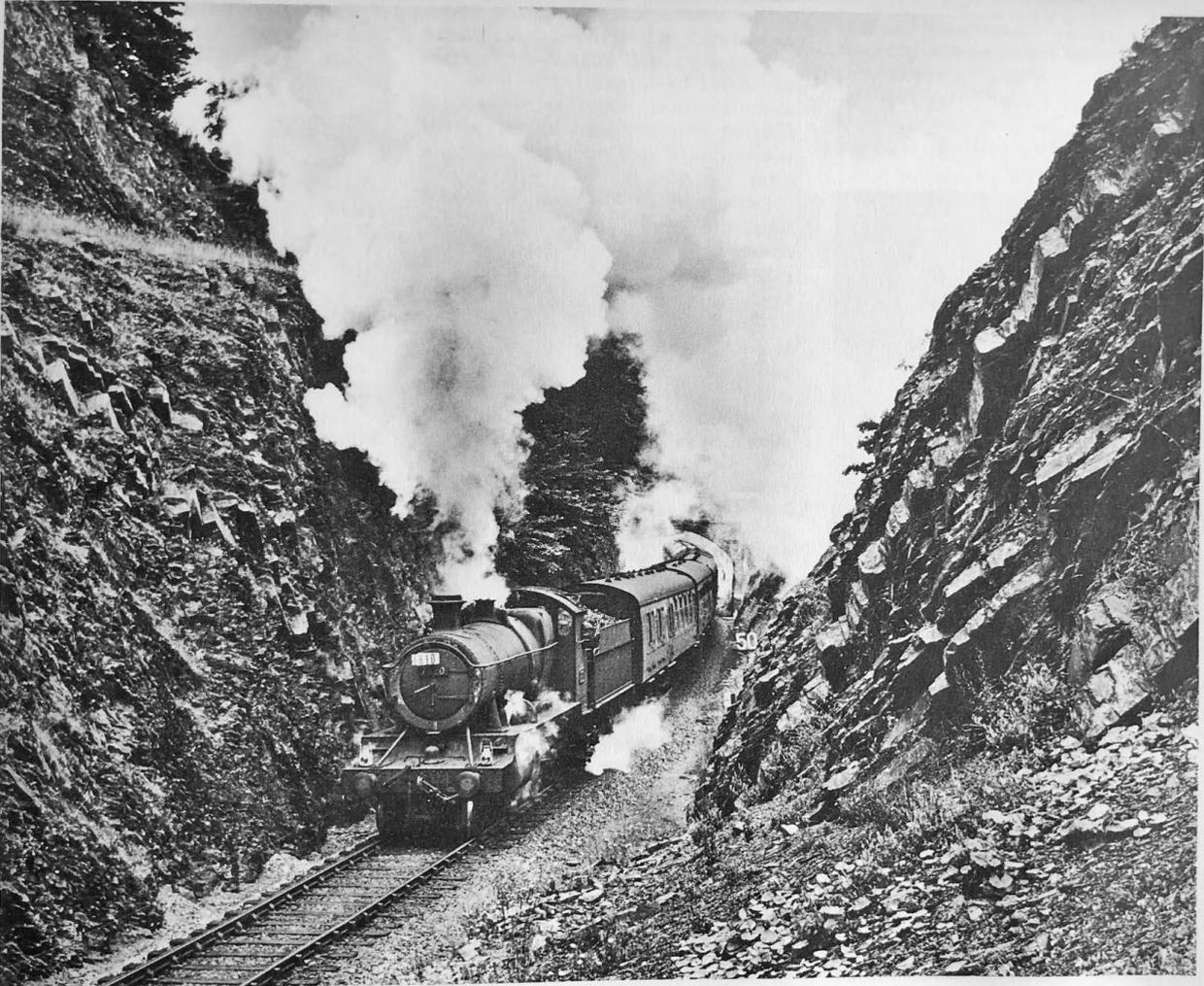


With news that GWR Manor class 4-6-0 No. 7812 Erlestoke Manor was to visit the Bluebell Railway for their branch line event my quarterly model review took a rapid change of direction. This provided the appropriate opportunity to review the Dapol 00 gauge GWR Manor, a truly exquisite model. Thus the planned cameo of a setting on the Lyme Regis branch to photograph the Hornby LSWR Adams Radial 4-4-2T was halted, and time was spent finishing off the Talerddig diorama. Talerddig cutting is the summit of the Cambrian Railway main line between Newtown and Machynlleth. Where most railway builders would have tunnelled through the mass of Silurian rock, David Davies in charge of the project decided to cut out the rock and use it to build other structures to complete the railway and the surplus would be sold and was used in the construction of Aberystwyth University.



TALERDDIG CUTTING.

Reproduced from the "Great Western Magazine."



CHURCHWARD 2-6-0 BLASTING THROUGH TALERDDIG CUTTING, c.1963

The financial success of this project awarded him an accolade and he then went on to buy mining rights in the Rhonda Valley and he became the biggest exporter of Welsh steam coal and built his own railway, the Barry Railway - the rest, as they say, is history.

The half-finished rock cutting project was hurriedly finished off. The diorama had been created on a 4ft. x 1ft plywood board that had a 3 x 1 ins framework to make it rigid and sturdy yet still quite portable...a size that will fit comfortably in the boot of my old Zaphira. A length of SMP track was glued on top a 2mm thick grey mounting board card profiled to represent the ballast track bed. The diorama is about one 1ft. too short for the real cutting, but it would be good enough to represent the cutting which is on a tight curve. Very few pictures exist as reference material and I have only found 1 photo of a train passing through the cutting. With my experience on working on the railway this was a very dangerous place to be due to the tight clearances. Photographers tended to take pictures on the steep gradients on the approach to the summit.



7802 Bradley Manor making a dramatic noisy eastbound climb up Talerddig bank near the summit cutting. (7802 was bought as a source of spare parts for Erlestoke Manor).

With the track laid, ballasted and weathered I built the rock out with layers of cardboard glued together so that the layers were at an angle to represent the rock strata, a rather tedious and laborious process. The actual cutting scales a whopping 19 inches deep in 00 scale but I decided to make it just 10 ins deep which would suffice for the photography. Blocks of cardboard were made up into 8 inch lengths and cut to suit the profile of the cutting and to follow the curve of the track, so I did things just the opposite to Davies!

The blocks were shaped using a mini chain saw ...a very useful battery driven piece of kit that has paid for itself many times over whilst cutting away all the ivy that previous owners had allowed to grow over my garden wall. The thick blocks of card need a brutal bit of kit to shape them up. When I was happy with the shape I covered the surface with PVA and shaped it up yet further with fingers. Allowing a day to dry I gave the lumps a coats of grey emulsion paint and then worked with fine brushes to add more detail and, voila, we had something that resembled rock. The final finishing was with pulverised roof slates that have been ripped off the house in a storm. A few more splashes of colour and then came fitting it into a ply framework to hold it place.



Finally I managed to snatch a bit of afternoon sunlight to take the cameo outside into my courtyard garden for photos just hours before the next deluge arrived.



Whilst it was outside I took the opportunity to photograph a couple of Bachmann 00 scale Dukedogs as the sole surviving Dukedog No. 9017 owned by the Bluebell Railway has now been moved to Aberystwyth for display in the shed that was once its home in working days.



I've been invited to take the diorama to Aberystwyth to display it at a forthcoming model train exhibition that is being organised in the newly restored former GWR engine shed where loco 9017 now resides. I'm not totally satisfied with the cameo and will rebuild it in due course using the same materials but I will substitute Polyboard to make the majority of the structure with just my card technique for the facing. This will take the hernia factor out of the diorama but also might precipitate the valium factor!