

Association of Shrewsbury Railway Modellers

JOURNAL

No.2 June 2025

Editorial

Recently, I had the pleasure of attending a LNWR Society event for the first time. I was invited to exhibit my significantly incomplete Coventry 1839 layout and some carriages etc., at their annual Modellers Day held just south of Warwick Services, one hour and forty minutes away. Now, I am not a fan of exhibiting anything part finished as it makes me uncomfortable knowing that whatever I'm showing could, and hopefully will be at some point, better.

So, it was with a certain amount of trepidation I left the house early on a fresh Saturday morning and negotiated the back roads to pick up the M42 at Lickey End. Arriving safely and thanks in no small part to 'What Three Words' without a single wrong turn (pretty unusual for me), I was warmly welcomed and helped in with the layout and assorted boxes. The venue, a large industrial unit on a farm, is the home of two extensive exhibition layouts: 'Clarendon', an exceedingly handsome S4 layout, and 'Kimble', an equally impressive 7mm scale affair decorated on the day with an array of very fine looking LNWR motive power. My efforts were to be viewed alongside some seriously skilled examples of the modellers art.

Having only joined the LNWR Society a couple of weeks previously, I had never met any of these folks in my life so despite knowing a few names, I could not have picked any of them out in a police identity parade. However, I need not have worried. No sooner than I had set out my stand, conversation started and did not really stop until it was time to pack up at 4pm. At one point in the afternoon, I was getting hoarse due to so much talking.

What struck me the most as I drove home, reflecting on the day's enjoyable proceedings, was just how much a common interest can bring together an otherwise quite random group of individuals. Most members knew each other and, in most cases, have done so for a very long time, but it did not stop them welcoming a complete stranger, and taking an interest in what he had to offer. Of course, I was equally intrigued to find out as much as I could about their areas of interest and conversations flowed. Whatever flavour we prefer in terms of our railway interests, there's nothing quite as inspiring as looking at what others are up to, being a bit nosy if you will. One chap was 3D printing 7mm scale trams of the Wolverton & Stony Stratford tramway, obscure perhaps, but it didn't stop us enjoying a long chat about the design and production process, the challenges involved in assembling the parts, motorizing, painting, glazing, and lettering trams. Ours were quite disparate modelling interests but we were bound together by very familiar challenges, he was just as welcome there as anyone else.

It is often difficult to identify why we are interested in particular aspects of railway modelling, how many of those creating a colliery layout were once miners? Does everyone modelling a slice of East Coast mainline hark back to their days as a top link driver for the LNER? I doubt it. Irrespective of our own interests and inspirations we can still find so much common ground in our multifaceted hobby, and just enjoying the company of like-minded souls can be a great tonic.

Our own club meeting back in March provided a textbook example of this. After the business of the AGM was dealt with as efficiently and smoothly as one could wish for, members presented their 'Philly Box Challenge' entries. The loose brief was to create a scene on a repurposed cream cheese or similar tub featuring a few figures and props. The dioramas varied enormously but each one was entertaining in its own right, supported by some wonderful descriptions of the work and modelling techniques involved. The penultimate presentation was comedy gold and had us all in stitches, laughter of course being the best medicine of all.

So, support your local club, visit exhibitions, take part in society days, just chew the cud with your fellow railway modellers. You may find you'll get more out of it than you expect, and in my opinion at

least, the reward always far outweighs the effort. Finally, please don't forget your club journal, I can only publish what I'm sent by you, the members, so if it looks a bit thin you know what to do.

This year's remaining two Journals will be published in September, and December 2025. There may be a slight delay for the September issue as I am on holiday two weeks prior to publication. However, deadlines for contributions remain as follows:

August 29th - November 28th

To assist with my task of editing, please could contributions be in the form of a simple email or an attached Word document with all images as separate jpegs (not embedded in the text). If you have a lot to send and/or the file size is large, then file transfer tools such as WeTransfer.com are free and easy to use and save clogging up the email system. Thank you.

chriscox5and9@gmail.com 07496 161 142

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Coalbrookdale Modelling Day

The March instalment of the Coalbrookdale Modelling Day was a very enjoyable one with nine of us in attendance. Despite much chatting there were still some long silences punctuated only by quiet whistling and the occasional curse, always a good sign that stuff is getting done! I am pleased to report that the funds raised have been used to help all the Scouts complete their cooking badge, a fish & chip night, and to pay for the group to go canoeing. The next Modelling Day will be held on Saturday 28th June 2025. Please contact your editor if you would like to take part.

chriscox5and9@gmail.com.

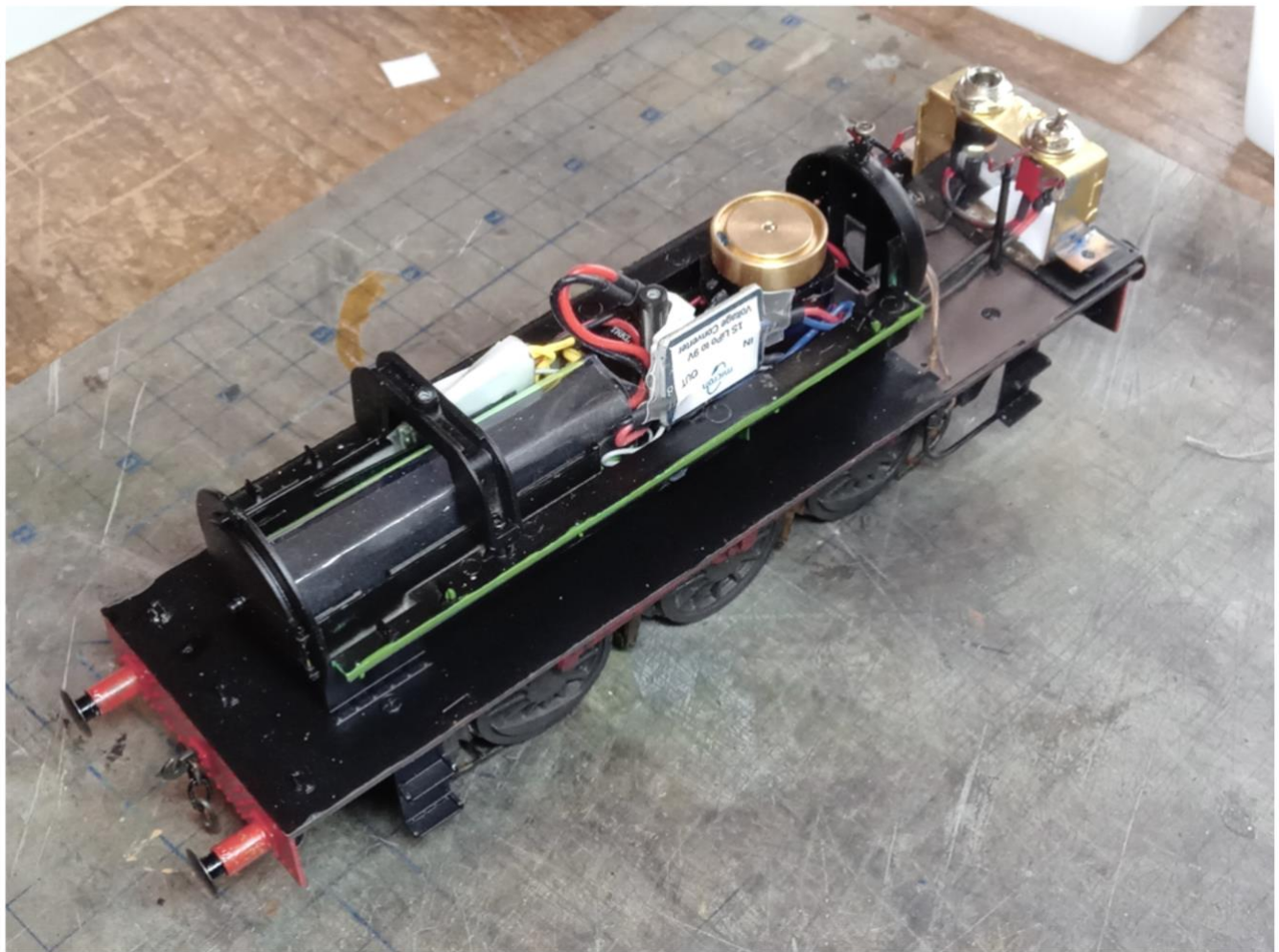


'Civilising' a RTR loco

In the last (first?) ASRM Journal, I wrote about researching in preparation for a new loco. Harking back to my South Wales visit over 40 years ago, I plumped for the Austerity 0-6-0 saddletank built by Bagnall, number 2758 as running when I saw it at Graig Merthyr colliery. It would be green, so I ordered a green Austerity from Dapol. When it arrived, it was *very* green with green wheels. Someone looked at it and suggested it looked like Percy! Percy was an 0-4-0 saddletank but it was a similar lurid green.



Undaunted, I started to investigate changing the model from 12 volt, 2 rail to radio control. The very helpful Andy Rutter from Micron Radio Control suggested a single Lithium cell with a voltage booster. The space inside the loco is a bit more limited than the GW panniers and Jinty I had radio controlled in the past using eight nickel metal hydride batteries. However, the 3.7 volt lithium cell needed the addition of a voltage booster, and I would need a new charger. I ordered the largest cell I could fit inside the boiler to give me the most running time. I chose a booster to increase the voltage to 9 volts as the loco does not need to travel particularly fast. In addition, I had to fit a receiver/motor controller, a resettable fuse, an on/off switch and a charging socket. All these components have to be joined with wires and then packed into the available space. This can be a bit of a headache. You must ensure the wires are not crushed when you reassemble the model. The flywheel on the top of motor is exposed so must not be able to wear its way through a stray wire.



You can see the black and green cylindrical battery taking up most of the space in the boiler and the rest of the components packed tightly together. The switch and charging socket are mounted in an open brass box in the bunker. I had to cut off most of the switch lever to clear the coal which will cover them up. The wires to the bunker run across the cab floor but a dull paint and a loco crew should hide them from view.

While wiring it all together, I noticed a grey wire which I could not identify. Apparently, its purpose is to monitor the voltage at the booster input so that the receiver LVC can work correctly! No, I didn't understand it either! Andy sent me a supplementary wiring diagram, and I just followed that and *hey presto*, it did seem to work. I am pleased with the way the loco runs in its new r/c guise.

Dapol have produced a very nice model for a fairly bargain (for 7mm) price. The frames and footplate and the saddle tank are cast metal, the rest is plastic. The tiddly bits are mostly well modelled but, *Oh Boy* are they delicate? Each time I broke off a bit I grimaced and fixed it back on. The worst time was when I swept the loco minus topworks off the table onto the floor knocking off three buffers and snapping the reversing lever. The chimney was very chunky and required some judicious re-shaping to get it look better. Neal Cooper pointed out that there are two sets of bolts on the bufferbeam but only one set of gusset plates. Looking more closely, I discovered that some locos had one and some two sets. The Bagnall had one set, so I filed off the redundant bolt heads. The other loco I looked at, 'Norma', has two sets of gusset plates and two corresponding rows of bolts.

Because I was modelling a specific loco at a specific time, I wanted to include its idiosyncrasies. Its bunker was dented so I attacked the model with a file in the appropriate places, it is missing one of the lamp brackets from above the front bufferbeam and all the brackets on the rear of the bunker had sheared off leaving just the bases. There was an additional bracket on the offside rear of the cab. This can still be seen on 'Welsh Guardsman' at Bridgnorth which has the Bagnall's cab.



To access the printed circuit board for changing it to DCC (I ripped all that out), you have to open the smokebox door. The smokebox door handles are beautifully modelled in plastic and snapped off after a couple of goes at opening the door. I have since replaced them with a metal version. The bars across the rear windows, protecting the glass from coal, were moulded in thick plastic. I removed the plastic and drilled the cab back with 0.45mm holes and bent up brass wire which looks a bit less clunky.

I looked at the few colour photos I could find of the loco and decided it had been painted a green, similar to the Doncaster shade of LNER loco green. I sprayed it with Precision Paints enamel and it looked a bit better than Percy's toothpaste green! The green wheels had to be brush painted using a mix from Martyn Welch's excellent book on weathering. For some reason, the buffers were black with red bases. I primed them black and painted them bufferbeam red. The red side rods were authentic but a bit too clean so I toned them down a little. Some dry brushing and the use of Ammo enamel rust wash helped make the frames and brake gear look a bit less plastic.

Following a 'helpful' visit from Chris Cox, I realised I had missed some minor details which differed from the model. These, I attempted to rectify. Originally the whistle was located deep in the saddletank, between the two safety valves. At Graig Merthyr, 'my' Bagnall had it removed and relocated on a copper pipe sticking out of the front of the cab just below the roof. I hate turning tiny items so cautiously approached making the brass whistle which was 0.8mm diameter with a 1.2mm diameter top! After filing a couple of notches for the whistling bit, I soldered it to the end of a piece of 0.8mm copper wire for tube, drilled the front of the cab sheet and glued it in. Chris had also spotted a sheet repair riveted to the top of the saddletank, which I had missed. The sheet repair was cut from very thin aluminium sheet, riveted and super glued in place and painted.



Perversely, the model came with vacuum pipes, as fitted to most preserved locos but only 3 link couplings. I removed the vacuum pipes and replaced the top link with a shackle and the bottom brass link with a steel one to enable a magnetic shunter's pole to be used. A visit to the London Festival of Railway Modelling (the Ally Pally show) yielded a suitable crew from Modelu.

I now had a reasonably clean looking loco so obviously, it was time to dirty it up! I found lots of colour photos of the original loco on Flickr, other internet sites and in magazines and I used these to guide the weathering, in particular, this photo from the Industrial Railway Record.



Left: Bagnall 2758 of 1944 was at NCB Graig Merthyr on 24th July 1974. Robin Waywell photograph, Industrial Railway collection.

I then read the relevant bits in Martyn Welch's weathering book and made up a mixture of Humbrol paints and slightly more than double the volume of thinners. *Incidentally, if you are using Humbrol number 53, Gunmetal, be sparing as it can make it look slightly too sparkly. The sparkles do look a bit like soot and coal particles that have settled on the*

loco. I waved the airbrush back and forth across the loco and the nice LNER green gradually faded beneath the grot. I then gave it a feint dusting of matt black. Once satisfied it looked a bit like the photos, I left it to dry before fiddling around. I used a cotton bud with a drop of thinners to rub the areas in the photos where the green showed through like the edges of the cab. I dribbled light rust wash down from the tank filler and around various seams in the bodywork. I also used a bit of light grey weathering powder on the footplate. I hope this looks a bit like a poor, uncared-for steam engine in the final days of commercial operation.



Nick Coppin

Pomeroy Signal Cabin

The gestation period for this project has been much longer than originally planned, having first seen the light of day in the autumn of 2020. The delay in completion was due in part to a series of ongoing heart and blood pressure problems, now mostly behind me, although at one point I did briefly (and light heartedly) consider painting the Forth Bridge as a quicker option all round, though on reflection, I am not that sure as to just how an article could have been written. Always known as signal cabins in Ireland, the one at Pomeroy station was situated on the much lamented ex GNR(I) 'Derry Road' line, running from Portadown to Londonderry and closed in its entirety on 14 February 1965. The line itself was held in the same high esteem as the Port Road from Dumfries to Stranraer and the Somerset & Dorset line from Bath to Bournemouth West. Despite the road orientated Northern Ireland Government's false claim that the line was losing money, it was one of the last places in the UK to retain and need daily lodging turns for train crews, with upwards of a dozen overnight goods trains, seven days a week in each direction. This is the cabin that I was hoping to re-create, shown here on a typically wet day in July 1964 and I wanted to try and show it in the slightly careworn condition it was reduced to during the last year of operation, without making it look like a badly made kit; not the easiest of tasks.



Having a strong family connection with Pomeroy village, I had always wanted to replicate the entire station. The space needed however to build an accurate model would have been prohibitive in my usual scale of 4mm/ft so for this project I moved up to 7mm/ft and settled on a small diorama. A start was made in the summer of 2020 and a suitable board was obtained, actually a rather posh and heavy breadboard, 17" x 14" x 3/4" with a nicely bevelled edge to it. Rubber feet were quickly attached, mainly so that I could get my hands underneath when lifting it. Just one very poor quality drawing of a GNR(I) cabin was found and pictures of the station were equally

rare. With all traces of the station and cabin long gone, the small niggles of the site being 300+ miles away in Northern Ireland, was just another hurdle to overcome.

I had hoped to build a solid model in MDF and plastic, and was struggling as to just how to make a start, but in the event, help came from some unlikely sources. Roger at Alphagraphics card kits had just introduced a series of Irish items in 7mm scale, and a GNR(I) standard small cabin was in the range. Granted, the steps were on the wrong end for my intended model, but after a quick conversation with Julie at York Modelmaking, the appropriate card sheet in the kit was sent up to her for use as a template, suitably reversed to produce a right-handed cabin. By Christmas 2020 I had made a visible start. As I did not feel confident in making the windows myself, she quickly produced some exquisite 3D prints, consisting of inner and outer laminations plus the glass, and even including a couple of spare pieces for me to experiment with. I always feel that it is better to know your limits and accept them – there is no shame in that.

The drawing below comes from a contemporary engineering journal. I assume the GNR(I) cabin was a modular design, that could be expanded according to the size of the lever frame. Ed]

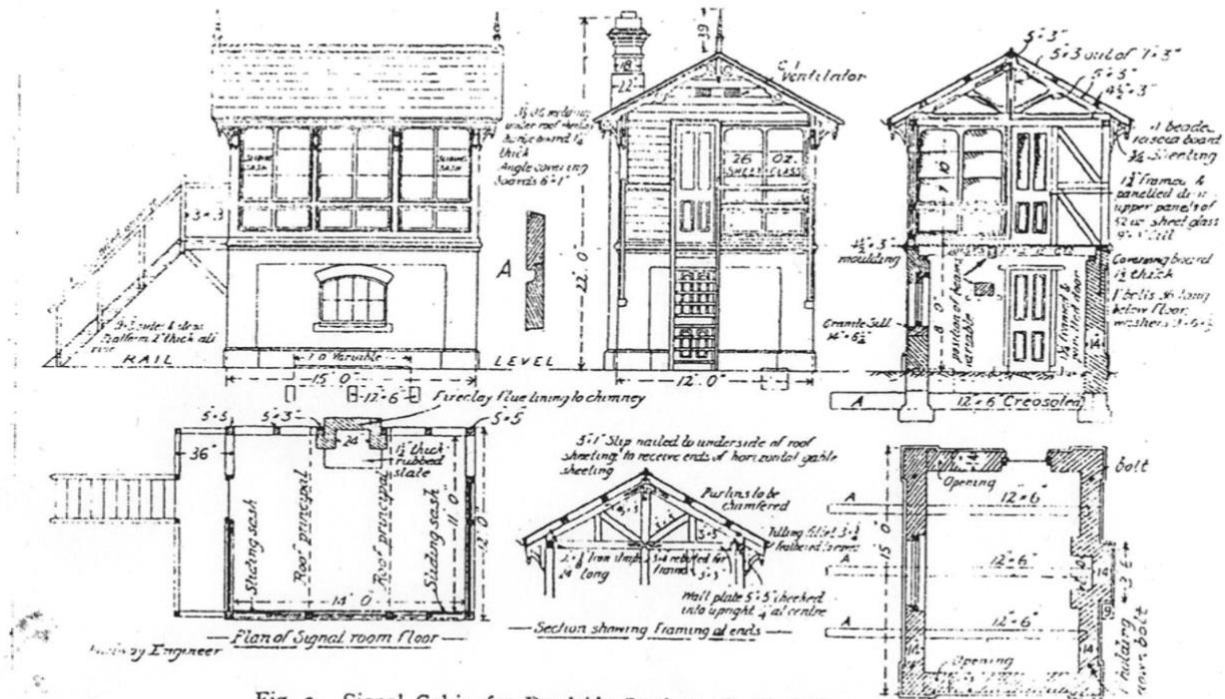


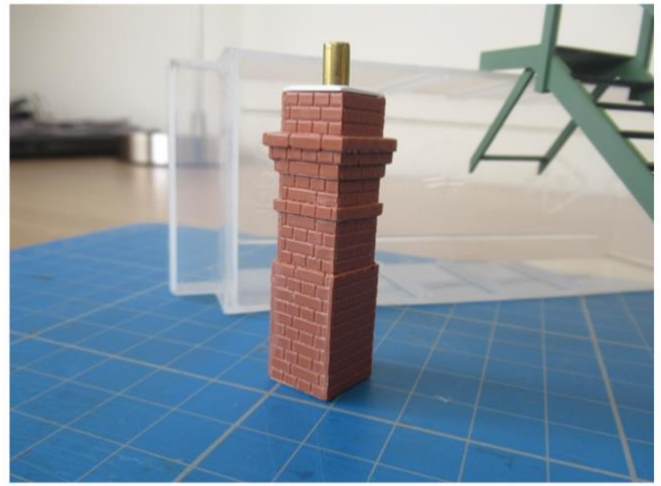
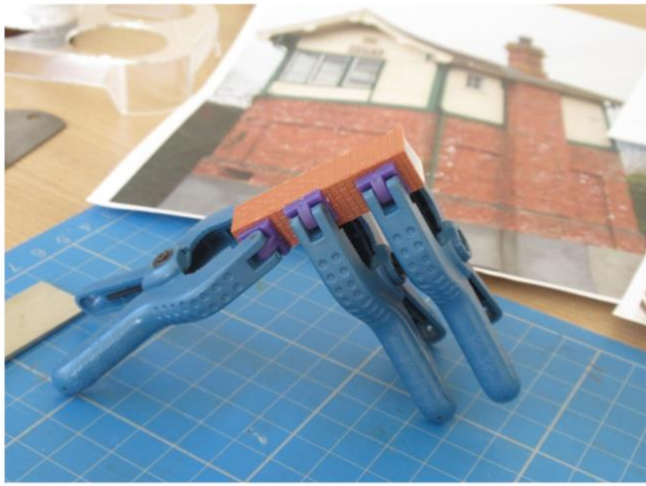
Fig. 2. Signal Cabin for Roadside Stations, G. N. Railway of Ireland.

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Things were now looking up. The workbench had started to look like a miniature builder's yard and I had managed to make the locking room myself, albeit with much swearing at some of the parts and the occasional suggestion made that was both physically dangerous and (probably) medically impossible! Such are 'joys' of railway modelling. The chimney was constructed using 'Plastruct' box section, allowing for the final size of course, and then cladding it with Slaters 7mm scale brickwork. At this point I found myself having to squint at the photographs through a strong magnifying glass to try and calculate the number of courses between each raised section (great fun)!



The ornate sections were simply made by cutting further lengths of brickwork and gluing them on top of the existing brickwork, actually a very enjoyable if slow process.



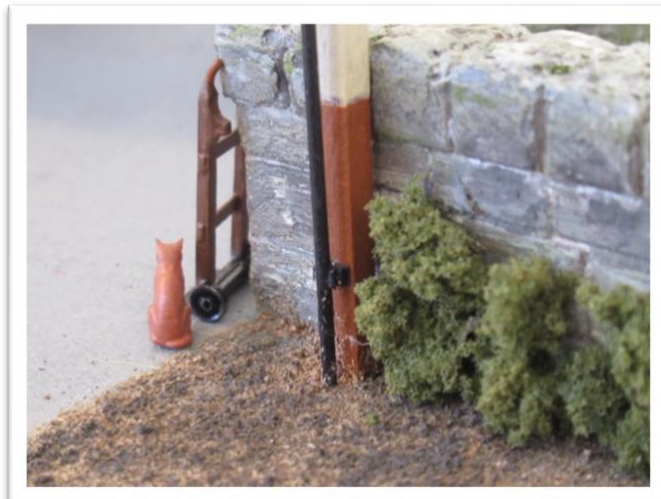
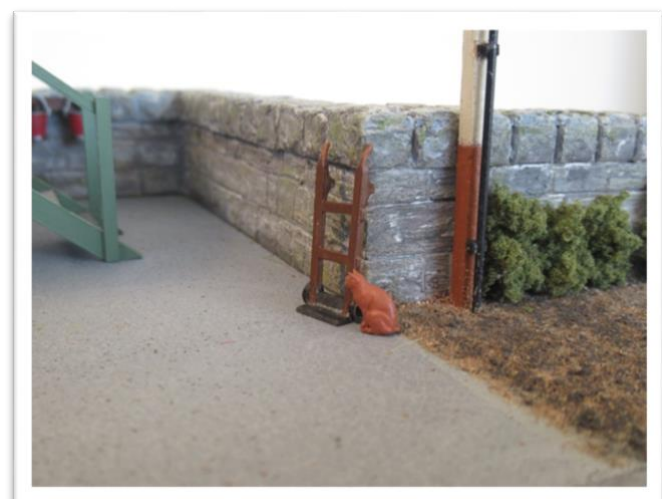
Gradually it all began to come together and I found myself constantly referring to an old hand drawn map, probably done way back in 1968 when I was exploring the remains of the station. Fortunately, I had put on many of the required dimensions around the site and I recall that I only had my shoe – of all things – to use as a rough measure at the time. As it subsequently turned out, more by luck than judgement, they were close enough to use for the platform area of the model. By 2022, when it came to external items around the cabin and platform section on the diorama, I looked to Ratio kits for inspiration. The quality of their mouldings is usually very good, if a little on thick side at 2mm, but this would suit now my requirements for self-supporting items. With this in mind I used the Ratio

point rodding kit and it seems to have done the job ok without looking out of place or under-scale. Due I suspect, to manufacturing limitations, many of their products are some way over 4mm scale, being nearer to S scale size at 1:64 or 3/16" to the foot, being one of the oldest imperial modelling sizes. The 5' 3" gauge track was produced using C&L components, with 3-bolt chairs and bullhead rail, spaced at 36.75mm.



Similarly, the dimensions of the stone walling supporting the platform worked out correctly by using Ratio again. Sometimes, it's surprising what you can use. However, the field wall at the back of the platform presented an entirely different problem and I simply could not find anything that was right visibly or dimensionally. Enter Metcalfe 4mm card kits! Some years ago they sold packs of self-adhesive street paving slabs, in a variety

of sizes and whilst rooting through my 'do not throw away as you might need these' box of bits – and we all have one – I saw a half used pack. A quick check showed that in 7mm scale they would look just like 18" and 24" stone walling blocks. With an undersized wooden former and the 'slabs' glued on, the wall began to take shape and a dabbed-on Polyfilla mix completed the rough stone effect with weathering to suit.

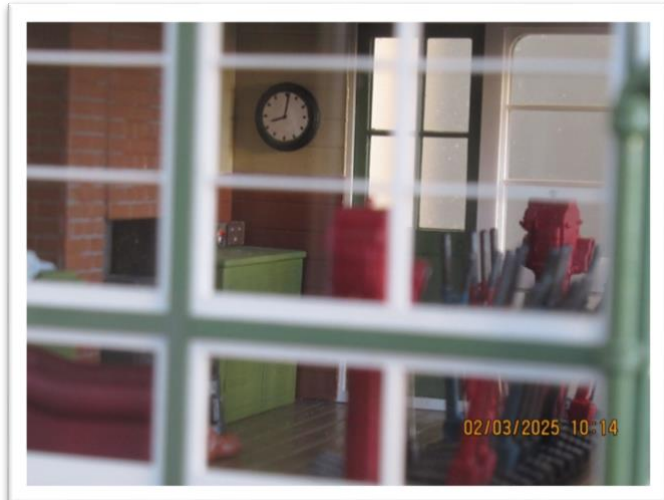


By 2024 I was almost there and down to the last fiddly bits. It's strange how they take longer to get right than all the big work, or perhaps I was getting a little too finnick and needed to stand back from what I was trying to achieve. A word here about some of those smaller items -
Cat – The railway artist Terrance Cuneo painted a small mouse somewhere in each of his works, so many years ago I thought that whatever I created in the future, be it a set piece, a diorama or a full layout, my own 'marker' would be a little cat. It was just a bit of fun really but then, a station is not really a station without a cat, and Modelu came up with a suitable feline, also the large floor-

mounted telegraph instruments. If you are ever going that way, your nearest two station cats are Kevin at Kidderminster Railway Museum and George at Stourbridge Junction.

Platform Lamp – There simply wasn't anything of the market that would do, so I made it by hand; the wire was quite hard and it took several goes to get the curve right. The bulb was fashioned out of a piece of semi-clear plastic with a dollop of superglue on the end; left to go hard and the filed to shape (the things we do for our hobby).

Bookshelf – Don't ask how I got a representation of the individual pages. Let's just say it involved several hours with a set of high-powered lenses, a very, very fine needle and a suggestion from 'her indoors' that maybe I should get out more often!

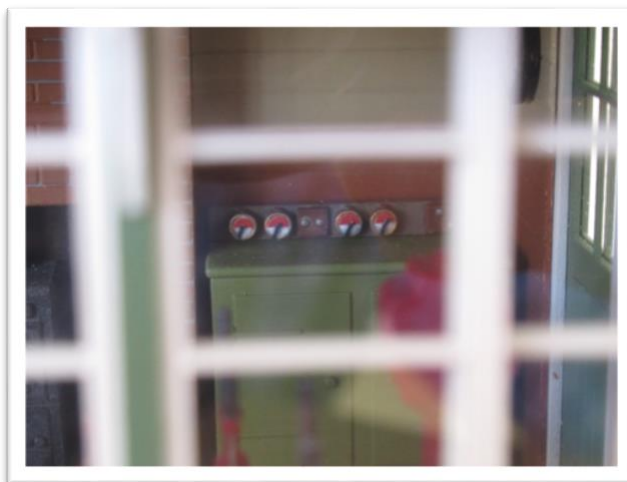
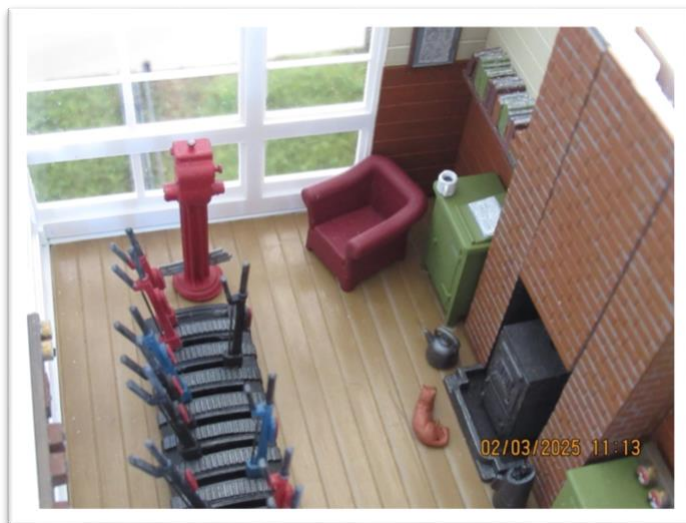


Clock – This bit was relatively easy. Two different sized were small washers were glued together for the clock body, painted black and the paper clock face from Rogers kit glued on the front.

Paraffin dispenser and sack truck – Both are both from Skytrex kits and quite well detailed for the modest price.

Lever Frame – This was a mix of parts from Peco and Severn Models, as there were items in both kits that would work nicely for this particular item.

Repeater indicators - Hand made and fiddly, but worth doing for completeness.





Come March 2025 it was all done and finished; well, certainly as good as I was going to get it. Am I happy with the result? Overall, Yes, and that is all that matters. Inevitably, there are one or two areas that I would tackle differently a second time around, but isn't that always the case. These final images will show if it actually worked and if I caught the feel of the real cabin.



A Visit to Hornsey Broadway

Some fellow ASRM members and I recently visited Kier Hardy's truly inspirational Hornsey Broadway layout in Hereford. It is a large EM gauge layout based on the railway lines north of Kings Cross. It is set in the early 1970s and is diesel with some electric third rail stock. Here are a few pictures but the best thing is to search for Hornsey Broadway on YouTube and Kier can introduce it to you and you can watch the trains go by.



General view looking north. Class 31 on passenger train. Lots of brick retaining walls, so characteristic of London railways.



View of mainline station at the top and underground below it. Much of the platforms are hidden, increasing the apparent length of the layout.



Diesel Pullman train in the Down platform. Both this train and the class 31 are fitted with DCC sound. Much of the stock is DC.



The loco depot.



Fiddle yard/storage sidings. Southern region class 33 with two 4TC sets in the front and a 3rd rail electric multiple unit towards the back.

Nick Coppin

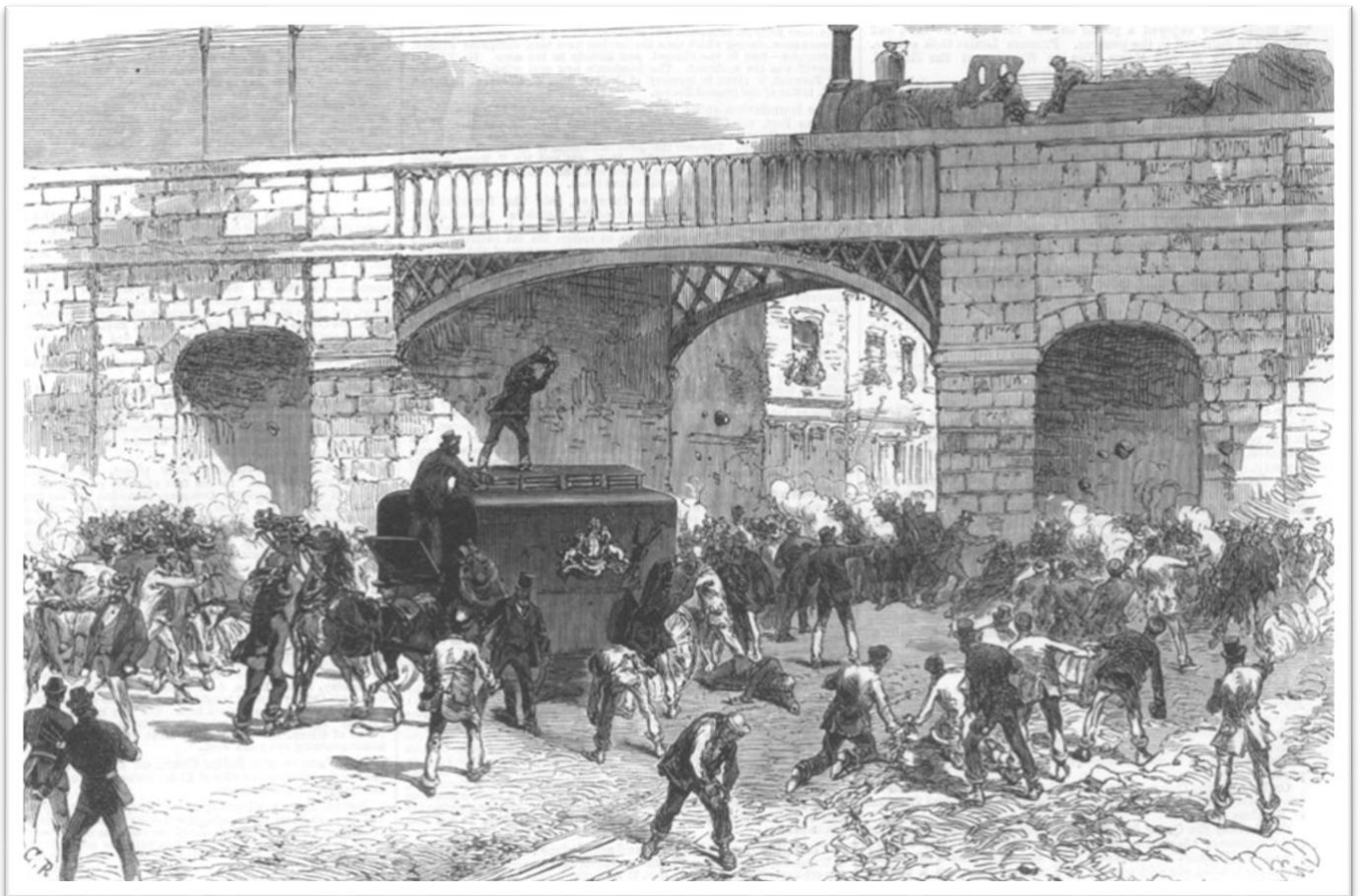
Shrewsbury Terrors – Grim Tales from the Rails

Three stories from Shrewsbury's past concerning alarming topics, as revealed in the newspaper.

Shrewsbury Station Terror Target (1868)

Shrewsbury station was once thought to have been considered target for a terrorist attack. In the 1860s the Fenians were a secret Irish nationalist organization who sought to establish an independent Irish Republic. The Fenian movement was inspired by the Fianna Eireann, a legendary band of Irish warriors led by Fionn mac Cumhaill.

The Globe reported on Tuesday 1st October 1867 that tensions and paranoia were so high that the Police were called to private lodgings by a member of the town. The resident suspected they had seen a notable Fenian, a Captain Deasy. However, after the Police had gained 'entrance' to the young man's bedroom it was found that the likeness was only that, and he was entirely innocent of being the suspected Fenian. Tensions had increased so much that the Dublin Evening Mail reported on Monday 6th January 1868 that 'information was received last night of a Fenian plot to blow up Shrewsbury Railway Station. The authorities immediately had the sewers blocked, and the station guarded all night.' The Scotsman, also writing on the 6th January, shared the particular concern stating that 'several alarming rumours are as usual afloat; but none of them appear to be deserving of heed and we do not except one to the effect that on Friday night information was received of a Fenian plot to blow up Shrewsbury Railway Station.'



While the attack did not appear to have gone ahead the Chester Chronicle reported on Saturday 18th January 1868, the Rev. Henry Hopkins had had to come to the support of Shrewsbury's Irish Community:

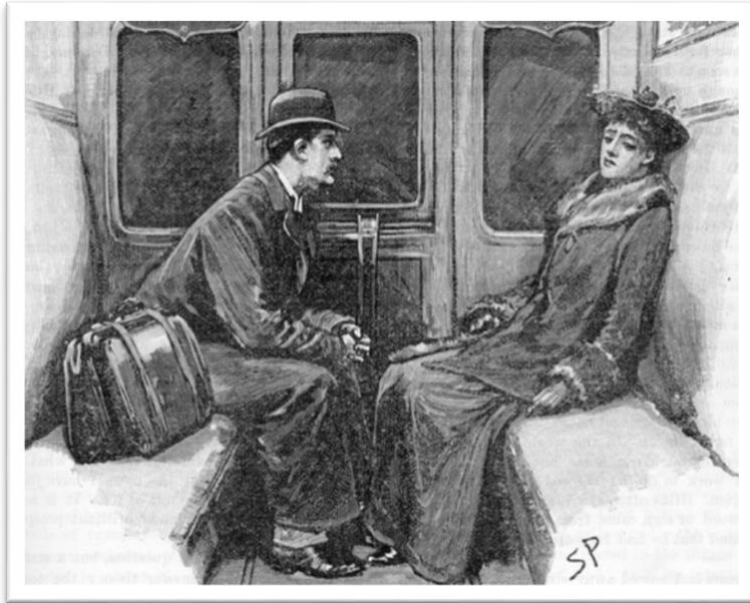
'Shrewsbury and the Fenians. At the Shrewsbury Police Court, on Thursday, the Rev. Henry Hopkins, priest of the Roman Catholic Chapel, formerly Chester, addressing the Mayor, said he attended the deputation from the Catholic inhabitants of Shrewsbury, and in consequence of rumour which was widely current to the effect that they, and especially the Irish portion of them, were inclined

sympathise with what was called the Fenian plot, and were in fact secretly connected with the conspirators. The rev. gentleman denounced the conspiracy, disclaiming, on behalf of his flock, the slightest sympathy with it.'

Incidentally the worry from the Fenians continued. On the 18th of April 1883, the Portsmouth Evening News reported that a man had attempted to purchase 56lbs of glycerine from a Shrewsbury chemist shop. This amid the discovery of letter stating that either the Town Hall or the Drill Hall would be destroyed by either dynamite or nitro-glycerine signed a "Brother Confederate F.K.D."

The Protection of Ladies (1887)

The safety of ladies in railway carriages was something of a Victorian cause, not the danger from accident but the danger from other travellers. So, when George Grice indecently assaulted Miss Catherine Scragg in a railway carriage between Wellington and Shrewsbury on August 27th, 1887, there was national attention on the issue.



In other well known cases women had quitted carriages out of fear of impropriety, however in this case there appears to have been a very real threat to the victim. What it took to make a lady, with her Victorian dresses climb out of a moving carriage on to the footboards and seek safety in the adjoining compartment must have been truly terrifying.

The following month on Wednesday 19 October 1887, the South Wales Daily News reported:

THE ACCUSED ADJUDGED INSANE. At the Shropshire quarter sessions held at Shrewsbury, on Tuesday, the grand jury returned a true bill against George Grice (34), puddler, for unlawfully assaulting Catherine Scragg in a railway carriage

between Wellington and Shrewsbury on the 27th August, with intent to commit a felony. The prisoner and the lady were travelling together, when he assaulted her, and threw her down. She opened the door and got out on the step, and into the next compartment, where she was pulled by a gentleman through the window. The prisoner followed her out and had to be driven back with a sword stick, after which he leaped from the train and was badly injured. Dr Strange, medical superintendent of the county lunatic asylum, and Dr J. D. Harris, prison surgeon, gave evidence to the effect that Grice's state of mind was not fit for him to plead, and the recognisances were consequently enlarged to the joint assizes to be held at Stafford.'

Gruesome end at Shrewsbury for a career railway gentleman (1908)

From the Ludlow Advertiser on Saturday 25th January 1908: 'SHREWSBURY MAN DECAPITATED ON THE RAILWAY Considerable sensation was occasioned at Shrewsbury last Friday morning by the tragic death of a well-known Salopian who was found decapitated on the Shrewsbury and Hereford Railway.'

It appears that shortly before four o'clock that morning the 'guard on a passing train noticed the body of a man lying on the rails and reported the matter to Albert Edward Jones, foreman shunter who hastened to the spot, the crossing at Kemp's Eye, Belle Vue, and found the corpse of an old gentleman whose head had been severed from his body and his right leg severely lacerated. The body was quite warm, and it was conjectured that the man must have been killed by the Cardiff and Hereford express which passed about 3am.'

The body was subsequently identified as that of Mr. Edward Craston, of Victoria Terrace, Castle Fields. by his brother, Mr Craston, of Bell Hotel, Princess Street.

'The deceased was a son of the late Mr. Edward Craston, hatter. Pride Hill, Shrewsbury. For some years he was employed in the offices of the London and North Western Railway Company and later joined the staff of the Cambrian Railway Company, at Oswestry, where he held an important appointment until about eight years ago. He has since had no regular employment. At the inquest held in the afternoon an open verdict was returned.'

Tom Nicholls

'O'n the shelf.

For various reasons past generations of my family have lived close to the railway, and when I say close, I mean close. As a small child, watching and listening to trains go past the bottom of my parents and my grandparents gardens became a favourite pastime of mine. Having recently moved into Church Stretton itself, I'm close to the railway once again and I find something comforting about the sound of trains passing, particularly late at night.

Green BTH Type 1 Class 15 diesels were a common sight and sound back in those early days, mainly on freight duties. I remember thinking back then, the class had been designed to look a bit like a steam tank engine. Perhaps the brief had been to come up with a diesel design that the died-in-the-wool, old time steam engine drivers, might find just about acceptable. For what it's worth, in my opinion the Class 15 was one of the more interesting and aesthetically pleasing diesel designs of its time, but in practical terms it was a bit daft.

Unusually for this country, the Class 15 and 16's had its single cab positioned three quarters of the way along its length, with a full height bonnet fore and aft. Therefore, unlike other contemporary diesel designs with a cab at both ends, or at least a single cab at one end, the Class 15 and 16 guaranteed a restricted view for the driver in BOTH directions, very much like most steam engines had done in the past.

The poor visibility was made worse when a problem with the Class 15's Paxman engines developed. They had a tendency to belch copious amounts of thick black smoke, later found to be caused by water getting into the engine's cylinders. This unfortunately led to numerous breakdowns, gaining the class a reputation for poor reliability.

Aged seven, I was oblivious to such problems, so you can imagine my excitement when in a cloud of its own black smoke, a Class 15 conked out at the bottom of our garden. Dad's camera was fetched and pointed vaguely in the direction of the drama, the results of which can be seen below.



Fast forward to late last year and my efforts to fit all my goods and chattles into my retirement pad. Fortunately I found an ideal position for my old wall units, with an eye level display shelf just inside the lounge door, a position passed on each entry to and exit from the room. I thought, what that shelf needs is a statement piece, an object of interest, something from my collection perhaps. I tried any number of my OO locomotives, but they just looked lost.

You may recall in the last edition of the new look ASRM journal, I had a bit of a rant about a Hornnby OO gauge box being as big as an EFE O gauge loco box. Well, the contents of the EFE box was actually a new O gauge Class 15 (bought purely for display purposes you understand) and I have to say I'm really impressed with it, especially for the price. It has a lot of fine crisp detail, most of which I can see without having to fetch my glasses, working head code discs, interior lights, etched brass

louvres and excellent below the running board detail. It's DCC ready, has factory fitted speakers, but no smoke unit as yet.

The exact prototype of my model, D8234 went on to become the Liverpool Street pilot when the ageing J69 'Shed Pet' was retired. Seeing my O gauge Class 15 so frequently and in such close proximity is good for the soul. Behind it, a collection of Dapol O gauge Bauxite vans is growing at an alarming rate, a longer shelf may soon be required, 'O'dear!



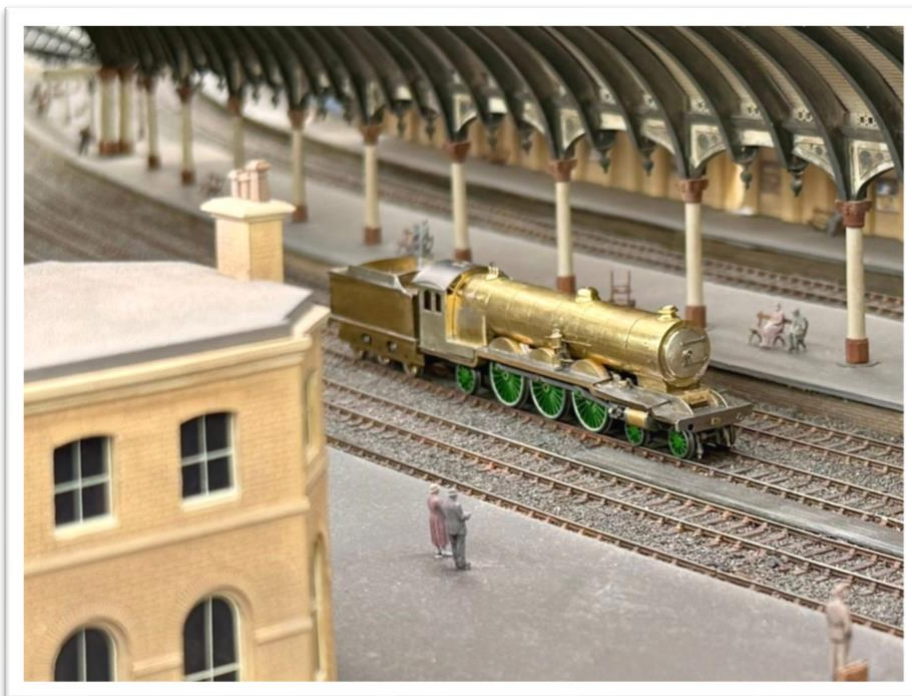
Andy Butler.

Railx 2025

Your editor/chairman and your secretary had a jolly to Railx on Saturday 25th May. A good chat to a few familiar faces and a bit of 'networking' was interspersed with some light shopping, all adding up to a grand day out without overdoing it. I made time to take some photos of inspiring scenes which I am taking the opportunity to share with you. I won't say too much but let the pictures speak for themselves but must add that the exhibition guide was disappointing in that it fails to tell the reader who made, owns, operates each layout. Very unhelpful, especially when using it as a reference to caption the following images!

Those members who attended the recent talk by Tim Watson will remember his incredible 2mm scale model of a 'skittle alley' seen here on the superb York layout.

I would love to be able to credit this layout to the modellers who built it, but unfortunately the exhibition guide makes no mention of them whatsoever, so I don't know. However, the photograph was taken by Tim Watson.





The superb (if a little crowded) Harton Gill. The guide doesn't credit this layout to anyone either but the standard of modelling and attention to detail was excellent. Plenty of interest for the viewer whether trains were running or not.



Almost real, almost! 7mm excellence by...? Exhibition guide doesn't say.



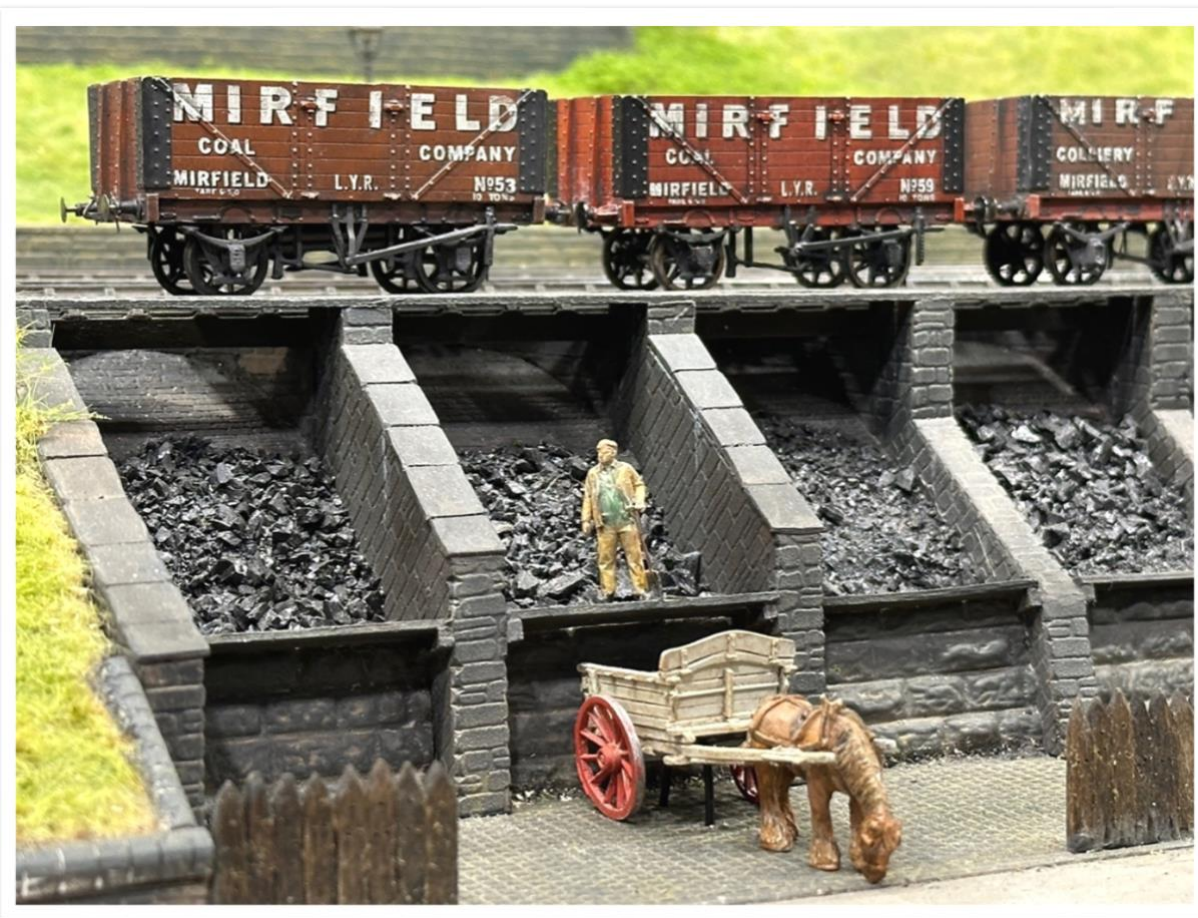
Kerrinhead, a masterclass in P4 from Gavin Clark and the Marches Finescale Group. At least I know that one without referring to the guide.



Kerrinhead was featured in the latest Model Railway Journal, well worth acquiring a copy if you can.



A really charming street scene at Eastwood. The stout might be invalid, the modelling by members of the South Hants MRC certainly isn't.



The Eastwood coal drops. This layout is in 4mm scale and displays remarkable attention to detail.



The diminutive station at Eastwood.



Breathtaking 7mm scale scenery by Neil Podberry, very cleverly constructed in shallow layers to create depth.



Impressive detail and finish on this lower quadrant signal, 4mm scale Eastwood again.



You can almost hear the 7mm scale seagulls at Northport Quay.

Tales from the dining room table



Well, my activity these last few weeks have been less about what I might have achieved at the dining room table but more concerned with bringing Coventry 1839 up to some sort of exhibitable standard, even if it's not running and I have yet to complete a loco for it! That said, I have indulged myself in some scenic work which will no doubt get in the way when I attempt to complete the trackwork and wiring, but then I do love a challenge. A recent addition has been this couple epoxied onto the Warwick Road Bridge. I do find the addition of appropriately placed figures really begins to bring things to life. As for the exhibition, please do come and see me at the

Shrewsbury Festival of Model Railways (see below). I may even leave you in charge whilst I nip to the loo!

20  25

SHREWSBURY FESTIVAL OF MODEL RAILWAYS

7th June 2025
10.00 - 16.00

**St. Mary's Church,
Shrewsbury, SY1 1DX**

**Disabled access, Dog freindly,
Refreshments and food available**



Layouts, Trade Stands, Demonstrations and Heritage Railways
Adults £8.00 Children 16 and under £2.00 Under 5's FREE!

Christmas Quiz

I have been running the Christmas Quiz for a few years now, and I felt it could be worthwhile to open it up to all members of the ASRM. If anybody has a burning desire to pose a question, or questions, then I would be happy to consider them as part of the quiz. Last year Peter Cox provided some sound clips and Ian some questions on signalling.

Most questions in the past have been geographical or historical, and it would be nice to have more on current affairs on the railway. Photographic "where is it?" questions are popular, but they shouldn't be too obtuse, and there should be a clue or feature that helps to suggest where it is. Questions can be single or multiple, and multiple questions with up to 5 questions in a group on a single theme.

Please send me your questions by the October meeting. I cannot guarantee to include every question, I might be inundated and have to limit the number used, or others might be duplicates.

My email address is sandgduffell7@gmail.com. Thank you.

...and finally



From the lens of Chris Kapolka...

SR rebuilt West Country 4-6-2 No.34046 *Brauntton* climbs south of Craven Arms with a Saphos trains excursion from Shrewsbury to Paignton 28th May 2025. The fire brigade were in attendance at the lineside just north of Craven Arms just where the line runs parallel to the A49 where a lineside fire was being contained.

...and bursting forth from Ludlow tunnel.





Kevin guards the signal box at Kidderminster – photo by Eric Challoner