



## ASSOCIATION OF SHREWSBURY RAILWAY MODELLERS

Newsletter August 2023



Shopping at the  
Bangkok Railway  
Market, by  
Dave Angell

## ASRM Newsletter - August 2023

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From the Editor's Chair :

I shall confess to being not that good at desktop publishing, but hopefully this newsletter will reach you intact and you will enjoy a brew while perusing its pages.

Some of our number have been busy it seems, as we have some interesting stuff here!

The spaces between the articles feature a few of my images of 2 foot narrow gauge subjects at both 16mm/ft or 12"/ft scales.

Our ASRM meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> September will be White Metal Kit Design & Casting, by Chris Cox. Hopefully I shall see you all there.

Andy Vaughan

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Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, June 2022





## Bath and a Shooting board

I recently attended the Larkrail model railway exhibition in Bath. This small event is very good and well worth the trip. Many well-known modellers were there, either exhibiting or demonstrating. Mike Baker and Martin Finney were there with their award-winning cameo layout, Newton Heath Works, Giles Favell was demonstrating his radio controlled models (I drove his 4mm scale articulated lorry!) and Gordon and Maggie Gravett were there with Arun Quay, a small, inspiring 0 gauge layout. My friend Richard Barton was showing his S scale layout, Arcadia.

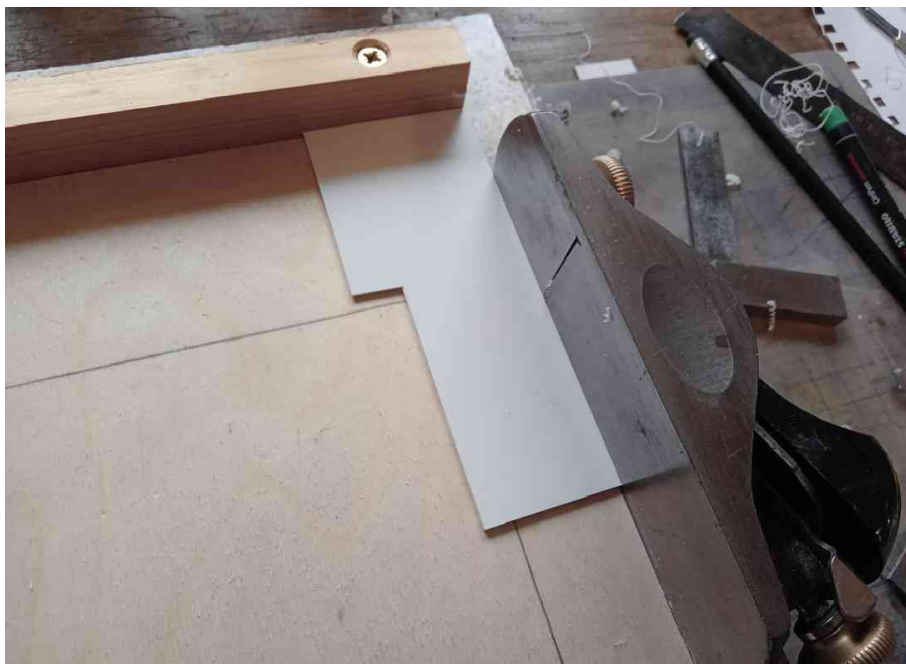


At a table was a man building a plasticard model of a diesel loco in 16mm to the foot scale. He was using a block plane and a shooting board and producing beautifully square edges on his plasticard. I came straight home and made one! I was about to build a small coal merchant's office and wanted to ensure the edges were square. It worked a treat.

The base is an offcut of kitchen worktop 17" x 10 1/2" but a flat piece of thick mdf or plywood would have done as well. I screwed a piece of 1/2" plywood, about A4 size, onto the top leaving an inch and a quarter gap on the right (on the left if you are left handed). Across the end is a length of pine to act as a stop.



To use it, you lay your sheet of plasticard on the ply with the end pressed firmly against the pine stop and the right hand edge overhanging the ply by a tiny amount. You lay a block plane with a finely set blade, on its side and slide it up the board taking a thin shaving off the edge of the plasticard. If you have cut the plasticard by scoring and snapping it, there may be a prominent cusp. The plane will whisk this off in a few strokes leaving the edge straight and at right angles to the face. This makes building carcasses for models much easier as they fit together perfectly. You just need to run MekPak into the join and Hey Presto!



I am sorry to say that I did not get the name of the chap who was demonstrating this useful device.





The shed came out quite well.

Nick Coppin

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Nick running with some coal tubs at a Broseley steam-up :





## The Gas or Coke Works cometh.

The last meeting of ASRM was the table top display and like many I noted Chris Cox had a redundant model advertised for disposal and suggested the buildings may be of use to somebody.

I have a few card buildings that I intend replacing with plasticard on my 00 layout and these looked to be very useful. To my surprise, when I asked Chris if anyone had asked for it, nobody had. I say surprised as I am usually in second place with these offers.

The following day, when I had a good look at this fine example of 4mm building construction, it was far too good to be dismantled and, having taken a few measurements, there was a corner of my layout that could accommodate the bulk of the model – provided I moved the ‘brewery’, which will then replace two ‘Scalescenes’ card warehouses.

The baseboard and some scenery needed trimming and the rail has no connection to my track, so is ‘connected off scene’. In addition, I had to make a few repairs, extra wall sections, a small building and repair a roof on one building. The remainder of the work to do is extra scenery, weathering the new stuff and generally blend the model into my layout.

Thanks Chris.

The pictures show it needing the final bits, pieces and weathering etc.





Graham Betts



## EARL'S HALL – A BRIEF UPDATE

A few odd hours snatched away from the seemingly endless chores of domestic routine have at last seen some tangible progress to the scenery on boards C and D. These are the two boards that originally lay hidden in tunnel under the MPD until the house move here enabled the MPD to be resited and reconnected elsewhere in the railway room.

And so I found myself in virgin territory with an almost clear baseboard measuring 7ft x 2ft and with only the track laid. The layout was always intended to be mainly for operational interest but now I found I could let my imagination run riot – at least within the constraints imposed by the petty cash director. And doesn't it all require a lot of funds these days, especially when you build a car park for the Church and find you have no modern image N gauge cars to park there. A problem experienced by Pete Waterman in constructing his 'Making Tracks III' in OO gauge. He, of course, was able to resort to 3D printing to fill his massive car park at Milton Keynes Station, whereas I had no such resource.

What I did have though was 'something I made earlier' in the shape of some Scalescene buildings mainly associated with a station and warehousing. In addition I found, stuffed away in the back of one of those drawers we all have full of purchases that at the time of seeing them at an exhibition were a 'must have', but once home join the serried ranks of kits bought with grand designs but never quite made it out of the drawer and under the scalpel.

These together with a Scalescenes row of terraced houses would therefore suffice, or so I thought, but when I located a Royal Mail Post Bus (remember those?) together with a set of Noch old people (well they looked like old people when I bought them, but now I think they are my contemporaries) meant that I needed to build a waiting shelter to keep the poor old dears warm and dry while waiting for the [delayed] post-bus.



I had already fitted lights in a few of these buildings but now I must have had one of those light bulb moments as several street lamps were ordered from Kytes Lights. Such street lamps were essential as I had formed a huge queue outside the post office replicating a scene familiar to me when we had a sub post office, with the 'Ancients in Years' queuing outside in the dark for more than half an hour before opening time to ensure they got their pension. How quickly real life changes, but on our layouts we can happily create nostalgia for the past where the grass is even greener than in my valley. Apologies for the mixed metaphor.

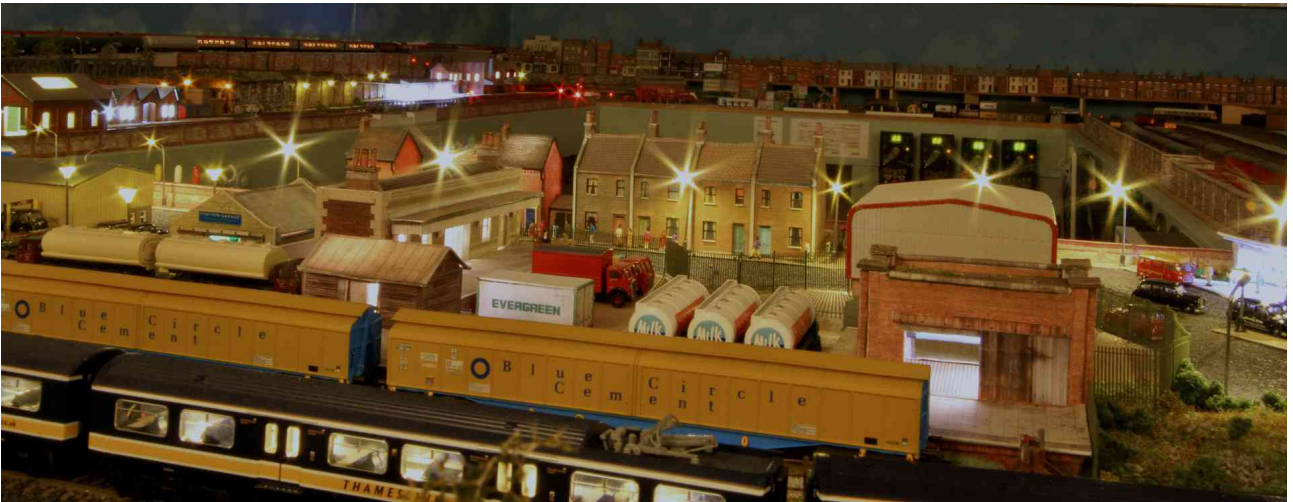


Something I had not taken into account however was the fact that there were already numerous lights on other parts of the layout in buildings, yard lamps, signals, LED indicator lamps etc., and some of those in buildings were not LED's but 12v bulbs. As a consequence, and after carefully wiring up the new lights and making, if I may be so bold to say, a thoroughly neat job I found that the Gaugemaster transformer thermal overload cut out after a short while. This surprised me and it may have been as a result of poor ventilation in the cabinet – not easily cured by providing an extractor fan, and so a spare plug-in transformer was used, but this meant re-wiring a lot of the previous which I had so painstakingly done — such is life!



For those interested in photography I mainly used a Canon 7D camera on a tripod, with a 10 – 22mm wide angle lens set at ISO 400, f29 for 13 seconds to endeavour to obtain a good depth of field. Some of the photographs were however taken with an iPhone 11 and it is somewhat annoying that the results are pretty much as good, if not better.





Michael Bennett

### **The Footplate of 762 at Lynton & Barnstaple**

From the open sack at the drivers feet, either they have found an unlikely alternate fuel to solve the coal crisis, or it's baked spuds for everybody's lunch!

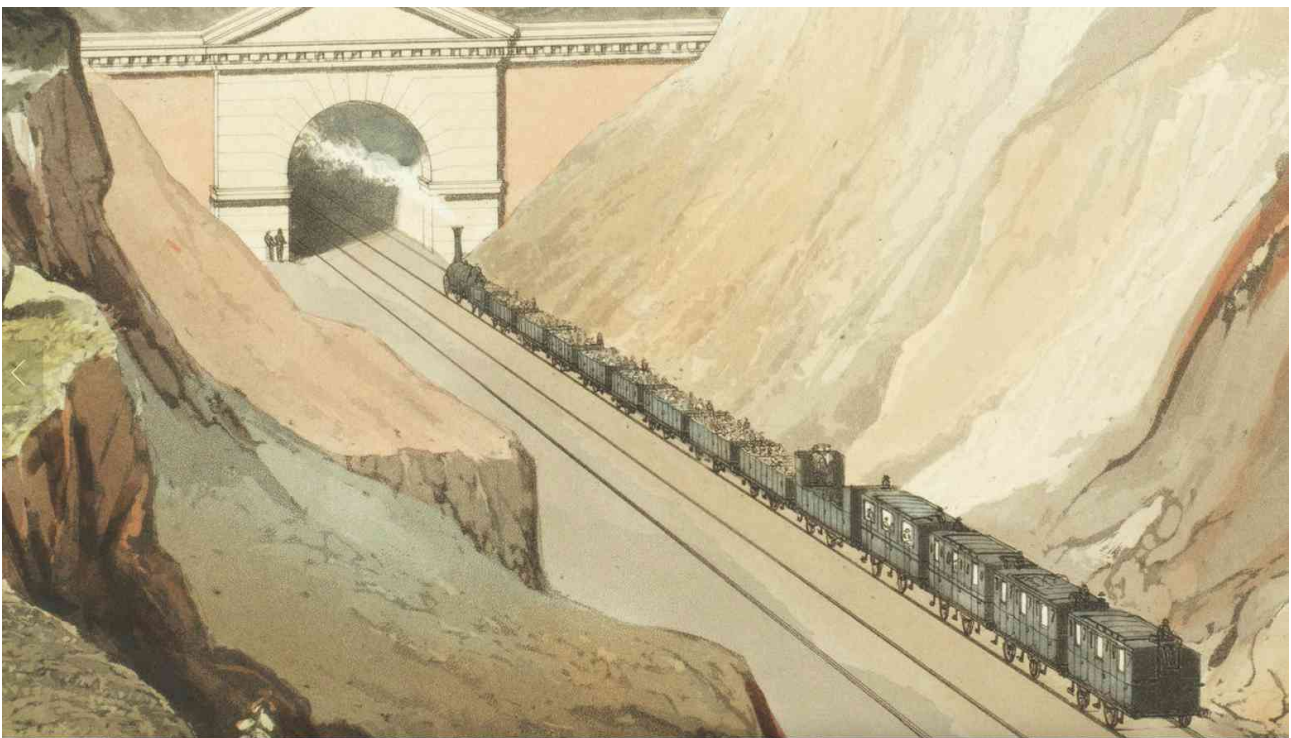




## A London & Birmingham Novelty

I've long been entertained and intrigued by depictions of early railways of the 1830s and '40s. The period was marked by significant political and social change, the technology of the new iron roads symbolised these changes more than anything and the railway companies knew it. From the opening of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway onwards, artists such as Isaac Shaw, John Cooke Bourne, Thomas Talbot Bury and many others recorded what they saw, creating images that sought to commemorate and impress. From these illustrations lithographic prints were produced and distributed in quantity, in a way a form of propaganda, promoting the grandeur and unprecedented architectural and engineering achievements of the railways whilst at the same time demonstrating how harmoniously they would sit within the landscape, showing just how marvellous (and safe) it would be to travel by train.

The detail and accuracy of many images is praiseworthy, Shaw was a skilled engraver, Bourne a talented artist and Bury a noted architect however, some images must be taken with a full chip shop's worth of salt, and a few would not look out of place hanging in a gallery of work by Salvador Dali. Therefore, one must never rely on such pictures as a clear window into the past but in the absence of photographs or files full of detailed and fully dimensioned drawings, they are all we have.



*Fig. 1. Detail of 'The entrance to the tunnel at Watford' by T. T. Bury, engraved by N. Fielding, published by Ackermann, London, 1837.*

The subject of this article is an oddity I noticed many years ago in a charming painting by T. T. Bury showing an impressive cutting on the London & Birmingham Railway. The little engine processes gaily towards the Watford tunnel entrance blissfully unaware that it is on the wrong line pulling eight open carriages, little more than trucks with seats, four enclosed second- and first-class carriages bringing up the rear. Sandwiched between these is one carriage which appears to be another open third but with raised full-height ends. Not only that, two passengers, apparently a

couple, stand at seat back height looking forward down the train to the locomotive and the approaching tunnel. Trains in this period seldom reached speeds in excess of 25mph or so, but even at this pace standing on the end of the carriage would seem to be an extremely hazardous thing to do. Momentary loss of footing could result in serious injury, even death. Surely a flight of fancy on the part of the usually reliable artist I thought - but no. Buried in the London & Birmingham Railway minute books held at the National Archives is a short sentence that goes a long way to confirm that Thomas Talbot Bury was not pulling our legs. Dated 17th April 1837, minute 81 reads *'Ordered - that Mr Bagster be authorised to give additional height to the ends of one or more of the third class carriages.'* It seems that this instruction was indeed carried out and remarkably Bury recorded one of these rare vehicles. Those familiar with my modelling will know that this is all the evidence I need to produce a model and it proved to be more straightforward than one might think.

After the opening of the London & Birmingham Railway, the board were left with a significant number of open carriages used initially to show-off the line but really only suitable for a third-class fare. Given that they had no intention of carrying third-class passengers something useful had to be done with them. Thankfully, they were sturdy enough to be converted into covered second-class carriages with the addition of brakes, full height ends and roofs whilst others formed the basis for entirely enclosed carriages. Our curious carriage would appear to be a half-way house for the daredevil traveller. In my quest for a good variety of London & Birmingham carriages I had already produced a cast white metal 'kit' for the open carriage based on drawings published by Samuel Brees in his 'Railway Practice' of 1842.

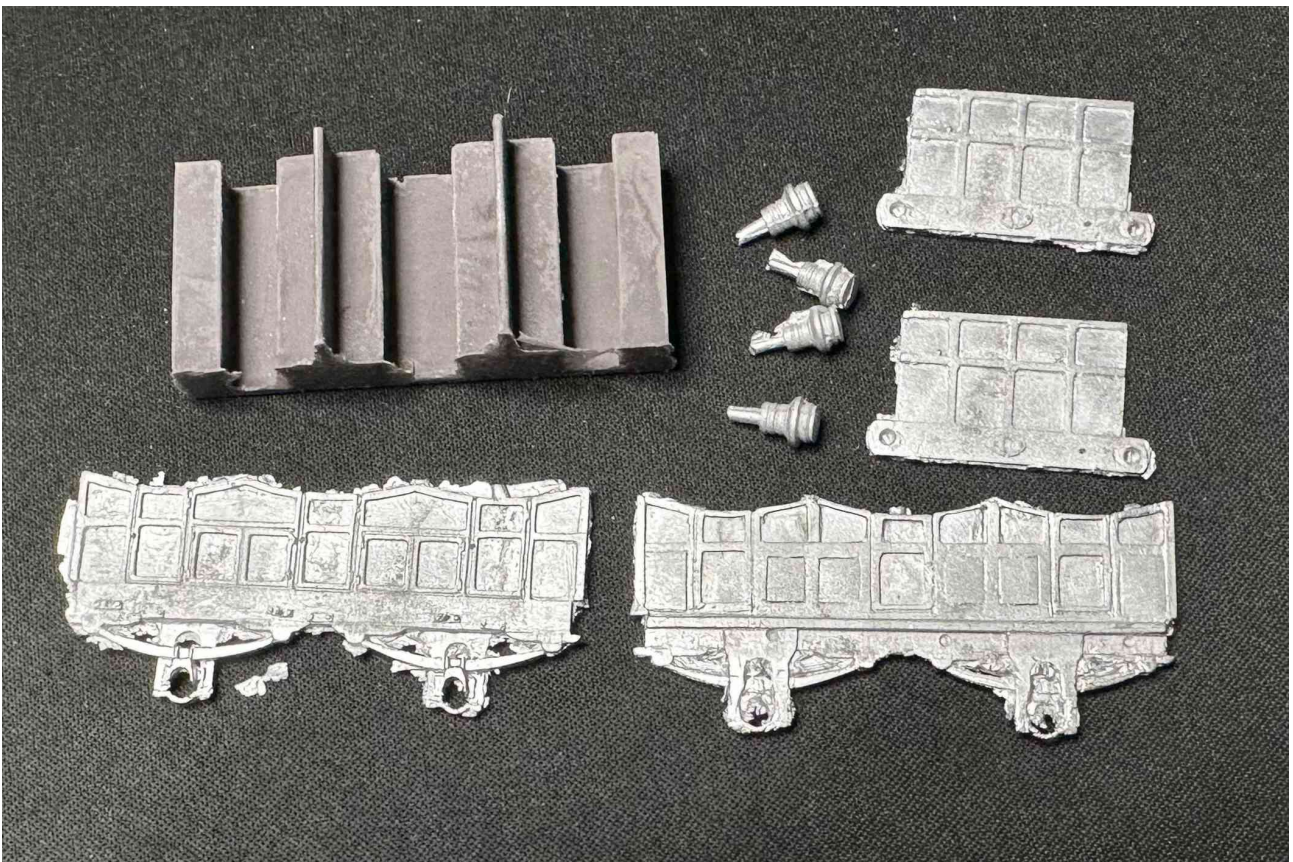
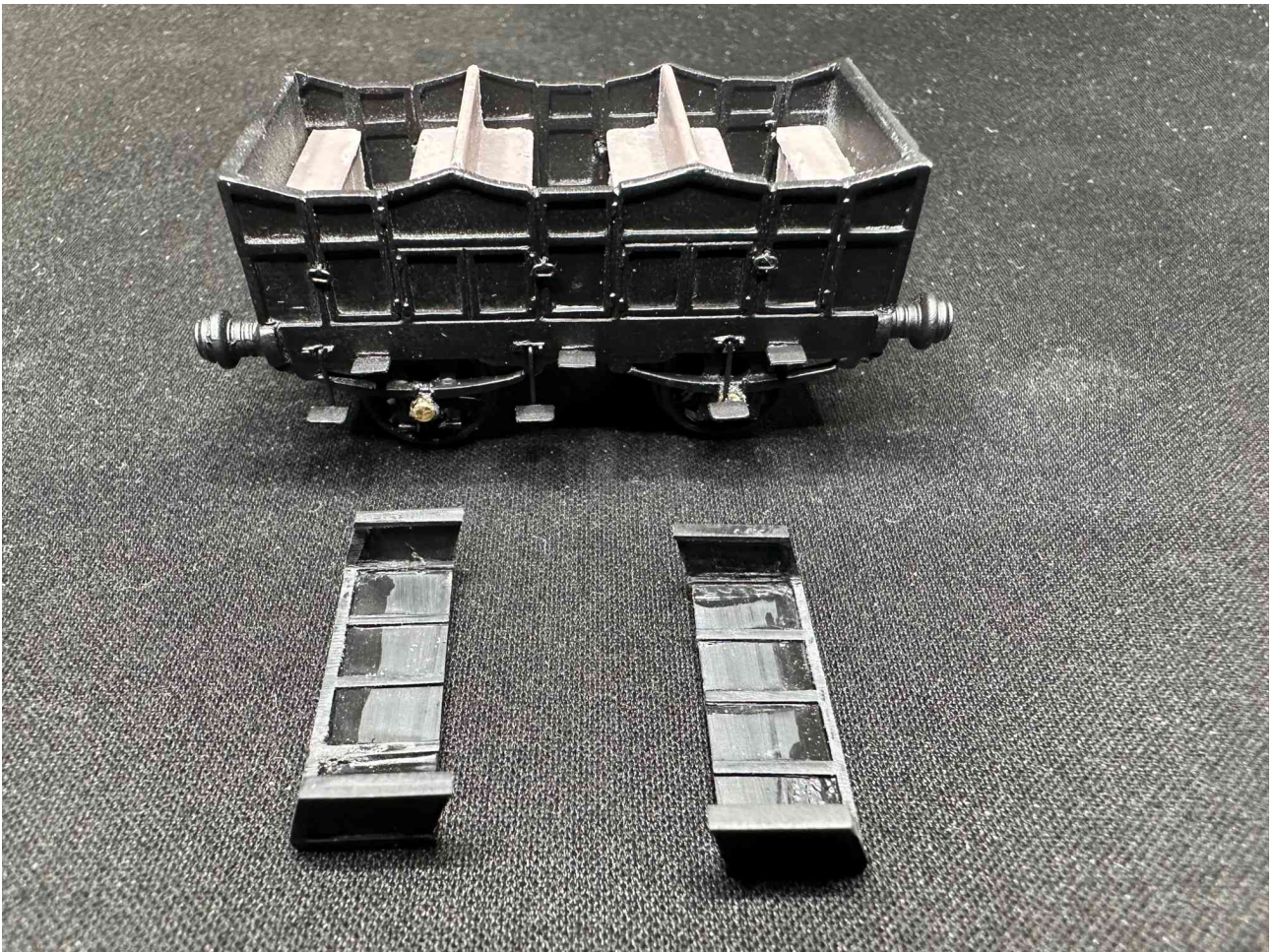


Fig.2. The raw castings for the London & Birmingham open third awaiting cleaning and assembly.



The basic carriage was put together in the usual way, soldered construction with etched details and a set of resin cast seats which simply slot in place. Once completed, the carriage was thoroughly cleaned and given a coat of primer. The end extensions were then fabricated from styrene sheet and strip, and carefully glued in place. I decided that Bury's suggestion that the two passengers were standing at the height of the seat back must be slightly incorrect. To do this would have required a substantial shelf at this height which would then prevent anyone from actually sitting on the end seats (unless the shelf folded up) and in fact standing on the seat itself would be sufficient to see over the carriage end and satisfy any burning desire to have one's top hat blown off.

*Fig.3. The assembled carriage in black undercoat with the end extensions made from black styrene.*



The building of this curiosity took a few evenings work but the novelty of the finished carriage together with the point that it brings to life an otherwise forgotten or even unbelievable detail from the early days of railway travel was well worth it. As always, I am very grateful to Tom Nicholls for finding this little gem of information in the archives and providing the excuse I needed.





*Figs.4-7 The completed and painted carriage just requiring a couple of standing passengers with a 'Devil-may-care' attitude towards personal safety.*

Chris Cox

A few 16mm/ft scale models, with 12"/ft scale drivers



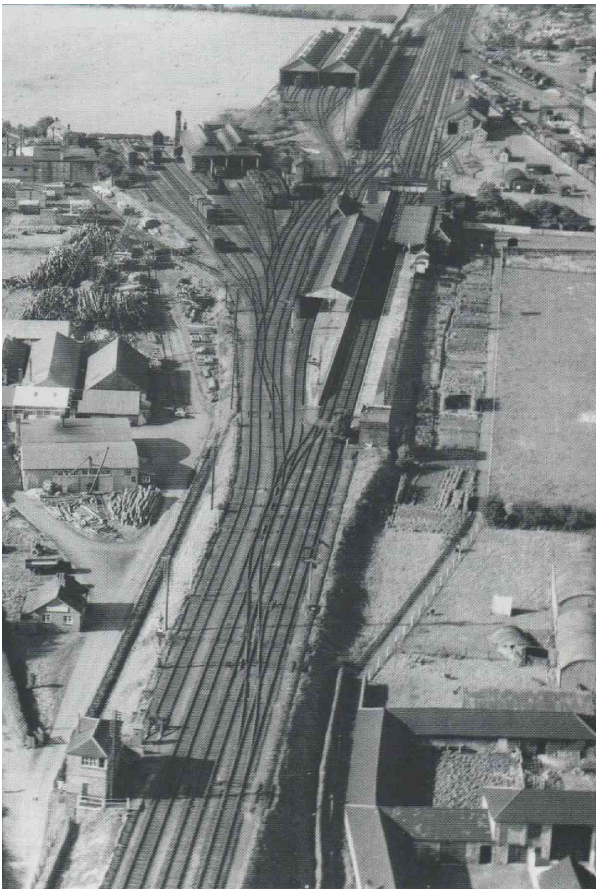


## A New Control Panel for the Craven Arms Goods Yard

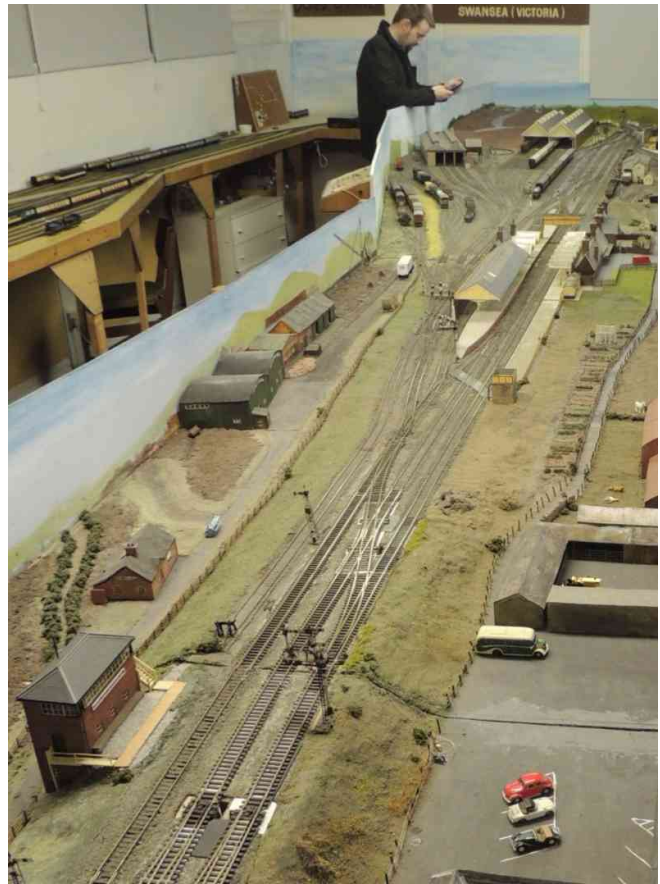
### Craven Arms & Stokesay

I have written in the past about my involvement in the refurbishment of Craven Arms & Stokesay, the main club layout of Craven Arms & District MRC, of which I have been a member for several years.

The layout is 48 years old, and was in a very run-down state when our major refurbishment project began in 2016. However, it is an accurate model of the station complex at Craven Arms in the 1950s and 60s. We continue to be impressed by the accuracy achieved by its original builders, at a time long before the Internet gave us easy access to large amounts of research material at the touch of a button.



***The Craven Arms & Stokesay station complex, photographed in 1948, with its substantial infrastructure still in place.***



***Craven Arms & District MRC's model of the same location, photographed in 2018, during the early stages of its refurbishment.***

The layout was, of course, originally built to operate on 12v DC. It allows continuous running, with a central operating well with 5 control panels (Up Fiddle Yard, Down Fiddle Yard, Main Line, Central Wales Line and Engine/Carriage Shed Sidings) and an additional panel at the front of the layout controlling the goods yard. The intention was (and still is) to be able to run the layout with 6 operators who, between them, assemble and run authentic trains to and from destinations on the main Welsh Marches Shrewsbury to Hereford line, and on the Central Wales, Tenbury Wells, Bewdley and Wellington lines, in addition to

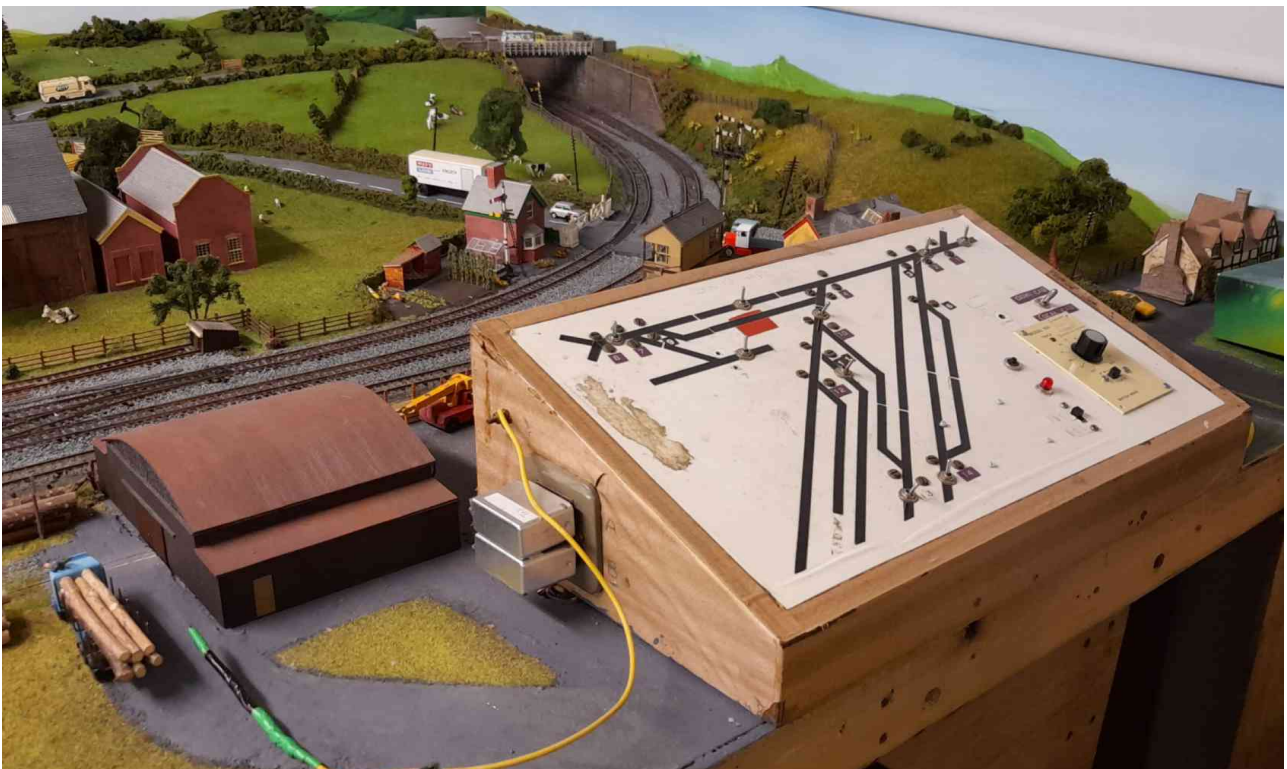
various freight services. However, all panel functions can be diverted to the Main Line panel, where the whole layout can be operated by one person. In fact, this is how the layout is normally operated on general club nights, where the junior (and some senior!) members just want to run trains round in circles on the main line. But when the current track refurbishment is complete, we plan to hold authentic running sessions on Tuesday evenings.

If any readers have any information about rolling stock, train formations, and particularly timetables, that applied to these routes in the 1950s/60s, we would be delighted to hear from you.

### **The Goods Yard Control Panel**

Although most of the layout's control panels are located in the central operating well, the goods yard panel is at the front of the layout. It is convenient to have it there for two reasons: it enables the operator to have easy access to the trains in the adjacent goods yard, and it acts as a useful training aid for new members, who can shunt trains around the goods yard without affecting main line operations.

However, its current position, on top of the baseboard, impedes view of the scenery behind it, and prevents further scenic development on that part of the layout.

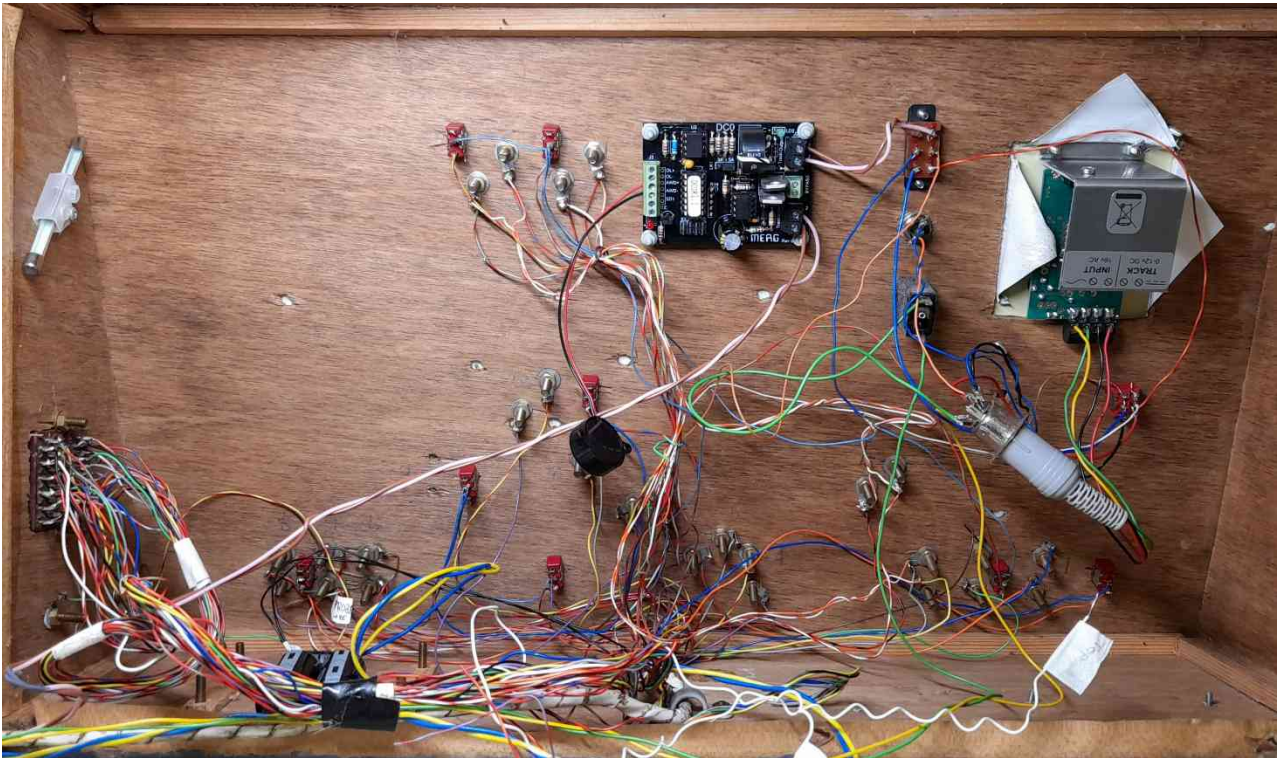


### ***Craven Arms & Stokesay Goods Yard Control Panel***

I therefore took on the task of building a replacement panel, to be located below the current panel, with its top level with the baseboard.



The first tasks were to understand how the current panel is wired, and to test its functionality. Fortunately, the panel is not fixed to the baseboard and can be turned on its back. This is what I found:



### ***Craven Arms & Stokesay; the old Goods Yard Control Panel***

The scenery and buildings on the layout were built to a high standard; unfortunately, the same cannot be said about its wiring!

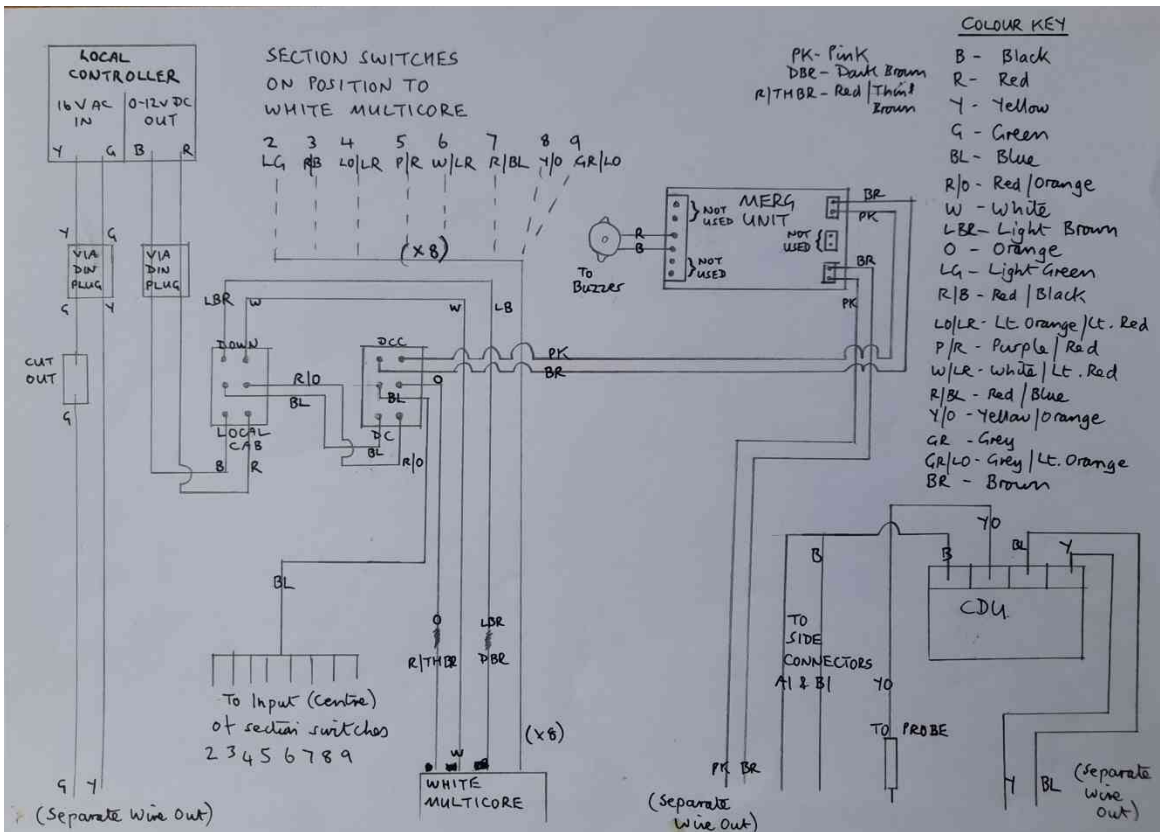
The point wiring is connected to the panel via two very old connectors, visible at the left-hand side of the photograph, while the wires for the track sections and the three sets of AC inputs run directly into the panel via a hole in the top of the baseboard.

The layout was modified in 2017 to be switchable between DC and DCC operation. The black rectangular device in the top centre of the above photograph is a MERG DCC unit, its AC input wires running loosely across the existing wiring, and its warning buzzer hanging loosely inside the box.

Most of the point and track section wires are strands of a multicore with a wide variety of colours; I don't know the source or specification, but the wires appear very thin, and seem inadequate for the purpose. Testing the panel's functionality proved equally below expectations, with a variety of faults coming to light.

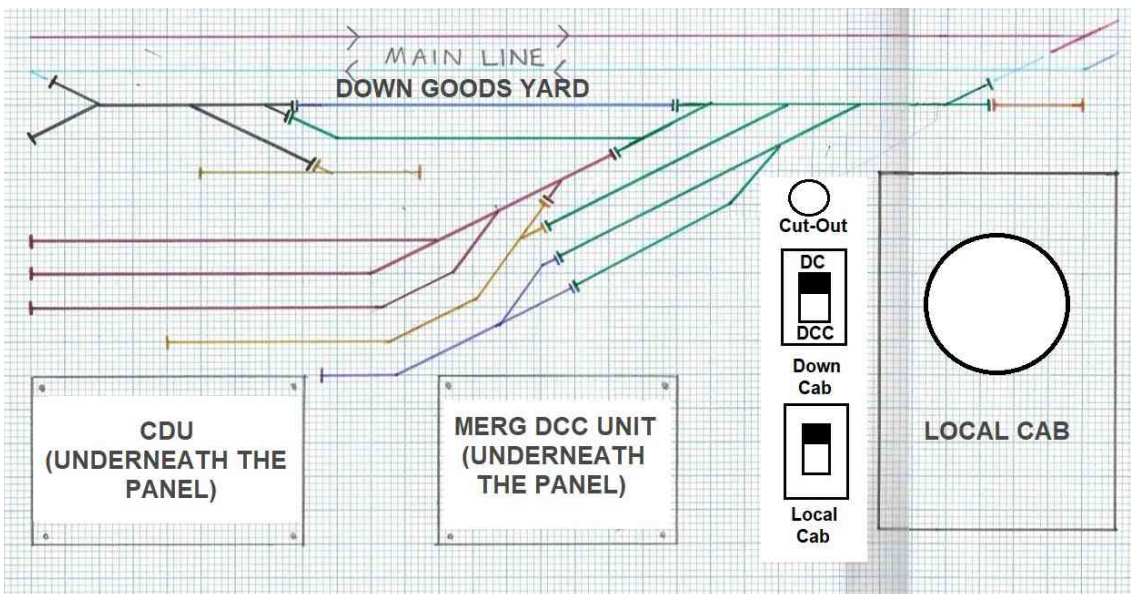
Quite apart from its siting, a new panel will enable all of the untidy and sub-standard wiring to be replaced. The functionality issues also need to be investigated separately, as some of these arise from wiring errors on the layout, rather than inside the control panel.

So, the next stage was to trace all wires to their source on the layout, and to construct a schematic diagram showing how everything was supposed to connect up.



**Schematic diagram of the old Goods Yard Control Panel**

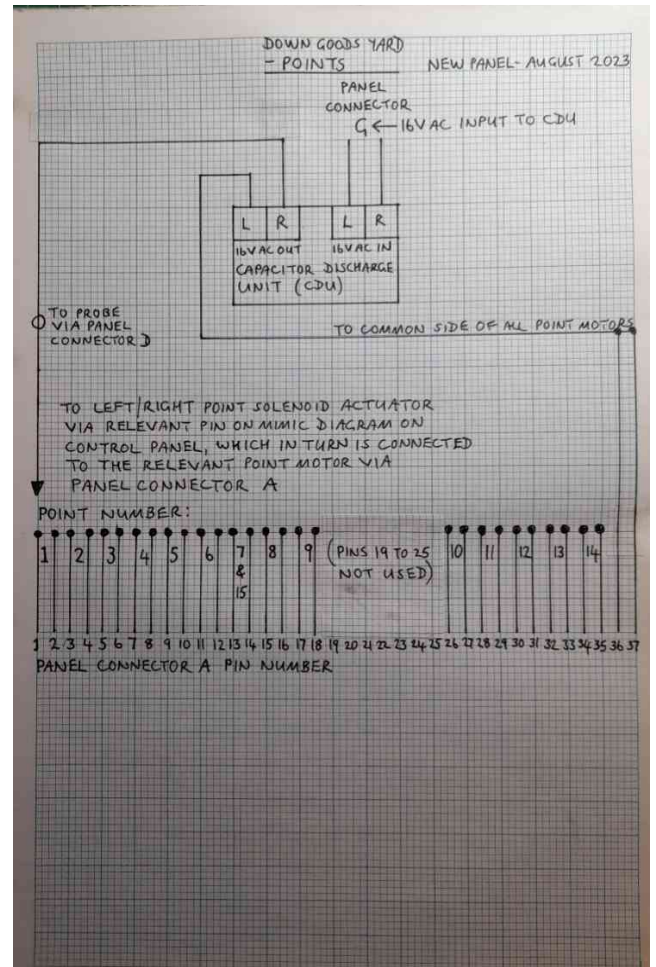
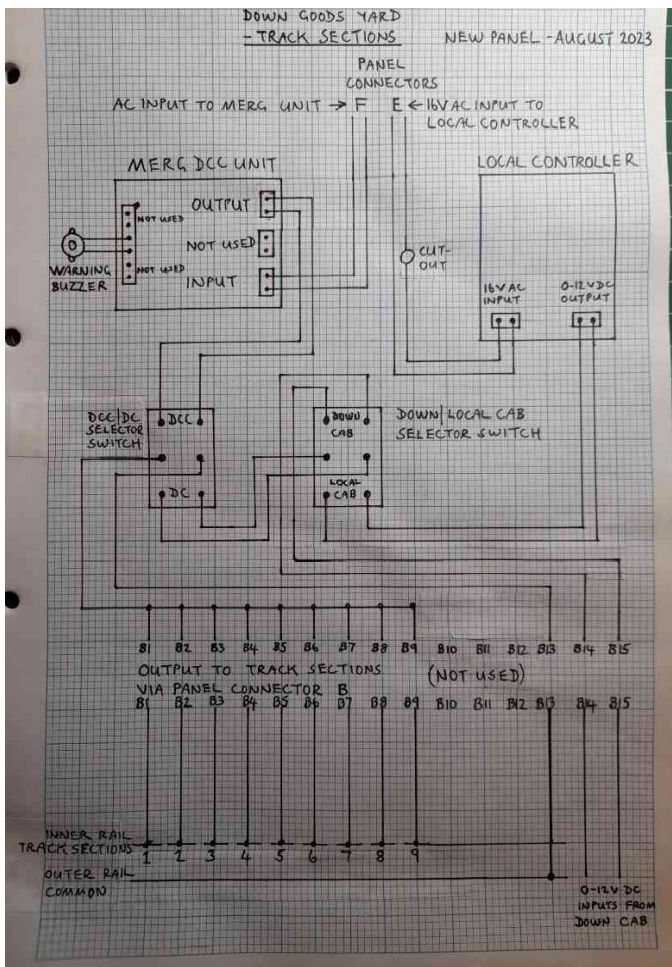
Next, I drew up the new mimic diagram and worked out how to connect the various wires to the new panel. I settled for a 15-pin computer-style connector for the 12 track section wires, a 37-pin connector for the 30 points wires, and separate connectors for each of the three sets of AC inputs (each of a different design so that they cannot be mixed up). This means that the entire panel can be disconnected and removed for maintenance and for working on the surrounding scenery.



**Mimic diagram for the new control panel**



Of course, the revised connectors required a new schematic diagram, which I split into two: one for track sections and one for points:



**New panel schematics: Track sections ... and Points**

The new panel is a simple plywood box, fixed to the baseboard with bolts and wing nuts for easy removal. The mimic diagram is constructed using a method devised by fellow Craven Arms member Chris Jamieson: the diagram is red pinstriping tape, affixed to the underside of a sheet of 3mm Perspex. So the side you see is actually the adhesive side of the tape. The Perspex is then painted, also from the underside, with silver enamel spray paint. I tried using various tape and paint colour combinations but in the end I concluded that red tape with a silver background, as used by Chris, gives by far the best appearance, so I stuck with that.

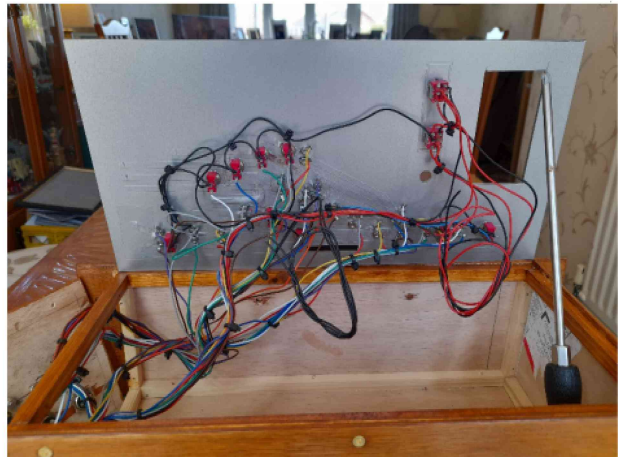
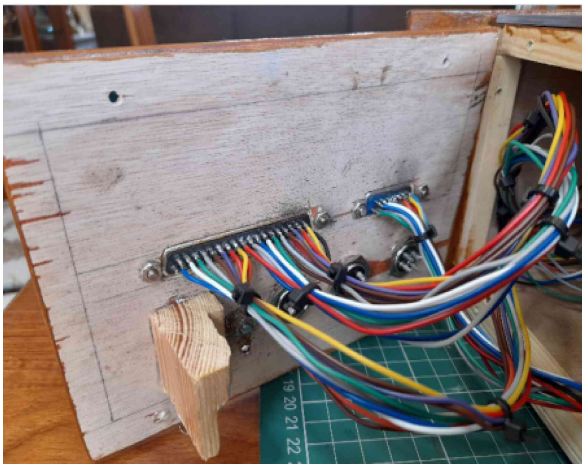
The various connectors were attached to the side of the panel, and switches affixed to the mimic diagram. Micro switches were used for the track section selector switches, and for the DC/DCC and Down/Local cab selector switches. Point selection uses the “stud and probe” method, the studs being M3 bolts and nuts, and the probe being a spare multimeter probe, connected to the panel by a standard banana plug, making the probe easily replaceable if damaged.

At the time of writing, I am in the process of replacing all track wiring in the goods yard, before decommissioning the old panel and installing the controller, MERC DCC unit and Capacitor Discharge Unit (CDU) for the points into the new panel. I expect to complete this in September 2023.

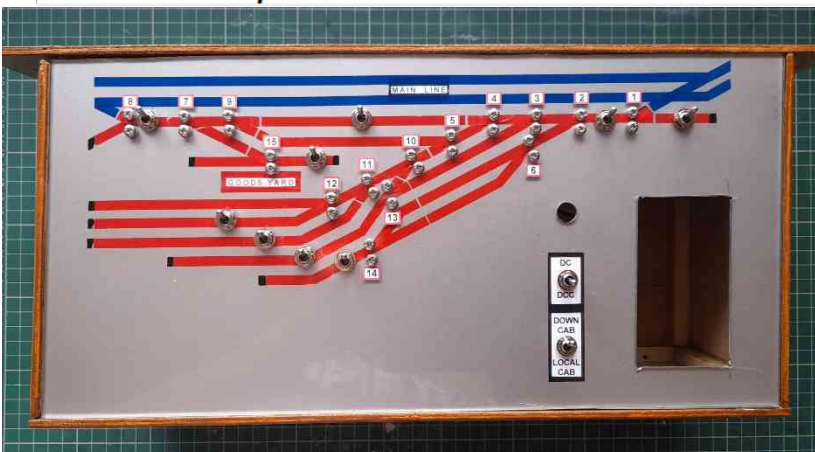
The job has been tricky, fiddly, and far more time-consuming than I originally envisaged, but enjoyable – particularly as it is outside my usual comfort zone in terms of layout-building. Besides, it is a pleasure to work on the restoration of what is, in most respects, an outstanding layout, especially in view of its age, and hopefully my efforts will contribute to its continued existence for many more years.



*Side view of the new control panel, showing the connectors to the external wiring: 15-pin computer connector for track sections, 37-pin computer connector for point solenoids, 3 x M16 Aviation Connectors for the 3 AC inputs (for MERG DCC unit, Local Controller and CDU for points) – each of a different design to prevent them from being mixed up – and a banana plug for the points probe. The circular recess at the bottom-right is to store the probe when not in use.*



*Replacement wiring in the new control panel, using heavier-gauge layout wire than that used in the old panel*



*Mimic diagram on the new control panel, awaiting installation of the Local Controller, MERG DCC unit and CDU. The diagram comprises red pin-striping tape (and blue tape to indicate the position of the main line – not controlled by this panel) attached to the underside of the Perspex panel, painted from the underside with silver enamel spray paint.*

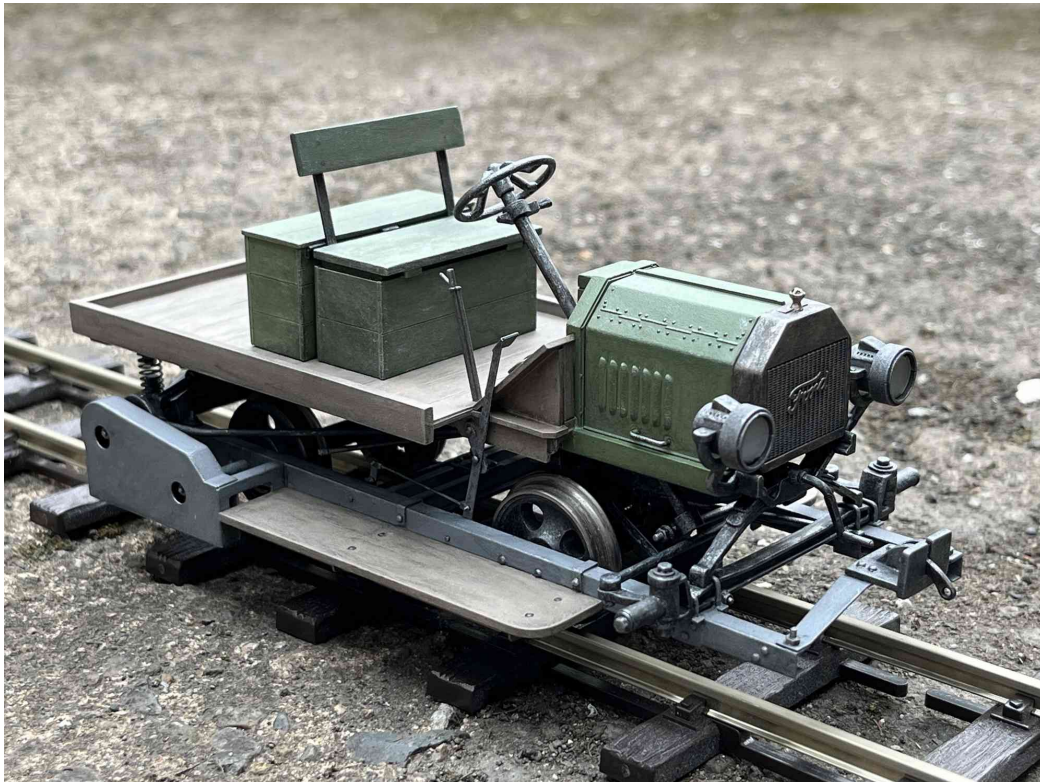
Dave Gotliffe



## Rail Rolling WW1 Crewe Tractor at 16mm/ft

As some will have seen at our mini exhibition in June, I finished the WW1 Crewe Tractor that is motorised and radio control. This long running project has made a few appearances in the newsletter, so I will just add these last few images to complete the set.

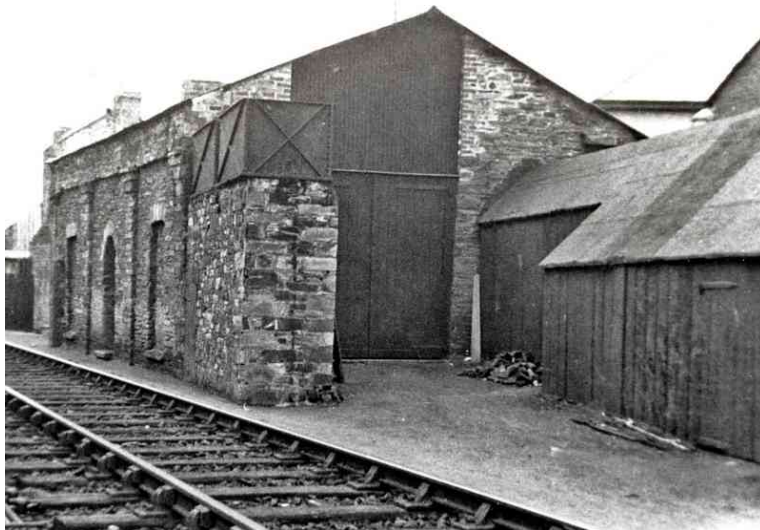
The chassis for the rail running version is all brass. I opted for 1.5mm solid brass footboards too on the assumption a bit of weight may be needed to help traction, as it is only driven on one axle. The battery is stowed under the seat, and a tiny motor & gearbox is under the bonnet. A small delrin plastic drive chain passes through two holes cut in the visible model T ford engine to a sprocket on the front rail axle.



Andy Vaughan

## Constructing Wadebridge

My Wadebridge project has been some 40 years in gestation ...however it has finally been started.... It seemed appropriate to begin the layout project with the cluster of original Bodmin & Wadebridge Railway buildings that survived till the line closed. Only a handful of pictures exist, a friend took some for me in 1966 , he borrowed his dad's Leica camera which was loaded with Kodachrome slide film and hence these are the only colour pictures I have ever seen. The engine house was built some 30 years before the Great Western Railway reached Cornwall. It was home a little locomotive called *Camel* which moved the rock from local quarries to the quay at Wadebridge. Sailing ships brought the granite to London to build the bridges over the River Thames and also the Royal Opera House. The engine shed building went through various changes in its life ....a very early black & white photo suggests that it had a lower pitch roof with slates and two roof lights. By the time the LSWR got to Wadebridge it had a new roof. When the Padstow extension was built the adjacent water tank was demolished as it impinged on the clearance needed for railway workers walking along the trackside path. The shed became a store house when the new loco shed was built and remained as such till line closure. My period is 1961. It obviously hadn't been built by the Inkas as there were structural issues. I have yet to add the buttress that shored up the left side corner. A later structural failure became obvious in two early 1950s pictures of trains arriving from Padstow. I think that the tribe involved construction may have been *Las Bodjas Grandes* and it seems they have been here at my new home as well, and hence my Wadebridge project is taking a bit longer than anticipated.







Wadebridge Engine Shed

Chris Kapolka

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'Elf & Safety!  
No Smoking Please!

oh wait....