



ASSOCIATION OF SHREWSBURY RAILWAY MODELLERS

NEWSLETTER No. 24: JUNE 2023



60007, Sir Nigel Gresley, completes a perfect scene as it thunders past Stokesay Castle heading south along the Welsh Marches line on 10th May 2023. Photograph by Chris Kapolka.

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7029, Clun Castle, speeds through Beeston on 29th April 2023, in charge of a charter train heading for Llandudno. Beautifully captured on camera by Chris Kapolka.

1. Introduction and guide to a selection of local railway attractions and events

Welcome to Issue No. 24 of the ASRM Newsletter. As Summer approaches, we look forward to a prolonged spell of good weather in which to enjoy our holidays, which we hope will include visits to some of our heritage railways, most of which are facing a difficult and uncertain future. Locally, many of us already support the Severn Valley Railway, but we are sure our friends at the Cambrian Heritage Railway, Telford Steam Railway, Welshpool and Llanfair Railway, Llangollen Railway and Chasewater Railway would also appreciate our support.

A lesser-known local attraction is the Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre in Wolverhampton. This is a small community-run museum housed in the goods depot of the long-closed Tettenhall Station, on the Wombourne branch of the Great Western's Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton line (the "Old Worse & Worse"). The museum contains a small but fascinating collection of transport memorabilia, including a OO layout of Tettenhall Station. The adjoining station building - remarkably still in existence, 90 years after its closure - contains a small tea room. Open on Fridays from 10.00am to 1.00pm, and on Saturdays and Sundays from 10.00am to 4.00pm, admission is free. Further details are obtainable on the museum's website.

www.tettenhalltransportheritagecentre.co.uk

On the model railway side, Craven Arms MRC will be holding its Spring exhibition on Saturday 3rd June at Ludlow Racecourse, from 10.00am until 4.00pm.

On Saturday 10th June. Local event organisers Chantilly Grey will be holding a model railway exhibition at St Mary's Church in the centre of Shrewsbury. Andy Vaughan and Sam Ryan will be there with a stand promoting the ASRM. Our friend Dan Evason will also be in attendance, demonstrating his remarkable figure-painting skills. A date for your diary for those who are able to attend.

**SHREWSBURY
MODEL
RAILWAY SHOW**

£5.00
ENTRY
CHILDREN
FREE

**10TH
JUNE
2023**

ST MARYS CHURCH
ST MARYS ST - DOGPOLE - SY1 1DX

10 A M - 5 P M

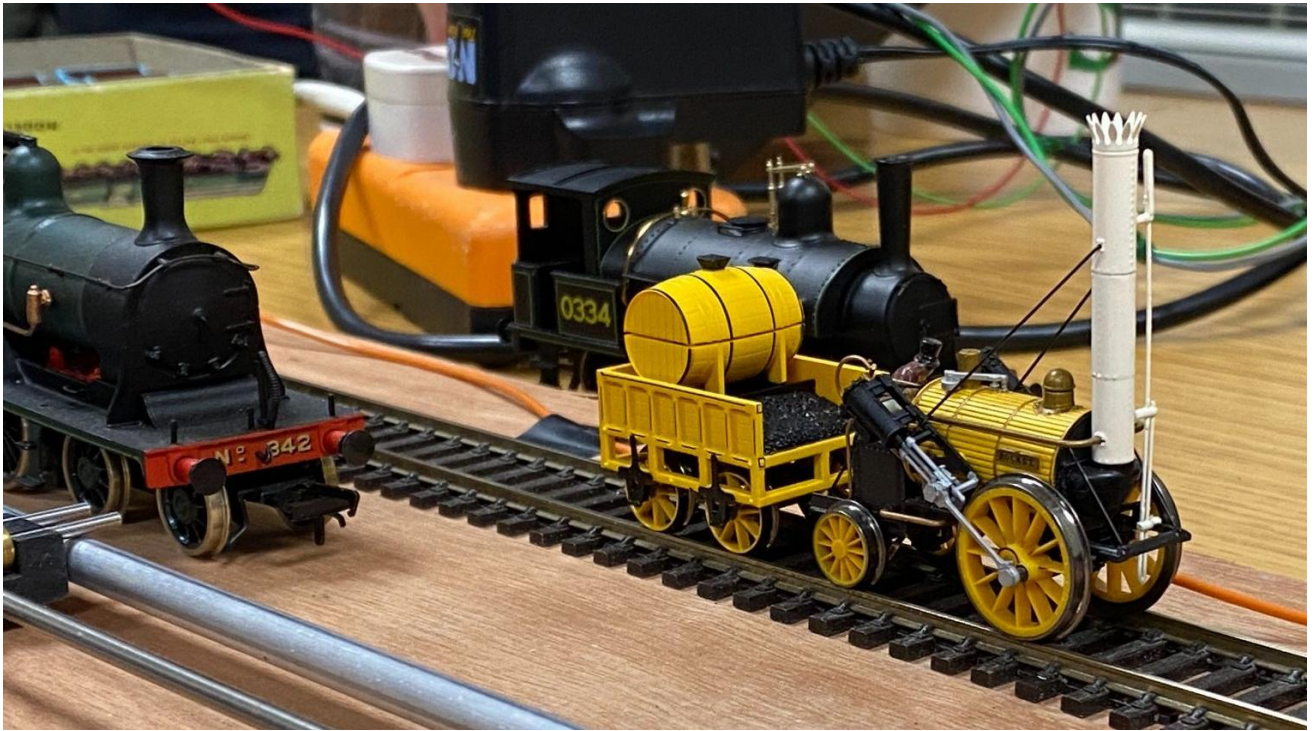
WWW.CHANTILLYGREY.COM CHANTILLYGREY@GMAIL.COM

**SHREWSBURY
MODEL RAILWAY SHOW 2023**

IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE HUGELY
TALENTED DAN EVASON
FROM TUNNEL LANE MODEL RAILWAYS WILL BE
JOINING US ON THE DAY, DEMONSTRATING
A FIGURE PAINTING MASTERCLASS!

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE 2023
10AM - 5PM
ST. MARY'S CHURCH SHREWSBURY SY1 1DX
ADULTS £4.00 - CONCESSIONS £3.00 - UNDER 16'S FREE!

Our summer meeting on 5th July will take the form of a mini-exhibition. This follows the one held in March 2022, which was a great success, if a little cramped in our usual meeting room. We have therefore booked the main hall for the exhibition this year. In addition to the exhibits, Chris Rowlatt will be holding a loco clinic for troublesome locos or rolling stock (12v DC or DCC only). Again, we hope as many of you as possible will be able to come along. Family, partners and friends are also welcome to join us.



Robert Stephenson's Rocket, at our previous mini-exhibition on 2nd February 2022.

You will probably have seen Nick Coppin's email of 9th May, regarding a Model Railway and Collectors Exhibition at Telford Steam Railway taking place in the Village Hall, Horsehay, on 30th July. The organiser is our friend Dave Angell (who gave us a talk on Tri-ang trains in February 2022), who has invited members to bring a display or layout to the show. Dave can be contacted directly at if anybody has an exhibit to offer. Otherwise, once again we hope you will be able to attend as a visitor.

Finally, I'm sure we were all impressed by the presentation by Pendon Museum's Chris Webber on 3rd May. Pendon Museum is located in the charming village of Long Wittenham in Oxfordshire, on the banks of the River Thames, about 130 miles from Shrewsbury. So a bit of a trek for a one-day visit, but if you haven't been there before, it's well worth the effort. It's open on Saturdays and Sundays, also on Wednesdays and Thursdays in August, and on other occasional days. Check out their website: <https://pendonmuseum.com/>.

Pendon Museum, Long Wittenham, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 4QD

Dave Gotliffe

2. This year's ASRM challenge:

“Make a Building for your Layout”

Following the talk about Pendon Museum on 3rd May, we thought it would be appropriate to choose as the subject for the next Challenge: 'Make a Building for your Layout'. Any scale, any subject, any size. Modify an 'RTR' building or build a kit, modify a kit or build partially or wholly from scratch; the choice is yours. We will display them after the AGM on 3rd April 2024. Plenty of time to decide what to do and make it. (Unless you are using the 'Pendon' methods, in which case we will look at it in April 2034!) We do have a copy of the Pendon booklet 'Modelling Buildings, Methods and Materials' if anyone wants to borrow it. We have also had some talks and demonstrations on making buildings from Andrew Vaughan and Geoff Kent. Reports are on the ASRM website for 9th September 2015 and 1st May 2019 respectively. There was also something on brickwork and stonework by Tim Lewis and me on 3rd November 2021. Everyone could use a building on their layout!

Nick Coppin

First Thoughts on the Challenge

I haven't yet decided what building to create for the Challenge, except that I would like to try something outside my comfort zone. This includes my choice of construction materials.

I like to construct buildings from scratch, usually from plain styrene sheets, laminated as required with embossed sheets representing brick, stone and roof slates, and braced with internal bulkheads for strength. For large buildings, the basic plastic carcass is usually built around a thin plywood base, with internal bulkheads made from either thick styrene sheet or thin plywood.

Sheet styrene is the basic go-to construction material for many modellers, although some prefer card, wood (hand- or laser-cut) or cast resin. Some modellers cover a wood or plastic shell with Das, or a similar air-drying clay, particularly where the building is faced with stonework. A clay-covered building can be embossed by hand before the clay hardens, to create a realistic surface – particularly useful for representing coarse or random stone blocks.

I was surprised to learn from Chris Webber's presentation that the Pendon team construct most of their buildings from card, so I have been looking into using this in place of my usual styrene sheets.

At this stage I needed to Clarify the measurement units, which can be confusing. This is because British sheet styrene is usually supplied in

thicknesses defined in 1000ths of an inch (“thou”); high-quality card, in microns, and most other modelling materials, in millimetres,

One inch equals 25 millimetres*, so 1 millimetre equals $(1000/25) = 40$ thou. One micron is 1,000th of a millimetre.

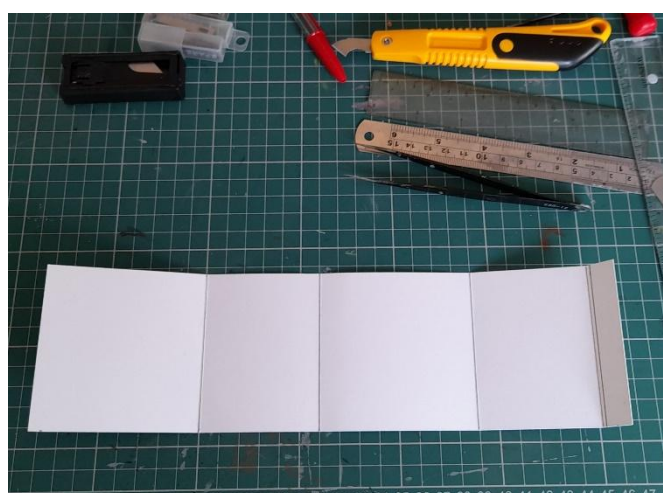
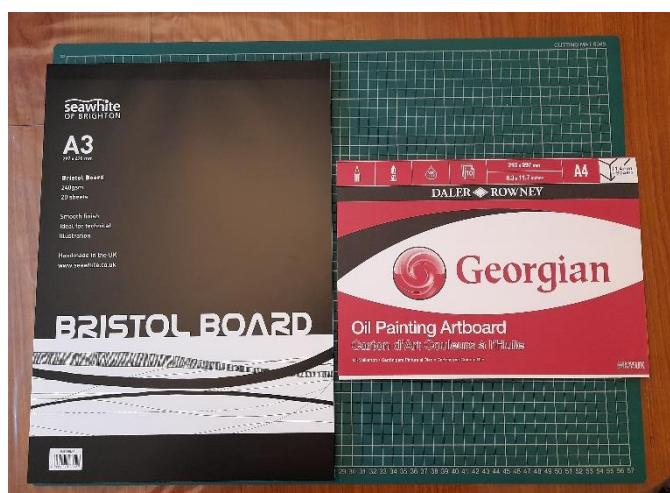
(*Strictly, one inch is 25.4 millimetres, but rounding it to 25 mm is close enough for our purposes.)

Here is a little conversion chart.

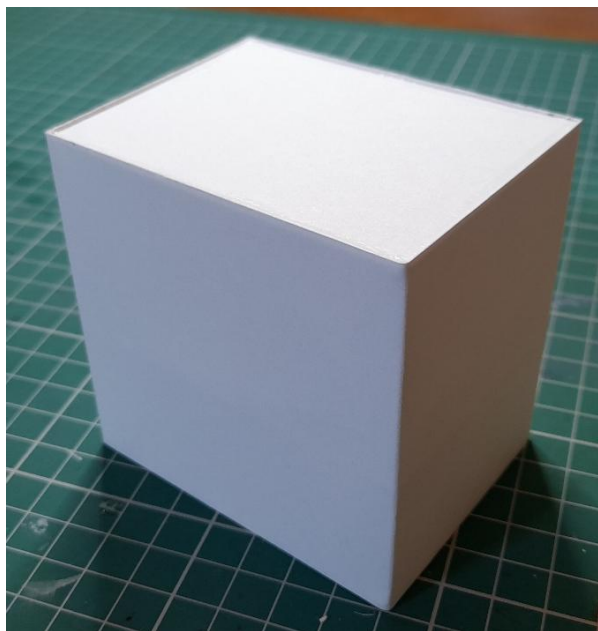
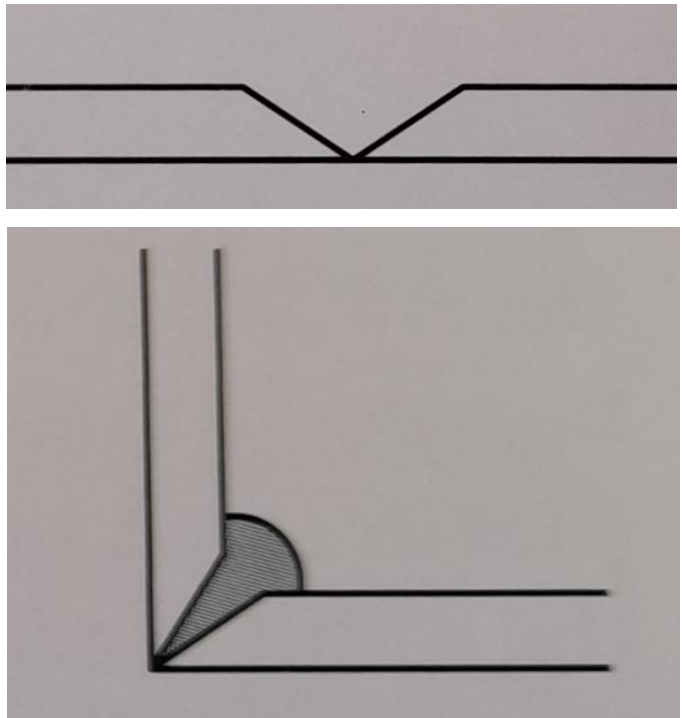
Most Modelling Materials	Plastikard	Card
2 mm	80 thou	2000 microns
1.5 mm	60 thou	1500 microns
1 mm	40 thou	1000 microns
0.75 mm	30 thou	750 microns
0.5 mm	20 thou	500 microns
0.25 mm	10 thou	250 microns

In addition to the Pendon booklet 'Modelling Buildings, Methods and Materials' by Malcolm Smith, referred to by Nick above, I also have access to another Pendon book, 'Cottage Modelling for Pendon' by Chris Pilton, and I have been researching both.

Chris’s presentation suggested Bristol Board for the basic structure. This is a high-quality card, 560 microns (just over 0.5mm) thick, available from Hobbycraft at £10.50 for 20 x A3 sheets. The Malcolm Smith booklet simply suggests using “high-quality white card with a matt surface, about 0.5mm thick”, without mentioning Bristol Board by name. The Chris Pilton book goes further, recommending **not** using Bristol Board (“apparently its skin is too brittle”), but suggests “Apsley White Pasteboard”. All very confusing! In any case, 0.5mm seems very flimsy to me, compared with my sheet styrene structures, which are generally 1.0 or 1.5mm thick. But as I’ve now invested in a pack of Bristol Board I’m going to experiment with it for the time being. (I also bought a pack of 1.5mm Artboard for use as internal floors and bulkheads.)



So far I've just made a simple box from the Bristol Board. Chris described the necessity to make a "V" at the folds, ensuring the cut doesn't go right through the card. This sounds easy, and looks simple enough from the drawings, but in reality the card is very thin so the "V" is not easy to cut - my first attempt resulted in corners that are not as crisp as I would have liked. It will need some practice! However, the box went together easily, using standard Evo Stik PVA wood glue, and the Artboard for internal bracing. The complete box seems solid enough, although the surface feels fragile, but I guess if it's good enough for Pendon it should be good enough for me!



One reason Chris promotes using Bristol Board is that its surface can be directly hand-embossed with brick or stone effect. Although the same effect can be achieved by covering a structure with embossed Plastikard, the Pendon method enables the exact brick/stone surface of the original to be applied to the model, including any imperfections, irregularities, and – importantly – the exact configuration of corner bricks or stones. I have made a few attempts, but so far I've found that while the card can be easily embossed, it is difficult and very time-consuming to get right.

This leads me to question whether card construction has any other advantages over styrene and /or plywood. So far I can think of three possibles:

- Card is significantly cheaper (especially when compared with styrene sheet laminated with embossed brick/stone/slate sheets);
- Windows and doors are easier to cut, with high accuracy and sharp corners;
- Card takes watercolour paint, which is easy to apply in layers and enables a more subtle and realistic paint finish to be achieved.

I'll press on for the time being, and let you know how things progress. I hope you will all join me in finding a suitable building – and construction method – for the Challenge!

Dave Gotliffe

3. The Wells & Walsingham Light Railway

by Mike Bennett

During our travels around the British Isles I identified a camp site in Norfolk which boasted its very own railway station, which fact encouraged me, nay demanded, I made a booking.

[Had the site claimed that it had its own 'train station' I would not have been so enthusiastic.]

What I did not know at the time of booking was the meaning of the name of the site: "The Midden". Students of old English will know that this was the term for a Rubbish Heap. In fact the site had been completely landscaped and now, best of all, provided a personnel gate leading directly to a platform and a quadrant signal with which we took childish delight pulling ON, and the satisfaction of a crowded train stopping just for the two of us. Even better on the way back to overhear comments asking who these two scruffy people were for whom the train made a special and unadvertised stop, apparently in the middle of nowhere!

This 10¼" gauge line runs 4 miles from Wells-next-the-Sea to Walsingham which is the location of the famous pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. The line was constructed by Roy Francis who had harboured an interest in railways from childhood. He was born in 1922 and at the age of 14 his father sent him to Naval College from whence he progressed to become a distinguished and decorated Lieutenant-Commander. In 1956 he left the Navy and set up a boat building business on the Broads; and then in 1976 Norfolk County Council asked him to construct the 10¼" gauge Wells Harbour Railway which he then sold in 1979 to finance the construction of the Wells and Walsingham Light Railway. Sadly the Harbour Railway, ironically commissioned to relieve congestion on the roads, was closed in 2021 and replaced by a bus service.

For four miles the Wells and Walsingham follows the course of the former Great Eastern line to Wymondham which was closed on 3 October 1964. It is claimed this makes it the longest 10¼" railway in the world. Services commenced on 6 April 1982 and one cannot but help ponder if Roy Francis' days in business had been instrumental in choosing the beginning of the fiscal year, perhaps for some tax advantage, especially as this was a Tuesday - who knows? The first locomotive was an 0-6-0 tank most appropriately named "Pilgrim". This served the line well for five years when "Norfolk Hero", a 2-6-0 + 0-6-2 Garratt took over. This enabled two further coaches to be added increasing the seating capacity to 76. In 2011 a second Garratt was introduced and named: "Norfolk Heroine". Although Garratts are a powerful locomotive the final approach to Walsingham can nevertheless be demanding

with a heavily loaded train pulling up the 1:60, for which the partial infilling of the original cutting can be blamed.

That just leaves me to extoll the virtues of this lovely little railway with its unique Garratts, and of course to add that if you have never visited Wells-next-the-Sea this also is delightful, and on arrival at Walsingham you will have been pleasantly hauled back in time.

Four trains run daily during the 2023 season with the first one departing at 10:30 and the price is £10.50 with a £2.00 discount on Fridays for what they still term "OAPs", and what is wrong with that? Moreover, just like old times one just turns up and goes, paying the guard on the train, no need for mobile phone payment or online advance booking, but then this is Norfolk!



Mike Bennett

4. Coventry: A Project in Historical Railway Modelling by Chris Cox

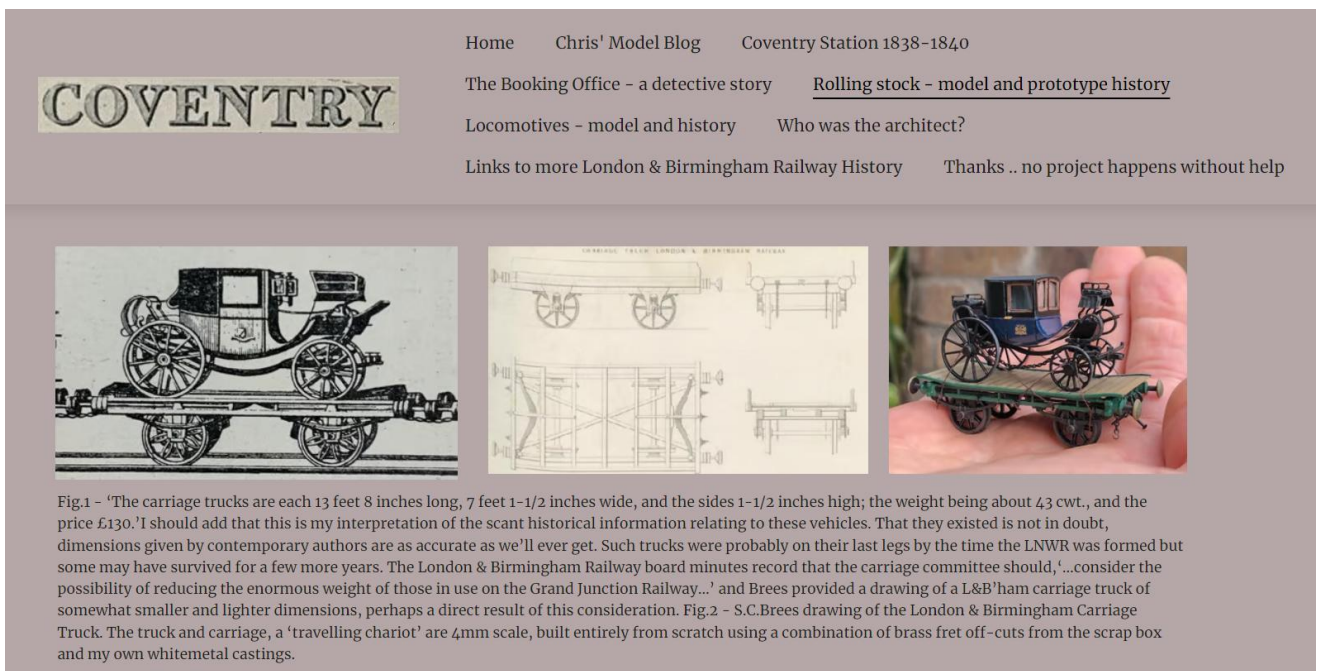
A year ago, my friend Tom Nicholls and I embarked on a joint project to model Coventry Station of the London & Birmingham Railway c.1839. As part of the project, we have set up a website:

<http://coventry1839.org>

The website is a combination of Tom's extensive and meticulous research into the history, day-to-day running and rolling stock of the London & Birmingham and my own modelling of the station as it appeared in 1839, together with all the relevant rolling stock and distinctive bar-framed Bury locomotives. The website is a recent development, and whilst it's early days yet we are beginning to fill it with articles covering both historical research and modelling, in the form of regular blog entries as I progress with that side of things. Tom lives in London and has spent many hours poring over archive material stored at the National Archives at Kew and in the British Library at St. Pancras, discovering some gems of early railway history along the way.

The layout will be portable for exhibition purposes, and is in 4mm scale to EM track standards.

There is still much to do but readers might be interested in taking a look at the website and following progress of this layout, which we hope will be able to be exhibited in 2024 - perhaps with the ASRM getting 'first dibs'!



Home Chris' Model Blog Coventry Station 1838-1840

The Booking Office - a detective story Rolling stock - model and prototype history

Locomotives - model and history Who was the architect?

Links to more London & Birmingham Railway History Thanks .. no project happens without help

COVENTRY

Fig.1 - 'The carriage trucks are each 13 feet 8 inches long, 7 feet 1-1/2 inches wide, and the sides 1-1/2 inches high; the weight being about 43 cwt., and the price £130.' I should add that this is my interpretation of the scant historical information relating to these vehicles. That they existed is not in doubt, dimensions given by contemporary authors are as accurate as we'll ever get. Such trucks were probably on their last legs by the time the LNWR was formed but some may have survived for a few more years. The London & Birmingham Railway board minutes record that the carriage committee should, '...consider the possibility of reducing the enormous weight of those in use on the Grand Junction Railway...' and Brees provided a drawing of a L&B'ham carriage truck of somewhat smaller and lighter dimensions, perhaps a direct result of this consideration. Fig.2 - S.C.Brees drawing of the London & Birmingham Carriage Truck. The truck and carriage, a 'travelling chariot' are 4mm scale, built entirely from scratch using a combination of brass fret off-cuts from the scrap box and my own whitmetal castings.

An extract of a page from Chris Cox and Tom Nicholls's website, containing information about the L&B's Carriage Trucks from the 1830s. Each of the originals cost £130 to build; we would hazard a guess that this is somewhat less than the cost of each of Chris's superb EM Scale models!

Chris Cox

5. Road Vehicle Challenge #1

WW1 Model T Ford Ambulance, 1:19 (16mm/foot)

by *Andy Vaughan*

The ambulance is built upon an old American Model T Ford kit which is noted as 1:20 scale, though a fair number of parts in these older kits tend to be a tiny bit over scale which suits me just fine, as my aim is 1:19 anyway. The kit is die cast metal and plastic for a touring car Model T, so I cut away all the car bits so left with only a chassis, axles, front mudguards and the bonnet. The back mudguards also got cut off, but then re-used later after some hefty re-bending in the vice.

The body part is a construction of 1mm plasticard sheet made into a box and reinforced inside with cross bracing. The radius parts are 2x1mm styrene strips glued to a shaped core, like planking around a barrel, then sanded smooth after. The seat is made by splicing two model T seats together to make it big enough – luckily the other model T projects I have did not need the upholstered seats, so I had spare. At this scale I wanted to see the canvas texture on the back. This is done with silk – on eBay you can get a square metre for silk painting. It comes with some wrinkles though so I laid out cling film on a flat surface then spread out the silk and soaked it in dilute PVA. After it is dry you can peel it off and it is lovely and flat and is resistant to fraying at the edges when cut with a scalpel. The windows are acetate glued as a sandwich between 2 layers of silk. The straps on the back are just narrow strips of silk again, but painted to hopefully look a bit more like webbing. Brush painted with acrylics, with extensive drybrushing.



6. Road Vehicle Challenge #2

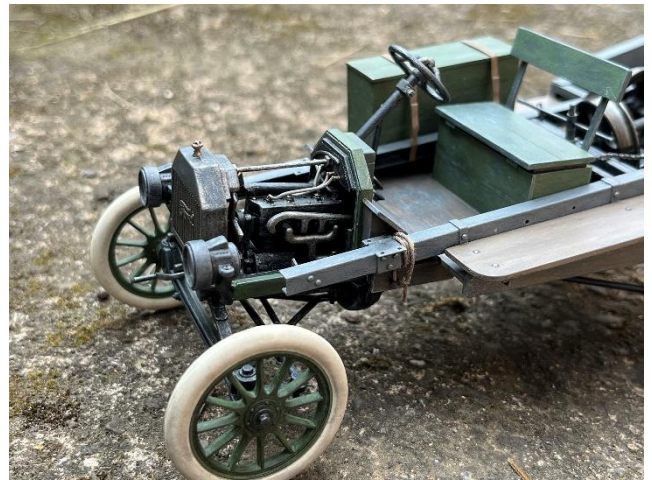
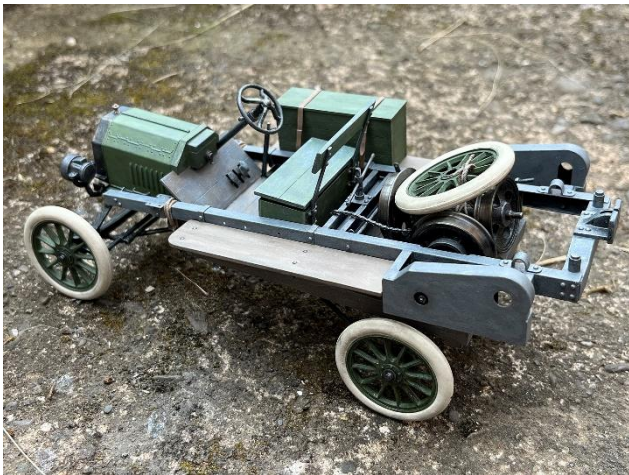
WW1 Crewe Tractor in road-mode, 1:19 (16mm/foot)

by Andy Vaughan

This Crewe Tractor is one of two I am making – one for the road, and one for the rails. The Crewe Tractor was a Model T Ford that could carry its own narrow gauge railway chassis, drive to the tracks then be converted in about an hour, and drive away as a light locomotive on the 2-foot narrow gauge supply lines in WW1 northern France.

The model is again based on the old Model T kit, even more got cut away for this one – there is more offcut left over than there is in use. The flatbed, seat, floor and parts of the body are again plasticard sheet and strip. The rail chassis is fabricated and folded up from a brass etch I designed for the purpose – it is not a kit – there is no way I want to write the manual to build these! The rail wheels have the drive sprockets fitted, and a dummy drive chain hangs over the chassis rail and is piled up below it. The thing that looks like a large tommy bar on the rail chassis was like carrying their own turntable – wind it down until the wheel flanges clear the rail, rotate your Model T, lower it and drive off the other direction.

The rail version I am making is once again a pile of bits on the bench, though the chassis is now together and primed. More on that one next time.





Andy Vaughan's superb Model T Ford Ambulance (top) and Crewe Tractor in Road Mode (bottom). We look forward to seeing the Rail Mode version of the Crewe Tractor – currently under construction by Andy.

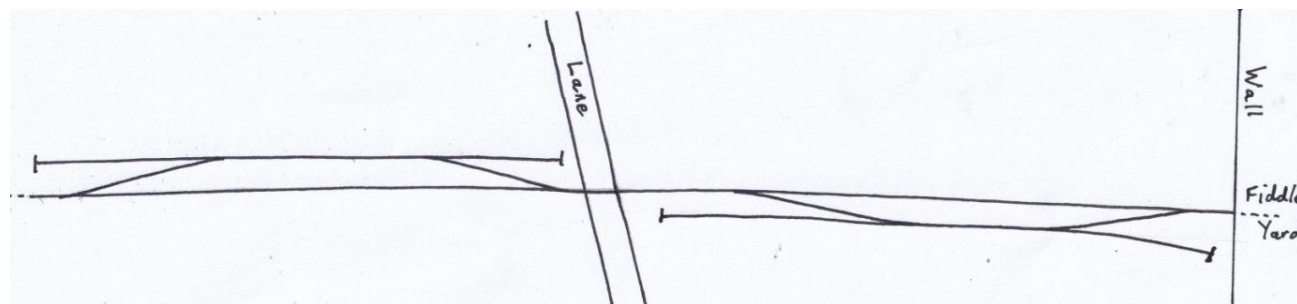
Andy Vaughan

7. Transforming a Layout

by Nick Coppin

Listening to Chris Webber's talk about Pendon Museum reminded me that superb quality layouts take a very long time to complete. Time, being something most of us know is finite! In a charming [Pathé film](#) about Royce England of 1958, they say the Pendon project will take another 25 years to complete! 65 years later, it is still not finished.

I had a plan to build an historically accurate model layout and after much research and wanting to base it on the Great Eastern Railway, I chose Tollesbury in Essex. It was quite simple and though built as a through station, the line beyond was little used and it became a *de facto* terminus.



I have modelled in 0 gauge since I was a lad and I decided to build it to this scale with radio control instead of track power. I built the base in the garage and laid the track ignoring the possibility of powering the track. This meant no track sections or switching and I could include prototypical stretcher bars between the point blades which short it all out! I started building suitable pre-Great War wagons and also started the loco, an un-rebuilt R24 0-6-0 side tank; what became a J67/69. Covid intervened and I got side tracked into building a live steam loco and running battery powered Dapol locos on my outdoor 32mm gauge track. The GE project ground to a halt and despite building a few more wagons and making some progress with the loco, I got to the point where I could not see me ever finishing it. The real stumbling block was the loco. I had scratch-built it but found fitting the radio control and associated batteries, charging socket and switch difficult to fit in. I also wondered how I could paint it in beautiful Great Eastern blue with all the lining. It seemed the whole project would be for naught.

I could not convert the layout to 2 rail, so was stuck with radio-controlled locos. Against prevailing opinion, it is built into the garage, not portable, so not something I could alter or dismantle easily.

So I decided to put Tollesbury on hold and re-imagine it, using the same track plan, as exchange sidings for a colliery. I already had two r/c NCB locos and a batch of empty and a batch of loaded 16t mineral wagons. I pinched the r/c gear for the GE loco and fitted it to a BR pannier tank. There is a fiddle yard through the wall in the workshop so I can run full coal trains into one siding behind an NCB loco. A BR loco brings in a train of empties with a brake van. After some shunting, the NCB loco takes away the empties and the mainline loco the full wagons with the brake van attached to the rear. Not exactly mind-blowingly exciting but at least the layout is

being used. I can run trains on it. It has also spurred me on to make progress with the scenery.



NCB owned, ex GWR, pannier takes away empty coal wagons

I have not completely given up on the GE version of the layout, so I will not do anything too drastic that cannot be undone. Coal mine exchange sidings could well be surrounded by fields. I am assuming mine are situated on the site of a station that has lost its passenger service. Not, however in Essex!

Nick Coppin



Chris Kapolka

A4 Pacific 60007, Sir Nigel Gresley, heads off from Crewe via Chester down to the West Somerset Railway. Photographed by Chris Kapolka at Beeston on Tuesday 9th May 2003.