ASRM September Newsletter

ASRM, the current state of play.
In case you are wondering about the likelihood of resuming meetings, the Committee have been discussing this in email exchanges. As rules and advice seem to change daily, this is just an idea at the time of writing!

We believe we might be permitted to resume ASRM meetings if the Priory School makes the room available, in accordance with the latest guidance on multi-purpose community facilities, *an extract of which is attached below*. We think the same broad principles apply to community facilities as is the case for pubs, restaurants and other public places that have reopened; there is no longer a fixed limit on numbers but people are advised not to socially-interact with people outside their household or support bubble. This is why pubs and restaurants provide table service for each separate group. In other words, it is OK if there are other people on the premises, provided you practice social-distancing from them.

Perhaps we could resume with our Christmas meeting on 2nd December? We would have to ensure activities don't involve too much close contact but perhaps we could hold the quiz and members could be invited to give a quick talk on their Plastikard Challenge entry or anything else they've been working on during the lockdown.

Guidance

COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities

Updated 14 August 2020

3c: Recreation, leisure and social gatherings

We recognise the importance of social clubs for some individuals and recommend that these can proceed with caution in venues that have been made COVID-19 secure.

Clubs or groups that use community facilities can begin to meet again and facility managers should follow these COVID-19 secure guidelines to facilitate that.

Premises or locations following COVID-19 secure guidelines will be able to hold more than 30 people, subject to their own capacity limits. It is important for people to maintain social distancing and good hand hygiene when visiting these spaces. People using community facilities should continue to limit their interactions with those they do not live with outside of any formal activities they are participating in to help control the virus.

People meeting in a club or group context at a community centre should be encouraged to socially distance from anyone they do not live with or who is not in their support bubble.

Buffet Car
Meanwhile here is a suggestion you might like to consider. For a year or so, we have been running the *Buffet Car* in Broseley. Five of us meet up for coffee and train chat once a week or fortnightly at each other's houses. We bring along models and books to talk about and share and invariably someone has a modelling problem they want help with. We switched to Zoom at the start of lockdown but have recently resumed in each other's gardens, which is really nice.

If you wanted to, groups of up to 6 ASRM members could contact each other and try a similar arrangement. If you don't know where anyone else lives, I could put an email out asking for members near central Shrewsbury or Telford, Baschurch or wherever, to contact you to form a group. What do you think? It might be a nice interim solution to being starved of train chat!

Nick Coppin

The Motorised challenge.
This is the new challenge for next April's AGM Meeting, suggested in the July Newsletter by Peter, our chairman. We hope this will give you something to work towards.

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

BELDMAN, an N scale USA layout built by Graham Betts.
Some years ago, during a fly-drive holiday in the USA, I was extremely impressed by the 'railroads' both modern, old and disappeared that covered the states of Arizona and Colorado. Such was my enthusiasm for something not even British, I decided to build an N gauge layout based in the Rocky Mountains.

My trip had included sight of the miles long Santa-Fe (BNSF) trains running through Flagstaff and the steam powered line from Williams to the Grand Canyon in Arizona. This was followed by driving past lifted railroad track and derelict infrastructure of what I later learnt was the route of the Rio Grande Southern and an unmissable trip on the Durango and Silverton preserved line. A drive along part of the Rio Grande route leading to the renown, but now abandoned Tennessee Pass that once connected Salt Lake City with Denver allowed me to see the location of what would become the inspirational location for my model. My final rail trip was on the Georgetown Loop and an end to my holiday in Denver – via the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden of course. My only regret was my ignorance of railroads in the States before leaving the UK meant I missed so much more.

As for my model, I based it on the Rio Grande, Tennessee Pass route at a time following the various mergers and take overs involving the Denver and Rio Grande (DRGW), Southern Pacific, Western Pacific and Union Pacific so all three styles can be run – diesels in black, grey and yellow. The railroad building style is that of the Rio Grande Southern.

Other buildings are based on the intensive mining along the route fitted into the steep rocky canyon geography of the Tennessee Pass, littered with aspen trees.

Following completion of the 12ft x 2ft model I wrote an article published in Continental Modeller, later followed by a supplementary article in CM after the addition of an extra board giving the full length of 16ft.

The track is Peco code 55, the buildings are all bespoke ‘plasticard’ scratch build and the scenery uses of a lot of cork bark, sea moss ‘Forest in a box’ and Woodland Scenics scatter products. The diesels are all Atlas and the stock is a mixture of makes: Atlas, Kato, Micro Trains, Model Power, Roundhouse and Walthers, all fitted with Magne-Magnetic couplers.

The model has been displayed at Welshpool, Ellesmere and the Trent Valley North American Modellers exhibition near Rugeley.

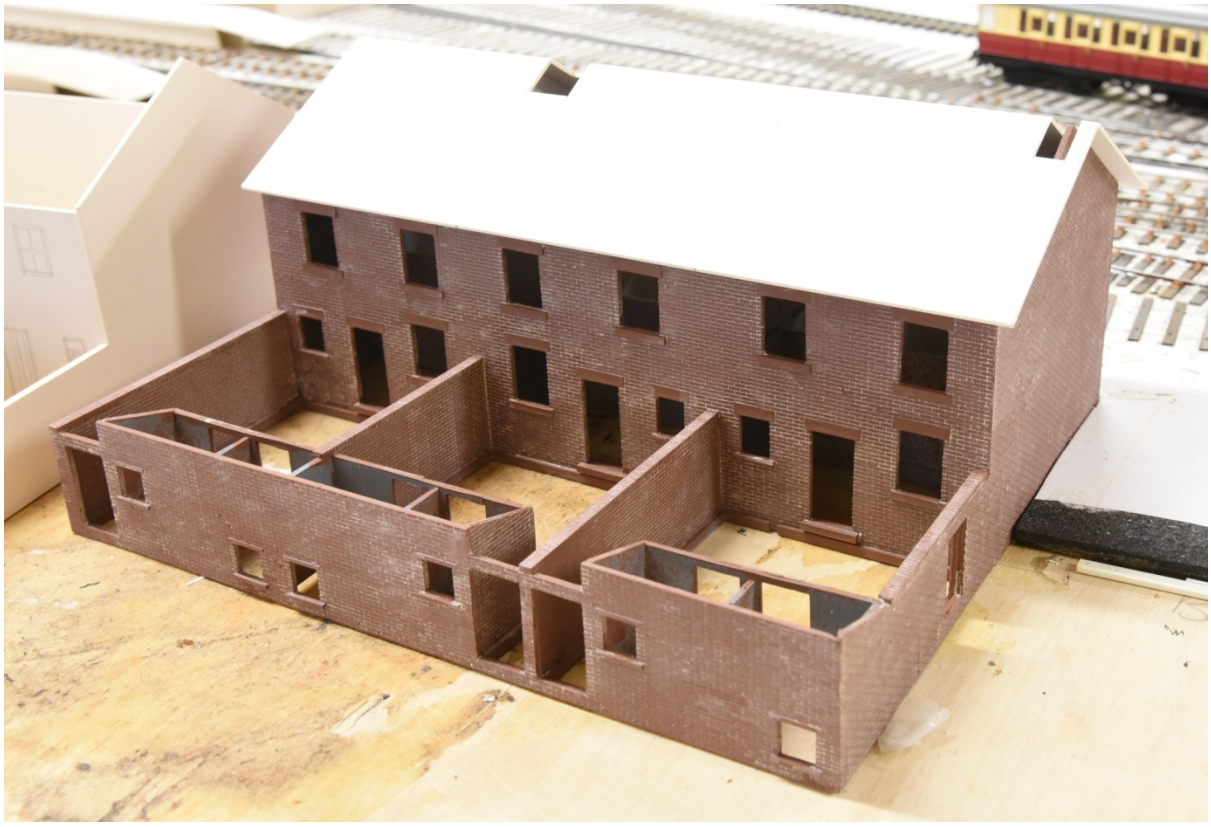
That’s enough of me – here are some pictures:


UNION PACIFIC
5301
Rio Grande

Graham Betts

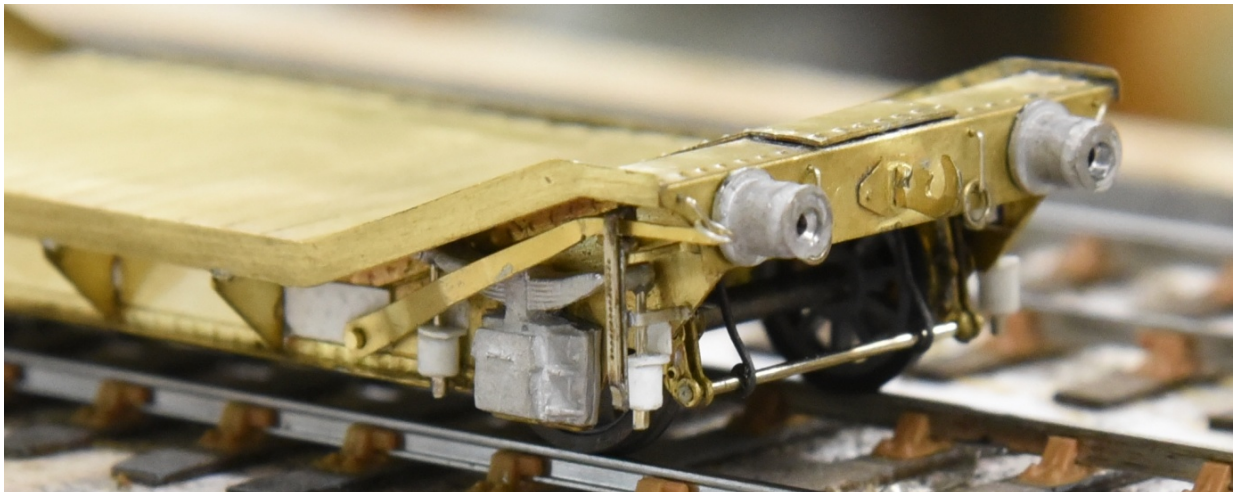
ASRM Plasticard Challenge and other modelling

I missed giving an update in the July newsletter, so there's two months modelling to catch up on. In fact, not a great deal has happened on the modelling front, having been diverted onto gardening and other domestic things. There is some minor progress however. In the June newsletter, the station cottages had just received their first coat of brick colour. I've now done the mortar courses, and have continued experiments with windows and doors (these are only temporarily held in position at the moment). I've now got a "template" for window and door construction that I'm happy with. I also made a start on the second chimney, but like an idiot cut the hole in the roof the wrong size, so had to make a new roof (which is no big deal - just a piece of folder card).

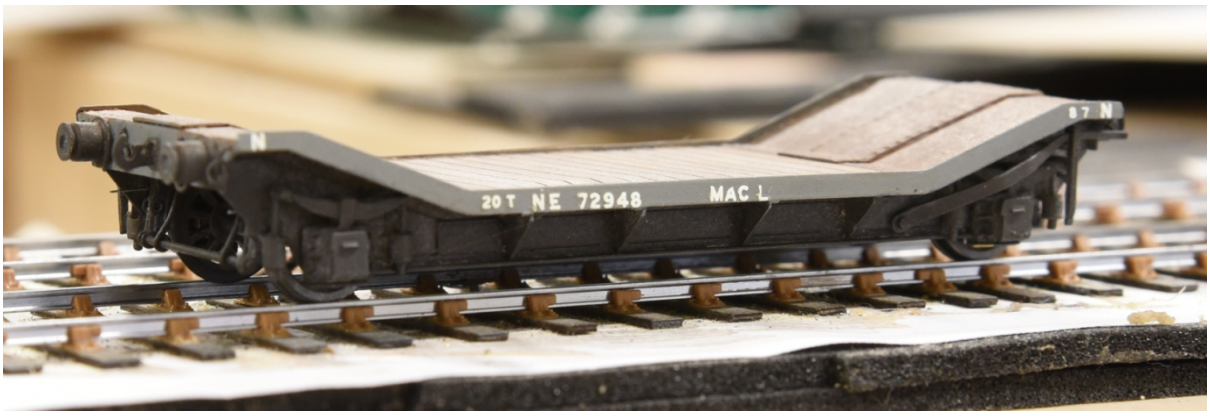


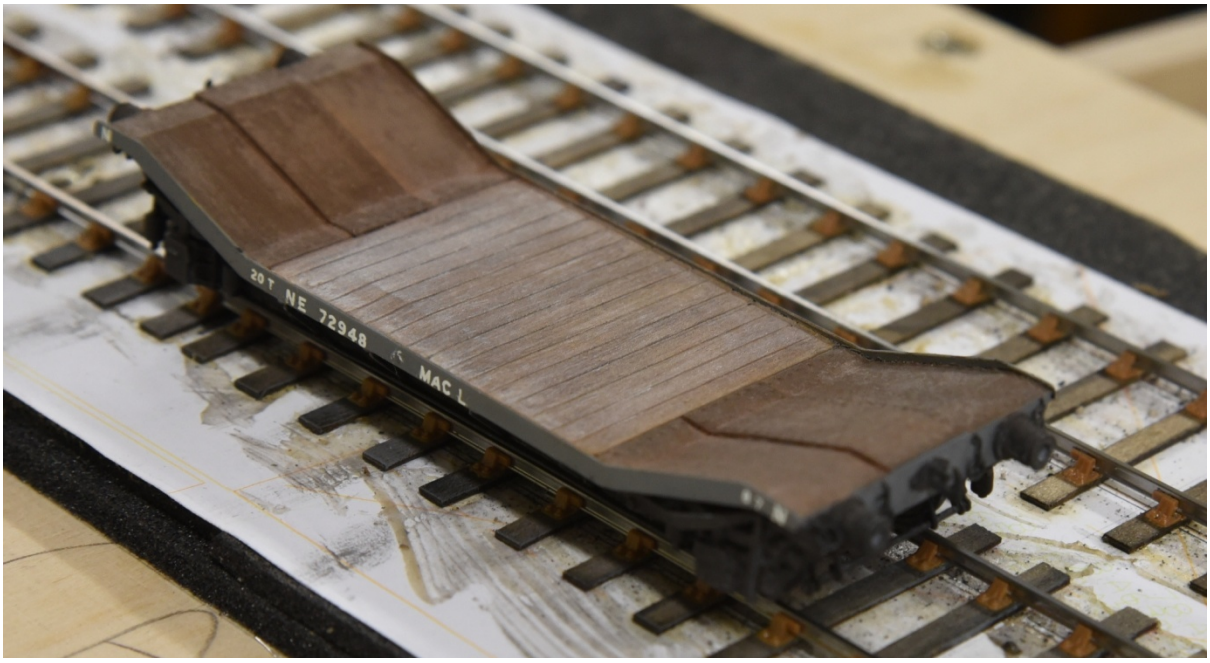
I've also made some progress on the decorative brick courses at the tops of the chimney stacks. No photos of these just yet, as the detail won't show up in photos until it's got a coat of primer/paint.
Next jobs are further dry-brushing of the walls, then painting cills and lintels, as well as making a start on the final configuration of windows and doors.

The NER Lowmac has also progressed a bit. Last time I said there were **just** the brake levers and guides to do before painting: this was true, but they turned out to be very fiddly. The ones provided in the kit were not really the right shape and the bracket securing them to the body was all wrong. So, using the drawing and photos in Tatlow as a guide, I fabricated new brackets out of nickel silver strip, and used some spare lever guides from Dave Bradwell. I used the brake levers from the kit, but modified the shape. After a considerable (!) amount of work, I ended up with this.....



....which I think looks OK. I then began the painting, lettering and weathering process, which isn't quite finished yet, but it's getting there:





I'm quite pleased with how the wooden deck and metal ramps came out - a combination of Lifecolor acrylics, Humbrol enamels and weathering powders. Transfers are from HMRS. So, now it needs lashing rings, buffers, couplings and securing chains/shackles, then final weathering - all in all, a time-consuming wagon!

Tim Lewis

A brief history of British trams. (excluding the Isle of Man)

'A tram is a passenger vehicle running on rails laid in a public road' OED.

Four wheel trucks on rails were used in mines and quarries to carry various materials for many years and first converted for passenger use in South Wales from Swansea to the Mumbles in 1807. This was a horse drawn passenger stage coach put onto rails. At that time public roads became quickly damaged from the coach wheels and the rails gave a smoother

ride with no damage to the road surface. Horse drawn trams were introduced in many British town and cities and the last horse drawn in Britain was in Morecambe in 1926.

Cable hauled trams based on the American San Francisco design with quick release cable grippers was introduce in Birmingham in 1886, running from the City centre to Handsworth. A cable winding system used steam engines that wound the continuous cables around drums at each end of the route. The driver griped the tram on and off the cable providing stops for the passengers. It continued in service for nearly thirty years until 1911. The largest British cable system was in Edinburgh. It employed 202 double-decker trailers and continued in service until 1922. One remaining cable hauled tramway is the Great Orme system at Llandudno.

Steam Tram engines were first tried as an integral unit by locomotive designers. Due to fire and smoke affecting passengers they were soon separated. Steam tram engines became the norm, many with condensers on the roof. The first successful steam tram engine in Britain was designed by Henry Hughes of Loughborough. Engines by Hughes entered service in 1877 in the Vale of Clyde route in Scotland. As a general rule in Britain only one trailer was used behind the steam tram engine. These could be single and double-deckers.
The Stony Stratford steam tramway in Buckinghamshire lasted until 1926. Most steam tram systems were converted to electricity before 1910.

The first electric tram in Britain was in Blackpool in 1885, using a third rail Conductive system. The system functioned via a third rail placed between the two main rails. Power was feed under the tram using a collector shoe or plough running in the third rail. Initially London objected to overhead cables and the Conductive System was used on early routes and some continued to be used until 1952.
Lorain stud conductive system was tried in the road at Wolverhampton and later abandoned for safety reasons. The first overhead cables with a Trolley Pole were introduced in Leeds in 1891.

Initially electric power at 600-750DC was provided by stand alone dynamos driven by steam engines. (one is preserved at the National Tram Museum). From the 1930's onwards AC power was taken from the National Grid, rectified to DC and reduced to the required voltage. On long routes a number of sub stations were required so that the local domestic supply was not compromised.

Trams running in British towns and cities were predominately Dirk Kerr trams, of which some 8,000 were manufactured in Preston. Also used were, Horsfield trams and some local authorities manufactured to their own designs. The majority of British trams were mounted on bogies by English Electric, Maley & Taunton, Brush & Co and E.M.B. (Electro Magnetic Brake).

Michael Glover

Control Cabinet, Operating and Slow Progress.

In the July newsletter I mentioned how I had acquired a trailer load of MDF off-cuts, some of which were of substantial size to enable, amongst other things, the manufacture of a control cabinet to house an ever-growing array of wizardry. I forecast that the temptation of operating would put paid to swift progress in the way of either baseboard construction or track laying to connect the main run to the MPD. Unlike a weather forecast, this did prove correct, as the fun of operating put many things on hold, including the ever-lasting list of outstanding items not railway related. (apparently).

To quickly get the layout working again after the house move I pressed into service an old steel cabinet [photo 1]. The layout had grown like topsy and I had never got round to making a bespoke cabinet, so now this was the time to rectify that situation.

Among the pile of MDF was located a perfect rectangular off-cut measuring 1200 x 750 x 19mm which was earmarked for a small bench and, if the bungalow's walls had not been substantially out of true, would have fitted the available space perfectly without any adjustment.

The cabinet [photo's 2, 3 & 4] houses a Lenz Command Station LZV100 feeding two Lenz handhelds (LH100 and LH01) and connects both to the Lenz XpressNet and a ZTC (now Taunton Controls) X-bus manifold feeding 4 ZTC handhelds. The latter have remained a firm favourite as the speed control is by way of a lever (regulator) and both loco and function selections are easily and swiftly accessed. [photo 5] Unfortunately the small nature of their DIN sockets militates against frequent moving to another port, and so I purchased the new Lenz LH01 which has a more robust DIN socket and easily transferred to the outside of the layout which will be necessary when (eventually) the MPD becomes operational. It is unfortunate that this handheld does not come with a holster, unlike the ZTC handhelds which are so provided.

The ZTC command station 611 has the great advantage of being able to output DC as well as DCC and incidentally Zero 1, which gives a clue as to the origin of the brand. Thus running-in a new locomotive before fitting a decoder is much easier. However I do wonder if running-in on DC is strictly necessary having regard to the fact that so many loco's are now supplied complete with a decoder. The only advantage I can see is that if performance is poor it can be returned before opening the body which could invalidate the warranty.

Also within the cabinet are the transformers for 16v AC and 12v DC supplies. Either Lenz or ZTC can be used to provide DCC power to the main track together with a separate programming track and auxiliaries such as the Sprog, an ESU chip tester, rolling road and a powered wheel cleaner. Also contained in the cabinet is a dimmer which can handle both LED's and grain of wheat/rice lamps. My new ‘widget', a soft start is likewise housed in the cabinet. No problems have yet been encountered with overloads on starting up on DCC but with the advent of more and more power hungry sound locomotives it was considered a wise

precaution to wire in one of these at this time. The controller at the bottom left is a Kato and will provide DC power to the Kato trams. This is yet another long-term project where the plan is to have two trams shuttling back and forth using Heathcote's electronics which changes points and signals automatically whilst running the trams alternately. Whilst I have the trams, track, points, signals and the PCB's, so far only the over-bridge for the tram stop together with houses and shops for a future street have been constructed; but track laying and wiring are 'on the list', albeit a long way down.

So, some progress, but much interrupted by running a few trains from time to time. (In truth many trains and frequently). And now to turn my attention to the making the final section of baseboard joining up the MPD. This will be a fun endeavour as the 6 tracks require two different gradients. In all 24 yards of track and 9 points, these yet to be modified for DCC. The supports for this baseboard were made and fitted two months ago but time goes by so quickly when one is enjoying oneself!

PHOTO 1 - Temporary steel cabinet to get the layout operating quickly

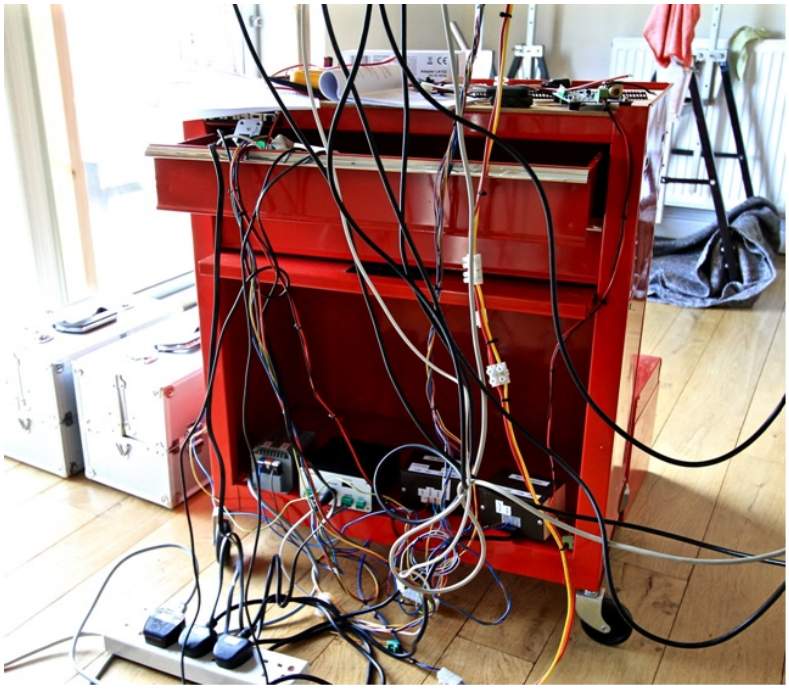


PHOTO 2 The new cabinet. The top shelf slides out to enable access to the wiring.

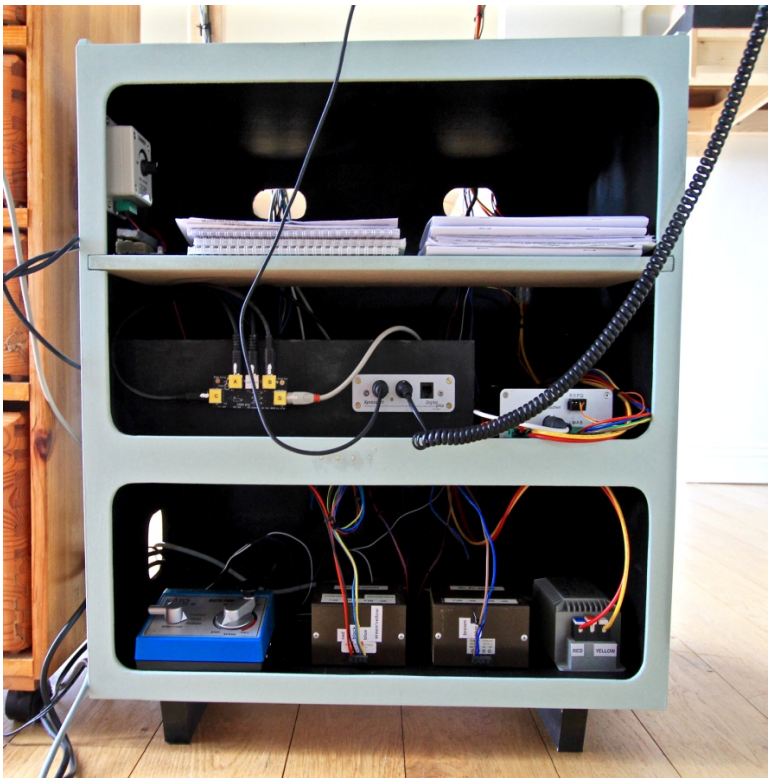


PHOTO 3 Painted and in use.
The wiring could be tidier by reversing the modules but I prefer to have ready access for future maintenance/testing.

PHOTO 4
Showing connections for the programming track, auxiliaries and the essential handbooks and beer mat.

PHOTO 5
The four favoured handhelds.

Mike Bennett

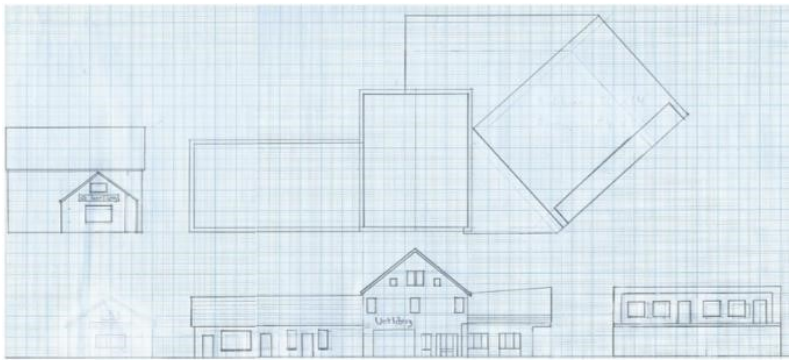
Uetliberg – the "Top of Zurich": Part 2

In the previous newsletter I set out my thoughts on building a small cameo layout based on Uetliberg, Switzerland. I have now started to build the layout.

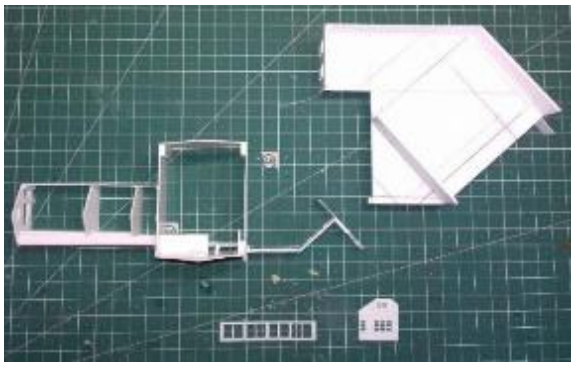
Uetliberg is a purpose-built visitor resort located on a small mountain overlooking Zurich. The visitor complex comprises a single building housing the station facilities, restaurant and hotel, together with a variety of outdoor kiosks and stalls during the visitor season.

The Uetliberg visitor complex. This view is more or less identical to the area that will be covered by my cameo layout

I decided to start by constructing the main station building. I created the drawings in early May and they appeared in the previous newsletter; the next stage was to cut out the components of the basic shell of the building.



Original drawings made in May 2020



Components based on original drawings, partly-assembled

Polystyrene is my material of choice for small buildings. The Uetliberg station is made almost entirely of plastikard and microstrip – both of these are varieties of polystyrene. The external walls are made of 1mm plastikard sheets; as always, I took care to ensure adequate bracing in order to avoid them warping. Each internal corner is reinforced with a piece of 6 x 2mm rectangular tubing from my scrap box, and the left-hand side of the building has two internal bulkheads. The upper floor is made of 1.5mm plastikard and covers the right-hand side of the building. It is robust enough to support the remaining internal and external walls without the need for further bracing (apart from the conservatory windows, which are described below).

Window and door recesses were cut by hand, as were the window frames and doors. Without an ample supply of leftover microstrip from previous projects the building would have been expensive to construct – you can cut microstrip from plastic sheet but I find it curls at the edges, so I tend to stick with ready-made microstrip wherever possible, despite the high price.

The basic shell of the building fully assembled, as yet without a roof.

The roof is made of Wills N Gauge textured plastic sheets – roofing tiles for the regular roofs and concrete for the flat roof (in order to give it some texture). The restaurant features a large conservatory, which was fiddly to make – once again I used a variety of microstrip pieces. The prominent glazing at the front is made of a single piece of clear plastic. Three clear plastic bulkheads run the entire depth of the restaurant; these push the glazing against the front of the conservatory without any glue having to be used. I used a similar glue-free

approach for the glazing on the Craven Arms station canopies, which I recently rebuilt, and I now use this approach for glazing wherever I can.

In this view the flat roof has been added, and all windows and doors have been installed.

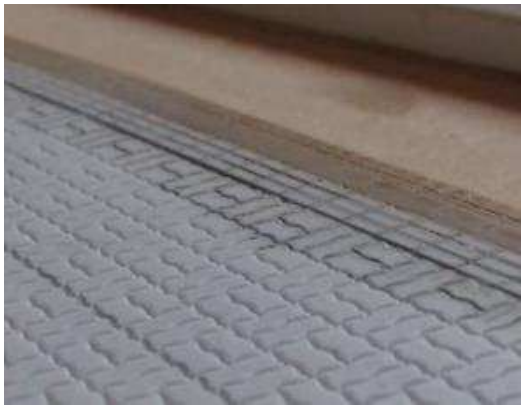
At this stage the building was painted before adding the final details. I've created an album of photos of Uetliberg, from which it is apparent that the building has been repainted several times over the years. I settled on one of its previous colours, which I think is more striking than its current rather insipid pink. The microstrip scrap box was then raided yet again in order to make the balcony handrails. Guttering and downpipes are Wills N Gauge (over £6 for a few tiny strips of plastic, but impossible to fabricate from anything else). The ridge tiles for the roofs were made from Wills OO gauge guttering; they finish off the roof perfectly – and fortunately I had some left over from the Craven Arms station refurbishment.

Uetliberg station, now painted and nearing completion. The station name, front canopy and various signs are still to be added.

The real thing: the station at Uetliberg, on what appears to be a quiet day.

I have also started to construct the baseboard. This consists of two 810 x 410 mm MDF sheets sandwiched together; the lower is 9mm thick, the upper, 6mm. The recesses for the two terminal platform tracks have been cut into the upper sheet. The platform surfaces are made from textured ABS plastic sheets obtained from the Spanish website "Green Stuff World" in a design which they call "Offset Curved Rectangles". The design is a near match of the original at Uetliberg, and the quality of the textured sheets is superb. My son has used Green Stuff World for specialist modelling supplies for many years, and we can both recommend it.

The distinctive paving slabs at Uetliberg



My version, using "Offset Curved Rectangular" paving sheets from Green Stuff World. Not identical, but not far off.

Uetliberg station, loosely placed on the embryonic baseboard to give a feel of how the completed layout will look.

The real thing, photographed from a similar angle to the previous photo. The model won't start to resemble a real place until the surrounding details start to appear.

Uetliberg is proving to be a very suitable subject for a cameo layout: the real location is quite small, so I have not had to compress the space by much, and it contains a nice mixture of formal paved areas, paved roads, and grass verges which transition at the back into a hill covered by trees. The main station building and the platforms are asymmetric, with the resulting angles creating an interesting and unusual set of structures at the front of the layout.

The next stage of the construction will be to finish installing the paving slabs and the surrounding transition to the adjacent roads, footpaths and grass verges. I will need to decide whether the large number of trees needed on the layout will be made by hand or bought, or a combination of the two. However, the scene won't really start to come to life until some of the large number of detailing items start to appear: kiosks, tables and chairs, parasols, market stalls, signs, vending machines, bicycles, wheelie bins, station furniture … and of course people! I find constructing and adding details to a layout to be a very satisfying part of our hobby. There is a limited range of such items available in Z Gauge, although there are a few cottage industries on the Continent making a few bits and pieces, and I also use some N

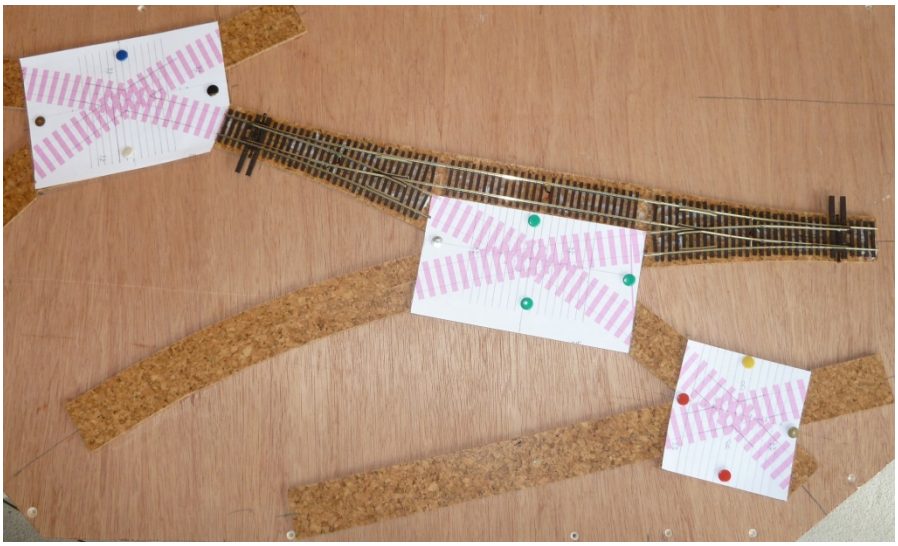
Gauge items here and there. The remainder have to be made by hand. I guess my big box of paints – and my trusty scrap box – will be back on my dining table again very soon.

Dave Gotliffe

Diamonds are Forever (I hope)

I am now setting to work on the key, central (and most difficult) baseboard in my town scene. Fortunately this is removable and can be worked on off-layout. I have not built track before, and I write this in the hope that it will encourage others to give it a try. I will also share some of the problems I encountered along the way, problems which you may then be able to avoid.

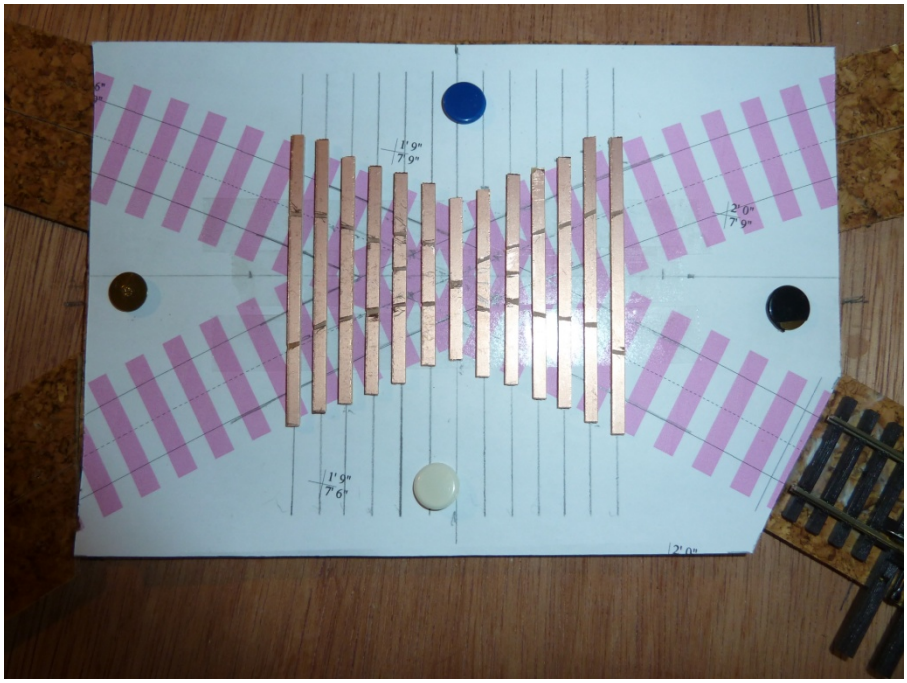
You will see from the picture that this board involves two points and three (yes, I know, I am a born masochist!) diamond crossings. The points and cork underlay are already in place, and print-outs of the three diamonds from my Xtracad plot have been pinned in position. (Note that the sleeper size and spacing on the print-outs are for OO and irrelevant to the code 83 HO which I am using)

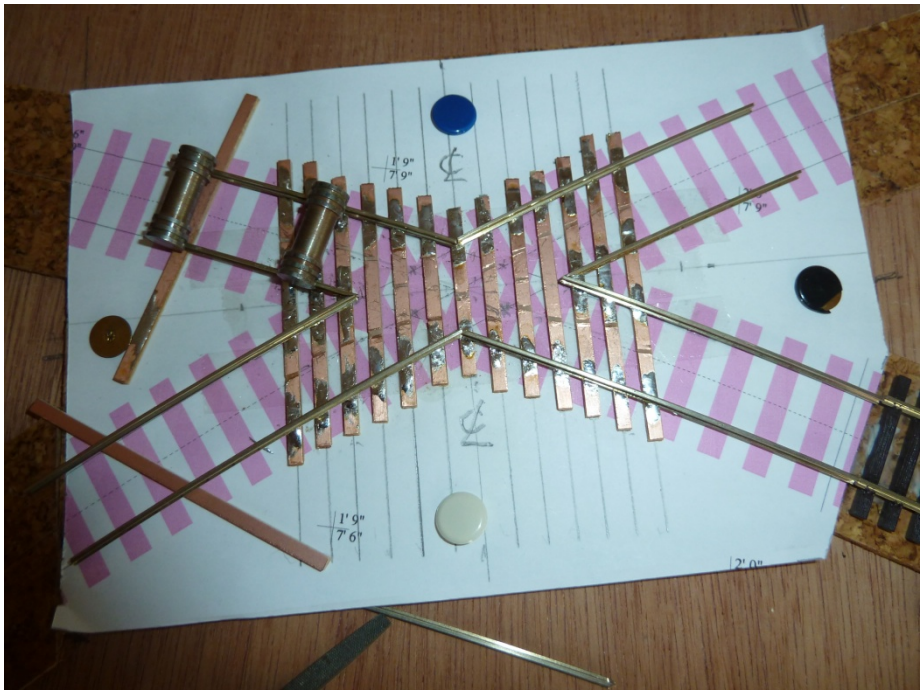


The left hand one of the three is the least critical, as the track running from bottom left will be non-powered and unused through the crossing because it runs off scene at top right, so I elected to start cutting my teeth - and track - on this one.

Having bought a batch of 3mm wide copperclad strip from Marcway, the best match I could find to the sleepers on the Peco code 83, I cut appropriate sleeper lengths, gapped the copper to provide isolation, and stuck them down at 3mm spacing onto the print-out using double sided tape. The tape proved to be easier to use than I expected and much stickier, so much so that I had to exert some care when eventually removing the completed diamond.

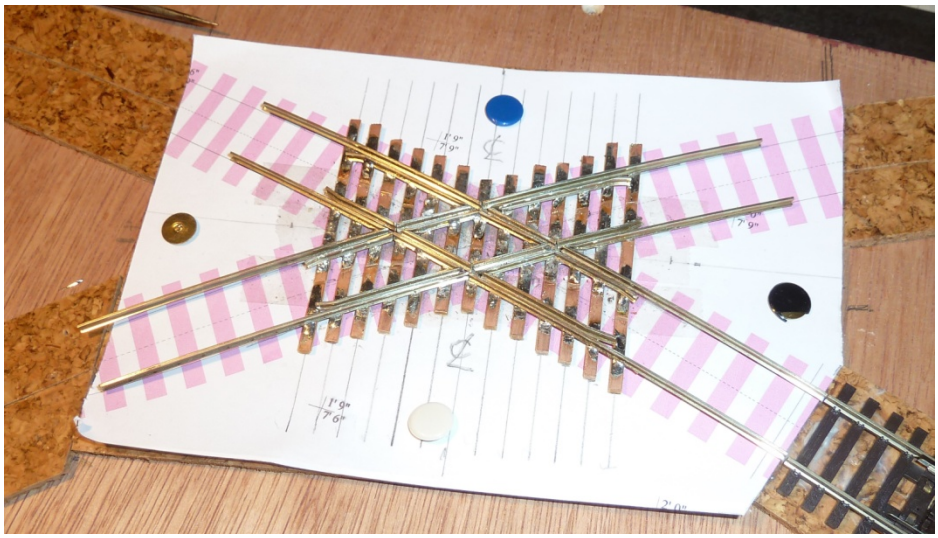
The next step was to cut and shape the ends on the running rails. The first two were the ones meeting at a wide angle top left and right as shown below. They were easy because (a) I only needed a slightly diagonal cut to match them up and I could do this with my railcutters; and (b) they can be placed with sufficient accuracy using the guidelines on the plan beneath. I tinned the sleepers and the bottom of the rails, soldered them in place and thought, “This is all going to be very easy…….”



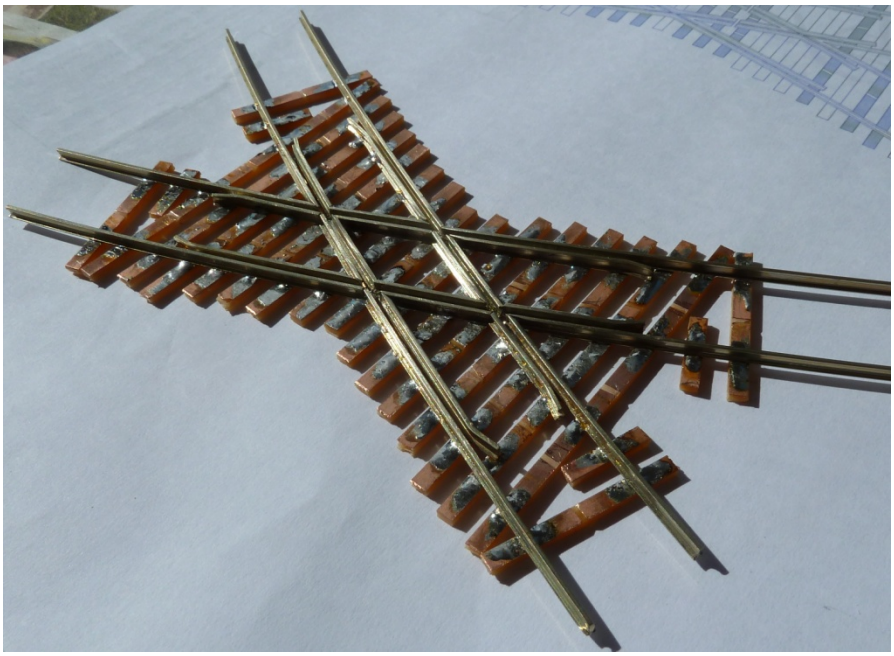


Well, no, it wasn't quite as easy from then on. All the other rails have to be put in absolutely precisely using gauges, working on round from the first two. In addition, the 'sharp' vees have to be ground to shape with some accuracy. I used a NMRA gauge and two roller gauges, as shown above, to get the positions right; and a neat little water-bath grinding wheel inherited from my father many years ago for the vees (pictured below). Practice was needed to get this grinding right, and several pieces of rail went in the bin before I was happy, but it would have been harder and more time-consuming, I am sure, to have achieved the same shaping with a file. It is also worth pointing out how important pre-curving the rail is. I cannot imagine that the required accuracy could be achieved if you were trying to stress a curve into the rail as you soldered.

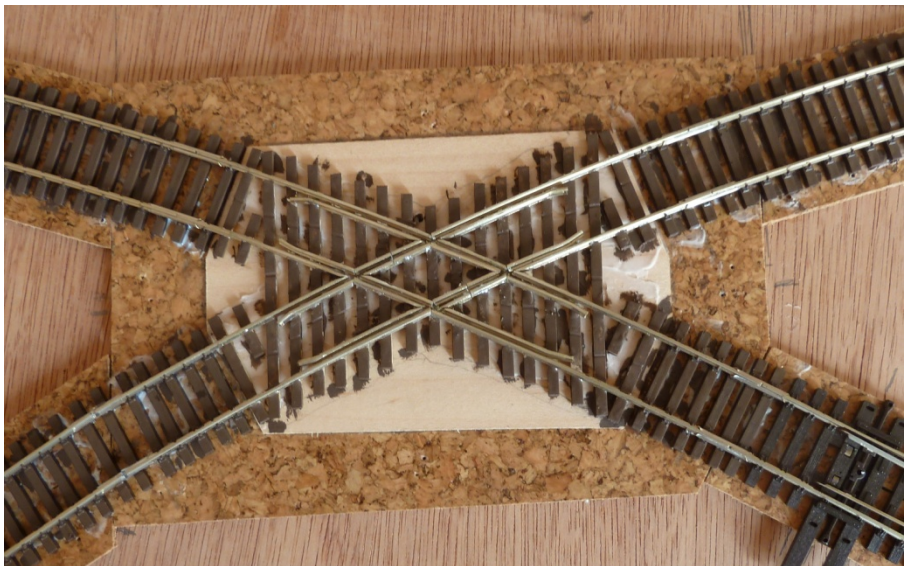
Now all that remains (!) is to fill in the gaps left in the running rails and to position the guide rails. To say that this is fiddly would be masterly understatement. Suffice to say that there are no fewer than 16 little pieces to cut, shape and fit accurately, to add to the 8 separate rails already positioned. It was at this stage that I realised two things: first, that I should have been born an octopus with asbestos ended arms; and second, that it would have been much easier to try making a point before attempting a diamond. Yes, the joggle in the rail for the point blades is tricky, but the rest is a doddle in comparison with a diamond! Holding the little lengths of rail steadily in place while checking clearances, making sure they were flat and level, and soldering all at the same time resulted in considerable frustration. In the end I found that a fair bit of fettling with files and emery sticks was necessary, both to the sides and the top of the rails, to get a test bogie to run smoothly through the crossing.



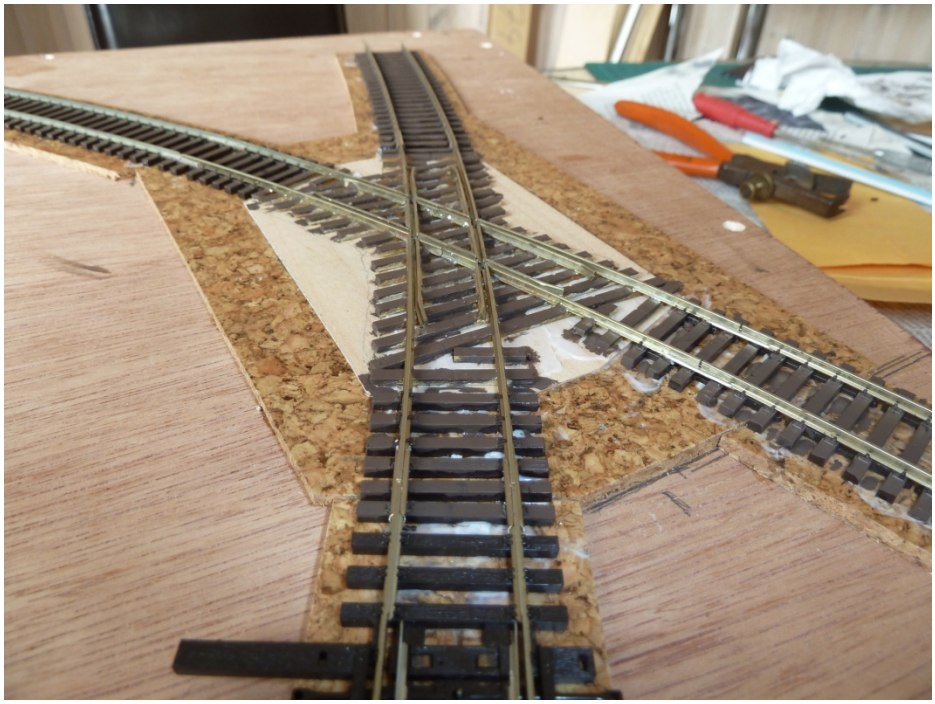
So, sparing you all the in between stages, the above is what I finally managed. Now I had to release it from the sticky tape, cut the insulating gaps, and remount it at the correct height to match the surrounding track. As I said, it took a bit of prising off the tape, but I was pleased to find that it felt strong and rigid. I chose to use a jeweller's saw to cut the gaps because I find cutting wheels rather too forceful and apt to cut too wide a gap; but despite all my care, two of the resulting pieces broke away from their solder. They were now even smaller and it was quite a job to get them firmly back in place; and too much lingering with the soldering iron stripped the copper off the paxolin in one spot. Fortunately the affected piece was non-current bearing so I found it easier in the end to araldite it back into position.



The paxolin sleepers lowered the rail height by 0.5mm compared with the Peco track, so I glued a 0.5mm thick piece of sheet wood onto the cork, knowing it would be easy to sand it down a little if it were too thick. In fact it was spot on, so I glued the diamond down, soldered in the power feeds and painted the sleepers. While not perfect, the paint served to cover up the ugly unevenness of my soldering.



I slid Peco sleeper base strip back onto the extended pieces of rail, joined up the connecting tracks, and here it is looking along the right-of-way:-



It looks a nice smooth curve, and cars appear to run through it evenly, though I shall not know for sure until it is in position and fully wired up, so I can try some finicky locomotive bogies and pony-trucks through it. Ballasting will improve the appearance too, but overall I am reasonably pleased with it for a first attempt. I have learnt a few lessons along the way, and I hope to avoid some of the mistakes I made in the next one now under way.

Some of the problems encountered: *and attempted solutions*:-

1. Too heavy-handed with the isolating grooves in the sleepers: *be gentler!*

2. Too heavy-handed with the solder when tinning: *the barest smear is sufficient*.

3. Insufficient hands: *I am making a small holding jig for the tiny pieces on the next one.*

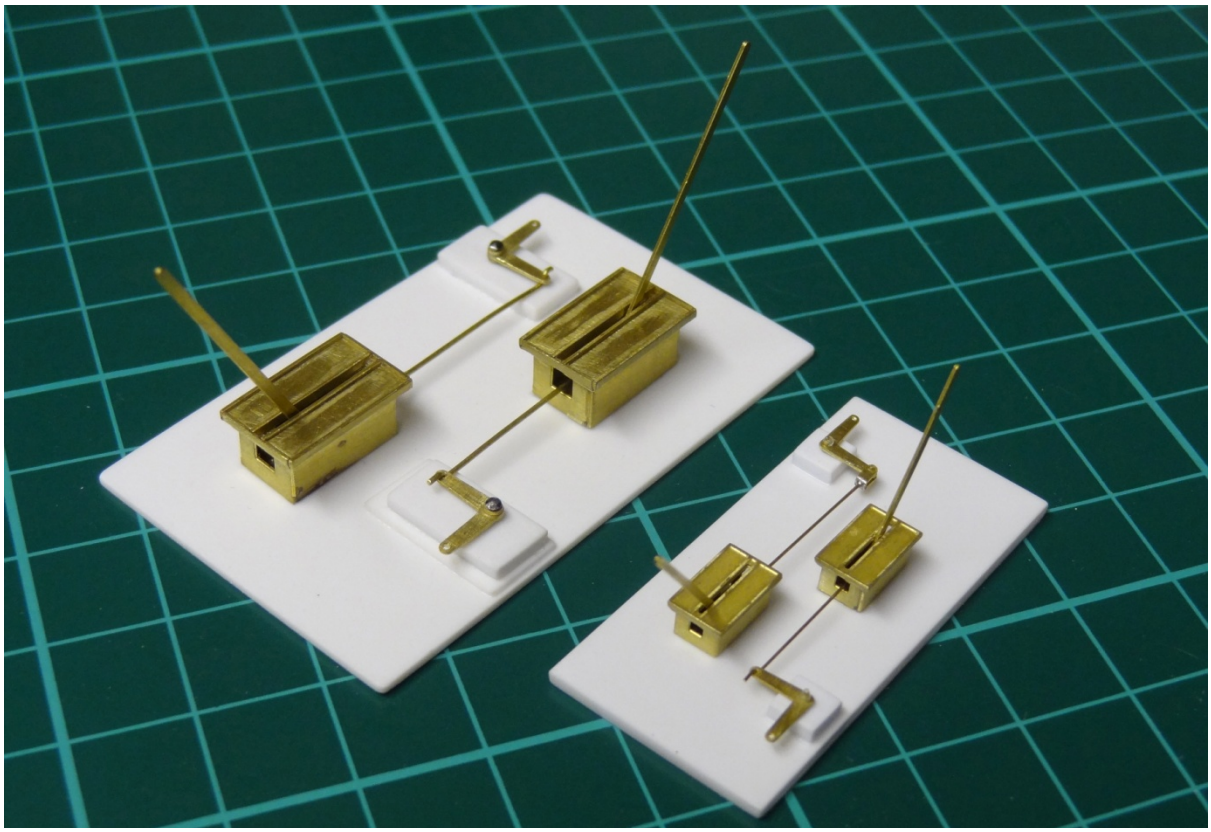
4. Isolating gaps cut in track too narrow to slide a piece of insulating plastic in to make sure they cannot close later. *Fairly confident that they will not close, but may try to squeeze some glue, with or without paper, into the gaps. Next time perhaps a wider saw blade would be better (more expense!).* Any ideas??

5. Not as patient as I used to be: *I fear this is a chronic deteriorating condition.*

So, it is on to the second one. I will let you know next month how it goes – and whether I have learnt any more from the experience.

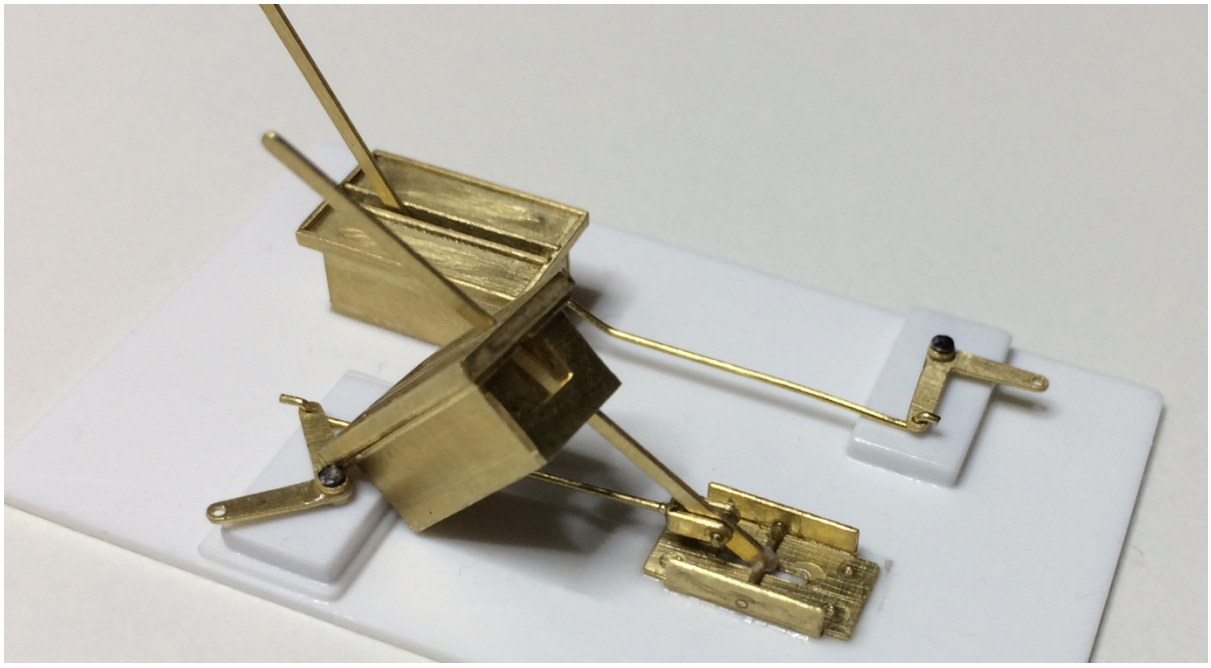
Peter Cox

Point levers in 7mm and 4mm scales.
Following on from the new functional ground lever kit for 7mm modellers earlier this summer, a number of requests arrived for something similar in 4mm. Severn Models wondered if it was possible to make a working point lever that small. There was just one way to find out! The result is perhaps the smallest functional point lever available.



7mm and 4mm scale point levers

While operating the lever to move a point is certainly possible, another alternative might be to link up the crank to points operated by another method such as servos. That way the lever would move when the points are changed, with less wear and tear on the pivots.



Each brass etch kit makes two ground point levers and each lever includes a crank and clevises, so they can be made functional if you wish. The levers are supplied as a flat packed

brass kit, along with sufficient brass wire to make the pivot pins and rods. The modeller just has to assemble and paint each one.

Andrew Vaughan

'Four Seasons'

So after a few months of this whole Covid 19 and normal way of life being dramatically altered for lord knows how long, these projects have certainly kept all of us active in our modelling hobbies. Due to work at my family shop, time for me to indulge in my modelling has been challenging as often I've been too exhausted to even go into my hobby room, too busy with other household or work related issues and mentally losing confidence in carrying out my project (I'll confess I've at times nearly chucked it all in the bin due to believing I wasn't good enough). But thankfully I picked myself up and pushed on and I'm pleased to say, I've completed my Four Seasons diorama (literally just finished it at the time of this newsletter coming out, hence why in some photos there are faint traces of glue still showing).

I've learnt a great deal from undertaking this project. Some areas I've learnt I'm good at (the static grass layering; painting the backdrop scene,) where I've quickly learnt there are areas I need to improve on (planning how the scene is to look; tree sculpturing; maintains confidence in my own skills), but I can look at this with a sense of pride that I completed what I had set out to do. There are many other areas that I would like to explore upon my next future projects (powering the track so an engine can operate on; incorporating a pond, river or stream into my diorama; etc etc), but for now I'm very glad on how it all turned out.

Not being able to attend any meetings has been personally trying as I do find meeting and talking to all the group members encouraging in believing I too can reach some level of skill that would be worthy of being dubbed a 'modeller'. Thankfully Eric has been keeping me on the straight and narrow in our chats via telephone or email, and hopefully we can all meet up again soon and see in person each member's projects and have a grand good catch up.

So anyway, now I've got that off my chest, time to figure out what my next project is going to be...

Spring

Summer

Autumn

Winter

Sam Ryan

A brilliant piece of modelling Sam. As one of our few 'working' members, what you have achieved is particularly impressive, given the difficult times. We look forward with anticipation, to your next offering!

From the Interweb

I am not a regular You Tube watcher but I did find a fascinating film from 1963 with John Betjeman. It is called *Let's Imagine, A Branch Line Railway*. In it, he follows the old Somerset and Dorset line from Evercreech Junction to Highbridge. There are some lovely shots of shunting wagons, a sound not heard any more; even on preserved lines. Sadly, I had a deprived childhood being brought up in a house miles out of earshot of a railway but I do remember staying with my grandparents in Wembley and hearing wagons clanging together at night.
Find this at https://youtu.be/kipZ-CH-M1g

Of more local interest is *The Golden Age of Steam Railways, 2. Branching Out*. This is made up of home movies and interviews with people involved with the re-opening of the Severn Valley and Keighley and Worth railways from the 1960s. It features the Railway Children film and is narrated by Jenny Agutter . There are some great shots capturing the fun of the early preservation days with not a high vis in sight!
Find this at http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b01pdsy6

Nick Coppin

October issue. Many thanks to Gordon Woods for volunteering to edit the next newsletter. Contributions for the October ASRM newsletter should be sent to Gordon at gcwoods1@gmail.com

Thank you to all the members who have contributed to this newsletter. It is amazing to see the range and depth of articles you submit. Keep them coming.