

BARROWMORE MODEL RAILWAY Journal

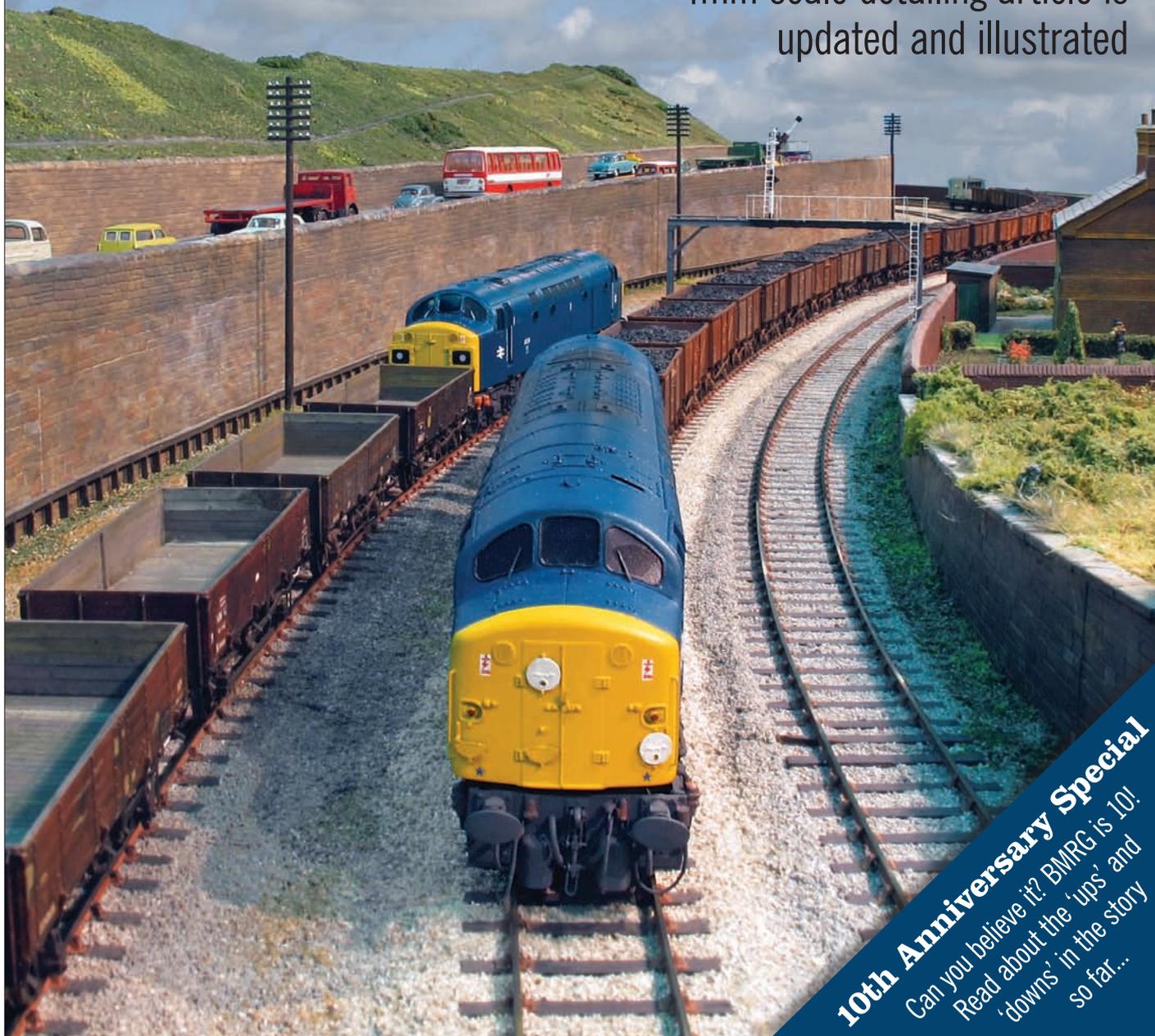
FROM THE CREATORS OF 'MOSTYN' & 'JOHNSTOWN ROAD' ISSN 1745-9842 No. 40 Autumn 2014

FREEMASONS' LOCOMOTIVE

Norman Lee recounts the history of LMS 0-6-0 tank No. 7532

'WHISTLERS' REMASTERED

Mostyn's Class 40s: The 'definitive' 4mm scale detailing article is updated and illustrated



10th Anniversary Special
Can you believe it? BMRG is 10!
Read about the 'ups' and
'downs' in the story
so far...

Who are we?

Barrowmore Model Railway Group is a friendly bunch of railway modellers with excellent clubrooms set in the Cheshire countryside a few miles east of Chester. We came together to pursue our hobby to high standards and build exhibition quality layouts. We have two exhibition layouts at present:

Johnstown Road ('O' Gauge) portrays an imaginary branch line blending the style of the impecunious Tanat Valley Railway with a Cambrian Railways extension. It is L-shaped, 48ft long, requires six operators and is transported in a Luton-bodied Transit or similar.



Club members' skills extend beyond locomotives and rolling stock. Richard Stagg built Porth Nefyn's station building in 1:43 scale based on the prototype at the terminus of the Llanfyllin branch in Powys.

Mostyn ('P4' 18.83mm Gauge) is an accurate model of the closed North Wales coast main line station as it was in 1977 featuring full length trains and prototypical speeds. It is continuous-run, 24ft x 30ft, requires 10 operators and is transported in a 7-tonne lorry.

Both layouts are active on the exhibition circuit taking us to destinations as far apart as Perth and Chatham. We welcome invitations from exhibition organizers but only go out about three times per year.

Apart from the basic necessities we run very informally and all members are welcome to use the clubroom as they please – it is available on a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week basis and everyone has a key. We regularly meet on Wednesday and Friday evenings but frequently use weekends and other days, especially when an exhibition looms. We do not have a committee or minutes of meetings. Most of our formalities are dealt with on our Yahoo! Group or in person.

BMRG is guided by three simple principles:

1. You pay your subscription.
2. All major decisions are taken unanimously.
3. You respect your fellow club members (in as much as their obvious shortcomings permit!).

BMRG produces a quarterly Journal reflecting our areas of interest and has a sizeable website – www.barrowmoremrg.co.uk As part of our commitment to the hobby we have bought or borrowed a comprehensive collection of BR Diagram books which have been uploaded to the website for the benefit of modellers and historians alike.

New members invited

We welcome (and need!) new members to refresh our ideas and bring in new skills. We are less worried about current modelling capabilities and more interested in your ability to fit in with a happy cohesive group. We will pass on our skills and expect you to share yours.

We currently have two types of membership:

Full membership costing £360 per year

Associate membership costing £100 per year

Full membership is the traditional route into our group whereas Associate membership was established relatively recently to welcome enthusiasts who, for whatever reason, are unable to use the clubroom but nonetheless wish to take part in the group's other activities. More details can be obtained by contacting us at info@barrowmoremrg.co.uk



We don't just get together at the clubrooms. Social visits and research trips form an integral part of our activities. Gavin Liddiard captured this superb shot at Dinas, on the Welsh Highland Railway, whilst on a BMRG organised day out.

Visitors welcome

We welcome visitors to our clubroom in the grounds of Barrowmore Estate, near the village of Great Barrow (but please contact us first). We can always offer you a 'cuppa' and the highly-regarded Bluebell Café (see Trip Advisor) is nearby. There are plenty of great walks through the countryside. Be warned that we are not on any public transport route. Barrow for Tarvin station unfortunately closed more than 50 years ago!

Barrowmore Model Railway Group

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Contributions are welcome:

- (a) as e-mails or e-mail attachments;
- (b) a hard copy of a computer file;
- (c) a typed manuscript;
- (d) a hand-written manuscript, preferably with a contact telephone number so that any queries can be sorted out;
- (e) a CD/DVD;
- (f) a USB storage flash drive.

Any queries to the Editor, please.

Copies of this journal are also available to non-members. A cheque for £12 (payable to 'Barrowmore Model Railway Group') will provide the next four issues, delivered direct to your home. Send your details and cheque to the Editor at the address given, left.

Front cover: How apt... Class 40s for the 40th issue!
Two freights cross on the Chester end of Mostyn.

Back cover: No.60 crosses the bridge on Johnstown Road with a passenger train for Port Nefyn.

BARROWMORE MODEL RAILWAY Journal



Stand up and take a bow! It is milestone time at **Barrowmore Model Railway Group** as we pass our 10th anniversary and publish the 40th issue of the Journal. Too often we forget what brought us together so this expanded celebratory issue not only covers current activities and areas of interest but also looks back at our history over the last decade.



What other group has its own bus service? In 2005 we hosted the Scalefour Society AGM and were able to arrange for preserved Birkenhead Transport Leyland Leopard L1 No. 93 to pick up visitors. We used Barrowmore Estate's training centre as the AGM venue and also utilised our clubroom (shown here) for a mini exhibition comprising four layouts and trade. Plenty of refreshments were on hand.

THE JOURNAL is an essential part of the fabric of our group, giving members and non-members alike an opportunity to share their interests in railways and railway modelling. We usually devote about 10% of our budget to the Journal but, to mark this special occasion, caution has been thrown to the wind as we go full colour and introduce a 'house style' of presentation for the first time.

The challenge for our contributors is to take full advantage of the potential of the Journal in its new format and this, in particular, means good images and drawings to illustrate their written efforts.

A big 'Thank You' is due to our Editor, David Goodwin, for his quiet commitment which has brought the Journal from inception to this milestone. Let's reward David for this excellent effort with a stream of potential articles to undergo his distinctive 'blue pencil' approach... ■

Forthcoming events

- 25th & 26th October 2014:** Taunton exhibition (Mostyn is appearing)
1st & 2nd November 2014: Merseyside exhibition (Whithorn makes its debut)
1st & 2nd November 2014: Merseyside exhibition (BMRG is manning demo tables)
15th November 2014: 7mm scale running track, Llanbedr (see Editor for details)
4th, 5th & 6th April 2015: York exhibition (Mostyn is appearing)

Notes of other railway-related events for this section are always welcome.

Next Journal deadline

Issue No. 41 will be dated Winter (December) 2014 and contributions should reach the Editor as soon as possible, but at least before 1st November 2014.

Journal No. 40, Autumn 2014

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Barrowmore Model Railway

I SUPPOSE IT ALL BEGAN with a feeling that things are not as they should be. It is August bank holiday 2004 at Peterborough station with Simon Curness, Gavin Liddiard and myself taking a couple of days holiday to meet up with Philip Sutton and Eddie Knorn whilst visiting some railway locations in the east of England. The then newly-formed Wirral Finescale Railway Modellers (which we were all members of) had already become an unpleasant argumentative environment. Mostyn was in storage in Heswall and Johnstown Road occupied Emlyn Davies' garage in Bromborough. Gavin fielded a long and tetchy conversation with another WFRM member that took the edge off a pleasant day's trainspotting.

Time passes, matters deteriorate further and an acrimonious AGM resulted in a small group of us deciding that 'enough was enough'. Spurred on by the motivation to do something better, a combination of hard work and luck resulted in David Goodwin and I finding and then securing our current clubroom at Barrowmore. And so, Barrowmore Model Railway Group was born...

People come and people go

In a hobby that is often pursued alone and requires commitment and determination to succeed, it should



Ex-BMRG member Ian Clark demonstrates his multi-tasking in 2005. Who else can sleep and keep an eye out for a bargain at the same time?

Richard Oldfield takes a trip down memory lane whilst reflecting on the triumphs and disasters of a small group pursuing their hobby.



Spreading the gospel. Members of BMRG giving a talk about Mostyn to Manchester Model Railway Society in 2011. We try our best to share our love of the hobby with like-minded individuals and organisations.

come as no surprise that disagreements occur when groups get together. We are no exception so I think we can take some pride in registering that nine out of our 12 founding members are still with us ten years later. So, take a bow, David Faulkner, David Goodwin, Iain Kirk, Eddie Knorn, Norman Lee, Gavin Liddiard, Richard Oldfield, Richard Stagg and Philip Sutton – we have established something worth fighting for.

Of the departures, happily, Emlyn Davies is still associated with our group, providing his excellent Cambrian Railways stock for our Johnstown Road exhibition commitments, writing occasional articles for the Journal and pursuing the hobby when family commitments permit. Ian Clark ('The Yorkshire Philanthropist') has retired to God's own county and Simon Curness has effectively disappeared but believed to be a long-distance lorry driver based outside London.

We have been fortunate to attract five new members to the group across the years of which three – Kevin Bays, Alisdair Macdonald and Mike Rapson – are staying the course, whilst two have successfully dug escape tunnels. Gareth Bayer ('I see myself as an ideas guru') is now living in Japan and teaching English as a foreign language whilst

Dave Millward ('The Reverend') pursues his railway interests from the hills above Leek.

So, we started off with 12 members and, notwithstanding a few dramas along the way, we still have 12 today. It would be great to have some more new faces, not the least because I suspect the average age of our club members has also gone up by 10 years, but we are more interested in adding to our skills and knowledge than simply adding to our financial security.

Putting roots down

The clubroom and toilet facilities were a bit shabby when first rented, so the group pulled together to refurbish them quickly. Sparse and spacious at the start, ten years of ambitious layout building and the inexorable accumulation of old tat now give an 'Aladdin's cave' appearance. We still have plenty of stuff that "might come in useful" and never has, necessitating regular bouts of shelf building.

Along the years we have equipped the club with hot water, sink and cooking facilities, a decent air-brushing set-up with fume extraction and upgraded overhead lighting. All manner of tools and equipment have been bought, donated or made available including a large volume ultrasonic

Group - The first ten years

bath for component cleaning. Last year saw us undertake the refurbishment of the exterior window frames, doors and surrounds.

When we first set up the group it was agreed that our subscriptions would be set at a level which meant that we did not need to indulge in the usual fund-raising tasks like exhibition organizing. This has not only given us precious time to 'play trains' but, led by Gavin, we were able to convert two large rooms in Barrowmore House to a form which would give their residents a semi-independent lifestyle. We have also been able to make occasional donations to the Barrowmore registered charity as our funds permit.

Our group is now very much an integral part of the Barrowmore scene – we can call on help from other unit holders and also offer help in return. Locally known as 'the trainspotters' or 'the train geeks', at various times we have used the *White Horse, Barrow Social Club* and latterly *The Stamford Bridge* as our local watering hole. We are blessed with regular visitors to our clubroom and a special mention must go to Hazel Hewitt who keeps a watchful eye on the club when we are not there.

Happy times

No doubt some events have slipped my memory but who could forget our brilliant outing to the Welsh Highland Railway in 2005 courtesy of Richard Stagg. Beautiful weather, footplate rides, a trip round the engine works at Dinas and a bit of osprey spotting all made for a superb day.

An HST research visit to the storage facility at Long Marston in 2006 yielded plenty of useful measurements (which we have still not utilised some 8 years later!) whilst the Railcar 50 gala on the Severn Valley Railway remains a vivid memory because of the 'Fish and Chips' special DMU run returning from Bridgnorth in the evening.

Mostly, for me though, it is the many happy weekends at exhibitions where our knack of finding good pubs and Indian restaurants never seems to desert us. From Chatham to Perth (and many points in between) we have done our best to share our hobby



BMRG's two cheque signatories, David Goodwin and Norman Lee, admonish a wayward club member for extravagant expenditure on fripperies like electricity.

with thousands of fellow enthusiasts yielding new snippets of information, new friendships and many laughs. Both layouts have won more than their fair share of silverware with the pinnacle probably represented by Mostyn's two wins at expoEM separated by nine years and a massive extension effort.

Tough times

We have been blessed with a fairly good run (so far!) interspersed with occasional soul-searching if we lose a member. Our low point was probably the departure of Dave Millward in 2011, when we dipped below ten members for the first and only time. In its own way this renewed our determination to persevere and led to a very successful eBay campaign to raise funds by selling surplus and donated items. A quick glance around the clubroom would suggest there is plenty more stuff should a repeat campaign ever be needed...

BMRG in the press

Our activities have led to a multitude of articles in magazines. We still have the record for the longest running layout series with the 114 monthly Mostyn articles which appeared in *Rail Express* from 2001 onwards. Johnstown Road in its original format was 'railway of the month' in the October 2003 *Railway Modeller* and Richard Stagg repeated this front cover appearance with a 2007 article on the building of the Cambrian trestle bridge. The definitive articles on the expanded versions of Johnstown Road and Mostyn are somewhere in the 'to do' pile. We have also graced

the pages of publications such as the *HMRS Journal*, *Scalefour News* and *DEMU's Update*.

Finally, the award for achieving greatest prominence in the press must go to BMRG's DMU fanatic, Eddie Knorn, who reached the dizzying heights of page 23 of the *Daily Mail* on 21st November 2006. The appearance in his front garden of full-size Met-Camm Class 101 DTCL M56342 enraging the sensitivities of the Planning Department of Nantwich Borough Council to such an extent that he was forced to move it on. Never mind, the 4mm scale model continues to do sterling service on Mostyn.

Crystal ball gazing

In a nutshell, our challenge is a healthy 'to do' list combined with limited time. 2014 will probably rank as one of our most productive years but each item ticked off is often replaced with a new task or something else that someone has a hankering to make. Having mastered the challenges of resin-casting, decal printing and photo-etch design in recent years, we still need to tackle other areas like 3D-printing and laser cutting to speed up our modelling output. We will also need to invest in handling aids to cope with our increasing decrepitude – baseboards which seemed fine ten years ago now seem to be a lot heavier than they were. There is plenty still to do but I think I can safely say that there is still the hunger to do it! ■



Bob and Dylan are enthusiastic members of the four-legged section of BMRG, always stopping by for a drink and a treat. Bob is very much the country gentleman and is pictured having just exited a pond whilst Dylan looks immaculate, a condition that is not typical of this enigmatic bundle of fun.

Members' activities...



Calling all coaching stock fans: A tantalising glimpse of things to come!

DAVID FAULKNER has provided this shot of one of his 17 Mk. 2/2a/2c coaches which, together with accompanying Mk. 1 vehicles, will shortly give Mostyn its first new loco-hauled passenger rakes for 12 years. A very careful set of 'cut & shut' exercises has produced the longer Mk. 2c body compared with the Bachmann Mk. 2a donor coach.

BR Mk. 2c Brake Corridor First (BFK) M14129 was built as part of Lot No. 30796, ordered in May 1969. This coach was one of 26 built to Diagram 165 for use on the London Midland Region and represents one of the later built D165 examples with roof vents made by 'Roovac' and smaller

style toilet window with body side air intake above.

The model seen in the photograph has its body in primer and is ready for its first coat of BR blue paint. The added detail you can see includes: (i) new handrails; (ii) RCH jumper cables; (iii) lamp irons; and if you look closely, (iv) a new etched cage in the van area, that is just visible through the windows. Once painted, the door handles, grabs and windows will be added to complete the body.

Whilst the body is being painted, various details like ETH cables, steam and air brake pipes will be added to the underframe before it too is primed and painted. ■

MIKE 'MATEY' RAPSON seems to have adopted Mostyn's dock branch and has recently added a fuel tank and pump. The prototype inspiration was captured by Paul Bartlett on a visit to

Mostyn in 1981 and available on his superb website (<http://paulbartlett.zenfolio.com/mostyndock/>). The tank is based on an old Slater's Charles Robert 12-ton rectangular tank wagon kit with

the breeze-block supports, fittings, pipework and dispensing pump made from scrap oddments. It is yet another step forward in providing a grimy industrial atmosphere on the branch. ■

Mostyn's tan van man

"Nurse! Please bring his medication", Padgate Works' IAIN KIRK attempts to explain the van building frenzy in his own distinctive style...

THE MOSTYN PROJECT has become a veritable voracious consumer of rolling stock. A long-term project for use on the layout has been the production of a large number of BR standard vans. By using the kits from Parkside-Dundas, I have endeavoured to produce said vans. 'Standard' is a bit of a misnomer in that three diagram numbers existed with detail differences appearing as the Lots were built. You also have the various 'Shock-Vans' and the 'Vanwides'. However, they are different beasts for another time.

The first Diagram to appear was the 1/208. The bodywork is planked with, at first, the doors being planked also, the ends being constructed from corrugated panels. These were normally two-part, however three-part variants did get built in small numbers as well. The vacuum

braking system is the Morton four-shoe variant, so demanding the presence of a tie-bar between the W-irons.



Almost completed Dia. 1/208 van showing various upgrades to the basic Parkside-Dundas kit

Later batches of 1/208s had plywood doors and the BR style eight-shoe vacuum brake. Therefore these vans did not require tie-bars.

The next diagram is the 1/213. Almost the same as the 1/208 bar the fact they were built with smooth plywood bodywork and doors. This diagram had the same braking variations as used on the earlier 1/208 type.

Both the 1/208 and 1/213 vans had various buffers fitted and some of the

early 1/208's had screw couplings. That said, the 'instanter' three-link coupling did become the most common coupling used.

The final type produced was diagram 1/224. This was essentially the 1/213 with a specific modern large-headed buffer and a coupling mounted in a protruding manner from the headstock of the van. The following images illustrate an example of the 1/224, created from kit PC08A for the diagram 1/213 and using the Red Panda Models eight-shoe brake underframe kit (RA01). Various upgrades and modifications are also undertaken using bits and bobs from other sources.



A quick change of axlebox, achieved using some old Ambis etches. The filler on the w-iron helps make the moulding look more like the real thing. The plastic brake-vee will be discarded.

Diesel loco fleet assessment and upgrading: Attention turns to Sulzer Type 2s

PHILIP SUTTON writes: In between the 'glory hunting' visits to Barrowmore to undertake last minute weathering tasks on Richard Oldfield's mammoth stock building efforts (see CCT picture on Page 8), I have been undertaking a review of the ageing locomotive fleet.

With more freight stock and David Faulkner's Mk. 2 rakes due out of the shops, we will have to redress the chronic shortage of motive power on Mostyn. The Class 40 situation is dealt with elsewhere in this issue, but we are contemplating



further expansion of the EE Type 4 roster using the more accurate new Bachmann bodyshell.

The Class 47 fleet is now below our current standards with many Lima models still in operation and the Heljan versions are due heavy maintenance. The Danish models have run many miles but are becoming unreliable and have suffered from Mazak chassis distortion. We have secured a dozen or so potential replacements from the ViTrains and Bachmann stable (along with the necessary Ultracscale wheelsets) and will be conducting 'pilot scheme' rebuilds shortly.

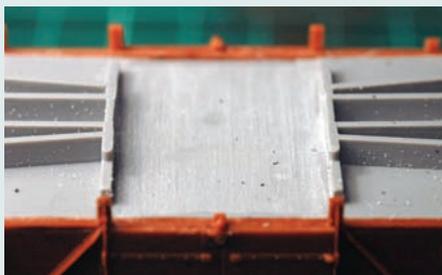
The most urgent requirement is for Sulzer Type 2s, many more of which need to be seen on the layout. Double-headed operation is also impossible at present with so few traction resources. To rectify this situation in the short term, half a dozen 'early series' Class 25s with the bodyside grilles are being slowly pushed through the King's Cliffe workshops. There is a tremendous amount of work needed to bring the 1977 Hornby product up to scratch (*we are not even considering Bachmann due to major inaccuracies*), including major cab and roof surgery. To assist with this, a detailing etch has been produced (see picture, left, which shows a test fit). Despite best intentions, it is proving extremely difficult to track down further supplies of the Hornby 5-pole motors and therefore another powering solution may have to be found. ■

EDDIE KNORN continues to make progress with his own assorted DMU vehicles whilst providing invaluable research assistance to Richard Oldfield - who is preparing to start a production line of high-density diesel multiple units of Classes 115, 116 & 117 based on

etched brass components supplied by Chris Higgs of Masterclass Models.

KEVIN BAYS has had 'other fish to fry' during the summer due to Chatham show responsibilities but a couple of SR-designed Bogie Bs are in the pipeline.

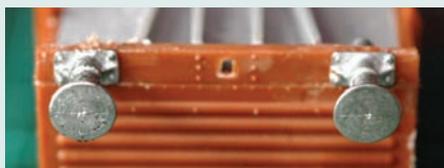
THE LONG GESTATION period for diagram 1/163 and 1/166 ex-ironstone hoppers is coming to an end with the first examples due to appear at Taunton exhibition shortly - where they will share their debuts with six Mk1 BGs destined for passenger services. ■



The Parkside kit has been modified by removing all underframe detail below the central doors, thus creating space for the replacement Ambis etch.



The Ambis etched component (WV6_4) is a smarter and more accurate way to create the brake assembly required under these vans.



The replacement buffers come from Lanarkshire Model Supplies (BP04). An extensive range of types is available from this manufacturer.



Another view showing the Ambis etch in place, as well as MJT fitted brake shoes, L.M.S. buffers and L.M.S. coupling hooks (CH07). The coupling links are 'homebrew', made from 0.4 mm nickel-silver wire and Exactoscale 'instant' links (E4CP 303A). All of these items have been fixed in place using cyanoacrylate adhesives.



The Ambis brake lever is in place, as is the brake lever guide which comes from an etch produced by Craig Welch. These etches (CW02/CW03) are available online via the Scalefour Society Stores.

This, I hope, shows the sort of upgrades and improvements possible in pursuit of overcoming the perils of these beasts. I always attempt to refer to pictures of vans for prototype fidelity, or something near it that is. I can highly recommend Paul Bartlett's on-line collection - <http://paulbartlett.zenfolio.com/paulbartlettsrailwaywagons>. One day, I may well continue with some thoughts on painting, lettering and weathering. However, we shall see how fate weaves its fickle course on that one. ■



Above: Veteran Hornby Class 24 Bo-Bo No. 24047 ambles past Mostyn signalbox with a lengthy departmental working. In the foreground you can see the results of Mike Rapson's upgrade of the level crossing and associated fencing. This scene is much improved over previous years.

Right: BR CCT M94219 forms part of a lengthy Up Parcels train - part of a batch of nine vehicles built by Richard Oldfield from the superb Masterclass Models etched metal kit. Painting is by Gavin Liddiard, employing the club's new Neo (Iwata) airbrushes, and weathering by Philip Sutton. The latter included spraying, dilute washes and dry brushing techniques, using a new range of pigments from AK Interactive. The dusty look is well-captured with dirty windows and chalked destinations.



Mostyn progress

MOSTYN is having a super year in 2014. It's not that previous years have gone badly but everything seems to be combining to deliver scenic improvements and masses of lovely new stock. So, rather than mountains of text, we are devoting these pages to some large images showcasing developments on the layout.

Our next show, at Taunton on October 25th & 26th is looming large and, for me (*writes Richard Oldfield*), it cannot come soon enough, although there's a batch of a dozen ex-ironstone hoppers that are touch and go for this deadline.

Setting new targets

There is still plenty to do – we might just be about to burst through the 500 barrier in stock terms but that still leaves another 400+ on the list. We could and probably will spend ages trying to agree a set of priorities for 2015 but here is my first attempt:

- ✦ Build more brake vans
- ✦ Add more Class 24s and Class 25s
- ✦ Complete a long wheelbase DMU
- ✦ Finish the air-braked van project
- ✦ Design freightliner containers

The list could go on but let's stop here and be realistic. Irrespective of the priorities we know other pet projects will continue so Mostyn watchers should anticipate more vacuum-braked vans, DMUs and parcels stock. The guilty know who they are!

Just like Monopoly – after building houses you need a hotel! The big gap in the scenic side behind the footbridge needs filling with the distinctive Mostyn Hotel. Alisdair and I have taken many key measurements of the prototype so we should target ourselves to have the hotel completed in time for the next exhibition after Taunton. Hopefully we can draw on etch design guru, David Faulkner, for the distinctive window frames... ■



Right: The newest building on Mostyn is a Government Buffer Store based on the 'Marl Cold Store' still extant at Llandudno Junction. We have included it (fictitiously) within the Mostyn Docks complex to increase the operational interest in the sidings beyond that of the traditional sulphur and steel traffic. The structure, built by Richard Stagg, has a perspex carcass clad with plastic embossed brick sheet. It spans two boards and therefore has to be removable. The loading platform will see frequent van traffic - some of Iain Kirk's latest vans await the attention of Class 08 No. 08300. New air-braked stock is also currently under construction for this flow. We would be interested to hear from people with knowledge of the traffic to and from these facilities to help us with our modelling.



Seeing around corners:

The Chester end CCTV monitor undergoing testing at our Barrowmore club-room last year. Keen-eyed readers will note the old Post Office straddling the running lines on Channel 3, whilst the bare unfinished scenery on Channel 4 is hardly in exhibition condition! An upgrade to HD quality may follow as age takes its toll on eyesight.



“The years passed and the challenge of operating Mostyn grew steadily... We responded to the public’s desire for entertainment by operating very intensively.”

AT OUR VERY FIRST exhibition (at Macclesfield in 2002) the task of operating Mostyn was quite straightforward. There was not a lot of stock and, more importantly, no signals to worry about. You simply picked a train from one of the seven fiddle yard roads available, checked the setting of the few installed turnouts and drove the formation round the circuit.

Over the following year, new stock was added, new fiddle yard roads were installed and, crucially, at Nottingham in 2003, the semaphore stop signals made their debut. At this time each Mostyn operator assumed the combined role of signalman and train driver. This may well have been a conscious decision but the reason is now lost in the mists of time – it is equally likely that, since the average enthusiast would much rather be a driver than a signalman, there were no takers for the less glamorous role of just being a signalman.

Operation becomes more complex

The years passed and the challenge of operating Mostyn grew steadily. The 17-road original fiddle yard approached capacity, multi-train occupancy of fiddle yard roads became the norm and we responded to the exhibition

public’s desire for entertainment by operating very intensively. After all, it is no use having a typical 5-minute headway between successive trains if your spectators drift away in the meantime.

Using the ‘Up’ direction as an example, an alert and well-trained operator would firstly use the fiddle yard control panel to set the turnouts for the next train. He would then walk across to the scenic control panel, check and set any turnouts and pull off the associated signals. He could now drive the train, checking, of course, that it was complete and, as it passed each stop signal (outer home, inner home and starter), set that signal back to danger when he was satisfied that the rear of the train was still complete and had passed the signal. This requires an amount of walking around, peering over the backscenes, plugging and unplugging DCC handsets and avoiding other operators with their handsets and leads. This was complex enough for trains simply making a circuit with all signals clear but required a lot of concentration when trains were required to stop in section or set back into the exchange sidings. Train 1 may have last left the fiddle yard but it might be Train 2 or 3 which returns first.

This all worked well enough for about six

Mostyn's eye in the sky

Mostyn's closed-circuit television system has become invaluable to its signalmen and train drivers. BMRG electronics supremo, **David Faulkner**, explains how a straightforward 'nice to have' feature has evolved into an essential contributor to safe and increasingly intensive operation.

years. However, whether through tiredness, inexperience, lack of practice or someone else standing in the way, we suffered occasional mishaps such as a rear-end collision or SPAD (Signal Passed At Danger) – if a train is being checked by a stop signal, it should draw up and stop in rear of (= when approaching) that signal and wait until that signal is cleared (when it is safe to do so). It is this sequence that sometimes didn't quite go to plan as it required precise timing of the operator watching the train drawing up to the signal, followed by moving to the panel and operating the signal lever, during which time the train was out of their sight.

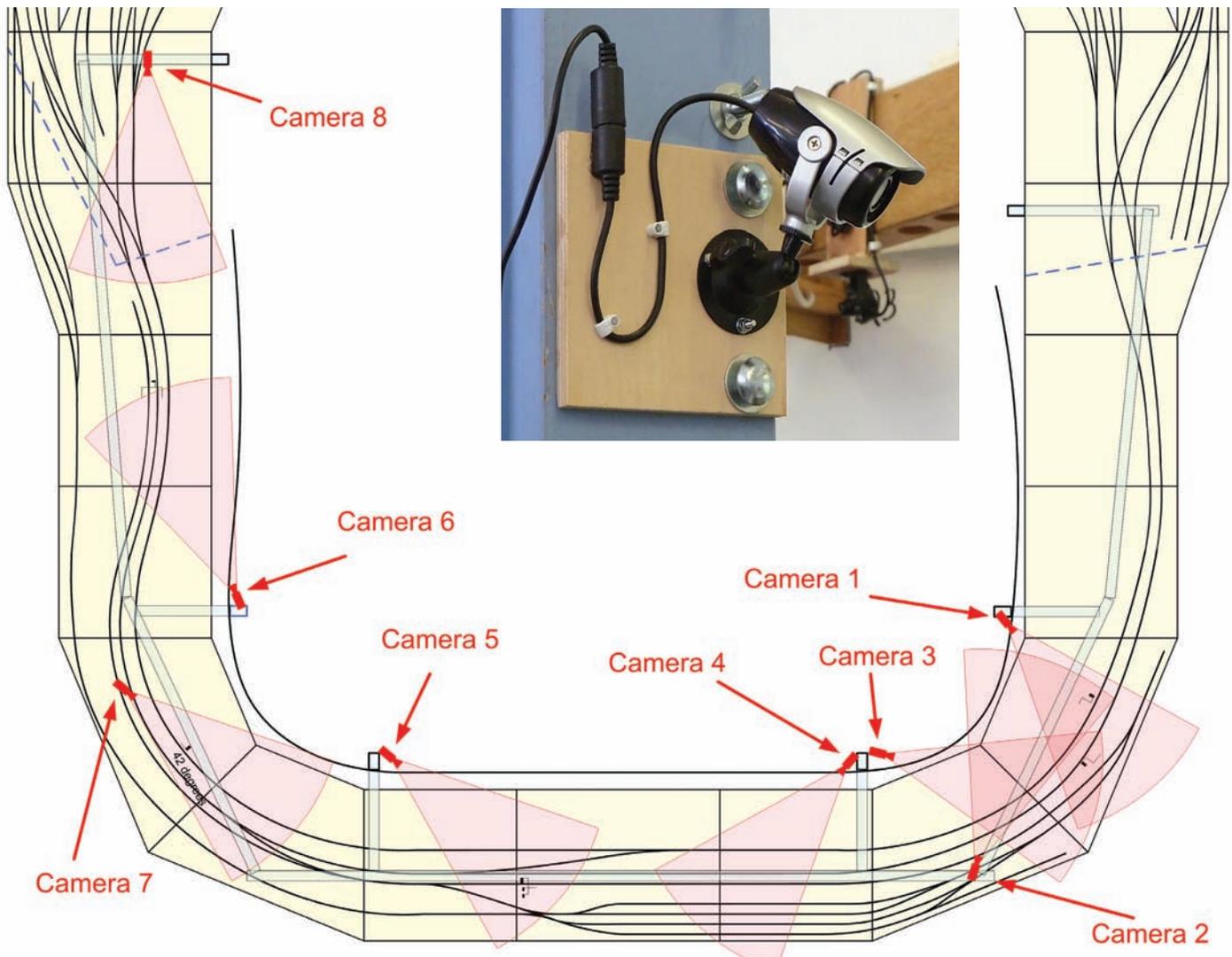
How it started

When the problem was first considered, a traditional remedy came to mind - a mirror. If we mounted mirrors on the lighting gantry above the signals we would be able to see over the backscenes. Whilst I didn't like the idea of mounting glass on the gantries, this was at least a simple solution as we only needed two mirrors to cover two groups of two signals away from the control panel position. This solution may have worked had anyone made the effort to source suitable mirrors and fix them in place.

What actually happened was a sale at Maplin (www.maplin.co.uk) that included a cheap single camera CCTV kit. I bought two



Scenic section of Mostyn in plan form with the lighting gantry outline overlaid. The eight CCTV camera positions are indicated along with their approximate lines of sight (shown as red segments). The inset illustrates an actual camera and mounting method - bolted to the gantry upright.





The smart new appearance of the scenic operating area with its vital CCTV monitors at the left and right extremes. Also of note is the new control panel, which was commissioned at Chatham in 2013.

Seeing around corners

sets and proposed mounting them on Mostyn's lighting gantries.

I have to say I had very little encouragement; views ranging from 'can't see what is wrong with the way we already do things' to 'why don't you just use mirrors' (which nobody was willing to fix in place...) were voiced. Anyway, a simple method of fixing the cameras on the gantries at shows using spring clamps, and wooden pedestals to mount the CCTV monitors on the legs either side of the control panel was knocked up, and the CCTV was ready for its first show use.

more prototypical distance from Mostyn box, it did now mean that it was no longer within the view of the Chester end CCTV. Well, of course, after the convenience of being able to watch the train position from the control panel, the loss of this facility caused complaints! We put up with this for six shows and, like the new control panel, it was the addition of the new backscenes that finally forced us to do something about adding to, or replacing the CCTV.

Adding to the existing CCTV was not the best option as it would mean having more hardware to set up at shows (and we are constantly trying to streamline the set-up process) so replacement was needed. I first experimented with a USB webcam on a computer to see if a number of these attached to a PC would work as a cost effective solution, but found that the view they gave was not sufficiently live (there was over a second's delay) and it would have been technically difficult.

What I opted for in the end was a conventional CCTV 'quad processor' [a device that combines four pictures on one monitor] that turns out are available cheaply (at about £50) direct from Hong Kong. Some of these have an output capable of driving a computer monitor in addition to a conventional CCTV feed; this opened up the option of using a cheap flat panel computer display and, again cheap second-hand flat panel monitors are readily available from online auction sites - I obtained some 17" Dell types for approx. £50 each. Finally, the cameras were added and Maplin had yet another sale, so a selection of different types was procured (£20 to £30 depending on type). Hey presto, a cheap multi-camera CCTV system!

Because of the height and extent of the new backscenes there can now be times when trains are out of view for a considerable amount of time (remember that an unfitted goods takes a full two minutes to do a 360° circuit). With an ability to display four images per monitor, as

"The first CCTV system, introduced in 2008, was an instant hit with the operators. It reduced tiredness and even encouraged better overall operating standards."

The result?

Well, at St. Albans in 2008, the CCTV was deployed and was an instant hit with the operators. When running up to a stop signal at danger, it was now possible for the operator to draw their train slowly up to the signal, stop (or nearly stop), clear the signal, and have the train move forward; all with a reduced chance of a SPAD due to lack of attention, or not clearing the signal as planned. Whilst this did not absolve operators of the responsibility of observing the correct passing of trains, it did allow some to up their game when operating Mostyn. More importantly, it reduced the total amount of walking around required which in turn ought to have led to less tiredness and even better overall operating standards.

What was shown on the CCTV? Well with two sets of CCTV to play with, grouping allowed viewing of signals at each end of the layout: the Down home and Up starting signal at the Chester end; and the Down starting and Up outer home at the Holyhead end. As the up inner home could be viewed from the control panel all bases were thus covered.

Extension reboot

When we extended the scenic section of Mostyn the Up starting signal moved towards Chester. Although this meant that it was at a



well as the running signals it therefore seemed sensible to have two sets of CCTV and have it show other parts of the layout. With two monitors (again one for the Chester end and one for the Holyhead end) operators standing at the control panel can now see all critical locations, plus some other parts of the layout to give reassurance that trains are still moving.

Setting up at shows

One of my worries was that the extra complexity of the CCTV would increase setup times at shows. However we have managed to maintain, or even reduce this, by choice of components and how these are labelled, packed, and transported, and then mounted in place at a show.

Firstly, the choice of Dell monitors was a good move, as these have a quick release version of the standard monitor mount; Gavin has fixed the stand section of this on the rear of the new backscene units and the screens simply clip straight on.

Next, rather than the spring clamps previously used, each of the cameras are all pre-assigned to positions and are on bases that are bolted to either the lighting gantry beams or uprights (see picture opposite).

Finally, all CCTV cabling, quad-processors, and power supplies are pre-connected and travel to a show in a 'Tuff Crate'; all that is then required is that they are placed under the relevant base-boards at a show and the cabling connected.

It just gets better

A really positive side-effect of the new CCTV installation relates to the stock and track cleaning routines that take place at shows every morning before the general public are admitted. This requires every locomotive and powered DMU vehicle to be removed and cleaned and every formation to be cycled round the layout to enable all the fiddle yard roads to be cleaned.

There is not enough time to achieve this on a road-by-road basis so Eddie Knorn and Richard Oldfield have evolved a technique which is 100% reliant on the CCTV installation. Eddie commands the operation, informing Richard which trains can leave the yard and which trains can return to cleaned roads (all the while a separate group of 3 people will be removing, cleaning and replacing motive power whilst Eddie cleans the fiddle yard). By using the CCTV we can safely have 2, 3, or 4 trains moving in each direction without a collision risk and without Richard needing to leave the fiddle yard control panel.

For the future, when dual or even triple occupancy returns to the fiddle yards it may prove essential to extend our CCTV coverage to the storage roads as well. We can even envisage miniature high definition cameras providing a live stream, from novel viewpoints, direct to exhibition visitors via large flat screens positioned next to our display boards or maintenance tables. ■

"An enhanced CCTV set-up was required after the extension of the layout and the fitting of new, much higher, backscenes. Quad processors now enable four views to be seen on each of the two monitors."

Two pages reproduced from Mostyn's CCTV set-up guide (which assists in positioning cameras accurately at the start of every show). Key features, that must be included in each camera's coverage, are shown circled.

<p>Camera 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up Main Outer Home Signal (no.39). • Down Main Starting Signal (no.7). 	<p>Camera 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach to Down Main starting Signal (no.7) • Overview of exchange sidings (Holyhead end).
<p>Camera 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Holyhead end running lines including approaching up trains. 	<p>Camera 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground signal no. 21 (Set back Down main to Up Main). • Overview of exchange sidings.

<p>Camera 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Down Main Home Signal (no.6). • Ground Signals no. 17 & 15 (Set back Up Main). 	<p>Camera 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up Main starting Signal (no.37). • Overview of approaching down trains. • Overview of dock sidings.
<p>Camera 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground signals no. 28 & 29 (exit from dock exchange sidings 2...5). • General overview of dock exchange sidings and Up & Down Main running lines. 	<p>Camera 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Chester end running lines.

Funny handshakes all round

DURING A WEEKDAY modelling session, a local gentleman turned up at the clubrooms having heard about BMRG's activities. He was interested in learning more about recent developments in the hobby before undertaking the construction of a garden railway. It soon became apparent that he was also looking for information about a certain locomotive – No. 7532. As a Freemason, he explained that lodges are numbered. The Westminster Lodge, based 'down the road' at Christleton, is number 7532 and its members wondered what type of engine would have carried that particular number.

Norman Lee's immediate reaction was that LMS 7532 was an ex-LNWR 'Coal Tank' - an 0-6-2T designed at Crewe under Mr F W Webb and built by the hundred. In later LMS days, many of them were renumbered (usually by adding 20,000) to make way for the 3F 0-6-0 tanks which became the standard LMS shunters.

Norman looked through the LNWR Society's photographic archive and soon found that No. 7532 was, in fact, something different - it was a North London Railway 0-6-0 goods tank. The LMS 'Coal Tank' numbers started at 7551.

North London Railway history

The NLR was incorporated in 1846 as the East & West India Docks & Birmingham Junction Railway. This was a few weeks after the amalgamation which formed the LNWR and the new line ran from the LNWR at Camden through to the docks at Poplar in east London. The Company shortened its name to the North London Railway in 1853. The NLR was of obvious interest to the LNWR (and, previously, to its constituent the London & Birmingham Railway). Right from the start the LNWR provided much of the capital for the NLR. Over the years, the LNWR provided finance for various expansions (particularly for the extension to Broad Street station, which was owned jointly by the NLR and the LNWR) - eventually the LNWR became the major shareholder but the NLR retained its independence into the 20th century.

Most of the goods traffic between Camden and the docks was carried by LNWR trains. The NLR's own trains were primarily for passengers and the Company ran commuter services over suburban routes, mainly from

Broad Street which was adjacent to the Great Eastern's Liverpool Street station. Much of the mileage run by NLR trains was over the tracks of other railways - around half the local services on Great Northern lines in the London suburbs were on NLR trains. The LNWR ran many of its own passenger trains over the NLR into Broad Street - particularly the trains from Broad Street to Watford and to the LSWR at Richmond. The huge goods terminus at Broad Street was wholly LNWR. By 1900, only Liverpool Street and Victoria had more trains per day than Broad Street.

London trams signal decline

The NLR prospered until electric trams were introduced in London. Then, in the early 20th century, NLR traffic fell disastrously. The LNWR, as major shareholder, thought it had to do something and in 1909 the LNWR took over the day to day running of the NLR. Many of the NLR senior officers were retired and the LNWR assumed the management of the NLR's tracks, locomotives and rolling stock although the NLR remained a separate company until 1922 when it was absorbed completely into the LNWR.

Once the LNWR had taken control, the Board decided to compete against London's trams by electrifying the lines from Broad Street to Watford, Richmond and over the West London Railway through Addison Road. The LNWR already had planned to build an extra pair of lines as an electric railway (4-rail 630V dc) from Watford to Euston and so work on the Broad Street scheme began very quickly, starting in 1911. Unfortunately, the project was interrupted by the Great War. The electric service from Broad Street to Richmond commenced on 1st October 1916 and other electrified services began during the next few years - Euston was reached in 1922.

NLR locomotive fleet

The NLR had its own locomotive works at Bow and most of its locomotives were built there. All the company's services were short distance ones and so the NLR only owned tank engines. From the 1860s, passenger services were run with a variety of 4-4-0 tanks. The few goods trains were hauled by 0-6-0 tanks, similar to No. 7532. Locomotive livery was initially green but during the 1880s

When a local chap visited the club to ask advice on building a model railway, the conversation took an expected turn. As a Freemason, he was interested in a specific locomotive. **Norman Lee** took up the challenge to find out more about LMS 0-6-0 tank No. 7532.



LMS 7532, ex-NLR 66, rests outside the former NLR's shed at Devons Road, Bow, in 1931. It was built here but also worked at Birkenhead during its 47-year life. LNWR Society photograph library (ref: VF2814).



for LMS 0-6-0 tank No. 7532

a lined black livery - quite similar to the LNWR's, including LNWR-style numberplates - became standard. After the LNWR took over in 1909, NLR locomotives were renumbered into the LNWR series and standard LNWR black livery was used - other than the change of number, little altered.

After electrification, several redundant ex-NLR engines were scrapped or moved to other parts of the LNWR. The process continued in LMS days, helped by the introduction of new LMS standard locomotives such as the 3F 0-6-0 tanks and the various 2-6-2T and 2-6-4T classes.

Many of the NLR 0-6-0 tanks lasted into British Railways days. On the NLR they were reputed to give a rough ride - with their outside cylinders and short wheelbase they would waddle somewhat - but they rarely ran very fast and could pull all that the NLR gave them. Their axle loading was low and they could run around sharp curves - several were drafted to the Cromford & High Peak

where they stayed until the late 1950s. One of the 0-6-0 tanks - No. 58850 - lasted in service until 1960 and was preserved. It was painted in LNWR unlined black livery and given its LNWR number of 2650 - it can now be found at the Bluebell Railway.

The first NLR 0-6-0 tanks were introduced in 1879 to the design of Mr J C Park, the NLR's Locomotive Superintendent, and 12 were built by 1879. Eight more were built until 1892 to a slightly larger design. Then, from 1894 under a new Superintendent, Mr H J Pryce, more were built until 1910 by which time the LNWR had taken over. Most of the Pryce engines were said to be renewals of or replacements for the earlier engines - some of the later Pryce engines even replaced the earlier Pryce ones.

At their peak there were 30 NLR 0-6-0 tanks. In NLR days few of the engines lasted very long before being 'renewed' (as the NLR termed it) - perhaps the process amounted to a heavy general repair as after NLR

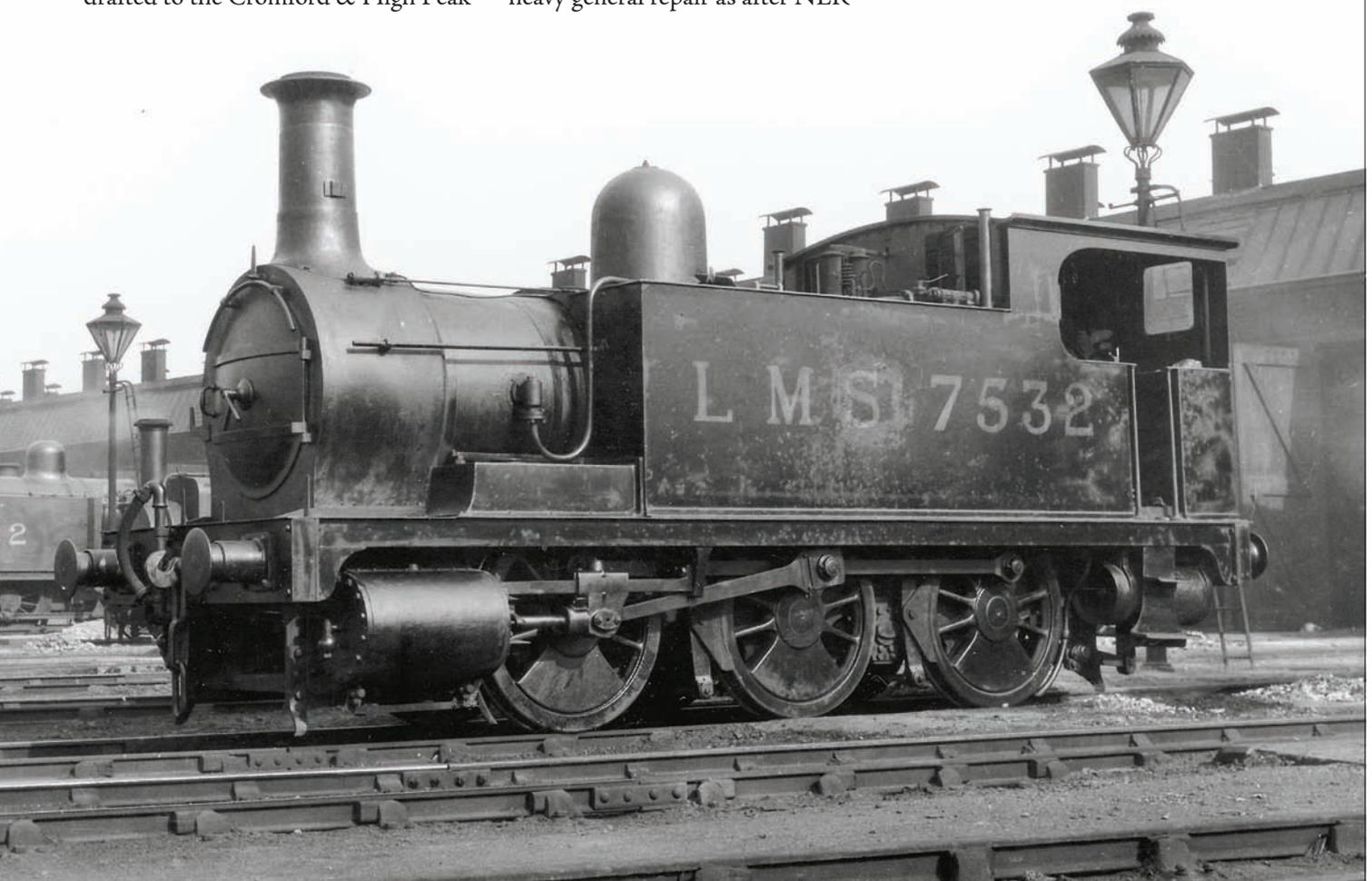
days many of the class lasted another 40 or 50 years!

The elusive No. 7532

No. 7532 was built in 1905 as No. 66 and was a 'renewal' of one of the original batch which had been built in 1899. It was given the number 2884 by the LNWR and then renumbered 7532 by the LMS. The LMS later renumbered it 27532. Finally, British Railways numbered it as 58863. Having spent time working off Birkenhead shed (6C) in the early 1950s, it was withdrawn from service in December 1952 and scrapped at Crewe Works the following year. ■

References:

1. *North London Railway - A Pictorial Record*. NRM 1979.
2. *British Locomotive Catalogue 1825-1923. Volume 2A: L&NWR and its Constituent Companies*. D Baxter 1978. Moorland.



Johnstown Road latest

York Model Railway Show invitation

We have received and accepted an invitation to take Johnstown Road to the York Model Railway Show held on Saturday 4th, Sunday 5th & Monday 6th April 2015. The venue is the Knavesmire stand at York racecourse. This is BMRG's first invitation to attend this large Easter exhibition and hopefully Johnstown Road will open the door for a certain 1977 'P4' layout in due course.

With most of the team having returned flat-footed from our last outing to Chatham in June 2014, it is surely time to scrap the heavy and hard Dexion stands that have enabled us to see over the backscenes (and carry out coupling/uncoupling) for the last ten years. Please can members keep their eyes out for alternatives, bearing in mind they really need to be able to be carpeted. Three days at York should act as an incentive to do something...

New timetables and posters on display

At the request of Richard Stagg, who wished to renew poster artwork and provide timetables affixed to the buildings at Johnstown Road and Porth Nefyn, Philip has provided the solution. This has been done using the same techniques as previously when producing new signage for the JR coal yard, coal merchant's hut and boathouse.

The easiest solution was to colour laser print scaled-down posters directly unto self-adhesive label sheet. Following e-mail correspondence we searched the NRM library and other internet resources to find suitable images for our 1908 period. These were scaled and enhanced using Photoshop before being output at the correct size. Additionally, a number of timetable pages were scanned from an old Cambrian Railways book and the headings suitably altered for our stations. The finished artwork was then applied directly to model plastic frames and hoardings built by Richard Stagg before fixing them to buildings with double-sided tape.

Stock handling and display to be improved

Whilst not quite at the rate of Mostyn, the stock list of Johnstown Road grows inexorably and our tiny fiddle yard looks increasingly choked at exhibitions. There is an obvious risk of stock damage – though no-one could be more relaxed about the possibility than Emlyn Davies who has produced nearly everything we use. We can slightly improve the capacity of the yard by adding a small shelf within its current dimensions and perhaps cladding the wooden surfaces with felt would help.

Gavin has suggested making a single Perspex display shelf which would slot into the fiddle yard above the current wooden shelf. It would be removable for transit and storage but fixed in place during exhibitions. This solution would enable the public to see more items of stock that were not on the layout and make the fiddle yard operator's job slightly easier. If anyone has any alternative suggestions then please step forward.

Operating schedule in need of re-hash

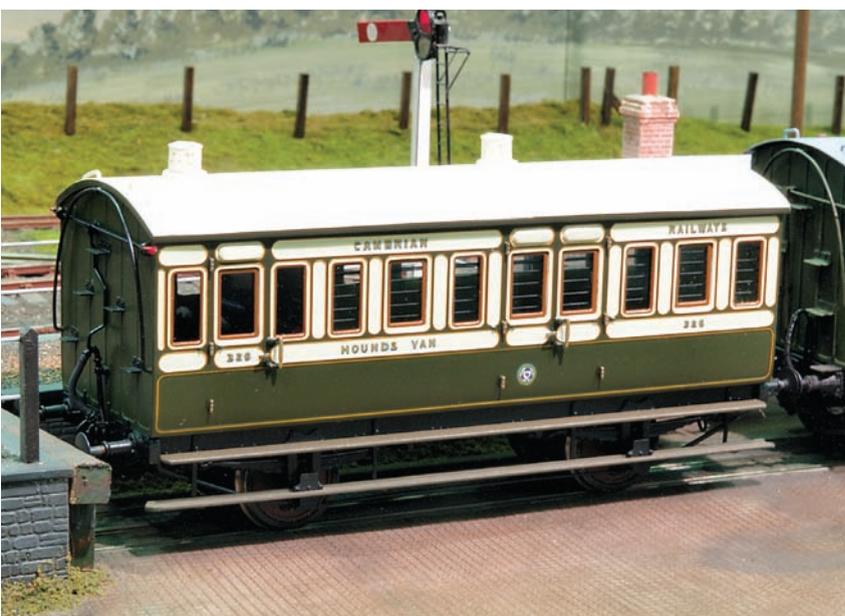
One of the ways in which we could reduce congestion around the fiddle yard is to simplify the operating schedule by removing locomotives from the roster. We have always used every locomotive which is available and they form an impressive display in their own right. We do need to modify the current operating schedule (to take into account Richard Stagg's and Norman's stock which uses 3-link couplings and is not compatible with the Alex Jackson couplings on Emlyn's stock) so now is a good time to consider this further. If the regular operators of Johnstown Road could provide their views then they can be taken into account before we arrive at York. Have we struck the right balance between complex and straightforward manoeuvres? Are we ready for a change or relatively happy with where we are? ■



A busy scene is captured at Porth Nefyn quayside. With the view dominated by the Dutch Motorlogger, Cambrian Railways 0-6-0 tender loco (Vulcan Foundry 1447 of 1894) shunts a pair of horseboxes to the loading dock. In the background 0-4-2 Saddle Tank No. 3 (Sharp, Stewart 1123 of 1859) waits for dockside capacity with a timber load carried on twin bolster wagons.



Right: An intriguing item of stock put in an appearance at Porth Nefyn when one of our guests produced a Hounds Coach. Two of these vehicles were built by Cambrian Railways to transport hunting packs around the shires. Information gleaned by Emlyn Davies reveals that No. 190 was converted from a Third Class coach at Oswestry in 1905 and finally scrapped in 1930. Oddly, the newer vehicle, No.326, built at Oswestry in 1908 only survived until 1924. Both vehicles were 24ft long.



Cambrian Railways 150th celebration

A newly-cleaned clubroom and smart Johnstown Road were ready to greet all visitors on the occasion of the visit of the Welsh Railways Research Circle on 21st September 2014. In addition, Richard Staggs had made a small diorama to display a number of 4mm scale Cambrian buildings and railway stock.

We were hopeful of a decent number of attendees but both operating sessions, separated by lunch and talks held at Tarvin Community Centre, were fairly quiet. There was, however, no shortage of enthusiasm as demonstrated by the fact that visitors had travelled from the Midlands and South Wales.

There's nothing like driving a train and we made sure that everyone who wished to operate got a good turn, none happier than three-year-old Ryan Hughes who had great fun until his eyelids started drooping through tiredness. Ryan's father, Steve Hughes, later sent a nice thank you text to the group.

Prometheus: The building of an engine (well, sort of)!



PROMETHEUS - a very ostentatious name for a small and insignificant engine! The Oswestry & Newtown Railway ordered three of these machines from Sharp Stewart & Company in 1863. They were:

No. 36, *Plasfynnon*, Works No. 1431

No. 37, *Mountaineer*, Works No. 1432

No. 38, *Prometheus*, Works No. 1433

As delivered, they had no cabs, not even a weather-board, and water was supplied to the boiler by a small donkey-pump on the footplate.

I had already modelled all three locos but foolishly sold *Prometheus* some years ago. I had not intended to replace the first *Prometheus* but, on the 'bring and buy' stand at the Telford O gauge show, I saw a set of driving wheels of the correct diameter and number of spokes plus a suitable Mashima motor with a Branchlines gearbox – I couldn't resist.

The model is of the locomotive in its later years when a very narrow cab was added with the unusual set-up of four circular windows to the front of the cab and a pair of opening doors quite high up the back for coaling. That cab might have been cosy in the winter but it must

Cambrian Railways No. 38, the last of a trio of 0-4-0s constructed for the Oswestry & Newtown Railway in 1863, was the odd one out of the three being dedicated to freight work because of the lack of vacuum apparatus. On a typical duty, *Prometheus* trundles towards Johnstown Road with a Lime train.

have been horrible on a hot summer day.

Cambrian Railways locomotives only had a single lamp-iron, front and back, usually on the right-hand side, but this trio had them on the left-hand side, I don't know why.

They had very much uneventful lives trundling up and down the branch lines hauling short passenger and mixed trains, except for *Prometheus* which, for some reason, was not fitted with a vacuum pump (the other two were), so *Prometheus* was restricted to freight.

Having said that they had uneventful lives, the first of the trio, *Plasfynnon*, was commandeered from the yard at Oswestry to bank a heavy holiday train towards Ellesmere. Unfortunately, at about 40mph, she left the rails and damaged herself and quite a lot of track. Fortunately no-one was hurt and the locomotive was subsequently repaired. At the enquiry it was said by the driver that, at speed, these engines behaved like a small boat on a rough sea.

For many years I knew the late Mike Morton Lloyd and he provided me with many drawings of Cambrian Railways' locomotives, coaches and wagons and it was his drawing that I used during the construction of these engines.

Construction materials

The chassis is unsprung and fretted out of 1/16" brass using a piercing saw. The frame spacers are commercial items and pick-up is by phosphor bronze strip rubbing on the back of the wheel rims - easy to adjust and amazingly long lasting. *Plasfynnon*, built in 1979, is still using the original pick-ups.

The oddly-shaped dome/safety valve casing was turned for me by a friend and the chimney and smokebox door are commercial castings.

The body parts were fretted out of nickel silver. I have often been asked about shaping the saddle tanks and I have found that, by making a tracing of the tank front from the drawing,

Having sold his first model of this small 0-4-0, **Emlyn Davies**, describes the construction of another, once again completing the trio of O&NR machines.

transferring that tracing to a piece of thicker paper or thin card and then gluing that to a piece of nickel silver, it is easy to cut around the shape with a piercing saw, fettling it with fine files if necessary. The paper or card can be soaked off afterwards in warm water if you use PVA glue. Once the shape has been cut out and the plate for the tank cut to size, it is relatively easy to bend the tank using a variety of sizes of rod to form the curve – part of an old broom handle is good for the first larger radius curve.

The buffer planks are like the prototype - a metal/wood/metal sandwich. The rivets are small brass pins pushed through holes in the 'sandwich' after the parts had been glued together and left to set. The pins are secured with a spot of superglue.

The re-railing jack, loco springs, handrail knobs and the clack-boxes on the boiler sides were bought.

The coupling rods were fretted and shaped using steel from the chassis of an ancient computer, a good piece of recycling. The brake blocks are wooden as per the prototype.

Paint and plates

On completion the model was given a thorough wash to remove grease and soldering deposits then coated with undercoat grey car spray paint. When that was dry a top coat of semi-matt black was sprayed on – car paints again. The buffer planks were brush painted. Red lining is by Rotring pen and ink.

I ordered three sets of nameplates from Guilplates, who did an excellent job, so all three engines have nameplates.

That's about it really, I didn't set out to scratchbuild locomotives, but 30-odd years ago when I began modelling the Cambrian, nothing was commercially available so there was no choice but to build it or do without. Having no background in model engineering or metalwork, I had to learn by trial and error – many errors! I soon learned the most important lesson in soldering – solder just won't work unless the metal is absolutely clean – if it is, then you can start having fun. ■

A bit of Cambrian DIY – a 'utility' brake van for branch line passenger trains

ON PAGE 80 in C.C. Green's *Cambrian Railways Album* book, there is a photograph of 2-4-0 No. 28 on a branch passenger train at Dinas Mawddwy in 1912. Now the two 4-wheeled coaches are normal passenger stock but the passenger brake van is a very odd little beast. Looking at the photograph carefully, it seems as if the Cambrian had converted one of their ordinary covered goods vans into a sort of 'utility' passenger brake van. The outside framing, sliding doors and general proportions looked correct and the modifications seemed to be the addition of two small windows in the ends, pairs of steps beneath the door openings and grab-handles on the outside framing by the doors. I could see no sign of a chimney so the guard must have had a cold time of it in winter.



In my box of 'bits that might come in useful' I found a suitable set of Cambrian wagon axleboxes, some Cambrian buffers, couplings, vacuum pipes, brake castings and open-spoked wheels. I already had drawings for the covered van and had built some previously so decided to build another, this time modified for branch passenger use. The chassis solebars and buffer beams were cut out of 1/16" brass of suitable dimensions and soldered together with rectangles of nickel silver soldered to the top to hold everything rigid and also to provide something to secure the body to, using nuts and bolts. The axleguards, buffers and vacuum pipes were glued into position as was the brake gear.

The body was made from artists' mounting board, the sort of material that is used as a mount when framing water colours. It is 1/16" thick and comes in a variety of colours, also it doesn't warp, shrink or go brittle – I don't recommend it for garden railways in the rain however. The basic bodysides and ends were drawn out first and all the planking and window detail drawn on with pencil. The planking was scribed using the point of an old pair of compasses held at an angle of about 45 degrees, this indents the card to represent the edges of the planks where they touch. The outside framing was drawn and cut out next – I use a scalpel to cut but a sharp craft knife is just as good – then all the parts are glued together with PVA wood glue.

The handrails were folded up from thin brass rod and pushed into pre-drilled holes in the outside framing secured with a touch of superglue. The step supports were folded and soldered to the solebars, the steps themselves, cut and shaped from brass strip, were then soldered to the supports. Lamp-irons were folded up from phosphor bronze strip and glued to the ends. I have fitted vacuum pipes but I don't know if the van actually had vacuum brakes or just a through pipe for the guard to control the train brakes via a valve of some kind.

When the body was complete but minus the roof and window glazing, it was given two coats of grey car body primer spray paint (inside and out) then brush-painted with Precision Paints Cambrian coach green. The glazing, clear acetate sheet, was glued into position and the roof, also artists' mounting board, scribed on the underside to represent planking, was glued into position and held in place with rubber bands until the glue set.

I had a few Cambrian coach transfers left so I used these. The van is lettered 'Cambrian Railways', and on the doors, 'Luggage Comp.' and 'Guard'. This is purely conjectural as I have no photographic evidence to prove it. For this reason the van is not numbered. Despite all the 'ifs, buts and maybes', the van will make an interesting and unusual addition to the branch passenger trains on Johnstown Road and Porth Nefyn.



Reading room

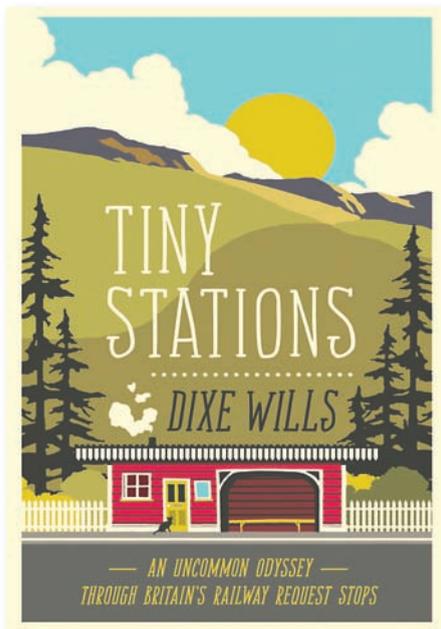
Tiny Stations by Dixe Wills. The AA, 2014. ISBN 978-0-7495-7561-8. Price £16.99.

THIS BOOK is the account of a journey the length and breadth of Great Britain visiting a varied and idiosyncratic selection of halts throughout the system. Each halt has an accompanying chapter which tells a story. The story usually has a connection with each stop, and each one has a charm of its own.

The author starts at Lelant in Cornwall and stops at each of his chosen places – gets off the train – and explores the locality. There is a story relating to the venue, and at times another story relating to how he got there. He travels alone – apart from his camping gear. He meanders through the West Country and Wales, then does a circuit of England before tackling Scotland and ends in the far north at Altnabreac.

For me, part of the interest in Dixe Wills' travels is that I used to commute through some of his targets and indeed, during my first job after qualifying, actually used one on occasions. The place in question is Tonfanau on the Cambrian Coast immediately north of Tywyn. Dixe suffered a bit of an adventure in respect of Tonfanau so there is more than one story he relates here, including referring to the use of the former Army camp at Tonfanau as a refuge for some of the Asians thrown out of Uganda. I, too, can expand a bit on this topic. While I was in the Army I had worked at the camp for nearly three years and had in fact been involved in its closure.

When the Ugandan Asians first arrived at Tonfanau obviously there was a great deal of media interest, most of it local to Wales, and we can remember seeing pictures on the TV news of these people being settled into the camp, and in particular seeing shots of them in the room used as their dining hall. This was the former Sergeants' mess and just before closure the Sergeants threw a big party and all the officers and families were invited, not only to the party but to help set it up. There was a sort of South Pacific theme to the event and my wife was heavily involved with the painting of the walls of the soon to be abandoned mess hall – so what the hell, let's splash the paint and jazz it up. No one's going to charge us for redecoration as the place is to be abandoned. The result was palm trees and beach scenes all over the walls with the odd appropriately (un) dressed islander. Hence her horror when we saw these unfortunate refugees having



to put up with what nowadays we would regard as totally non-PC décor! As the author says now all this has gone. It's just a memory.

Referring to memories, Dixe Wills spent a bit of time on the north Warwickshire line visiting The Lakes and Wootton Wawen. Poor Dixe displays his London origins when he luxuriates on saying the name of Wootton Wawen out loud. No, Dixe, it's not as you think. You need a good glottal stop in Wootton, and the second w in Wawen is silent. Do it that way to get an authentic Warwickshire sound – as understood by the great bard from just down the way.

This is an area I knew quite well as a teenager as it was my 'get out of the house and go for a bike ride' zone. Many a happy hour was spent in the lanes around Earlswood Lakes with my best mate. Now much of this quiet rural area has been ripped apart by the M42 motorway. The stations along this line are where I studied the layout of the goods yards and the operations of the pick-up goods trains – usually a pannier and a string of household coal wagons plus vans with fertilizer traffic for the farming community. There were also the regular suburban services to Stratford plus express services to Cheltenham and the south west and quite a lot of heavy through freights as well. Plenty to see.

But, back to the book - it's a great read. One of those that you keep dipping into, or will make for excellent bedside reading – just one little station a night. So this book I can heartily recommend. ■ *Richard Stagg*

The Buckley Railway Album and Associated Industries by P.G. Davies, C.J. Dawson and J.R. Thomas. Published by The Buckley Society 2007. 2014 reprint. Price £9.95.

A LOOK AT the booksellers' stalls at model railway exhibitions show a great variety of railway histories. Some books have a broad appeal, while others concentrate on local interests with limited appeal. This recently reprinted book might be considered in the second category.

However, having read the book and studied its pictures, this book has much of interest, and broad appeal, for local industrial archaeologists and railway history enthusiasts alike.

In earlier times the north east part of Wales played a major part in the 19th & 20th Century Industrial Revolution. Many industries took advantage of the natural resources of the area which prompted the local development of railways to move the raw materials and goods in and out of this part of the Principality. The Buckley Railway played its part in industrial life by linking those local industries and the movement of their goods to wider markets.

The railway was operated as a minor goods line, with no passenger services or stations, running from Connah's Quay on the Welsh coast, uphill and inland, to Buckley serving many local industries along its route. It was certainly a line which would have required much skill to operate with gradients of 1 in 30 and 1 in 40 over a number of sections, particularly as the trains in the photos appear to be unfitted.

It is said that a picture can paint a thousand words, and the 207 illustrations in the 184 pages of this soft cover book gives a great flavour of the day to day running of the line, as only short captions are provided. The authors are to be congratulated on seeking out these obscure photographs and giving a wonderful flavour of a line now long gone, with the added benefit of the 1876 photographic collection of the line put together by Martin Mollington, which is now held by Flintshire Record Office.

Included in the book are extracts from contemporary Ordnance Survey sheets which show the route of the line. While these extracts show how the railway fitted into its contemporary environs when it was in operation, the reviewer had difficulty in relating many of the OS extracts of the route of the line in the book when comparing them with the current 2½ inches to the mile Ordnance Survey Explorer Sheet No. 266. While parts of the line can be followed on this more recent, and smaller scale, OS sheet, other parts of the route are now impossible to follow. So, the possibility of walking the whole length

of the line might be difficult using only present day maps as a guide, although the final paragraphs of the book set out those parts of the track bed which are footpaths.

The addition of 'then and now' photographs along the route might have helped the understanding of what remains of this line today. The photographs of Buckley Junction Station, (now simply Buckley Station) at the top end of the line, might have benefited from reference to its connection with the Bidston to Wrexham line which is still in existence today. The only reference to the Bidston-Wrexham line is a 1990 photograph of a Class 101 on a Bidston service.

Originally part of the Wrexham Mold & Connah's Quay Railway, the line was operated by a variety of steam locomotives. Over the years these have included, among others, an ex-Great Eastern Railway J69/1 0-6-0 No. 68595, an LNER Class N5 0-6-2, a Lancashire, Derbyshire & East Coast Railway 0-6-0 and even an ex-Great Eastern Railway 'Buckjumper' 0-6-0 LNER J67 No. 68531, all showing that the Manchester Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway – later the Great Central Railway – was alive and well in north east Wales. Later, the GWR got in on the act with a pannier or two from Croes Newydd.

From a modelling perspective, part of the route would make a great 'O' Gauge layout; single track with a variety of 0-6-0 locos with private owner and BR non-fitted four-wheel open wagons. Even the sidings from the various industries on the line seemed to manage to avoid any catch points between the yard and the main line. No doubt wagons were held on the running line while the adjoining sidings were shunted.

The line was no doubt operated in a rather more relaxed way than today's railway. With all those gradients and the use of unfitted four-wheeled goods stock, the train crews must have required all their skill and local knowledge to prevent runaways and to maintain suitable levels of braking, especially on wet and greasy rails. I'm sure there were runaways, but there are no photographic records of such.

Recommended for anyone interested in local industrial archaeology and the GCR, this book is a quality production and superb value. ■ *Alisdair M Macdonald*

The book is available by post at £9.95 + P&P from bucksoc@ewclub.net, or by collection from Buckley Library, or from F&J Newsagents, Mold Road, Buckley or from Bethany Books in Shotton, or the Barber's Shop, Manor Lane, Buckley. The Editor visits Chris Dawson at his Barber's Shop, every so often (when his hair needs cutting!), and can save postage costs for anyone who is not in a desperate hurry to get a copy!

BR Parcels and Passenger-rated Stock, Volume 1 by David Larkin. Published by Kestrel Railway Books, 2014. ISBN : 978-1-905505-33-3 Price : £15.00

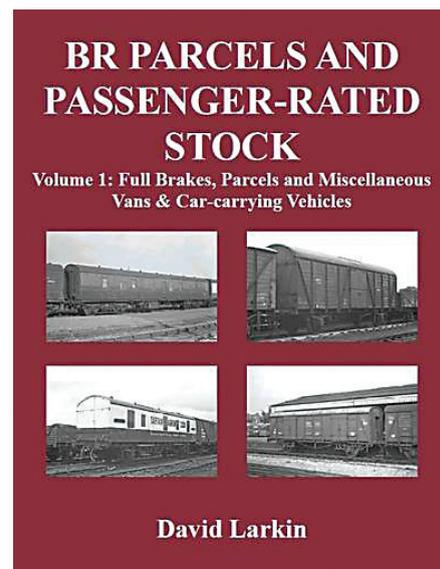
COURTESY of a well-known UK tax avoider, I have recently received my copy of David Larkin's latest work. This is his ninth book for Kestrel and is the first in a two-part series on BR parcels and passenger-rated stock. It's an obvious purchase for those of you who know my interest in these vehicles – having built no fewer than 20 of them during this year alone.

Volume 1 'does what it says on the tin' and covers full brakes, parcels and miscellaneous vans and car-carrying vehicles. Each type has a brief description accompanied by a number of photographs varying from crisp and clear to muddy and indistinct. There are also short sections covering these vehicles in the BR period and an analysis of parcels services.

For me, the formulaic layout of these books is starting to look tired and it gives me a feel of 'we need another book this year, let's crank one out'. In particular there are plenty of blank spaces which I would have liked to have seen filled by larger images or enhanced text, perhaps even some formation shots. Modellers will be frustrated by the lack of clear detail on some images and the sparse coverage given to the BR-designed full brake seems at odds with their large build.

Having said all of this, my copy only cost a 'tenner' and that's a bargain for a book that does have some fine modelling inspiration. It's an 'Aldi' book rather than a 'Sainsburys' book and none the worse for that. I hope it succeeds but I also hope that some day the encyclopaedic knowledge of David Larkin will lead to some definitive works. I will be placing my order for Vol. 2 as soon as it is announced... ■

Richard Oldfield



Steam around North Wales – the North Wales coast and the Lleyn peninsula by Mike Hitches. Published by Amberley, 2013. ISBN 978-1-4456-0-765-8. £16.99.

MIKE HITCHES aims to cover steam in North Wales as widely as possible and I am sure that he was spoilt for choice with his illustrations. He has succeeded in opening a long lost world to modern eyes with a pleasing depth of illustration of many of the obscure and 'off the beaten' track lines. While some pictures have appeared elsewhere, there are many that are new to me and fascinating to see. To quote but one example, there is an excellent 1950s shot of Mostyn looking towards Chester taken from the Down Slow platform, showing the complexity of the trackwork on the Down side and the goods yard entrance, with a view of the steel works in the distance and with both Up line starters "off".

The book is structured both by area and by pre-grouping company though the photos are mainly post-grouping and BR era. These are accompanied by explanatory text and captions. He makes no attempt to cover industrial lines. As the title says, the book covers the north Wales coast and the Lleyn – so nothing on Anglesey, in fact nothing north west of Menai Bridge station. Also there is nothing much south of the Ruabon to Barmouth line apart from a bit of the Cambrian coast line and the Wrexham and Ellesmere. A more notable omission, as it does fall within the remit of the book, is the almost complete ignoring of the WM&CQ – GCR – LNER presence in north Wales. There is just the odd reference in the text and an illustration of a timetable. This omission is, I think, surprising and disappointing given the meticulous cover given to all the other byways in the Wrexham area.

The aim of the book is to be commended. However, in execution, the author has - in my opinion - messed it up. There are far too many caption errors. To return to my quote about Mostyn, the caption finishes by stating that, "Closed to passengers in 1966, nothing now remains of Mostyn station." Yet if that were the fact, we would not have had to model an abandoned station building and bricked-up goods shed! I counted at least 35 obvious errors. Some of these are real howlers such as those on pages 174/5 placing Cader Idris in and over Barmouth and a caption about a train about to cross the viaduct when it already has done so. Another example comes on page 59 where Mr Hitches has the main north Wales coast line passing under the A55 at Old Colwyn rather than over it. Regrettably these silly errors so compromise the book that I cannot recommend it. ■ *Richard Stagg*

Mostyn's flagship locomotives: The Class 40 'Whistlers'

Richard Oldfield and **Philip Sutton** take a fresh look at modelling the venerable English Electric Type 4s which were ever-present on the North Wales Coast main line in the glorious BR corporate-blue era. The Mostyn Loco Superintendent is screaming for power on a busy summer's day and these beasts fit the bill. So, settle into your virtual Mk. 1 compartment and come for the ride – there'll be a few surprises but we get there in the end!





IT SEEMS HIGHLY APPROPRIATE to mark the 40th edition of the *Barrowmore Model Railway Journal* with a review of Mostyn's iconic Class 40 fleet which now numbers no fewer than nine examples. Way back in 2005 we produced the first six 'Whistlers' and *RAIL EXPRESS* magazine published a major article describing our efforts. This was well-received by modellers, acquired the 'definitive' accolade and resulted in that particular issue selling out completely. But, has it stood the test of time? You can make your own mind up as we bring you the chance to see the original work again and then bring it up-to-date.

NB: When we refer to the Bachmann Class 40 in the main body of the article we are referring to the version that was on sale prior to 2014. A re-tooled version (Bachmann catalogue Nos. 32-475DC, 32-480DS & 32-481) was released in early 2014 and we consider the ramifications of this 'improved' model for Mostyn's motive power requirements in the final section.



Top: No. 40134 made her debut at Chatham 2012 and is running in ex-Works condition as per July 1977. She is the first new locomotive on Mostyn for a couple of years and follows our tried and trusted heavily-modified Lima body method, in this case running on a much-changed Bachmann chassis. The Carlisle-based split-box 'Whistler' has a humble duty, trundling a long rake of pipe wagons back to the aluminium smelter on Anglesey to pick up another load of ingots.

Left: A filthy Wigan Springs Branch allocated No. 40182 is rostered on one of our many parcels formations, in this instance a Holyhead-Bolton working that loads to an impressive 15 vehicles (that's 3.6 metres in 4mm scale). The Lima body/Bachmann chassis 'combo' has no problems with a train of this length as it clatters past the rear of the railwaymen's cottages, at the Chester end of the layout, with the Up Main starter signal showing a clear road ahead.





Nos. 40001, 40111 and 40127 await the call for duty. The only further attention required will be to refine the weathering according to Works overhaul dates.

WE STARTED to seriously plan this major build of 4mm scale 'P4' Class 40s in June 2005 and began with a heap of locomotives, detailing components, books, modelling articles and pre-conceived ideas. The first questions are always: 'Where are the best model Class 40s?', 'What makes

them the best?' and, critically, 'What can we do to move the benchmark upwards?'

In our scale there are two possible routes – Bachmann and the old Lima moulding which eventually resurfaced as part of the Hornby 'Railroad' beginners range. The casual reader, picking up issues of the mass-market model railway press could be forgiven for believing that the Bachmann Class 40 was the answer to a 'Whistler' fan's prayers. So, how is it that none of the superbly finished Class 40s we have looked at used the Bachmann body at all?

It seemed only fair to re-visit our concerns about the Bachmann model but, in a nutshell, the review in *RAIL EXPRESS*, (November 2004) still rings

true. It's a 'shocker' – the excellent mechanism, with its centrally-mounted five-pole motor and twin flywheels does nothing to counter-balance the completely mis-proportioned body. What's more, having studied it in depth we can't see a practical route to correct the body issues.

So, lets dust off the venerable 1980s' Lima effort and give it the once over.

Pilot Scheme differences

D200-209 (later 40122 and 40001-009) can be distinguished by longitudinal panel seams that run the length of the roof just above the cantrail grilles and what appear to be locking bars across the boiler compartment access hatches. These can easily be made from plastic strip and Mostyn loco No. 40001 was given this treatment. Note also the lack on nose top grab handles on these disc machines.





The initial impression is 'so-so' because your eyes are drawn to the offensive cab windscreens/windows and the angularity of the noses. However, these are not insurmountable problems and the body as a whole is both dimensionally more accurate than the Bachmann offering and has some exquisite tooling that comes to life when the body is stripped. At this stage we haven't run a ruler over every feature on the body but the superiority of the Lima body's basic shape is so clear that there is no alternative. This just leaves the question of the mechanisms. Mostyn's fleet will eventually number 16 examples (see Page 31) and cost considerations exclude buying 16 Lima locos and 16 Bachmann locos just to put the Lima body on the Bachmann chassis. Our plan is therefore to use the Bachmann mechanism for half the fleet and double-motored Lima mechanisms for the rest.

After stripping the Lima body of all paint and removing any moulding marks, the best course of attack is to tackle the most obvious problems which we judged to be the previously mentioned cab windscreens, side windows, doors and nose profile. With these corrected it will be much easier to identify the smaller and subtler areas for improvement.

Nose profile smoothing

We used Flex-i-files plus 1200 grade wet 'n' dry silicon carbide paper to round off all three edges of the bonnet - a simple yet effective operation. With the windscreen

(see later) and nose profile tackled you can immediately see the true Class 40 character appearing... so it's on to the cab sides.

Cab door and cabside windows

A visit to No. 40106 at the Nene Valley Railway, armed with a tape measure, led to the conclusion that the Lima door is too narrow, the cabside window is too long and too shallow whilst the cab rainstrip needs positioning higher up the roof.

Our solution is not for the faint-hearted but yields great improvements:

1. Cut the door out and remove the moulded handrails.
2. Enlarge the door width to 7.33mm by filing away material on the side nearest the loco nose. Extend the footstep notch below the door accordingly.
3. Scratchbuild a brand new door from 1.0mm thick plasticard remembering to cut out the window aperture and score or scribe the door posts/frame before gluing in place.
4. Re-build post between door and side window by adding a 0.5mm thick fillet of plasticard. This has the happy result of reducing the length of the window as well.
5. File away the bottom of the cabside window until it is 8mm in depth.
6. Fit new cab door handrails from 0.4mm diameter nickel-silver wire and door furniture from a square of plastic scrap and flattened brass wire.
7. Scrape away the rainstrip above the cab and replace it 0.5mm higher up on the roof with 0.3mm brass wire. After supergluing in place this can be filed to give a flat edge to match rainstrip profile.
8. Remove the moulded cab vent (it's way too small) and replace it with a much bigger vent cut from plastic section.

Now we're cooking - you can almost hear it whistling!

The master checklist!

With the help of Peter Johnson, whose excellent Class 40s have inspired much of our efforts, and the benefits of hindsight, here is our master list of key items to address:

Roofs

- Cab vents
 - Radiator fan and fan grille
 - Engine exhaust ports
 - Access hatch grab handles
 - Different cantrail grille patterns
 - Cab roof rainstrips
 - Roof lifting bolts
 - Boiler exhaust flue (Extra inset above cantrail on some locos)
 - Boiler compartment hatches
 - Boiler safety valves
- (NB: There are distinctive roof features on pilot scheme Class 40s)

Cabs

- New cab windscreen surrounds
- New flush glazing
- Windscreen wipers
- Increase width of door aperture
- Replace doors
- New door furniture
- Revise cabside window aperture
- Cab handrails
- Cab interiors
- Worksplates
- Kickplates
- Door surround
- Crew

Nose

- Round-off nose profile
- Disc headcodes and clips
- Handrails and grab handles
- Improve split headcode boxes
- Air horn grilles
- New lamp irons
- Raised warning flash panels
- Nameboard brackets

Bodyside

- Boiler side access panels
- Radiator louvre depth and detail
- Frost grilles
- Flush glaze engine room windows
- Footsteps by cab and central door

Bogies

- Sandpipes and support brackets
- Multiple working cables
- Vacuum and steam pipe runs
- Speedo cables
- Steps to cab
- Pivots

Bufferbeams

- Air/vacuum/steam/control pipes
- New buffers
- Couplings

Chassis

- Bearer pads
- Air reservoir tanks, pipework and drain valves
- Water tank modification
- Drain cocks
- Filler pipes
- Lifting points



The front end of disc-headcode machine No. 40088 displays the code for an unfitted freight. Note the repositioned top centre disc and the nose top grabs that are not found on the pilot scheme locos.



No. 40127 is from the split-headcode batch and used the Lima headcode mouldings extended forward with 20-thou sheet with a new face from 10-thou. Note the circular telephone socket cover.



The centre-box is a much cleaner arrangement and again much of Lima's moulding was retained. To make up the numbers, several square-edged box ScR models were converted. The new handrails make a big difference.



Cab windscreen

THE TOP RANKING issue with the Lima body is the poor representation of the windscreen area. Fortunately, a clear route to improvement is provided by Craftsman's etched replacement part.

1. Cut away the two central window posts and clean up inside and around the aperture where the Craftsman etch will fit.
2. One error that is frequently repeated when upgrading is to fit the etched windscreen flat across the body whereas only the central window is flat and the two end windows flare back towards the corner posts like three sides of a 20p coin. This is achieved by carefully filing back the roof and corner posts and extending the nose back until the corner post is just like the prototype. Ensure that your filing does not affect the roof above the central window.
3. Make two gentle folds down the centre of the vertical posts on the brass windscreen etch (see picture, above) and check for fit. Remember that after the etch is superglued in place you will need to glaze it so make sure there is space to locate and secure the 'glass'.
4. Fill in any gaps (see tricks of the trade) to ensure a smooth transition from roof to cab windscreen to nose. The windscreen face is, in fact, slightly inset and surrounded by a weld line on the prototype but this would be almost invisible at scale size.



Front end detail

WHEN IT COMES to the front end it is imperative to work from prototype photographs of both ends as there are numerous details designed to catch the modeller out! The first step is to remove all unwanted plastic detail such as moulded handrails and air-horn grilles and ensure the area around them is worked until smooth. Handrail positions can then be marked out with a small punch before being drilled out with a pin vice. The use of 0.3mm wire looks good but resulted in an awful lot of drill break-ages! Take it slow and steady.

The Shawplan air-horn grilles had the most detail and included the surround and fixing bolts lacking on the Lima moulding. These were cut from the fret, any pips filed off, and fixed using a tiny dab of slow-acting superglue on the body. The etch can be positioned on the end of a scalpel on a blob of blu-tak. Shawplan also provided the headcode discs. Consideration was given to the Lima originals but these were thicker and over-size. Interestingly, both Lima and Shawplan seem to have the hinge representation upside down! Discs were fitted on squares of 15-thou plastic to lift them off the body. Top and bottom securing clips were from 0.4mm wire, drilled through the body. Extra headboard clips are small sections sliced from a length of wire soldered to a thin brass strip while the big lamp irons were made from brass strip soldered in a "T" shape.



Bufferbeam

THE FRONT FACE of the Class 40 is very distinctive and this includes the bufferbeams. Much thought went into which direction to take; we looked at the whitmetal products from Craftsman (No. 135) and A1 Models (B6) but decided to stick with the original Lima and Bachmann mouldings.

The Lima bufferbeam can be worked on as a separate unit which helps. The main job was to fill the big coupling aperture and to build up the missing sections of the raised bulbous sections with plasticard and superglue. Once this had been filed to profile, a new hole was cut below the coupling following the prototype carefully. Lima's beam is also lacking in bolthead detail which was added from 10-thou plastic cubes attached with superglue used very sparingly.

Bachmann's beam also needed the aperture extending downwards and this was completed before both types were drilled-out to accept new sprung buffers from Hornby. Had we chosen Hornby's Class 31 buffers (vice 50) which already have the footstep cast in, we could have saved ourselves a job in adding these from plasticard.

Pipework was from Hornby, special mention going to the 'curly' engine control pipes under the buffers which are Class 31 spares. The multiple working plugs, sockets and cables are a mixture of plastic rod, flower wire, filler together with adaptations of Heljan Class 47 detail parts.



No. 40111 received crash repairs in 1975 resulting in its nose doors being removed at both ends. Steady and patient work saw this detail paired away. At this end, the lower edge lip was retained.

We could not resist a few 'odd balls' in the fleet and No. 40127 was notable for its disc-fitted nose doors at the No. 1 end. Because they are there, we used them! This code is for an express parcels or Freightliner.

Boiler compartment bodyside access panels

THERE ARE TWO TYPES of bodyside access panels – one for the Stones Boiler and one for the Clayton boiler. The first job is to lose the Lima effort as it bears no resemblance to either. Both plates appear to be the same size (10mm x 8.4mm) and can be made from 5-thou plasticard glued in place and then left to dry thoroughly before adding the long hinges and rivet detail (see picture left). The hinges are 0.3mm wire and the rivets are made by drilling a 0.5mm hole in the bodyside, pushing 0.5mm wire through and then supergluing it in place. File to achieve desired prominence. Eileen's Emporium offer some turned metal heads, but these arrived too late for this project. You might think the rivet head detail is a 'bridge too far' but it's easy to do and is very visible on the bodyside – take care, though, because the rivets are not all aligned!

Detailing components

THIS HAS BEEN our first locomotive build for some time and it has given us a good opportunity to compare various detailing components on the market. Our verdicts are as follows:

ETCHED WINDSCREENS – Craftsman part E34 is clearly superior to the A1 Models A3708

AIR HORN GRILLES – We prefer Shawplan part 505 to Craftsman E14 and A1 Models A3706.

FAN GRILLE AND FAN – The finer mesh and detailing led us to favour Shawplan's DP37-00 over A1 Models A4002.

HEADCODE DISCS – After consideration we used Shawplan DP4504 discs, which are finer and slightly smaller, in preference to the nice discs which come with the Lima '40' and Craftsman's E2.

ENGINE ROOM PIPEWORK – Hurst Models WP40 gets our vote since it comes with fitting instructions.

WINDSCREEN WIPERS – Shawplan DP4513 single arm wipers seem ideal for the job.

COUPLINGS – With sprung buffers you can afford to shorten the overall length of your couplings and, for the first time, we're using the coupling that comes with the Hornby 08/09 detailing pack. It needs a little bit of working 'to and fro' to loosen the joints but seems OK in use so far.

BUFFERS – Take a bow, Hornby, because we preferred your Class 50 oval sprung buffers to any of the whitmetal or brass products offered by others.

BUFFER BEAM PIPEWORK – The Hornby products are markedly superior to any of the competing plastic and whitmetal offerings so we bought ourselves Class 31 and Class 08/09 detailing packs for all our Class 40s.



CENTRE-BOX loco No. 40170 is identifiable by having one of its bodyside windows replaced by an access panel for air-brake equipment. The window was plugged with thick plasticard before being filed and sanded smooth. The plate was made from 5-thou plasticard with cut-outs for latches which were made from thin brass wire. It's madness but the finishing touch was the bolt heads made from cubes of 10-thou plastic fixed carefully in place with liquid poly.

Tricks of the trade

Paint stripping

For whatever reason, some manufacturers like a nice thick paint coating which hides all the lovely detail (and a few carbuncles?). The Lima Class 40 body detail really comes to life when it is stripped down so it was straight into the Precision Paints' Superstrip at the outset. Superstrip is expensive but also very effective and partially recoverable and we estimate it costs about £4-£5 per locomotive to strip it down if you are doing a few at a time.

We decided to make paint stripping a Mostyn minimum requirement for all our modified ready-to-run projects. It saves the hassle of having to be careful when shaving off details from painted bodies. Also, as we're becoming much more confident and competent with our air-brushing and masking (the Tamiya products are superb), there's no reason not to start from the bare plastic.

Wart removal

Injection moulding and casting techniques bring a few drawbacks that can be quite easily remedied but are often overlooked. We're talking about moulding lines, injection pips and, in the case of the Lima '40', a roughish texture on the plastic surface of the body.

We use files, scrapers, chisels, scalpels and wet 'n' dry paper to make these blemishes disappear. The key areas for attention on the Lima body are the mould lines that run along the roof at the level of the top of the cantrail grilles, the pip in the centre of the roof and the mould lines that delineate the nose from the bonnet – these are very noticeable when the body is stripped of paint. Obviously the same degree of care should be given to any components that you add – casting lines on whitmetal pipework are a good case in point.

Superglue and activator

Mostyn stalwart Gavin Liddiard introduced us to the potential use of superglue as a filler and not just a fast-acting adhesive. This technique is quick and effective and worth sharing:

1. Spray area to be filled with a coat of activator.
2. Leave until the surface dries (about one minute).
3. Using a piece of fine wire as an applicator, draw the superglue steadily along the space to be filled. Thin superglue is best because it flows better than more viscous products. With care you will produce a smooth glassy finish.
4. Scrape or sand to get undetectable joints.

We used this method to remove the gap between the Craftsman windscreen etch and the Lima bodies and also to fill in the incorrectly positioned lamp recesses on Lima disc headcode-fitted bodies. One note of caution – take care not to over-apply the activator on painted surfaces as it can soften some paints. Our Lima bodies were all completely stripped at the outset so this was not a worry for us.

Bill Bedford etches

Two etches from Bill Bedford (billb@mousa.uk.com) have made work on the Class 40s a lot quicker and easier. His handrail bending jig (E017/4) – there is now also a longer handrail bending jig (E019/4) – was used for most of the grab handles and handrails and can be improved by adding a 2.5mm thick plastic/perspex backing. You then just drill through the holes you need and it ensures that the legs of the handrails are always parallel to one another.

The brake safety loop etch (CES0052) is a goldmine of narrow strip with half-etched folds in places. We've never used it so far for its design purpose but it is ideal for lamp-irons, brackets and other fine detail.



Modifying Lima detail between the bogies (see 40127)

1. Take the Lima water tank/air reservoir moulding (as cut off the underframe) and remove all detail above the top of the water tanks.
2. Cut the water tanks in half and reduce the overall width by 4mm. Insert 24.1mm spacers into the two halves of the tanks such that the overall width is 27mm when re-assembled.
3. Make new top for the tanks from 10-thou plasticard, enhance the dividing line between

the tanks and clean up the new assembly.

4. Enhance the horizontal ribbing on the tanks with 20-thou x 10-thou strip. Some Class 40s (eg 40127) have a different pattern of ribbing.
5. We added spacers totalling 7mm to the top of the assembly and then the tanks were then centrally glued to the perspex strengthener on the double-motored chassis whilst carefully checking that the bogies had free movement.

6. Make the rectangular angled trunking from 80-thou x 125-thou solid section with 20-thou x 20-thou strip for the banding.

7. Add reservoirs and piping as per the Bachmann chassis (below) but take care since the Lima body sits lower on the Lima chassis than it does on the Bachmann chassis. This means you need to adjust the positions of the added components relative to the bottom edge of the Lima underframe.



Bachmann underframe mods (see 40088)

NAIVELY, WE HAD ORIGINALLY thought that there wasn't too much work to do on these babies but our usual critical eye soon spotted areas for improvement. Firstly, disconnect the bogies and then grind off the raised bearing surfaces inside the die-cast block that cause the body to sit very high on top of the bogies. We replaced them with 0.5mm nickel silver wire and then adjusted the depth of the bogie screw-mounting hole (with a large diameter drill) so that the top of the bogie tower was just in contact with the nickel silver wire. Whilst the chassis block/ underframe and bogies are apart you should cut off the representations of the air reservoir tanks - we're not really sure what Bachmann based them on but they do not correspond to any photographs we've studied!

This is a good point at which to re-wheel the bogies (Ultrascales again), fit a DCC chip and secure the plastic underframe to the die-cast chassis - we used a Perspex mounting plate plus screws through the twin holes in the die-cast block to do this. This last step is important because, otherwise, the ends of the underframe tend to bow downwards. Re-assembly and testing should leave you with an excellent power plant running at the correct height - there is a central moulding on each bogie in line with the rear axle which may need to be filed down in order to give the bogie more vertical movement.

HEALTH WARNING: *If you have sharp curves and gradients, take care when lowering the body and adding underframe components. Mostyn is dead flat and has gentle 1200mm radius curves so we could to 'go to town' in this area.*

Armed with your running chassis you can take your pick from these improvements:

1. **NEW SPEEDO CABLE.** Essential since the Bachmann offering is at the wrong end of the loco and the upper end is wrongly positioned. Replacements fabricated from flower wire, 1.5mm dia plastic rod and 20-thou plasticard.

2. **SANDBOX PIPE SUPPORT BRACKETS.** After bending the pipes to be in line with our 'P4' wheels we added support brackets made from Bill Bedford brake safety loop etches. Position the half etch at the bottom end of the bogie side frame and this minimises the stress on the superglued joints.

3. **MW CABLES/SOCKETS.** We decided the Bachmann-fitted multiple working cables/sockets on the bogie side frames were oversize and replaced them with Heljan sockets and flower wire for the cable.

4. **AIR RESERVOIRS.** Make replacements from 4mm diameter plastic rod filed down so that just over half of it is left. Add draincocks and pipework if desired. The reservoirs are different sizes on each side of the loco and this is a nice feature to replicate - assuming you are a rivet counter!

5. **WATER PIPE.** There is a diagonal pipe running from the water tank up under the body side which is only on one side of a Class 40. This can easily be made with a length of flower wire. Removing the pipe-fitting detail on the left hand end of the water tank on the opposite side completes the picture.

6. **DRAINS.** On both sides of the body there are two outlets just above the water tanks and these can be made from brass wire and scraps of plasticard.

7. **LIFTING POINTS.** We made these from two 2mm lengths of plastic U-section glued onto 10-thou plasticard backing which was then superglued to the underframe just above the inner two cut-outs in the bogie side-frames (eight per loco).

8. **BOGIE PIVOT.** Fabricate framework from 10-thou plasticard and glue this to bogie side-frame above central axle. There is also a gauge inboard of these frameworks which can be represented by a piece of solid rod (Evergreen



Boiler differences

The Lima body is correct for the Stones boiler-fitted Class 40s but there are important changes to make if you are modelling a Clayton-boilered 'Whistler'. For Clayton examples the pattern of cantrail grilles at the boiler (No. 2) end should be 'long-long-short' and not 'long-short-long' as per the Stones.

This was done by sacrificing spare Lima bodies and cutting out their grilles to act as donors (probably making them the most expensive grilles in the UK?). The incorrect pattern grilles were then removed from 40.088/127/134/170/182. After carefully gluing the replacement grilles in place, and some minor filling, the alteration was almost undetectable. The only alternative is to scratch-build the grilles by scoring and we could not see how to make this invisible to the eye.

A major change to the roof panel needs to also be made if you are modelling a loco with the Clayton steam generator. The outlet flue is circular and there is only one (narrower) roof access panel. The former detail was created by using 4.5mm diameter plastic tube sunk into a 7.5mm square of 30-thou plasticard. The panels were made up from 8.5mm wide 5-thou with detail from Scalelink rivet strip, 0.3mm wire and cubes of plasticard. The blanked panel was indented with a sharp scribe to indicate rivets. The blow-off valve assembly was formed on a section of rounded rivet strip, the outlets being from 1mm diameter rod drilled out in the centre.



222) fitted inside hollow rod (Evergreen 223) leaving a proud lip. Mount this to the bogie on a square of 0.25mm plastic. For reasons unknown, both these details were omitted from the Bachmann model but present on the Lima offering.

9. FILLER POINTS. There are pairs of filler pipes just inboard of the outer lifting points and these can be made from 1.5mm plastic round or hexagonal rod.

10. BEARER PADS. Located immediately above the leading cut-out on each bogie frame, our bearer pads were made from 40thou plasticard 4mm wide and 34mm long, rounded off at each end. They are spaced off the underframe by 0.25mm.

11. STEAM & VACUUM PIPES. Study photographs and you can see prominent vacuum and steam pipework running on the bogie frames just above the leading axle. As you look at the loco we made the right hand end from 0.9mm brass rod and the left hand end from 1mm brass rod with fine wire wrapped round at one point to simulate a pipe joint. These pipes vary in length and shaping so they make a distinctive feature.

You might feel that this is an awful lot of work to do on the underframes but it all adds subtlety and points 7-11 get rid of the 'air space' between the bogies and bodyside which is so offensive to our eyes. The result is a 'heavy' looking loco which is exactly what the Class 40 is!

Lima underframe modifications

Use the Bachmann instructions as a guide but with the following changes:

- 1. SANDPIPES.** Cut away the plastic pipes but retain the bracket. Drill a 0.5mm hole through the bottom of the bracket. Bend, fit and glue 0.45mm wire in place as the sandpipe.
- 2. SANDBOX FILLER CAP.** Cut a sliver of 1.5mm plastic rod for this job.
- 3. UNDERFRAME-MOUNTED COMPONENTS.** The lifting points, bearer pads, draincocks, pipe outlets need to be mounted slightly lower than on the Bachmann underframe otherwise they will not show correctly below the body edge.
- 4. BOGIE PIVOT FRAMEWORK AND GAUGES.** No need to bother - they're moulded on the Lima bogie!

Tricks of the trade continued

Nickel silver wire for handrails

Historically we tended to use either brass or soft iron flower wire for handrails and grab handles. Casting a critical eye on earlier models has led us to the conclusion that, because of their relative softness, we tend to use a thicker gauge than is strictly correct (especially when you consider subsequent applications of paint).

The Class 40 project is our first one to exclusively use nickel silver wire which is now readily available in a wide range of diameters. The added stiffness and resilience enables the modeller to pick out details that would otherwise be clumsy and oversize. The use of 0.3mm diameter wire for the rooftop engine access hatch handles is a good example of what can be achieved.

Cheap home-made glazing

You can make a massive improvement to the appearance of many models by getting rid of the proprietary glazing and replacing it with hand-made glazing. We use thin 'Lexan' for fitting into apertures in plastic such as the cabside windows, cab door windows and engine room compartment windows. Much thinner acetate sheet is employed where the glazing is applied behind brass etches such as the windscreen.

Lexan method

1. Cut glazing blanks that are only just bigger than the final size.
2. File edges of blanks to exact size with a slight chamfer towards the inside surface (this is done by trial and error fitting to the aperture). Don't be afraid to throw errors away.
3. Run round the edge of the window with a black permanent marker to simulate the rubber surround.
4. The finished window should be an 'interference fit' that doesn't need gluing (but use Canopy Glue or similar if you want more security).

Ten minutes per regular window is about right but it can be much longer for complex shapes.

Acetate method

1. Cut acetate to fit nice and flat behind the brass etch with as much overlap as possible.
2. Fit and use a brush to dab superglue accelerator at the corners of the acetate.
3. When the accelerator solvent has completely evaporated put a tiny spot of superglue at the joint of the etch and the acetate. This will set instantly and be clear (without causing the milkiness that is typical of superglue use near acetate).
4. Seal round the rest of the glazing edges with Canopy Glue or Microscale Kristal Klear.

Radiator louvres and grilles

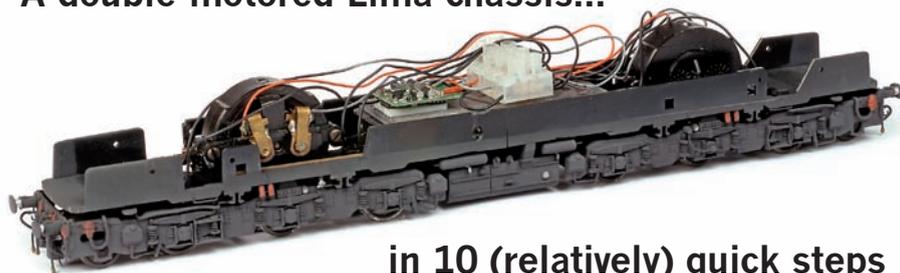
THE BACHMANN FROST GRILLE is correctly dimensioned and very nice (despite what you might have read elsewhere!) but the Lima representation of the louvres is shallow and positioned incorrectly in that it is too far down the bodyside and too far away from the nearby engine room window. Never mind, a swift bit of butchery will soon correct it:

1. Cut out the louvres.
2. Enlarge the rectangular hole upwards and to the left until the upper edge is 1.5mm below the cantrail and the left hand edge is 1.5mm from the engine room window. Adjust the other edges if necessary so that none of the bodyside shows through when the frost grille is positioned with 0.75mm overlap on each edge.
3. Make new louvres by cutting a long strip of 1mm thick plasticard 20mm wide and scrawling on it the louvre slats. Glue in position behind the bodyside. You will need to adjust the underframes later on to take account of this added detail.
4. Add both a vertical strip and diagonal bracing to the louvre aperture.

With hindsight, the benefits of this modification are not very noticeable behind the grilles but it's useful practice for ready for our No. 40199 which had its grilles removed. The LMR appeared to be quite tardy in removing the grilles or was it they just kept their radiator elements cleaner (than the ER and ScR) and thus overheating was not so much of a problem?



A double-motored Lima chassis...



in 10 (relatively) quick steps

1. Remove body and bogies from chassis (the non-powered bogie makes a thoughtful present for snowplough builders).
2. Take powered bogie and re-wheel to taste – in our case using Ultracscale 'P4' wheelsets.
3. Add as much lead weight to pony truck as is possible without restricting side movement – this is important for 'EM'/'P4' modellers but can probably be ignored by 'OO' fans.
4. Add new pick-ups and connect to motor. We used phosphor-bronze strip playing on the tyre surface of all four wheels on the leading and trailing axles of the bogie. The pick-ups were soldered to PCB strips glued to the cross-members of the plastic bogies, making them easy to maintain/replace.
5. Choose the motored bogies for pairing together by leaving them all running for hours and selecting those whose performance is equally good or equally dismal.
6. Take the stripped chassis and cut off all the water tank and air reservoir detail with a razor saw.
7. Cut the chassis in half and throw away the non-powered end.
8. Join two powered end chassis halves together. We cut a close-fitting rectangle of 5mm thick Perspex to bridge the gap and glued this in with Araldite. It is critical to ensure the new chassis is the correct length and is straight and level.
9. After adding lead sheet to the centre of the new chassis, fit paired motor bogies at each end, install chip (if DCC) and revise wiring.
10. Cut new holes in the vertical side of the chassis for the Lima body locating lugs, pop the body on and test until satisfied. There's no point in going any further until you have a faultless runner.

We were extremely satisfied with the running of the first couple of Lima double-motored Class 40s which debuted at the Gateshead show in 2005. They had no problems, even with heavy trains, and there were no failures. Despite being much lighter than the heavy Bachmann chassis, this reliability has been borne out in subsequent operating sessions.

If there is a celebrity locomotive on Mostyn, then it has to be No. 40106 which was the last of the type to retain BR green livery (which it was to keep despite impending overhaul). In 1977, the Longsight Type 4 was in a deplorable external condition with a lot of the paint having simply worn off. The scabby finish, with undercoat showing through the topcoat, was duly recreated on our version.





It's a busy summer weekend in 1977 but paths still have to be found for engineering trains. Here, No. 40127 whistles under the signalbox at Mostyn as it rumbles past with a track panel train from Llandudno Junction to Crewe. This view shows the odd No. 2 end of the locomotive which, following repairs, managed to received replacement communicating doors from a disc-headcode machine, complete with discs!

The intervening years

At the outset of their exhibition careers we had some doubts about the long-term reliability of the Class 40s powered with twin Lima motors but this worry has proved unfounded. All the class are popular with the viewing public and we have allocated them to many of the heavier and distinctive formations on the layout. The lighter twin Lima-motored '40s' tolerate dirty track less well than their heavyweight central-motored Bachmann brethren and a couple of locomotives have been re-chipped with Zimo decoders equipped with 'stay alive' capacitors.

Since 2005, the initial build of six locomotives (40001/044/088/111/127/170) has expanded to nine with 40106 and 40182 completed in mid-2008 followed more recently by ex-works 40134. The only disaster to-date was an abortive use of Johnson's Klear on 40111 which resulted in it being stripped back to bare plastic and metal before being completely re-sprayed, lettered and weathered.

Further stable-mates are planned to cope with our ever expanding rolling stock demands and include 40013/035/086/104/129/199.

Bachmann's false dawn?

Following a record gestation period Bachmann finally released three re-tooled Class 40s in early 2014. The rail blue split-headcode version sold out quickly whereas the green centre-headcode and disc-headcode sound variant are still available and heavily discounted. There is no official information as to when the sold out item will be re-stocked.

So far, the reviews are generally favourable, recognizing a significant improvement in the body over the previous version. The only consistent criticism of the new body has been the appearance of the cab windscreen where the obvious solution is to use etched replacements. Most disapproval has been focused on a still disappointing underframe/bogie appearance coupled with an unreliable new design of pick-up and problems with excessive use of grease at the factory.

The show stopper at present, as far as 'P4' Mostyn is concerned, is that no replacement wheelsets are readily available for the new Class 40s' six-axle drive. Ultrascals's website refers to the project as 'on hold', implying that there are some design issues to be resolved. One 'P4'

modeller reports success using wheelsets from two of the Ultrascals conversion sets for the old four-axle drive arrangement but this seems a waste of a scarce resource (though it does suggest that you might get two locos done from three conversion sets).

Modifying the Lima Class 40 body is a BIG – repeat BIG – job so we would be obvious customers for a good Bachmann solution. However, given that we have ample supplies of Lima models, Bachmann chassis and numerous Ultrascals wheelsets, it would seem strange to dump our 'tried and tested' method for a new route which has uncertain supply on the one hand and no established 'P4' conversion route on the other hand.

I'm sure we might think further, with time-saving opportunities always at the back of our minds, once we have fully investigated the new Bachmann product that has arrived at the clubroom. Look out for a more detailed analysis in a future issue of this *Journal*. Until that point, and conclusions can be drawn, our existing methods remain a practical, if time-consuming, solution to Mostyn's need for further Class 40s. ■

Feel free to pick 'n' mix

We've gone to great lengths to build our Class 40s but not everyone will have the time or inclination – please relax in the knowledge that a vast improvement can be achieved by just tackling the Lima cab and nose area alone. You can then pick and choose from the areas we've tackled to suit your tastes.

If you'd like more clarification about any part of this Class 40 article then please contact us at info@barrowmoremrg.co.uk and we'll happily point you in the direction of more images and explanations.



The Mostyn operators love playing to the crowd and there are always requests for crossing Class 40s, be it on high-speed passenger workings or more sedate freights. The latter is recorded here as No. 40001, heading east with a fully-fitted train of 16-ton minerals, passes the distinctive split-headcode No. 40134.

First Class 08 for Mostyn



“HAVING LEARNED that Richard Oldfield and Philip Sutton wanted to build a fleet of Class 08 0-6-0 diesel shunters for Mostyn, I felt that this would be the perfect opportunity to build my first ‘P4’ model and instantly wanted to be a part of it!”

The next step was to get hold of the list of 08s planned and see which ones worked at Dee Marsh during 1977. Big Rappo’s house was my next call, to pester him for the list of photographs that he took during working hours at the TOPS office, situated right next to the running lines at Dee Marsh Junction. It pays to have a Dad who works on the railways!

Dad to the rescue

Luckily my father had great photos of three of the intended Gronks on the list. He agreed (after a little persuasion) to scan the slides onto his PC and enhance them - to enable me to see as much detail as possible. He even printed them out in A4 format, in colour and at his own expense! Thanks Dad.

After studying the three photographs it quickly became apparent that there are many subtle differences between the Class 08s, so Richard and I sat down at the club, studied all the literature available and I subsequently ‘googled’

On a clear Spring day in March 1977, David Rapson captured work-weary No. 08300 (D3370, Derby 1957) resting outside Shotton Steelworks locomotive shed, in the company of British Steel Corporation’s own shunters. The 350hp 0-6-0 is notably devoid of data panel, allocation sticker and (probably deliberately) British Rail double arrow. The scene has so much atmosphere and, combined with a fascinating back story, proved irresistible to the model-maker in Mike.

the rest of the class from 08300-08400, looking at every picture to identify any modellable differences that they had. We learned a great deal from this exercise, including the variations amongst battery boxes, lamp positions, body side handrails, radiator grilles, cab doors and cab steps.

Easy decision to make

Deciding to model No. 08300 was easy. The prototype was so attractive, with its faded BR blue livery and lack of BR double arrows, the light coloured rust and general grimy appearance. The fact she was a ‘foreigner’ on her travels from Allerton shed made it extra appealing... I’d best grab it before anyone notices! The next stage was to study the details of the picture and the images that I had found on ‘internet’. Having rejected the Bachmann Class 08 as an inferior choice for the base model, the key decision was then to work out which of the Hornby releases was most suitable to become the donor vehicle.

Philip very kindly donated (no, this is

not a typing error!) the Hornby loco for me to work on. Sadly, he informed me of this generosity ten minutes after I had purchased one from eBay! Once my model arrived in the post I set off to Barrowmore to study the differences between the two models and ultimately decided that Philip’s donor was the most straightforward to modify for No. 08300 after all!

Wheels set the deadline

The wheelsets had been ordered from Ultrascale in September 2013, setting the clock ticking and giving me six months to complete the model ready to accept them. The first job was to strip everything from the body excluding the small handrails as these were acceptable and would not require replacing. Precision Paints’ Super-strip was used to remove the paintwork and revealed some lovely rivet detail. Once the paint had been removed it was obvious that the bodyside grilles needed a lot of attention, the mesh size was too crude compared with the prototype.

is a Rapson family affair

Dad David takes a photograph and, 37 years later, his lad makes the model! **Mike 'Matey' Rapson**, completes his first 'P4' project. Allerton-based 'Gronk' No. 08300 was hired to BSC Shotton in 1977 and provides the perfect excuse for another Mostyn visitor.

By coincidence Richard's son, Edward, had obtained a sample of very fine metal mesh and asked his Dad if it would be of any use in modelmaking. Richard immediately thought of the grilles and brought it along to the club. It was the perfect material to use for the job and was very easy to cut with a pair of scissors. This, however, presented a challenge as the moulded grilles had to be scraped from the body to enable flush-fitting of the mesh, and, in turn, posed another problem as the frames around the grilles were worn away during the scraping process.

Etched air filter frames

I measured the air filter grille frame dimensions and convinced David Faulkner to design an etch to produce these in a very thin nickel-silver. He drew them up and sent the drawings off to be etched by PPD (www.ppdLtd.com). We received twice the amount of etches that we ordered, so if anyone else wants to model a Class 08 there are plenty of spares at the club!

The rest of the work is shown by

the captioned pictures (overleaf) apart from some fun and games getting the model to run reliably when the new Ultrascale wheelsets were installed. The loco would run smoothly in one direction but limped a bit when reversed. Repeated tweaking and testing solved the problem but No. 08300 arrived at the Wigan exhibition in June 2014 with a reliability question mark.

New pick-ups cure all

Unsurprisingly, at a moment when the regular dock shunter (YEC 0-4-0 No. 2) also had problems, No. 08300 came to a sympathetic shuddering halt in front of the Wigan public and was despatched to maintenance table. Gavin Liddiard quickly diagnosed pick-up issues and, disgusted with the flimsy Hornby offering, made a new keeper plate for the wheelsets from single-sided PCB sheet. This provided a solid base to which new phosphor-bronze pick-up wipers could be soldered. It was not long before our new 'hired in' Class 08 was back in the limelight and running superbly. Now, which shunter is next in line...? ■

Stretching the truth

In 1977, both Chester and Holyhead sheds had allocations of Class 08 shunters. Their low maximum speed meant that they were not great travellers but could nonetheless be seen in locations as diverse as Bangor, Llandudno Junction, Mold Junction and Dee Marsh in North Wales.

There is no evidence that Gronks worked at Mostyn but they certainly passed by, in the consist of freight trains with connecting rods removed or under their own power, at night, going to and from sheds and maintenance. There are plenty of lovely detail variations to model amongst these iconic shunters and have proven irresistible to the stock builders amongst us. We plan to have a decent fleet to cover shunting duties at the Mostyn dock buffer store and marshalling turns within the fiddle yards – especially the ex-ironstone hoppers in sulphur traffic and Bogie Bolster Cs in steel traffic.

Doing the job it was modelled for, No. 08300 sits alongside the newly installed Buffer Store, hopefully looking identical in appearance to the prototype illustrated left. The 350hp 'Gronk' should make light work of the more intensive traffic passing through Mostyn Docks and our new freight terminal. It is a valuable back-up to the rather light-footed 0-4-0 No. 2 which is due refurbishment soon.

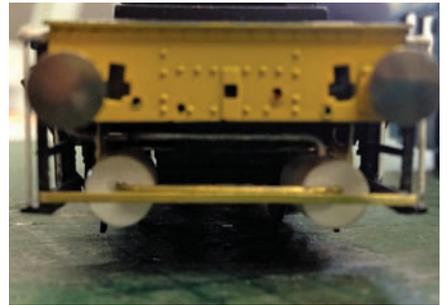




The completely stripped Hornby body takes its first step to becoming No. 08300. Differing builds of these shunters had varying radiator grille patterns at the side of the nose. This modification is achieved with 1mm cubes of plastic strip.



The relative crudeness of the Hornby bodyside air filter grille mesh is improved by scraping it away and replacement by very fine metal mesh and a custom-made photo etched frame, one of which is in position in the above image.



The front end of the chassis is improved by the addition of scratchbuilt reservoir tanks made from sections of plastic tube. Piping and supports are from wire and etched fret off-cuts, whilst the tiebar between the footsteps is 1mm x 1mm brass angle.



Trial assembly, with original wheelsets, sees the loco come to life. The cab end chassis has just received Masokits etched brass screw-link couplings (unfortunately still only available via mail order) and vacuum pipe (Heljan spare).



Again, there are variations in cab footstep design. These were soldered up from scrap brass strip using photographs as a reference. They are in an exposed location and careful handling will be necessary to avoid damage at exhibitions.



The completed air filters look much more authentic and it's time to begin replacing bodyside handrails using 0.45mm nickel-silver wire. The challenge for the grilles will be to avoid clogging them up when priming and painting.



A close-up of the completed long horizontal grab rail shows the three intermediate supports which were carefully soldered in situ. Not a job for the faint-hearted! Battery box detail is all Hornby despite coming out white after stripping.



Painting begins. To replicate the heavily worn appearance of the prototype, Precision Paints' 'faded' BR blue was used after spraying the ends with warning yellow. The fine rivet and other detail made masking off a time-consuming affair.



A view from the other end reveals the addition of Fox Transfers waterslide running numbers and overhead warning flashes. A few dabs of white paint bring the fuel gauge and lower nose handrails to life.



A start was made on the weathering by using Lifecolor acrylic paints combined with Tamiya weathering powders. Recreating the photographic inspiration, special attention was paid to the distinctive rust staining between the bonnet doors.



Having waited for nearly seven months, No. 08300 tries out her brand new Ultracscale 'P4' wheelsets. Although not shown here, I decided to re-use the Hornby connecting rods but will consider Brassmasters replacements in due course.



The obligatory wasp stripes were sprayed black after very careful masking. The cab door and side window glazing was replaced by 0.25mm Lexan sheet but the other glazing is original. After further dirtying, No. 08300 is let loose on Mostyn.

Keeping up 'standards'

Richard Oldfield and other BMRG collaborators consider the third build of BR standard brake vans for Mostyn.

TWO OF THE oldest items running on Mostyn are BR 'standard' brake vans numbered B953517 & B954898, built by David Goodwin in 1994. Subsequently David and I constructed a further eight examples based on the venerable Airfix kit in 2001 and spent considerable time trying to understand the detail variations that were possible amongst the numerous prototype vehicles. These have been augmented over the years by four Stanier-designed brake vans, two ex-GWR Toads and three BR Shark ballast ploughs (which could be used as brake vans on departmental ballast workings).

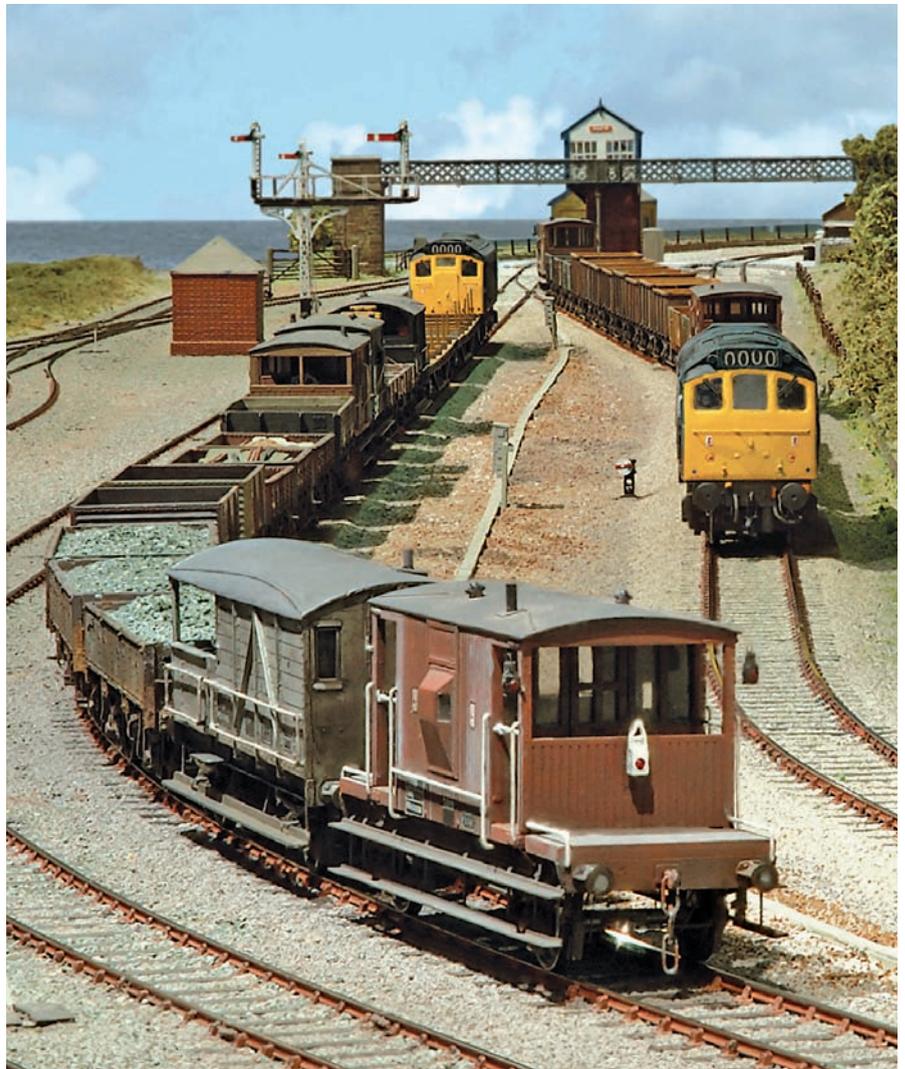
Perhaps inevitably, our modelling output of train formations requiring brake vans has caught up with our supply and we now need to return to the workbench for more. We plan to build enough to cure the current problems – such as the inability to run attractive locomotive+brake van consists – plus extras to cope with the other revenue and departmental freight vehicles that are on our 'do' list. Another ten or so examples will suffice.

What are the options?

In 2001, David Goodwin and I were in the habit of making copious notes – a good practice which I have not faithfully followed and regularly regretted. We could certainly re-run the Airfix-based project but other options are out there. How do they stack up?

Connoisseur models (Pocket Money Kits) produced a nice etched brass and whitemetal kit for 4mm scale but they now focus solely on 7mm scale and, whilst David Faulkner has one example, further kits are elusive.

We could use the Airfix body together with the etched brass underframe kit from Dave Bradwell. This might save a bit of time compared with our previous surgery on the Airfix underframe plus MJT compensation



The fleet of BR standard 20-ton brake vans on Mostyn numbers just 10 vehicles at present - woefully short of operational needs as new freight stock takes to the rails. An unfitted example brings up the rear of Up Trip 47, working to engineers' requirements. The train is Class 9 and therefore requires the two side lamps as well as the obligatory tail lamp. Ironically, in this view, there are no less than six brake vans of four separate designs on show - a Toad, Shark ballast plough and LNER-designed brake (barely visible) complement the three BR standards.

units plus various specialist and scratchbuilt components route BUT, at over £20 per etch, I think this is poor value.

Of the ready-to-run options there was nothing attractive until a couple of years ago when Hornby dramatically upgraded the quality of their offering with the launch of completely new tooling to provide R6508 (bauxite unfitted) and R6510 (air-piped). These models capture the look of the prototype but present a further challenge – the distance between the inner faces of the w-irons is so tight that significant modification would

be required in order to fit either compensation units or our preferred springing units. Alternative solutions such as internal bearing compensation (used on Mostyn's Dogfish and Catfish) and Masokits' internal bearing springing (being used for the first time on the current air-braked van project) were rejected due to their inherent increased rolling resistance. The Chris Pendleton springing method, outlined in MRJ 173, seemed a likely candidate and has been adapted successfully for a small batch of 21-ton coal hoppers that have been running reliably on Mostyn for five years. No other

practical suggestion came forward from a question posed on a modelling forum, unless you regard “leave it rigid and hope for the best” as a viable proposal. Finally, without really fixing upon the exact springing method, we decided to stock up with Hornby vans in order to take advantage of their superior appearance over the 1951-launched Airfix kit.

Work eventually starts

Having gathered dust for a couple of years, apart from an exploratory dismantling of one vehicle by Mike Rapson, the brake van shortage reached sufficient proportions at Wigan exhibition in June 2014 such that we were finally stirred into action.

Separating the brake van body from the underframe requires nothing more than the removal of a couple of screws having first disconnected the grab handles which run from the verandah ends to the headstocks. The underframe then needs completely dismantling down to the single main moulding – the concrete weight blocks ‘ping’ off easily but the nicely moulded footboards put up more of a fight and some were ruined. This is not too much of a tragedy as the footboard hangers come in a variety of patterns and some would have needed replacing anyway. The brake shoes and buffers are also removed at this stage. This level of dismantling is required in order to gain unrestricted access to the area where some form of springing would be fitted.

Let the butchery begin

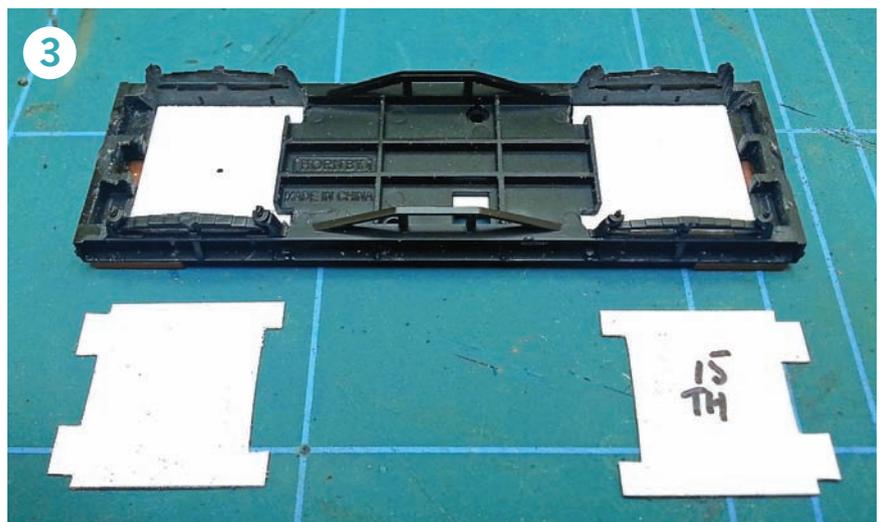
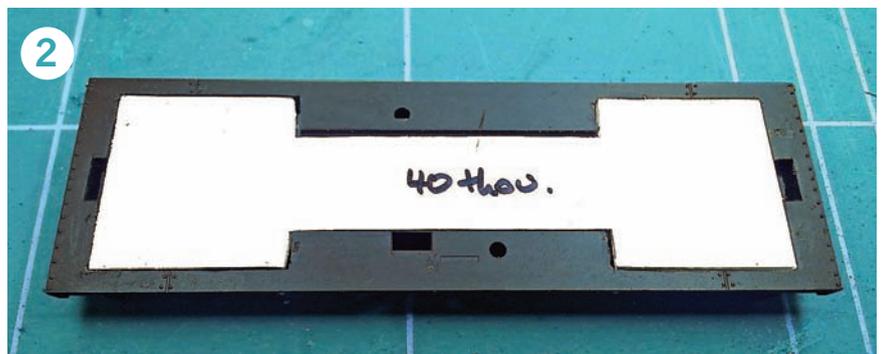
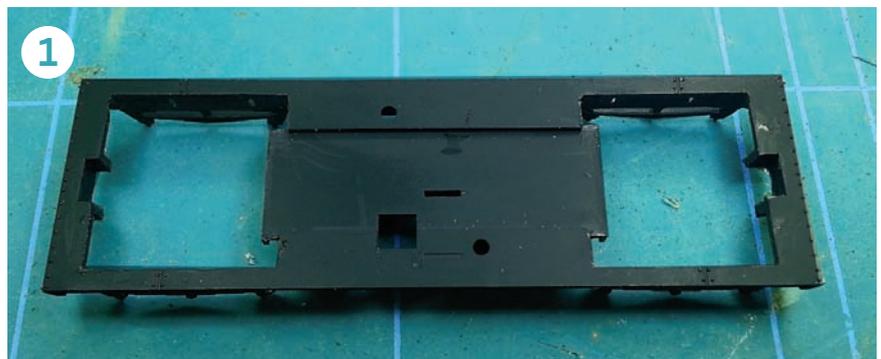
Having measured how much ‘meat’ needed to be removed in order to sit the Bill Bedford BR open w-iron springing units within the plastic moulded solebars, it became obvious that the plastic w-irons would be more-or-less completely filed away. Therefore the axlebox/w-iron was removed below the level of the wagon spring (before any cutting and filing) in order to save the axlebox for potential future use and to save wasting energy filing away the w-iron for no purpose.

The next step is to remove all the floor and attached detail from where the brass springing units will sit. The traditional method would involve drilling a number of holes at the corners of the desired aperture, cutting between them with a piercing saw to remove the main bulk and then filing the rough edges back to the desired final shape. Gavin happened to be observing this performance when he remarked that there was a better and quicker way so it’s over to him... (see panel on opposite page).

Keeping up ‘standards’



Hornby’s retooled model (released in 2011) was selected as the best starting point for the new build which will at least double the current roster. The body is pretty good and the nice cabin detail saves quite a lot of effort compared with improving the Airfix kit. However, the chassis presents new challenges because the moulding does not readily lend itself to a sprung ‘P4’ conversion.



A sprung chassis emerges....

Using Gavin's prepared underframe the next steps are:

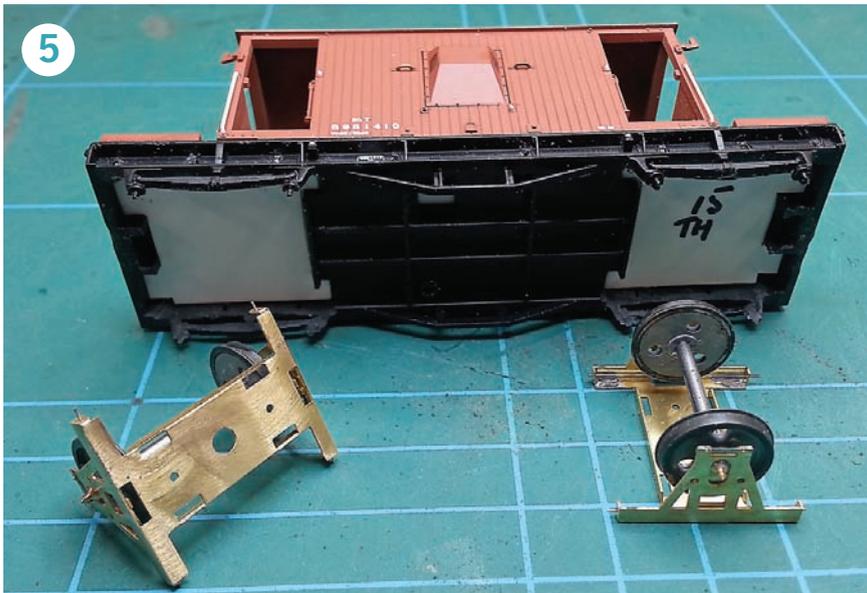
1. Carefully file back the solebar/J-hanger/spring detail to accommodate the brass springing units.
2. Cut and fit a dumb-bell-shaped 40thou thick piece of plastic sheet to form the new floor.
3. Re-position the concrete ballast weights to provide a firm location for the new floor.
4. Cut and fit 15thou plastic sheet to provide correct mounting height for springing units.

5. Re-fit body having checked that the underframe is straight and level.

6. Add springing units to van/under frame assembly using a Brassmasters' wheelbase setting jig (or similar). I have used 11 thou guitar wire for the springing units based on an all-up final weight of about 75gms.

Check this assembly for free, reliable running before going any further.

The rest of the work can now begin starting with replacement footboards, axleboxes, springs and buffers for the chassis. Progress reports will continue to appear in a future issues of our esteemed Journal. ■



Cutting square holes

Gavin Liddiard explains...

As I watched Philip Sutton undertake the first underframe I had an idea how to dramatically speed up the process. For my work as a kitchen fitter I have, over the years, acquired many high quality tools to ease my tasks. One of these is the Fein 'MultiMaster'. Ironically I first saw it advertised in the *Continental Modeller* magazine. The tag line 'cuts square holes' piqued my interest and I soon purchased my own.

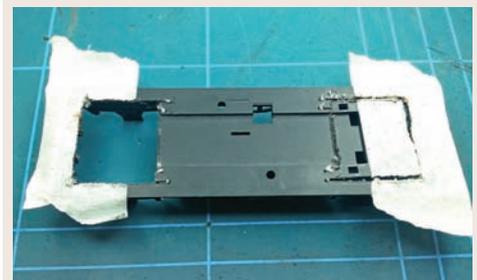
The Fein 'MultiMaster' is simply an oscillating tool that has a multitude of attachments which allow it to be a sander, polisher, saw, chisel, rasp and scraper. I have recently bought an updated 'MultiMaster' and placed my old model in the clubroom, for careful members to use, so it was at hand when the need arose.



A posed shot showing the cutting blade ready to cut plastic – please note that the sacrificial cardboard base has been removed for clarity. Switching the 'MultiMaster' on now would result in the need to buy a new cutting board!

I fitted a 10mm wide chisel bit with fine teeth and started cutting. The 'MultiMaster' oscillates by three degrees so the narrow saw bit acts more like a vibrating chisel. Holding the handle firmly and with the plastic underframe resting on cardboard, I slowly plunged the bit along the cut lines. This turned out to be a simple process.

The result was a nice square hole much closer to the desired size than the previous method and completed in a fraction of the time.



Job done – the right hand end needs pushing out but the left hand end just needs final filing and finishing. The masking tape is there to (try and) protect fine rivet detail from damage. Some detail was inevitably lost but will be replaced with small plasticard cubes.

A visit to Austria

Business trip or pleasure cruise?



“Vienna is very well connected in terms of public transport. The tram network is one of the largest in the world.”

Luxury rail travel on ÖBB is provided by the Railjet services which cater for three different classes of passenger. ‘Taurus’ loco No. 1116.237 is about to provide 6,400kW of power for the departure of this Munich-bound train, having originated in Budapest. If you ever get the chance, take a trip on this rolling stock - its spacious and well-designed interior makes a stark contrast to the UK’s high density ‘Pendolinos’.

A recent trip to Vienna, ostensibly for work reasons, turned out to be a pleasant adventure. Big railways, little railways, the underground and trams all featured before the chance was taken to sample beer at £1.50 a pint! **Philip Sutton** recounts.

BUSINESS INTERESTS and family visits take me abroad several times each year. In an effort to provide ‘pay back’ for having to endure both short and long-haul airline travel, I try to include some form of railway activity at the ‘other end’ of the journey. Depending on the spare time available to me, this could range from just an hour on a station platform to a full day trip to a museum or rail installation.

My most recent trip in July was arranged due to the need to visit Vienna for a series of meetings. Fortunately for me, the capital of Austria has much to offer the transport enthusiast and my hosts were also in the model railway ‘trade’. My female companion was less impressed, although the offer of copious amounts of beer and wine provided some level of compensation!

A well connected city

Vienna is very well connected in terms of public transport. There is an incredibly extensive network

of tram lines (172 kilometres and 1,031 stops - making it one of the biggest in the world), five U-bahn (underground) lines and a useful S-bahn (suburban train) system. To save our hosts making unnecessary car journeys through the city - which comes to a gridlock in the rush hours - we made the most of this fantastic transport system.

In fact, one of the reasons for so many traffic problems is the sheer amount of building work and renewal that is taking place. One of the biggest construction sites is a new Hauptbahnhof (main station) on the site of the old south station and goods facilities. Incorporating numerous offices and shops as part of the €220 million redevelopment, it will fully open next year.

The brand new through station, with 12 platforms, links main lines from all four points of the compass and will negate the need for many international services to perform a time-consuming reversal at the existing Westbahnhof main station terminus.





Bargain travel

A wochenkarte (weekly card) was just the job and cost only €16.20 (£13.00). Can you imagine that sort of value in the UK? London is £9.00 a day! Alternative travel cards are available including the useful 48-hour and 72-hour 'Vienna Cards' which give discounts off museum entrance prices and tourist attractions.

First chance for some 'gricing' was a short stop at Vienna Meidling station which is acting as a calling point for some international trains until the new interchange is completed. Highlights are the Railjet push-pull services which link Budapest (Hungary) with Munich (Germany). These are worked by ÖBB (Austrian State Railways) ES64U2 electric locomotives, nicknamed 'Taurus', and Siemens coach sets with a driving trailer at the rear. The red and grey-liveried trains are made even more distinctive by the fact that, as they accelerate, the locos sound like a violinist tuning up before a concert. Apparently, it's a side effect of the traction control gear. It would only happen in the home of Mozart!

A more recent development is the appearance of identical trains in the blue and white colours of CD (Czech Railways) which work through from Prague to Graz. They both make great photographic subject matter.

Dropping down in scale

Having completed a good proportion of our business, a surprising outing had been arranged to visit a large private 1:87 scale 'HO' layout

built by Herr Barabas and his son.

Taking over the entire 5th floor of a pre-war apartment building in north Vienna, this DCC-controlled layout was packed with contemporary rolling stock (mostly from Roco) and was partly controlled by computer. Several key scenic sections, like the viaduct and main station throat were covered by lineside cameras which fed their signal into a wall mounted TV display, enhancing the visitor experience. A large double-spiral staging yard was housed in the next room (which, at a guess, used to be a bedroom) and the former kitchen was an incredibly well equipped workshop! Herr Barabas, when he is not playing trains, lives above on the 6th floor!

Now that's what you call an impressive layout. Herr Barabas's railway is the result of over 10 years effort. It comprises two levels on the scenic section and includes a marshalling yard, viaduct, loco depots, main station, and even a small narrow gauge system.

Next door, accessed by a hole in the wall, is the multi-track staging yard arranged in a spiral for maximum use of space.



Vienna has a great tram system. Here is 'Old timer' M-Type tram car No. 4033 working the tourist run around the city's ring line.



A visit to Austria

Museum visit

The following day, with all the work now out of the way, another trip was arranged to the railway museum in Strasshof an der Nordbahn, about 20 miles north west of the city. So important were the railways here that the actual town name translates as 'Street Yard on the Northern Railway!'

Strasshof loco shed was planned in 1939 by the German Reichsbahn due to the dramatic increase in freight on the Northern Railway. Construction commenced during the war but inevitable delays saw it completed eight years later, in 1947, by the then newly-established Austrian State Railway.

Changing traffic patterns soon meant the facility was never to be used to its full potential and it became a glorified dumping ground and scrapyard. Notably, it was home to Austria's last working steam traction in 1976.

Closure as a workshop came in 1978, after which the Austrian Railway & Tram Society protected the site, eventually relaunching as 'Das Heizhaus' (steam shed) museum in 1984. The site is a real 'time warp' with original loco shed, wooden water tower, turntable and coaling plant all intact. With track extending about a mile to the main line connection, there is also room for passenger trips around the complex.

In total around 80 locomotives and 180 wagons are exhibited although the sheer quantity of stock means that much of it is unloved and is rusting away. However, most of the official Austrian Railway and Vienna Technical Museum collections are housed here and there is plenty of active preservation going on.

Model railways of various gauges are also

"Strasshof railway museum is a real 'time warp' with original loco shed, wooden water tower, turntable and coaling plant all still intact."



Deutsche Reichsbahn Class 52 2-10-0 Kriegslök (war locomotive) No. 52.100 inside the Strasshof railway museum. This austerity design was built in large numbers during the Second World War. 7000 were constructed by 17 different manufacturers and saw post-war use in East Germany, Russia and Poland. This particular machine, which is fully operational, was a product of Krauss-Maffei in 1943.





housed along with an outdoor 5" & 7¼" dual gauge garden railway and a large LGB set-up.

Powerboat to Bratislava

After a hearty meal in the incredibly kitsch *Marchfelderhof* restaurant (*Google it if you dare - I felt a bit uneasy eating in the shadow of a life size Emperor Franz Joseph I dummy*), it was time to wave goodbye to Austria. Being a bit of a tight-wad and to ensure the 'full house' of train, plane and boat could be recorded in my book, it was off to Bratislava, Slovakia, for our Ryanair low-budget high-cost flight home to Blighty.

The easiest and most relaxing way to do this was to take the high speed 'Twin City Liner' catamaran down the River Danube. Departing from the centre of Vienna, on the bank of the Donau Canal, the trip only takes an hour thanks to the two MTU diesel power units and

Hamilton turbo water jets kicking out 1,960hp. When the ship winds up properly to the full 37 knots, on the river itself, it is certainly noisy fun on the outside deck! The southern end of the trip is most scenic but what is interesting is the number and size of freight barges that you pass.

Time in 'old town' Bratislava was limited before the flight home and this was found to be something of a mistake in planning. The late summer evening café culture was most appealing, not least because of the amount of eastern European 'Supermodel' talent on view and the local beer priced at an amazing £1.50 a pint!

In conclusion, Vienna should be high up on any transport enthusiast's 'to do' list. The Austrians are accommodating and very friendly, especially if you make the effort and try speaking a little German. Above all, they are just as mad about their railways as we are! ■

Outside the main building at Strasshof were several lines of more modern motive power. No. 2067.04 is one of 111 diesel-hydraulic shunters of a 592hp three-axle design. Behind is No. 2062.55, a lighter two-axle 400hp type. Both are fully restored and wear the old spruce green livery of ÖBB.

Weblinks

Vienna Metro (unofficial):
<http://homepage.univie.ac.at/horst.prillinger/metro/english/>

Strasshof Railway Museum:
www.eisenbahnmuseum-heizhaus.com

Twin City Liner cruise:
www.twincityliner.com



A trip along the River Danube is to be recommended. Instead of wasting time cruising at a sedate pace, we chose the Twin City Liner service which links Vienna and Bratislava in under 60 minutes and cost €30 (£24). Two 40-ton catamarans built by Båtservice Mandal of Norway are in service which can seat 140 people and travel at a top speed of 43mph.

Who ^{the fuck} do you think you are?

This issue, it's the turn of our resident Jaguar-driving 'Southern Softie', **Philip Sutton**, to pen his autobiography. Despite regular protestations that he 'hasn't lived yet', the self-styled media mogul, glory-hunter and Victorian-style mill owner has revealed (almost) all. Judge for yourself if there are any achievements of note... Oh, is he boring you yet?

WHEN PEOPLE ASK about my early years, I often describe my coming into this world as the result of John Lewis. Feeling 'Jack the lad', a heavily Brylcreemed Sutton senior saw a pretty young lass dressing the windows of this Oxford Street department store in the mid-1960s. The sharp-suited, part-time bookmaker had the confidence to knock on the window and the rest, as they say, is history.

I arrived in early February 1967, with The Monkees' 'I'm a believer' top of the charts and just days before Keith Richards, Mick Jagger & Marianne Faithfull were busted for drugs. The London Hospital, Whitechapel, within earshot of Bow Bells, was the location of my birth, emerging under the instruction of a very junior Robert Winston. I believe this 'quack' later went on to do quite well for himself in the medical field...

Messerschmitts and Mosquitos

It was a happy childhood in south east London, spending plenty of time with my grandparents to which my hobby interests can be credited. One grandfather was a fitter and engineer, with a love of aircraft and so it was soon down to the local model shop in Brockley every week for the latest Airfix kit. German WWII fighter-bombers were my favourite(!), thanks to Gramp's wartime look-out stories, with only the Mosquito getting a look in amongst the Messerschmitts and Focke-Wulfs. Mum said I spent ages building these kits, locked away in my room wearing a beloved French foreign legion cap.

Railways started to figure in my life during the mid-1970s. Visits to family north of the Thames, in Hackney and Dalston, saw me pass many an afternoon on high-rise balconies overlooking Stratford TMD and the North London Line. Soon, with a 1977 Ian Allan ABC to hand, the different loco types became easy to identify. I can still vividly remember the then alien 'Peak' on the front cover! Next came the fascinating phenomenon of silver roofs being painted on the local motive power. It was only later that I realised this was Stratford's nod to the Queen's Silver Jubilee (which later

became a depot trademark). Another nail in my railway coffin! Being a pupil of John Ball school, Blackheath, didn't help matters since the classroom overlooked the railway. Despite spending most of the time watching double-headed Class 33 freights out of the back windows in class (conveying materials for the construction of the Thames barrier), I performed quiet well, academically.

Gricing with Nan!

It must be said that 'Tunnel Nanny' (so called because to visit her we had to travel through the Blackwall Tunnel) spoiled her grandson rotten. Highlights were the trips out on the No. 30 Routemaster from Hackney to King's Cross and St Pancras to see the 'Deltics' and 'Peaks' in these great London termini. I 'copped' loads of numbers and even got a few cab rides up the platform, after the shunt releases. What was keeping my Nan entertained during these weekly trips is completely lost on me!

Transition to secondary school wasn't a problem at all, especially as it entailed a journey between Lewisham (plenty of freight coming off the Nunhead line towards Hither Green) and Falconwood, riding on slam-door third rail EPB units.

"In a variation on the Mini trick, we used to see how many people we could squeeze into a single 4-EPB compartment."

A reasonable education was gained at Crown Woods (at one time the country's largest comprehensive) despite rugby union becoming another passion and rising to the ranks of 1st XV captain in the No. 8 position, thanks to the encouragement of the Welsh Physics master and an inspirational visiting All Black.

Great fun was often had on the way back home. In winter, the packed evening non-stop commuter trains travelling in the opposite direction had their droplights open a few inches to provide relief from the uncontrollable 'full-on' heating. The obvious challenge was to get a snowball in the gap...



A well co-ordinated broadside by about 30 pupils, in line abreast, was a sight to be seen! And, in a variation on the Mini trick, we also used to regularly see how many people we could squeeze into a single compartment, including several up in the luggage nets!

I'll be late home for tea

With the teenage years came increasing independence. At the age of 14, I was cycling almost every summer evening to Hither Green shed to watch the 'Cromptons' and 'EDs' arriving or leaving shed. Having become a regular and 'accepted' by the crews and foreman, I'd occasionally be asked to stand at the throat of the depot pulling the points over as the crews told me what road they wanted. Can you imagine that in today's Health & Safety regime? Oh, and don't forget, I was doing this whilst tip-toeing between the electrified third rail!

At this time, my rail obsession had progressed to joining a few societies for overnight shed-bashing coach trips. I'd also often disappear on railtours and Rail Rovers with a few mates. Some interesting adventures would ensue using the remaining network of overnight and postal trains that were still running at the time. The reasons for using these trains were two-fold. They often utilised 'rare' motive power when diverted and avoided the need to find sleeping accommodation. I remember ringing up mum one evening, and she asking what time I would be home and what I wanted for tea. She was most surprised when I said I'd sort my own food out as I was calling from Kyle of Lochalsh!

Chips and 'Choppers'

One of the most memorable tales was from travelling around Scotland in the mid-1980s. A couple of us rocked-up at Ayr depot one dark Friday evening and asked the shed foreman "Was there any chance of a look around, mate?" The old-school railwayman, with an accent two cockney lads could only just comprehend, expressed some surprise at our request: "You must be mad!" Then he asked where we were planning to stay that night. When we shrugged, he proposed a deal. This involved us having to do the whole depot's 'fish supper' run to the local chippy in exchange for permission to look around and kip down on the cushions in a condemned DMU vehicle. He must have known we wouldn't get a wink of sleep, being right next to the fuelling point as pairs of Class 20s, with their turbochargers whistling loudly, came and went all bloody night long. Still, great memories.

First steps in journalism

The first steps in converting a hobby into a job came in August 1984. Frustrated with the standard of diesel modelling articles at the time, a precocious 17 year-old penned a seminal article, entitled 'Build a better Rat'. With the aid of numerous scale diagrams, I explained how to convert the Hornby Class 25 into a detailed Class 25/3 variant using plasticard, Milliput and lots of filing. Publication in a national magazine gave me quite a 'buzz' and was later to become a drug, leading to regular contributions to *RAIL Enthusiast* magazine.

University offers were declined, but not before Loughborough, Hull and Warwick had been extensively researched several times by train. It would have been rude not to. After all, these learned institutions had kindly paid my fare during the last months of steam-heating on BR!

Soon, I found myself working in Putney as a 'junior' cartographic draftsman (drawing maps) in the oil exploration industry. Here, I found the tools available to experiment with design and typography: Rotring pens and inks, scalpels, Letraset rub-down transfers and an IBM composer. Computing and CAD had yet to arrive! God, this is making me feel old...

Chasing trains (and girls)

Let it not be said that interests in women and a career got in the way of trains. My time-keeping at work was atrocious. Most evenings I'd bugger off early so I could ride on the 17.20 & 17.50 London Bridge-Uckfield/East Grinstead, the last loco-hauled passenger trains out of this south London station. Bowler hats were still in fashion for these commuters and woe

betide any scruffy basher sitting in some high-ranking civil servant's regular spot!

With a move to Farnborough (Hants), visits to my girlfriend in Mottingham were combined with trips to Hither Green shed and timed to catch the last Class 33 or Class 50-hauled Waterloo-Salisbury service home. At this time, I joined the REC model railway club in Farnborough (best known as organisers of the current Woking exhibition). Memorably, I wrote off my first car, a Mini, on arrival at the clubroom gates one icy night. Some good friends were made but, unfortunately, diesels were distinctly frowned upon in this L&SWR stronghold! In my self-appointed role as flag-bearer for diesel era modelling during this period, I found myself as one of the founders of what later became the DEMU model society.

"My very first published article was in Scale Model Trains. August 1984. It recorded the rebuilding of a Hornby Class 25!"

Time moved on and childhood friends were also getting jobs on the railway at this time and I fondly remember meeting such a chum, a newly passed out driver, at Cannon Street one evening. The catch-up was to take up the offer of an unofficial cab ride on an EPB stuffed with city types (known as the 'Poppers' because these peak hour trains were so 'wedged' with passengers). Just as the signal for departure cleared, he got up out of his driving seat and said: "Right, it's your turn now"... No pressure then.

It's late summer 1984 and Frankie Goes to Hollywood is at the top of the charts with 'Two Tribes' and 'Relax'. And, no, I didn't have one of those T-shirts! The date was also notable for my first words appearing in print. One of the late-build Class 25 conversions is seen on my Mill's Bridge stabling point layout which ran the full length of one bedroom wall. Behind are a upgraded Hornby Class 47 and a Mainline (Palitoy) 'Peak'.



A professional trainspotter

The freelance writing for *RAIL Enthusiast* paid off in 1988. Regular telephone contact with the editor tipped me off that the mag, then selling around 40,000 copies, was proposing to double its frequency to fortnightly and would be looking for a new staff member. Being a contributor put me in 'pole position' but I had little experience and no journalistic qualifications.

The move to EMAP (East Midlands Allied Press) in Peterborough came early the following year and led to seven years of extremely hard slog reporting on the railway. Working almost autonomously (which was great) in the role of Traction News Editor, I indulged myself totally – I had become a professional trainspotter!

As well as learning a trade with desktop publishing equipment (this small hobby magazine was the national publisher's test bed for little beige Apple Macs), I was able to get involved with the big stories of the time including the opening of the Channel Tunnel and the axing of BR's wagonload freight network (Speedlink). I also assisted in many successful open day events and preservation campaigns, such as that for doyen Class 50, D400.

There were 'fun' jobs as well. I got to meet Freddie Mercury & Queen at the Nene Valley Railway as they prepared to film the on-train video to 'Breakthrough'. A few years later, having heard whispers about filming for a new James Bond movie at the same railway, I arrived to find a Class 20 being completely rebuilt as a Russian loco to haul the baddie's train in *Goldeneye*. Another front cover scoop but, sadly, I missed out on meeting Xenia

Who do you think you are?

Onatopp (Famke Jensen) the gorgeous sadist, who enjoys torturing her enemies between her thighs!

I did, however, get to meet Page 3 girl Linda Lusardi. She had been booked to launch an improved Waterloo to Southampton timetable using 'Wessex Electrics'. I clicked away as she smiled, between blowing a whistle and waving a green flag in front of the Class 442 unit. The picture was good enough to make the front cover and imagined I had done a good job. It was only when the issue hit the news-stands, that we started getting complaints from readers that 'this bloody woman' was stood in front of the train and obscuring its number. You couldn't make it up could you?

I worked hard during the week and usually tried to end on a Friday with a nice appointment out of the office. Doncaster Works and RFS Kilnhurst were regular destinations. Hugh Parkin, one of the shift supervisors at the 'Plant' would let me in to see what was being repaired. Chatting and drinking tea in his small office one afternoon I noticed what seemed to be a large piece of rock, the size of a football, on the window sill. "I didn't know you were into Geology", I said. "I'm not...", he replied. "That's the world-record lump of Isopon filler that fell off a corner of a Class 47 under repair - A right Glasgow Works bodge job!"

RFS Kilnhurst was also good for a pie and a pint on Friday afternoons with my late friend Roger Raylor. The firm was overhauling Class 08 shunters and getting Class 20s ready for Channel Tunnel construction trains. If I timed it right (which, strangely, always happened) a freshly finished loco was ticking over in the yard, waiting for a test run up and down the sidings. As you can guess, great fun was had playing on this 12inch to 1ft scale 'model railway' before we headed off down to the local pub.

One of my most rewarding achievements was to develop the entirely 'steam-free' modelling content of *RAIL* from a single page or so, to a complete mini-magazine. Several successful 'all-modern' exhibitions were staged under the *ModelRail* banner at St. Albans, Bletchley and Manchester in the early 1990s. Subsequently, I proposed and planned the launch of a stand alone title (known today as *ModelRail* but, alas, it was diluted in content to cover all periods).

Another claim to fame is the 'Dutch' colour scheme. BR Civil Engineers fleet manager, Roger Price, was looking to give the overlooked sector a higher profile but had been lumbered with the dull all-over 'General grey' paint scheme. With little

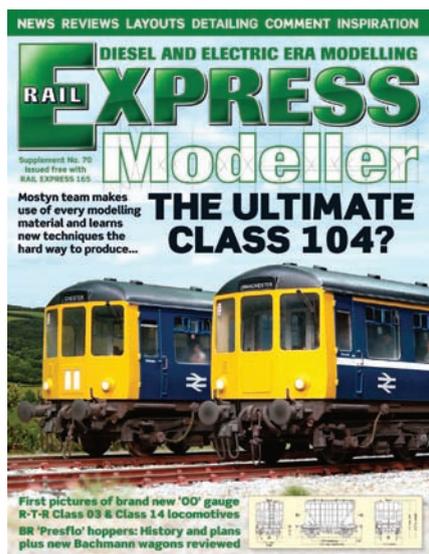


money available, a few experiments later saw the broad yellow bands added, which I quickly branded 'Dutch' livery, due to its similarity to the colours worn by the Netherlands Railways. With a few loco namings added in, the business got more attention than you would have ever believed.

EMAP provided a good life (plus free film and developing) and plenty of training. These training days - covering things like journalistic law, sub-editing, headline writing, etc. - were informative, with highly respected tutors drawn from Fleet Street. Attendance was compulsory and there was a nice mix of people from all the publisher's titles such as *Practical Photography*, *Motor Cycle News* and *Angling Times*. You got to know each other quite well and the 'bike lads' would come in each month with some or other injury. First it was a grazed arm, then a broken leg, followed by a neck brace. Then for, some reason, they wouldn't turn up at all for the next session...

Catalyst for change

The fun obviously couldn't last and in 1994 a new editor was appointed at *RAIL* and



the magazine changed direction away from the enthusiast and towards politics and business. With little interest in these subjects, and a declining circulation, the core of the staff became disillusioned. A plan was hatched between four of us to personally finance and launch a completely new national magazine filling the void that *RAIL* had just vacated.

A new chapter began in April 1996, at the Sheffield Tinsley open day, with the launch of *RAIL EXPRESS* magazine. What a roller-coaster ride! Welcome to the world of big bucks and learning the hard way. Despite good sales of over 15,000 copies, REX - as it became known - quickly became a living beast, consuming money and time like a black hole. Woefully under-financed from the start using personal savings, and with houses on the line as guarantees, the money soon began to run out and the team started to fracture as we worked long hours for little or, usually, no wages.

Two things stick in my mind about those early days. First was walking into the massive printing plant to see the first issue come 'hot off the press', with its spinning metal plates and zig-zag paper streaming past at high speed. It was just like the black and white Pathé newsreels and their spinning newspaper headlines of the 1950s. As I casually sauntered to the end of the press line, in best Rupert Murdoch media magnate mode, the 'Inky' was waiting for me with a pen in hand and a wry smile. I soon clocked that all this fresh print was flying straight into the scrap skip. "We can't use any of this until you sign it off, he said". Knowing how much I'd just paid for the massive rolls of Scandinavian double-coated gloss art paper, I signed my squiggle in a flash.

The second recollection was the day we had to leave the office unattended for some reason and returned to find we had been visited by the bailiffs who fortunately couldn't get in! How lucky were we in not being around at the time and then being able to beg and borrow enough cash to get them off our backs? Our old editor at *RAIL* said we wouldn't make it past three issues. We sent him a complimentary copy of the fourth by courier!

Privatisation bonus

RAIL EXPRESS was incredibly hard work, and killed off any chance of a social life, but it slowly started to settle down and grew enough to pay a living wage. We had actually timed it right - privatisation saw a resurgence in the hobby and there was plenty to photograph and write about as the old BR classes were replaced by General Motors' Class 66s. We were right in at the

beginning of DRS (Direct Rail Services) and GBRf (GB Railfreight) to report on their start-ups, as well as being there to describe and analyse the dramatic sale of BR's freight and parcels businesses first to the Americans, then the Canadians, followed by the Germans! Digital photography was becoming more affordable and providing better quality imagery. It was this latter point that led to the adoption of an innovative new 'super size' format, much bigger than the traditional A4 magazine. I was also privileged to interview such luminaries as Chris Green, Richard Branson and Ed Burkhardt and get to see behind the scenes at many railway installations.

There were also lighter moments that saw several TV appearances, including the *Clive Anderson Show* and, most notably, Channel 4's anarchic *Big Breakfast*. We had just issued a CD of rare diesel loco sounds and, with the saying 'there's no such thing as bad publicity' ringing in my ears, I agreed to go on. Johnny Vaughan mercilessly ripped the piss out of me whilst I played the 'straight' man. Denise van Outen then promptly blind-folded me (nice!) and then played the recordings back whilst I attempted to identify them.

There were some great trips out; John Smith, boss of GBRf, invited me out to Canada to see the Class 66s being built in the EMD factory, whilst Max Joule of DRS let me visit their embryonic depot inside the high-security Sellafield Nuclear plant. If the geiger-counter checks weren't enough, a simple cup of tea in the mess hut left me with a feeling of paranoia. The fitter told me, "We're the lowest point on the site, so we don't fill up kettle up from the tap - unless you want to start glowing!"

With most of the original magazine partners now having gone their separate ways, REX continued to improve and played a role in breaking big news stories. Outside recognition of all this time and effort came when Virgin Trains asked if they could name a Class 47 loco after the title. That's not something you turn down. Having discovered that it was actually several locos, spread across all the rail magazines, it was down to me to put my hand into the hat and draw out our nominated machine. Bingo! It had all been worthwhile... I'd selected the 'pick of the bunch', No. 47853, best known as D1733 - the loco that heralded the arrival of corporate blue with the XP64 trainset. In a fantastic gesture, Virgin's Chris Green also agreed to the loco being repainted back into near original colours for the last few months of Class 47 operation on Cross-Country services. The Brush Type 4 is still going strong, and still carrying the



A day to be proud: April 27th, 2002, and Virgin CrossCountry Class 47 No. 47853 is named RAIL EXPRESS at Grosmont NYMR (exactly six years after the mag's launch) having been restored to its unique XP64 colours.

RAIL EXPRESS nameplates, but in the dark blue livery of Direct Rail Services.

The open-access Wrexham, Shropshire & Marylebone Railway was also an operation I have fond memories of, not least because they used 'proper' trains of Mk. 3s hauled by Class 67 diesels. On one press outing I had the pleasure of sitting with Monty Python's Michael Palin, who really is as easy going as he appears on his TV travelogues. He told me about his love of railways (remember his *Great Railway Journey* to Kyle of Lochalsh) and was only too happy to be photographed reading a copy of REX.

"There were lighter moments, including TV appearances on the Clive Anderson Show and Channel 4's Big Breakfast."

Modelling content also swelled to monthly 40-page supplements and that is where the mutually beneficial link with Merseyside MRS's David Goodwin and Richard Oldfield was forged. The long-running Mostyn column (114 consecutive issues) provided some ground-breaking content (as well as filling up otherwise blank pages!)

Legal letters

There were plenty of interesting times caused by our policy of honest and forthright product reviews. So much analysis was, and still is, sugar-coated because of poor knowledge or unlosable advertising deals. *Ooops! Did I say that out loud?*

When the Bachmann Class 37/4 model first came out we gave it the slating it deserved. It was a 'dog'. And not a very nice one at that! Not long after, a strongly-worded solicitor's letter arrived demanding

a full retraction and apology. We refused, instead offering the right of reply which was never taken up. At the next show, a fit-to-burst Bachmann MD tracked me down and gave me an uncensored earful in front of hundreds of amazed exhibition visitors. They certainly got their money's worth that day! It all was forgotten in later years as the company made revisions to improve the model. We even ended up commissioning numerous limited editions from them, ironically, ten being Class 37s!

Declaration, with 170 not out

Although immensely enjoyable, after 15 years and 170 issues, the production of a monthly magazine was starting to lose its attraction. The writing, travelling and photography is the glamorous part - it's the never-ending deadlines, admin and people management that wears you down! So, when a larger publishing company looking to expand its portfolio, made an offer, it was difficult to keep straight-faced in negotiations.

Somewhat surprisingly, although keen to take the magazine off my hands they didn't want the model merchandising side of the business, feeling that the limited edition market was too risky a venture (quite right!). With a client base too good to bin, including many friends made over the years, I decided to keep this operation going (not without hiccups) and it continues to this present day. We now dabble in all sorts of railway-related activities which entails a fair bit of travel (see pages 38-41).

Thanks to this slower pace (really?), I hope to spend more time actually building stock for Mostyn... instead of turning up at the last minute with my weathering brushes just to steal the glory moment! ■

Fill her up, matey!

As mentioned in Members' Activities, Mike Rapson's Mostyn Dock fuel tank and pump is now installed. Ta Dah!



Your website needs you

Besides your Editor, there is another quiet soul beavering away on behalf of the group. Webmeister David Faulkner ensures we are becoming well known on the world wide web by developing www.barrowmoremrg.co.uk into a treasure trove of information.

The diagram books are the biggest attraction but who can fail to value the 25 sets of workshop notes compiled by David Goodwin over the years? After all, where else can you find a modelling purpose for KY Jelly?

So, why not explore the site fully and identify ways for you to contribute towards making it even better?

Whithorn progress

Alisdair Macdonald is rapidly approaching 'squeaky bum' time as his new 'EM' layout, Whithorn, makes its exhibition debut at the end of October at Merseyside Model Railway Society's annual show (for more details please

Odds and sods...

see <http://www.merseysidemrs.co.uk/events14.htm>). Alisdair reports that progress is going well, due in no small part to some sterling work being put in by MMRS member, Paul Rees. BMRG will be manning modelling demonstration tables at the same exhibition and will be on hand to provide any support required. We hope to bring you images and a full report on Whithorn in Journal No. 41.

Teddy bear's picnic

This charming domestic diorama was captured by David Faulkner on his morning commute from Liverpool Lime Street to Crewe on the 14th July 2005.



Sadly no more, teddy's front room was cleared away when the adjacent Halton Junction signalbox was refurbished.

Halton Jn is at the Runcorn end of the Halton curve, a line that runs from Frodsham Junction. This stretch of

line was singled in the mid-'90s and is usable currently in one direction only, there being a weekly parliamentary train during the summer months, the 2F80 07.53 SO Chester to Runcorn Mainline.

This is now likely to change, though, as the campaign to redevelop this line has intensified in recent years. As well as Merseytravel naming the redevelopment as one of its 12 priorities, the Chancellor has announced £10.4m of funding to redevelop the Halton Curve route.

Close shave for Gav!

This is what happens when you puncture a can of expanding foam. Not surprisingly, he was seen at the club later that week sporting short hair and a chin 'as smooth as a baby's bum' for the first time in years.



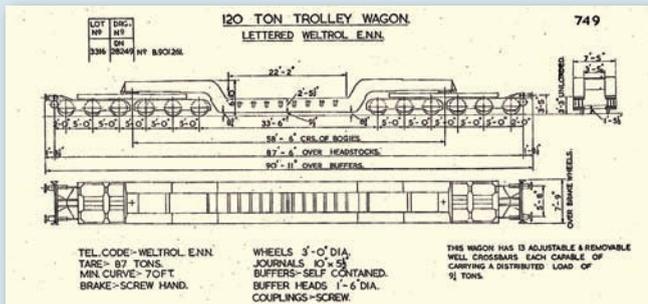
Letters to the Editor

BR Diagram books (BMRG website)

From Michael Hunt, by e-mail: I have been meaning for some time to drop you all a brief e-mail, simply really to say thank you so very much for the wonderful collection of downloadable scans of prototype Diagram Books, which you have so kindly made available on what I regard as a truly wonderful website.

I can only too well appreciate the time and care that has gone into scanning these alone, not to mention the kindness and generosity of those who own the original material and have allowed it to be made available. I have gleaned so very much from all of what is here.

Many thanks again to you all and so much appreciation.



Mold Junction Slate Yard (Journal No. 39)

Alisdair Macdonald writes: It is a known fact that, at the end of the 19th and into the 20th Century, the flourishing development of Liverpool, and many Cheshire and North West towns, demanded slate for the roofs of the many properties which were finished at that time in Welsh slate.

As part of the supply chain there must have been many builders' merchants who acted as middle men to sell the cut and prepared slate from the various quarries, who then sold them on to building contractors and developers.

Much of the slate was shipped from the quarries direct by boat to Liverpool and other ports. While there are many pictures of the cut slate being loaded on to standard gauge wagons from the narrow gauge railways at Ffestiniog, Bethesda and Dinorwic, I have not seen any images of where those loaded wagons ended their journeys.

Perhaps Mold Junction Slate Yard was a distribution point for the Chester, Wrexham and Mold area, the slate arriving by rail, and it being a convenient location for merchants to collect their purchases. The photograph in the article shows the slate neatly stacked from the quarry in the various sizes used in roof works ready for collection by the local builders.

I would doubt that the various quarries each had a representative at Mold [Junction]. The site was many miles from the quarries, and at this stage in the supply chain the slates would have been sold by the quarries to the builders' merchants. Only a thought!

Class 25 No. 25153 accelerates away from Colwyn Bay with an unusual formation on Tuesday April 5th, 1977, possibly the 4J16 MSX Holyhead-Bolton parcels. Immediately behind the locomotive is a three-car BRCW Class 104 DMBS/TCL/DMCL diesel multiple unit (failed?), two Mk. 1 CCTs and then two SR-designed PMV/CCTs. Controversy surrounds the identification of the fifth parcels vehicle, note its high roof line, perhaps an LMS-designed two-axle CCT but maybe you know better? Tom Derrington



'I don't believe it...' (said in best Victor Meldrew voice)

IT IS ALWAYS FASCINATING to receive previously unseen photographs of North Wales coast line operations during Mostyn's late-1970s 'period setting'. Both these pictures fall into the 'prototype for everything' category, and the fact that they'd raise lots eyebrows if seen running on our layout simply means we *have* to recreate them in model form! The above picture was provided by Tom Derrington, a visitor to the recent Wigan exhibition where Mostyn was one of the star attractions.

He informed us that he was lucky to get close to the railway back on that day in 1977 since he was on his honeymoon! The layout attracted much interest from existing and retired railwaymen from the north west, including Merfyn Jones, who was with the S&T department at the time and was happy to recount stories about his 'patch'. Career railwayman, David Rapson, father of club member Mike 'Matey' Rapson, supplied the image below which provides the ideal excuse to run a very short train! ■

On Tuesday August 9th, 1977, Class 25 No. 25157 ambles past boarded-up Connahs Quay signalbox with a single merry-go-round coal hopper and brake van. This is the return working of Trip 29 (reporting number 9T29) and looks to be conveying the crippled HAA hopper from Point of Ayr colliery for corrective attention at Chester Wagon Repair Depot. The different coloured side-lamps on the brake van would be a nice feature to model. David Rapson





GALLONS POINT BOAT CLIFT FOR THE MCHTSMAN, 1850

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SAMPSON