

Risborough and District Model
Railway Club

Oct-Dec 2009 Autumn

FOOTPLATE



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Committee Notes



Committee meeting

There have been no committee meetings since the last Footplate.

Cover photo: Beeches Light Railway, June 2009

WELCOME

Summer is now over and we move towards another busy exhibition season. High Wycombe and Beaconsfield shows are due soon. The O gauge show at Telford which a number of you visited and the N Gauge show which I attended were both excellent single scale shows.

Okehampton continues to make excellent progress (page 14) and Aylesbury is beginning to take shape with the two scenic boards constructed and track being built, see page 16. In order to make room for these new projects Chiltern Parkway is in the

process of being sold and failing that will be dismantled. Other old and unwanted projects will also need to go such as Saffron Street and the aborted boards for the London based P4 project. We need the space for new projects so cannot afford to be sentimental about the old ones. Anything not required should be disposed of and anything that is required should be stored in an efficient and tidy manner. Clubroom tidiness is still on the agenda, every time we clear up we make a mess again!

The AGM is nearly here, so have you considered standing for the committee? Do you want to get involved with exhibitions? Do turn up and express your point of view, everyone has a right to express an opinion as to how the club is run. It is your club, make your view known.

More bad news from the model industry, Faller have become insolvent. Probably the largest kit maker in Europe producing models in all scales. No doubt most of us have built some of their kits at one time. They are presently trying to restructure and hopefully they will survive.

We now have a new trophy for Wheeltapper, the "Derek Turner Trophy" has been made by Alan Cooper and donated by Barbara Turner. It is made of oak with a nice curved profile with a steel loco wheel at its centre. It will be presented for an O gauge item of stock at Wheeltapper although the exact category has yet to be confirmed. Get building!

A group of us again spent the day at the CRMA TIME event in Watford, a day of modelling and talks. A bit like a bigger version of our modelling days. This is a good event and I am sure more of you would enjoy it.

At the end of June Margaret & I visited the Beeches Light Railway with David & Sue Powell. This is a 2ft gauge Darjeeling and Himalaya railway running around Adrian Shooter's garden. A very enjoyable day with a BBQ lunch.

Sunningwell Command Control have updated their website and James has started a web based model shop, see page 21.

Following my mention of £50 notes in the last issue Adrian informs me he has a couple of books about Boulton and Watt if anyone would like to read about them and also informs me that:

The Chiltern Area of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers has scheduled a talk by Bob Alderman on 'Building the "Tornado"' in Aylesbury on March 5th 2010 -venue unspecified.

Paul

Modelling the Netherlands

When the Diorama workshop/competition was announced, I started building a row of canal side buildings based on those in the centre of Utrecht. This was intended to be my entry into the Wheeltapper competition but it was also to become part of the town scene on my home layout. Progress has been slow but the buildings are now taking shape. There are six buildings in this curved row which face onto the canal. They are built as follows:

From the left

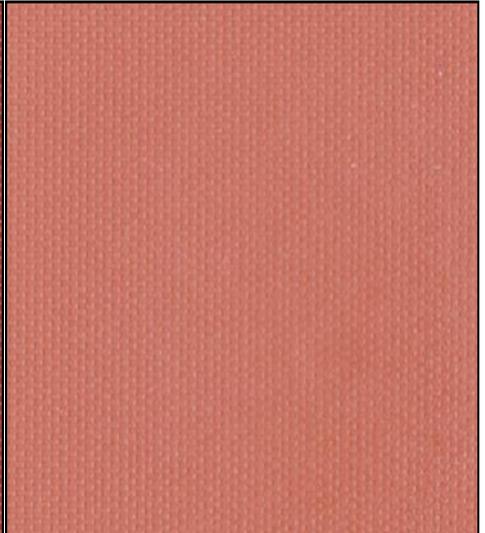
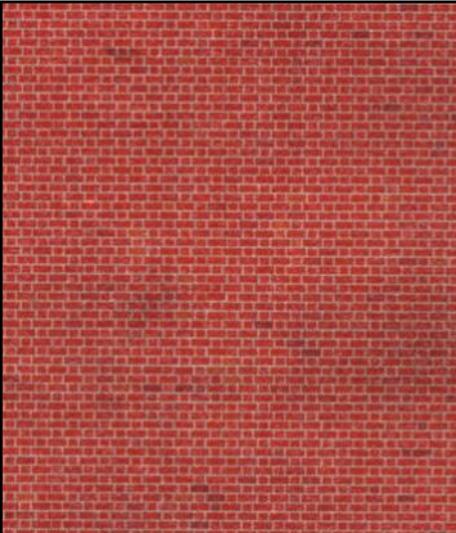


- 1 Kibri kit, 2 sides from the kit but built as a wedge shape.
- 2 Kibri kit, fascia as intended.
- 3 Pola kit, very old kit two fascias cut into pieces and rebuilt.
- 4 Scratch built using Pola windows. The brickwork on the original kit was very overscale.
- 5 Almost identical to number 4
- 6 Pola kit, again an old kit but the parts have been rearranged and a new roof built from Kibri plastic roofing sheet.

There are no interiors to these buildings although some do have Venetian blinds (etched brass) or curtains (paper). Unless the building has lights then the interior cannot be seen. The buildings on each end will have interiors on the ground floor as these are shops so the large windows do allow you to see in.

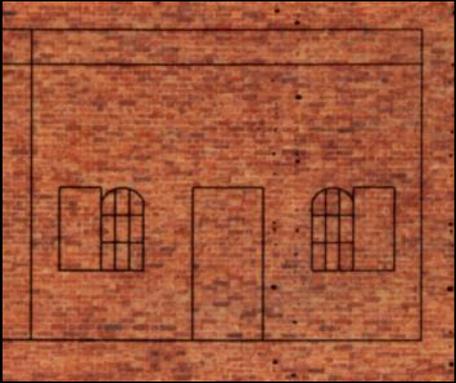
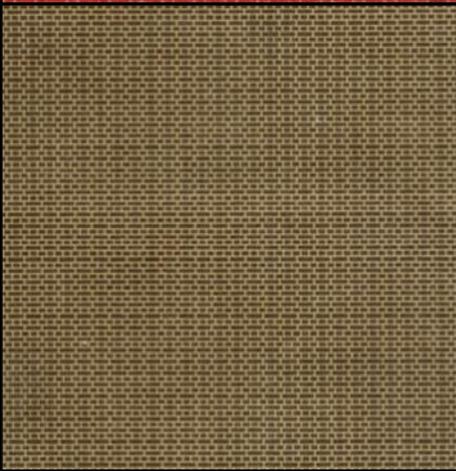
Now that this row is assembled I can start on the lower levels which were the old wharf entrances and cellars, many of which are now restaurants. These have to have the same frontage positions as the buildings above.

For the original mock-up I drew a number of fronts using TurboCad based on photographs of the buildings in the centre of Utrecht. This allowed me to plan to street level and choose suitable structures. These lower level fronts now needed a small amount of adjustment to make them match the completed buildings above.



Above: Ratio plastic brick sheet. A gentle rub with wet-n-dry helps the finish. I also find it easier to add mortar effects to plastic sheet.

Top: Metcalfe
 Middle: Prototype
 Lower: Howard Scenics

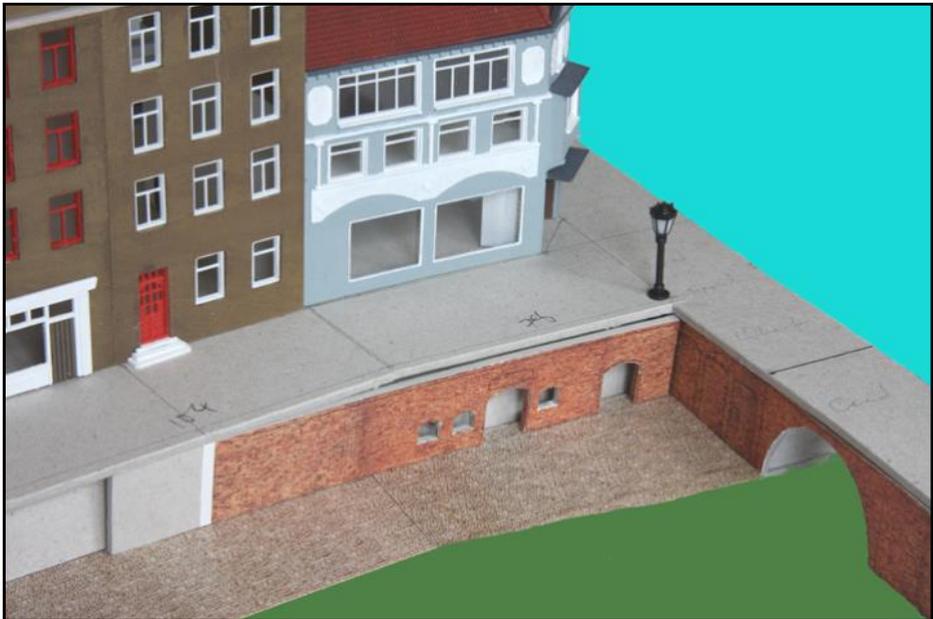


To construct these I can use either plastic or paper and at present am considering the latter. First I needed to find a suitable paper so looked through my modelling cupboard and found 3 different papers produced by different manufacturers: Metcalfe, Prototype Models and Howard Scenics, all in English or Flemish bond.

The Metcalfe brick is slightly larger than the others and has a very clear mortar course which makes it look too big. Its advantage is that it is supplied on two thicknesses of card while the others are all paper. The Prototype Models paper is very clean looking so would be more suitable for a modern building, take a look at some of the modern offices in Aylesbury as an

example. The Howard Scenics brickwork has a much older look with narrow mortar and although it is over scale (1:148 or is it 1:152?) for my European models (1:160) it does not look it and would be ideal for my buildings. It may also have been produced from photos of real bricks as opposed to being drawn as a series of rectangles.

The next step was to print the CAD version of the buildings onto the brick paper. This was a little challenging as the paper size did not correspond to anything the printer knew about. After a little experimenting the outlines of all the buildings were printed. The printed brick paper is now stuck onto 2mm card and cut out to form the buildings. Windows, shutters, windowsills, etc will be made from Evergreen strip. Signs, menus etc will be produced on the computer while the tables and chairs will be from etched brass. The cobbled lower level makes use of Faller building cards which need a wash of dirt coloured paint to remove the shine, water will be 2mm clear polystyrene painted on the back and no doubt there will be a boat of some kind. The lamps are by Vollmer and are the correct pattern for the area and just need a touch of gold paint on the top.



Trees will be of the usual twisted wire and foliage net. Etched brass railings will be required, probably from N-Detail of Germany.

Paul

Shepherd Neame “Spitfire”

Downed all over Kent, just like the Luftwaffe!

September: Harvest and Hop Festival time. Where better to reflect on this facet of our social history than from around the fields and orchards of Kent, the garden of England? How better to retrace the annual exodus from London that spanned over a century up to the early 1960s of hop pickers heading for Kent than by steam train as they once did? Romantic nostalgia? Maybe nowadays but back then it was probably far from that. The annual migration of East End(ish) cockney ‘op pickers from ‘ackney, ‘arringay and ‘oxton, along with their mountains of luggage, were packed into the most run-down compartment carriages imaginable. Usually headed by the most clapped out antiquarian steam engines the Southern could persuade to still raise steam, nearly all started their journey from platforms 8, 9 or 10 at London Bridge, aptly referred to as “Low Level” - a name ironically befitting the lowest order of social class who spent their holidays on Kentish farms hopeful of earning a few extra bob picking hops. Hop Picker trains usually reached their destinations by the slowest, most circuitous routes imaginable, deliberately planned thus to keep them away from normal scheduled main line traffic. Their stops at junctions were frequent, having the lowest priority over most other trains preceding them or crossing their path. Many of these travellers had had too much to drink even before they left London Bridge, and continued “topping up” en-route. Thus, with no toilet facilities on these trains, finding relief behind bushes wherever their trains happened to stop along the way was commonplace, as was their habit of brawling to resolve their petty disagreements.

Hopefully, with somewhat better travel prospects ahead than those suffered by the hop pickers of yore, Sunday 6th September found us joining the 07.34 ex-Aylesbury, intending to reach London Bridge by about 09.15. However, as with our Risborough Venturer trips of twenty years ago, it seemed the powers that be were conspiring to thwart this journey too. First of all, Victoria station, where we were originally due to set off from, was closed due to engineering works. Our revised departure from London Bridge was then impeded by London Underground; their website stating no Jubilee line trains would run between Stanmore and Waterloo. Never mind, the Bakerloo line to Waterloo and Jubilee line from there to London Bridge should do it for us. Errr, no! At Marylebone we discovered the entire Jubilee line was closed, with a replacement bus service offered in lieu of. Yet, surfacing at Waterloo, our twelve pairs of eyes saw no signs directing us to any such bus ‘service’. So, with the clock ticking relentlessly, we piled into three taxis to get us to London Bridge in good time to witness the arrival of our e.c.s. from Grove Park sidings, headed by a West Coast Rail ‘37’ with “Tangmere” coupled on the rear, into platform 2 (South Eastern side).

With “Tangmere” up front and 10 Mk IIs and 37706 trailing (used only to boost our standing start to clear the station section - merely idling thereafter) we started a minute or so late. This was a light load for “Tangmere” and our schedule was gentle to say the least. However, with adverse signals here and there, lost time recovery produced some spirited uphill running, noticeably: the long stretches between New Cross and Chislehurst; the re-start from Swanley station to Sole Street summit and the downhill dash and braking heavily for the tight curve onto Rochester Bridge; and best of all, the

stiff climb from there to Chatham got “Tangmere” breathing far more heavily and deeply than usual, being heard very noticeably even where we were, eight coaches back from the engine - and the clag belching from “Tangmere” was at times like being accompanied by our own foggy weather system! (A warship laying smoke to hide from the enemy couldn’t have made more..... Luvly stuff!)

Our tour of Faversham could have been an anti-climax to the trip itself but in fact, with such a lot happening throughout the town to hold our interest it wasn’t. The day was described as the ‘Faversham Hop Festival’ – yet even on reflection since, I can’t really pin down the difference between a Hop Festival and a Beer Festival, except that a lot of the hop stuff that goes into beer is harvested locally and that everywhere one looked around the town, hop vines were draped on buildings, lamp posts, signposts and general scenery too. Even some people’s heads were adorned with Romanesque garlands - but of hops rather than laurel!

Shepherd Neame were quite visibly the main event sponsors - and most of the pubs in town seemed to be owned by them too. Moreover, the several entertainment stages rigged for Rock, Acoustic and Folk sets respectively were also dressed with ‘Spitfire’ and other regalia associated with the brewery. Even the old Sentinel steam lorry chuffing around the outer edges of town (all inner roads were pedestrianised) was

wearing the company’s red livery.

Having strolled through the town, we reached the 15th Century Shepherd Neame Visitor Centre, where a very decent 3-course Sunday lunch awaited us. (The Kentish Fruit & Bishops Finger Ale Chutney accompanying the pate was exquisite!) Next up, a conducted tour and ‘tasting’ experience in their brewery (claimed to be the oldest in the UK). Our interest was reasonably well held for the rest of the afternoon until our 16.35 departure from Faversham station. (To minimise the risk of these words failing to paint the picture, I hope Paul finds room to print a couple of the photos I took around Faversham that might hit the spot).

Back on board our train, we set off more or less on time - without that ‘orrible diesel on the back. Instead of returning





as out we went, we carried on down the old London Chatham and Dover (L.C. & D.R.) line through Canterbury to Dover where we turned very sharply right, passing the old Dover Marine station and engine shed site to our left, leaving the L.C. & D.R. to join the S.E.R. (South Eastern Rly.) route back to London. During WW2, the Dover area was known as Hellfire Corner, being within range of German coastal gun batteries around Boulogne. Keeping a sharp lookout across the channel for gun flashes, the locals knew they had only about 22 seconds to find cover before the incoming shells found random targets.

Anyway, leaving Dover with the awesome white cliffs above us to our right and the Channel to our left, “Tangmere” stormed through Shakespeare Cliff tunnel, climbing into Folkestone Warren, the most unstable

section of railway line in the UK. Infamous for its serious cliff falls and landslides seaward in the past, at least twice in its history the line virtually disappeared completely. One such landslide, just before WW1, took a train and its engine, a South Eastern & Chatham ‘D’, with it and closed the line for almost the entire duration of the war!

Easing back through Folkestone Central, a mile or so further on we came to a stand at Folkestone West station for 15 minutes to allow “Tangmere” to have a drink and me to have a fag. Any hope of getting a decent photo of the engine were dashed as seemingly most passengers off the train were milling around admiring it at close quarters. Never mind.

With the tender now holding about 4,000 gallons of water more than it held when we arrived, we were ready to go - and still on schedule, go we went - but not for long. We soon passed Dollonds Moor, the freight transfer yard of the Channel Tunnel, where ‘66’s and ‘92’s were seen hitched on to some inbound freight trains awaiting their paths northward and several more parked around the fuelling point. They would have made decent pictures for those interested in such stuff, except for the continuous huge grey steel paling fences placed inconveniently between our line and the transfer yard/HS1. What a pity!

Our speed was now climbing into the low 60s and, with camera strap round my neck, leaning out of an end-vestibule window and being pebble-dashed with cinders coming from Tangmere's multiple-jet blastpipe, we swept (lurched?) left, right and down towards a fly-under beneath HS1 near Westenhanger as I took a succession of pictures on maximum zoom telephoto straight into a weak sun - barely able to see if "Tangmere", eight coaches ahead of me, was even visible in the viewfinder, let alone if it might be in focus. Soon, double amber then amber signals loomed ahead to check our speed into the Sevington Loop - a siding where we would wait to allow a following e.m.u. to overtake and for us to then follow it. Even before we stopped alongside HS1, looking back the headlights of the following e.m.u. were closing on us and soon flew past at not much less than 90. Also as we waited and, as hoped, given we were there for about 10 minutes in all, a EuroStar came humming past doing at least 140mph. Even though the fencing was minimal enough not to obstruct our view of it hereabouts, the bushes and small trees between us did their best to get in the way instead. Oh Dear - what a shame - never mind; best of all was soon to come!

With signals ahead as far as the eye could see, virtually into Ashford International



Station nearly 3 miles distant, suddenly turning green, we got away from Sevington briskly, passing through Ashford Intl. on the Up Main at not much less than 60 and still accelerating towards the 21¼ mile "racing stretch" between Ashford and Paddock Wood, so we were already well on target to make mincemeat of a mile a minute.... Six miles beyond Ashford we passed Pluckley - "Darling Buds of May" orchard country - and *still accelerating!* *PERFICK!!!* I called across to Mick to time us against the quarter mile posts on his side - after a short wait he announced 75 - and all the while going quicker still. (Moving forward to Monday briefly, someone on the next

station, Headcorn, five miles past Pluckley, posted a video clip on YouTube of our train as it whizzed through and, counting the seconds in pretty much real time of the passing coaches of our train, I calculate we were doing almost 80 there. Check it out: YouTube video: search: "06092009036" if it's still there). However, time for a reality check: Today, "Tangmere" is as grand an old engine as those wheezing engines on hop picker trains of the '50s were, though better cared for of course. But in the '50s, "Tangmere" and co. would often reach well over 90 on this stretch with twelve coaches plus two baggage vans (swingers) in tow on the boat trains, despite their usually "easy" timings. Also 'L1' 4-4-0s have occasionally averaged 70+ from Tonbridge to Ashford pass to pass with nine on. Our schedule Ashford to Tonbridge was 34 minutes, yet, losing speed through Paddock Wood and coming to a dead stand just before Tonbridge for around 5 minutes, we were through Tonbridge only a minute or so down on schedule, a comparable net time; and by Sevenoaks, after the long climb through Hildenborough, we were 2 minutes up, reaching London Bridge 10 minutes early... A pretty good run I think.

I still wonder if it would have been the chivalrous thing to do to let our accompanying womenfolk know beforehand that of the 75½ mile run from Dover Priory to London Bridge, just 66 yards short of 7 miles of the route would be in porous, very wet and drippy tunnels cut through chalk; and that through all of them most windows in our carriage would be at least partly open all the way through them. No wonder Nikki M. felt compelled to mention the smuts she found herself covered in when she got home - it seems we really were "the dirty dozen"!!! The Ginger Cake man offers the grovelling plea: Ooops! - Sooo sorry!

Pete

September 2009

PS I nicked this story's title from a Shepherd Neame poster - quite simply, I just liked it!

Reminder - club subscriptions are now due.

Steam Throu

GWR Castle Class 5043 Earl of Mount Edgumbe passes through Princes Risborough Station heading north on Saturday 1st August.

We left our modelling day to drive down to Risborough Station in a small convoy of cars. We were not sure of the exact time of the train but it had to fit between the service trains so we had only a short wait in the rain for the steam special which came through at a good speed with a 10 coach train in chocolate and cream livery. Very impressive it looked too. Then back to the modelling!



gh Risborough



Okehampton update

progress at mid-September 2009

Outwardly, Okehampton may appear to be just the same 4 boards that were built ages ago but with a bit of more track. However, a lot more is happening behind the scenes.

The next 3 mirror boards are now ready for track laying. By “mirror” I mean that we have a central square board, and on each side of that, boards mirror each other. So the two either side of the central board are designed to fit together top to top for transport purposes; then the two outside those also mirror each other as do the two outside of them. Finally, we’ll need two more to take the sharp 6 foot radius curve to the fiddle yard at both ends. These two cannot be built until the exact maximum space they can occupy within the clubroom is calculated beyond the existing seven boards once they are all joined together, so Pete is devising profiles of these boards to help ensure the layout will fit within the clubroom. Track has been laid on 4 of the 9 scenic boards.

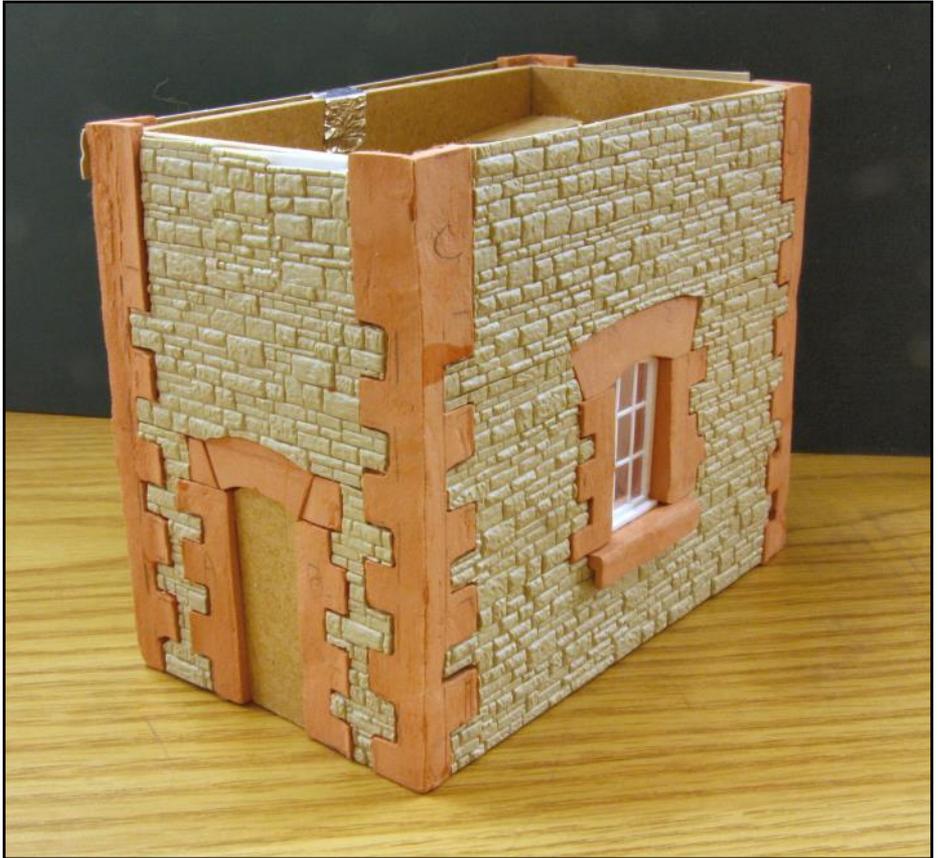
Richard has been very busy building the most complicated board of all. This takes track on a bridge over a road that climbs behind the layout beyond the goods yard, and two other roads, also climbing, to the station forecourt and to the Military sidings. This board is now complete with legs and is ready for track laying, as are the other two this side of the central board due to the efforts of Paul, Adrian and Richard.

In the meantime, Adrian has built another section of main line track; Russ has built the lead in points to platform 1 and the goods shed; while I have made track for the main line where it meets yard and military siding entrances. Russ and Adrian made the track for the rearmost sidings a while back but won’t be laid until the lead-in tracks are in place to ensure accurate final track alignment from the yard throat points.

Scenery wise, Tim has been working steadily on the coal stage, its supports are fitted to the board already and the whole assembly is nearing completion. Mike is getting on nicely finishing the water tower cladding around the shell that Martin put together.

Mick has fitted and wired up the turntable motor and spent quite some time with me wiring the main layout and pointwork. We now have the first 4 boards fully wired and tested with connectors, DCC control of all points and the 4 power districts working. This was quite a job, as the power district module misbehaved to begin with. Eventually we found it was configured to automatically reverse polarity as soon as it detected any form of short, whereupon it jammed up and stopped the lot! It took quite a while to debug this odd behaviour as it was far from obvious what was wrong.

Pete and Merlin have produced a shed-load of brass board-end sleepers and chairs ready to fit on new track. All 4 complete boards now have brass sleepereed track ends. Where next? The immediate next step is to finish laying the main line and test it on the 3 new boards, and then wire up underneath with connectors so we can test the current 7 boards together; then lay and wire up the remaining rear sidings. These sidings will



connect to the existing wiring buses so should be easy and quick to complete.

When built, the scenic side will be ready to test run but we'll then face two major problems:

1. Lack of clubroom storage space will prevent modelling the scenery and
2. The layout must be erected semi-permanently to enable effective scenery progress on any days any of us can spare *in addition to Friday evenings*.

James 15-09-09.

Aylesbury Update

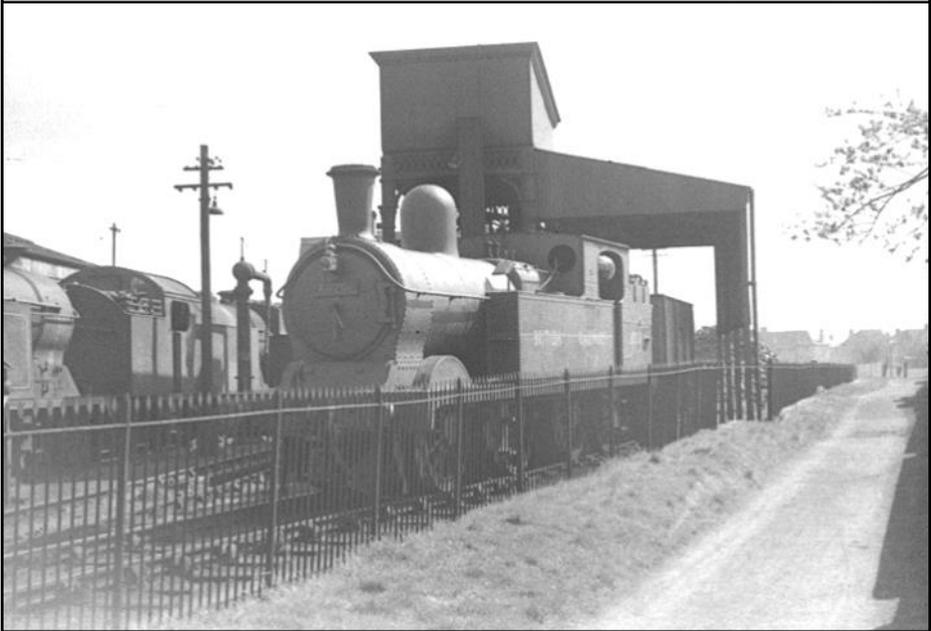
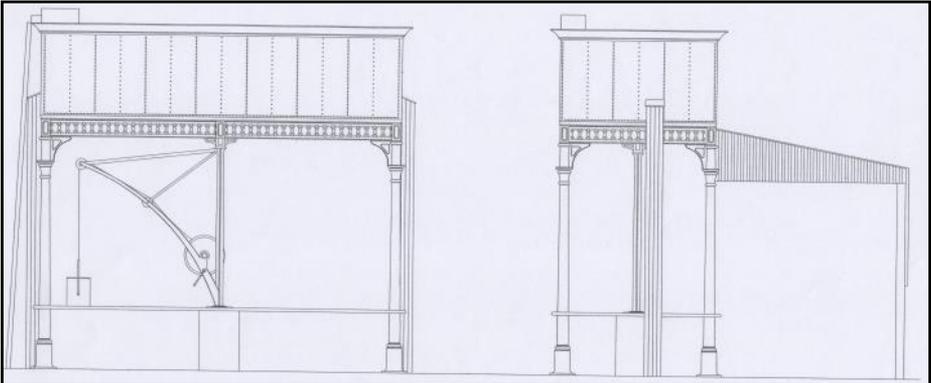
The Aylesbury project is starting to make good progress. Pete Miller has built the two curved scenic boards, made the legs and fitted the joining clips. This allows the layout to stand on its feet for the first time. Track work has been constructed off the boards with some of the main lines built and a good percentage of the Risborough platform track work made. Tim has built the entry turnouts to the engine shed, which includes the rather interesting catch point built into the turnout. While Steve and myself have been building the remaining three turnouts and straight track. Hopefully we will have all track wired and sprayed before we lay and ballast all in one hit on a modelling Saturday before the end of the year.

I have been collecting some rather nice details of the station as well detail notes taken



of things like colour schemes, so we hope to get things as close as possible. We found out that the station was repainted in gulf red and cream in 1950 when ownership passed to the Midland region of BR although responsibility of motive power remained Eastern and Western region until 1958 when the Midland region took over. We have quite a few interesting photographs of unusual motive power, for example a green Western diesel on a one coach chocolate and cream inspection saloon in 1965.

As for the buildings we have quite a number to build. We first intend to draw up all the structures in CAD and so far I have produced the water tank/coaling stage and Engine shed. I am currently working on the public footbridge to the north of the station, which will form a scenic break. Luckily, I own the original linen contract drawing from 1863



so this has proved quite easy to draw up. I have yet to measure up the station buildings. We will need to produce quite a few custom etches for things like the water tank, bridge and station valances- yet a new modelling discipline to learn!

We intend to use some of the stock from Saffron Street to allow us to get things running, but we do need to build more stock that is appropriate to what we need, currently I am building an LNER A5, and will need to finish my 14XX. Hopefully we can after a number of years have enough stock to run through the period 1950 to 1966 then back again.

We have been invited to have the layout on display at Risex in February so we need to prioritise jobs so that we can have at least the bare bones of what we are trying to achieve on display by then. We won't have any finished buildings by then, but it

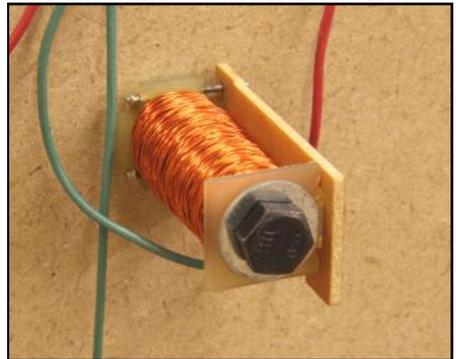
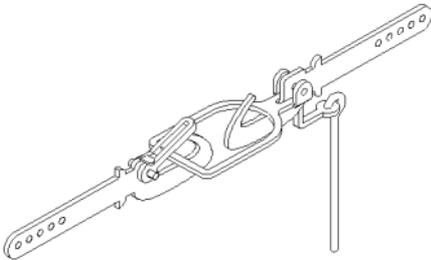
would be nice to have some very basic mock ups in place to show where everything goes. If anybody would like to have a go at making these I can supply the drawings, please let me know.

David Lane

Auto-couplings for Okehampton

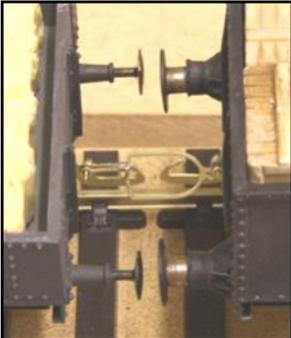
For our Okehampton project we needed to choose a type of automatic coupler as most areas on the scenic side will be inaccessible from the operators' positions at the front of the layout (especially the rearmost Down sidings!), so investigations were made into a coupler I'd seen on layouts at various shows, namely the Dingham Autocoupler. This was developed initially for a large 7mm scale shunting layout, Lofthouse-in-Nidderdale, not unlike our own Project, which many of you may have seen at Shows over the last 5 or 6 years. The Dingham has since been produced for 4mm scale as well. (How about it P4 team?). Basically, each end of a vehicle has either a loop or a latch type of fitting (see illustration showing the two coupled together).

These are simple fold-ups from thin etched

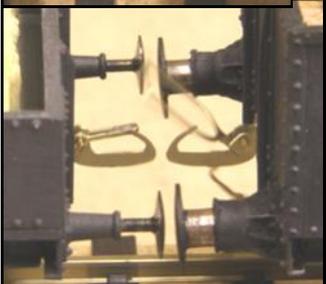


brass and are relatively unobtrusive compared to other autocouplers, and readily replace the usual 3-link or screw coupling, utilising the slot in the headstock/buffer beam on all vehicles. During assembly some care is required to provide minimal 'slop' in the pivoted joints, by broaching-out the etched holes instead of drilling to take the 0.8mm brass wire, and also to ensure the latch and loop always drop back down after operation. Bearing this in mind a pair of couplers can easily be made-up in about 1 hour, but once proficient this will reduce to about 30 minutes, including fitting to stock. (We may need a volunteer who likes "fiddly work" to produce a few dozen pairs for us! Any Offers?)

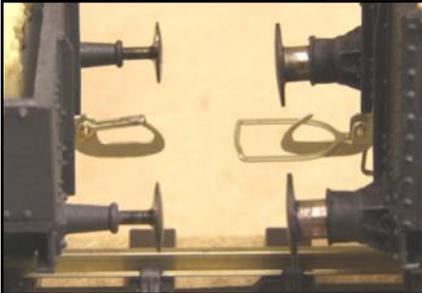
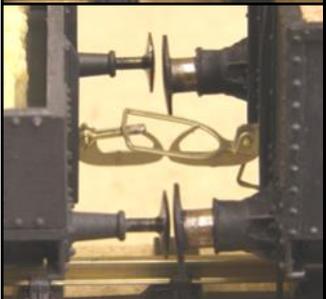
Uncoupling is done by energising discreetly hidden electromagnets between and flush with the sleepers at strategic positions around the layout, (usually at the entrance to sidings and each end of platform roads, for example) as the Dingham Autocouplers between rakes of vehicles pass over them during propelling moves. This allows the shunter to select just those wagons/rakes to uncouple as required by the operating



sequence. As the train is propelled over the energised electromagnet the “Tail” on the Loop coupler is attracted downwards a couple of mm towards the magnet. This in turn lifts the Loop upwards, which, when clear of the magnet, drops down and now sits ON TOP OF the Latch. When drawn forwards later in the shunting move, the vehicles remain uncoupled. It’s easier to see this in action than to describe it!



It is not suggested that we fit all our rolling stock with Dinghams but rather to provide a selection of barrier vehicles, Vans, Opens, Brakes, etc, (as well as locos!) so that rakes of 3-link-fitted stock can be coupled together using these “Barriers”. We already have a sizeable offer of freight and parcels stock for use at Shows where the owner isn’t prepared to retro-fit his stock, and this is a way to get around the problem. We simply marshall groups of wagons into rakes with a barrier vehicle of appropriate type at each end. However, all locomotives would have to be fitted with them so that we can shunt these rakes around the various sidings and platform roads. Coaching stock will take the form of fixed rakes as well as loose vehicles, and these too would have Dinghams at the outer ends, a loop at one end, and a latch at the other. Within coaching stock rakes we could make use of Kaydee couplings as the Southern and BR used these knuckle couplings for real. We will perhaps need to standardise on a particular Kaydee Series so that fixed rakes can be altered during shows (e.g. strengthening a 3-car rake to a 5-car by inserting vehicles from other Sets)?

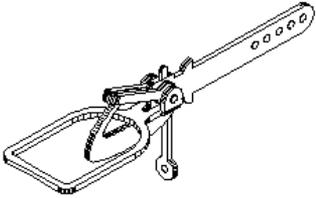


Now, one or two of you may have noticed a slight flaw in the plan? When you turn stock around, you cannot couple two loops or two latches to each other! Well, the Dingham is designed for layouts where stock always remains the same way round, which is what Okehampton is – an end to end layout which just happens to have the ends joined somewhere in the middle of the fiddle yard!

Problem solved! Well, only partly, as most locos will turn on the Turntable or in the fiddle yard at some time to perform station/yard shunting, or take a train out in the direction it arrived from. We won’t always know if a loop or latch is at the loco’s end of the train, so each end of each loco will be fitted with a “Combined Latch & Loop” coupler. This will enable any loco to attach to either end of any rake of stock, whether passenger or goods. We just have to make sure

when setting-up that all rolling stock is formed the correct way round! Simple!

As yet I haven't had the time to fit the Combined type to a loco and test this theory out, but will be doing so very soon. I'm assured it is possible but some extra care in assembly is required. We can then iron out any pitfalls before we proceed further.



Trevor Shaw, the Dingham designer and supplier, has an excellent Website which explains all of this, together with a sequence of photos showing the coupling and uncoupling operations work. Definitely worth a look at :

www.dingham.co.uk/index.html (Diagrams illustrated here courtesy Dingham Website)

The couplers are very cheap, currently £15.00 for 20-24 pairs, depending how many are made-up as "Combined" types. The Electromagnets, operating at 12V DC/8.5 Ohms, are £5.00 each. Mick tells me that we will be able to energise these as if they were just another fixed device, like a signal or point. We'll just need to identify where they are on the layout and give them a number so we can operate them via the DT402s!

Happy Modelling! Russ

Useful internet addresses:

www.met.police.uk/about/photography.htm

More on the legality of photographing railway infrastructure

www.lmsca.org.uk

LMS Carriage Association website

www.epbpg.co.uk

EPB Preservation Group

www.rafmuseumphotos.com

There are around 70 (mostly) SR railway photographs taken by the late Charles Brown available to view and to purchase from the RAF Museum website.

<http://tinyurl.com/mr3hvp>

Time lapse view of bridge replacements

THE Model Kit Shop

In a mad moment, I decided that it was about time I did something else with my working day instead of trying to get my existing business going again after a tough time in the recession. I'd always wanted to do something in the model railway business, and after a friend suggested that the 0 gauge world needed a product directory where modellers could search for exactly the model kit they needed for their layout, I thought that perhaps I could combine my programming skills and model railways.

I talked to a number of traders in 0 gauge, and the common theme was that they knew next to nothing about the web, but all recognised that they really needed a good web presence and probably on-line trading too. Most have web sites, but if there was competition on which web site was the worst in the world, many would qualify. I investigated the open-source commerce packages, and concluded that oscommerce met all my requirements. There are many sites based on this core code, and all are easy to use and good to look at. It uses PHP for the programming language and MySQL for the database, both of which are well supported and freely available on hosted sites. The major benefit is that they are completely free to use.

After a couple of months trying to understand the code and making at first small changes, then latterly much bigger changes as my confidence grew, I now have a live site. I have agreed trading terms with Parkside Dundas, Precision Paints, Alan Gibson, Cooper Craft and others to resell their kits and parts. Stock is either sitting in my spare bedroom or is on order and I am ready to roll.

The site is at www.themodelkitshop.co.uk and contains not only the products that I stock but also a list of products that I do not stock. Why - you may ask? My concept is to attract people to my site instead of others, because they can find most of the models that are available in one place. They can compare one against another and when they decide what to buy, my links take them somewhere where they can place an order. If

people come to my site first, then I am more likely to sell the models I do stock, while providing a service to the modeller that costs me nothing except some time setting it up in the first place.

Ultimately, I want to be able to offer a mechanism where orders can be placed for models I do not stock, where commission can be charged.

So what is different about my site compared to the hundred other model sites? I have customer reviews so that people can say that a kit is easy to put together or not as the case may be. I have found review sites for hotels and holiday places essential reading before I book and you learn to eliminate those reviews where someone has been unlucky. I have a customer gallery where customers can place pictures of their models with a description. I want to encourage both by giving a small extra discount on their next purchase. But most usefully I think, is that when you select a kit, the site lists all the extra items you need to finish that kit off. This includes the right wheels if the kit does not contain them, the right paints for each period, and which transfers are needed. I will make a point of stocking the extra items so that they can all be ordered at the same time. This is a key element in encouraging people to return. The site has better pictures of the models than most other sites. I have been staggered by how many traders have no pictures of finished models of their own kits, painted and lettered. Cooper Craft is one, so I photographed my own models for the site as I'd built all their kits some years ago.

It's exciting times at the model kit shop. Check the site out. I'd welcome constructive comments.

Cheers, James.

Colour-Rail

After 32 years running Colour-Rail, the railway slide business, Ron White has decided to call it a day. The new owner is Paul Chancellor, the change taking effect from 1st October 2009. For the first time, there will be a website, and it is hoped to have this up-and-running from the same date. It is already "live", but with very little information for the time-being:

www.colour-rail.com

Club Diary

October	Footplate Autumn Edition
	3 rd Club Open Day Beaconsfield Exhibition
	23 rd Test Track
	23-25 th Eurospoor, Utrecht
	29 th Englefield Curry Night at the Radhuni, The Old Library, Church Street in Risborough
November	6 th Annual General Meeting
	7 th High Wycombe Exhibition
	13 th Workshop by Richard Turner
	12-15 th 4 th European N Scale Convention, Stuttgart
	14 th Modelling Saturday
	20 th Workshop by Richard Turner
	21 st Modelling Saturday
	21 st -22 nd Warley Exhibition, NEC
December	5 th Modelling Saturday
	18 th Test Track
	TBC Christmas Social
January	Footplate Winter Edition

Next Workshops

13th & 20th November, Painting and weathering by Richard Turner

Modelling Saturdays

The following Saturdays have been booked for the morning and afternoon, **note change of November dates**:

October 3rd (Club Open Day), November 14th (only 4 small tables) & 21st (no tables available), December 5th.

Back page: 46115 "Scots Guardsman" taken at Carlisle station prior to its run back South over the S&C on "The Waverley". Photo by Dave Wellington who is a former club member.

