



Risborough and District Model
Railway Club

Apr-Jun 2013 Spring

FOOTPLATE



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WELCOME

A good start to the new year with a talk by Ted on some of his travels in the USA. I am not an American fan but did find the talk very interesting. If anyone else would like to give a talk on their railway interests then let us know. Maybe a talk on the LMS, Southern or GC? Or if you know of someone who is not a club member and might give a talk, let us know.

Risex went very well again this year with about 750 visitors and as usual most seemed to come in the morning. An excellent selection of layouts were on display with trade support. Unfortunately Page Components seem to be winding down, so we had a new trader this year, Hedgerow Scenics. They have a range of grass mats and ready made scenic items. The scenic mat is a different finish to those from Silflor etc and seems very versatile judging by the samples on display. Thank you to Adrian

for organising the event, to everyone who helped make this exhibition a success and please pass on our thanks to the cake makers. Catering was busy with over 500 cups of tea and coffee made during the day.

Friday nights are very busy now and the small meeting room will be used on the test track nights to provide more space. Saturdays are particularly good for working on the club projects and progress continues to be made to Aylesbury and Okehampton. See reports on page 18 and 20 respectively.

Railex approaches fast and all the planning seems to be going well, looks like another interesting “not to be missed” show.

Wheeltapper takes place this year towards the end of March so just misses this issue but will be fully covered in the next one.

Paul

Articles for publication in Footplate

Articles can be on paper or in electronic form (preferred) with minimal formatting, preferably doc, txt or rtf. Digital photos should be at as high a resolution as possible to allow editing and good print quality.

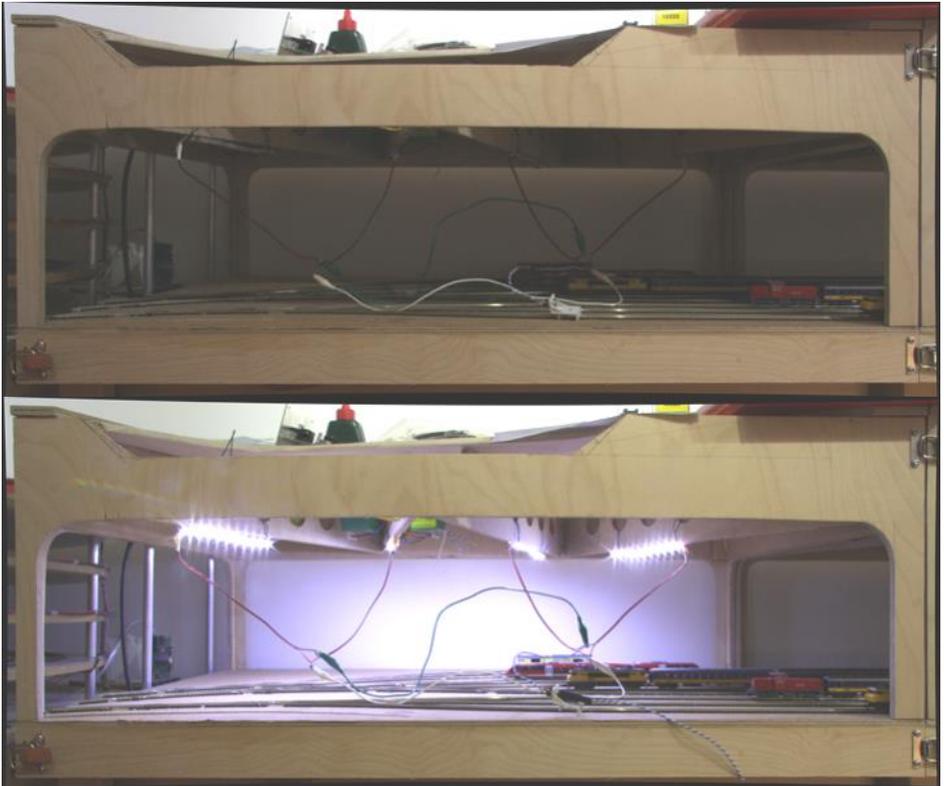
We would like to hear about your railway and modelling interests, places you have visited or models you have bought or made. Reviews of models, gadgets, books etc. are particularly welcome.

Articles should be sent at least 1 month before publication dates, i.e. beginning of March, June, September and December for publication in January, April, July and October.

Paul

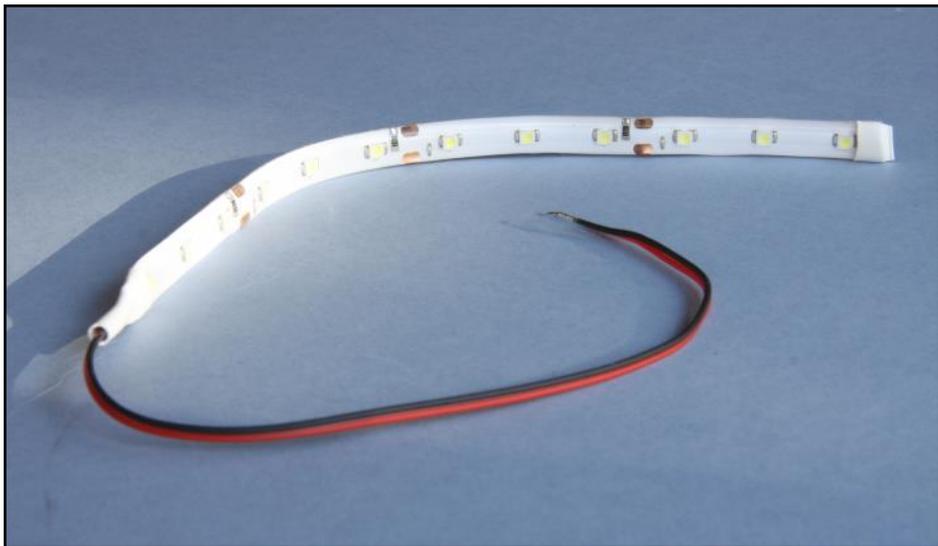
LED lighting

While searching for 2.1mm connectors for my Digitrax DS64 units I found a supplier of LED lighting. These come in a variety of colours and lengths from 5cm to 20cm with 3 LEDs per 5cm section. At £2.35 for the 20cm units this seemed worth a try so I bought 5 to try on the layout. On my layout the storage area is below the scenic area and is a little dark and needs lighting. The LED strips were roughly held in place by some offcuts of wire and connected up for a test. The photos show the storage area with lights on and off with the photos taken at exactly the same exposure. Looks like a success to me so more will be purchased for the other boards. I think I need at least 5x 20cm strips per 90cm board, maybe up to 8 would give good light coverage. The strips are self adhesive but I don't think they will hold well to the edge of plywood so I will stick a strip of styrene on to the ply edge and then attach the LED strips. A 12V PSU will be mounted under the layout and power fed to the 4 boards that will need lights.



These units are ideal for this purpose as they are bright, light weight, produce almost no heat and are flexible. Probably they will be used for the Okehampton hidden sidings as well.

These LED strips are made and sold on eBay by "THE TOPLEDSHOP".



Paul

A week in Colorado

Back in June, along with Ted Smale and Jon Jewitt. I went for a short week to Durango, Colorado for the SoundTraxx and Blackstone Models Dealer Training workshop. When it comes to mixing work and hobby, it really doesn't come much better than this.

Now, Durango takes a little getting to from the UK - it's one of those places that you can't get a direct flight to. Indeed, even though we bought tickets for UA929 from LHR to Denver, to connect to Durango, even that isn't direct. When we booked it, it stopped in Washington. When we flew, it went via Chicago, where we entered the US, but then continued on a different plane, though with the same flight number. Now, some of you will know that Denver is home to Caboose Hobbies, the largest train store in the world (think medium-sized Tesco), and also to the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden. So we planned to be there for long enough to get to one or other of those before the onward flight to Durango. Which turned out, for more than one reason, to be a good choice.

On the day, we started with the 04:00 Oxford Bus to LHR. Pretty uneventful, until we got to a large immigration line in Chicago, and started to fret about possibly missing the onward connection. However, it was delayed by the same 40 minutes that we were delayed in Immo, so we arrived at the gate just as they were about to close the doors.



Denver airport, especially as we were now domestic passengers, was a breeze - total time from gate to sitting in a hire car was no more than half an hour, even after the hire car guy tried to explain that with the outside temperature being around 43 degrees (109F in old money) the aircon in a Fiesta would not cope with three large blokes, let alone drag them all the way to downtown Denver. Dream on, mate, it was fine, for the 40 minute drive to Caboose and back - and it would almost certainly have taken us up into the mountains too, if we'd had the time. At Caboose, I was able to get just about everything that I had on my list of stuff I wanted to find. Not sure that Jon and Ted were quite so successful - not sure that they had lists, either.

Getting back to DIA in the Denver rush hour was as uneventful as the trip out, but still as hot. Caboose tills to sitting down to some dinner in one of the many restaurants in B pier was not much more than an hour. But it went downhill a bit after that, when we got to the gate area for United's local flights, to find that these services out of Denver were majorly disrupted because of the heat affecting aircraft takeoff weights, meaning that the planes were scattered all over the place. Our flight to Durango was listed, not listed, cancelled, reinstated, and then finally departed three hours late, meaning that once we'd collected another hire car in Durango, we got to our hotel at 01:30, having gained 7 hours along the way. But at least it flew, and we got onto it, which might well not have happened had we booked for an earlier flight.

Next day we went railfanning. After all, with a free day in Durango, what else would you do? We watched the first train depart Durango, had breakfast at the McDonalds next to the depot, and then chased the third train as far as the underpass where the rails

and road separate and the train goes into the canyon, before backtracking to my friend Mark Kasprowicz's place in Hermosa. He took us first to visit a huge O-scale Great Northern layout - and I really do mean huge, here, at least 3 times the size of Okehampton and best part of 1000 freight cars on the layout. Mark then drove us up to Silverton and on to Animas Forks. 27 degrees, even up there above 11000 feet. Fascinating stuff, especially if you've read Sloan's Rainbow Route, to see the remains of the the Silver Lake, Sunnyside and Gold Prince mills, and the ghost towns of Eureka and Animas Forks.



Wednesday we started the course itself, with a meetup at the factory and a factory tour. Here we met office, development and production staff, as well as a quick view of the factory room itself. Soundtraxx design, but don't actually make, the blank PCBs for their products, but they do install the components to the boards, and do all the rest of the assembly at this now rather cramped location. Boards are populated with components that are already programmed, so once the solder operations are done, the board is ready for test and packaging. They also do any repairs to decoders here - and be assured - decoders that can be repaired are repaired. You don't automatically get a replacement. We could also see why the "purple" Tsunamis are more expensive than the board replacements, because the (incredibly expensive - like 75cents a foot!) flexible wires have to be hand-soldered to the decoder before the purple shrink-wrap is added.

That done, we all headed up to Fort Lewis College on the other side of Durango for the rest of the week. The rest of Wednesday was a high-level overview of the company, of



DCC and DCC sound, and then went on to product line descriptions - not just the Soundtraxx-brand decoders but also all the OEM ones. We looked at the Blackstone Models HO_n3 range, including test shots of parts of the new versions of the C-19, including the new pilot beam casting for the post-wreck 346, made from a testle bent timber. We also covered sales tools and methods - and there was some good advice in here about how to raise footfall with clinics and other demonstrations. We then wound down at the Bar-D Chuckwagon - but no beer! It's a family friendly place, see?

Thursday we did some installs - split into advanced and beginner groups, working with locos kindly supplied by Bachmann and Kato. The advanced group, which I joined, did a moderately complex install in a Bachmann 2-10-2 which involved rewiring the entire loco and tender all but the headlight, and using Soundtraxx's rather frail DBX9000 between engine and tender - I've since replaced that. The Kato F40PH diesel install was much simpler. The loco is already fitted with a speaker clip and the board with two LEDs, so all we has to do was add third LED to the board, solder two

wires between speaker and decoder, and snap it all back together. After that, we did some programming with NCE-supplied Powercabs - and I have to say that the bulk of this was about how to drive the Powercab rather than programming the Tsunami, but still interesting. End of the day was a D&S roundhouse and yard tour hosted by Soundtraxx's Jarrette Ireland and Blackstone's Jeff Johnson, followed by a Mexican buffet in the museum, this time with beer. Evenings don't get much better than that. Friday was break day. Given the course material - model train DCC, and the location, Durango, a ride on the Durango & Silverton could not be missed - and we had my

favourite K-36, #486, on the train. For those who've ridden, you know what it's all about. For those who have not, all I can say is go and ride it. I've ridden quite a few heritage trains, and the D&S is about the best there is. It's certainly better than anything we have in the UK from a scenery point of view, and the length of the ride.

Saturday was the last we'd get to see the local sights, as our return flight was early Sunday. So we decided to go down to the McDonalds next to the depot for breakfast, and watch the first train out, before starting the last day. While we waited at the College Drive crossing for the train to start, Jarrette and George Bogatiuk drove past, commenting out the window, "haven't you guys had enough yet?". Of course we hadn't!

Saturday's coursework started with three breakout sessions, of which we could attend any two. Ted and Jon covered SurroundTraxx, while I did Advanced Programming and Creative Decoder Installs. Jarrette covered the programming session, two hours reviewing and hands-on playing with much of the features of the Tsumani, using the two locos we'd installed on the Thursday as guineapigs. Pity there wasn't time to cover more. I thought I knew the Tsunami well, but there were still things I learned from this session, particularly diesel-related functions. I'm more of a steam man. George Bogatiuk discussed Creative Installs - particularly alternative decoder selections, speaker location planning and more. Mostly concentrated on diesels, but with some very useful hints and tips.

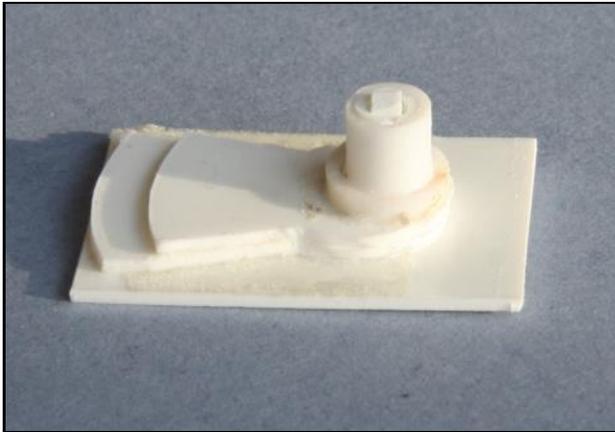
Rest of Saturday was a Q&A with SoundTraxx staff, where we pressed them on what's coming next, and they played coy, as you might expect. Specific questions I asked were on UK versions of the Tsunami, adding cylinder drain cock sounds to steam Tsunamis, suppressing the first chuff, and more. No promises were made, but they are listening acutely to these sorts of requests, so we live in hope. Proceedings closed with the handing over of certificates showing that all three of us are now Factory Trained Soundtraxx and Blackstone Models Dealer Staff, and some associated goodies.

Overall? I think that there were two things specifically that I brought away from the week. Or three. First, SoundTraxx staff are incredibly passionate about their products and about the company they work for. SoundTraxx as a company comes over as an employer with high but fair expectations of its staff, and every bit willing to help the staff meet those expectations. Indeed, on the Friday, Steve Dominguez - President and Chief Engineer, and Nancy Workman, VP of just about everything else, missed the train ride because they were in Denver at the Colorado Companies to Watch 2012 awards. Secondly, the effort that they put into the week showed. Everything happened and worked as intended, or if it didn't, they covered up so well that nobody noticed.. I've attended many training courses and business conferences, and none have been as well organised as this one, though some have been close. Thanks have to go to Allison, Jaime, Jarrette, George, Jeff, Jessica, Dan, Steve and Nancy for all of that and looking after us so well, and to Fort Lewis College for their facilities and services. The third point of note: Durango itself, and of course the D&S. If you've not done it, get it on your bucket list.

Mick

Dutch Double Decker part 2

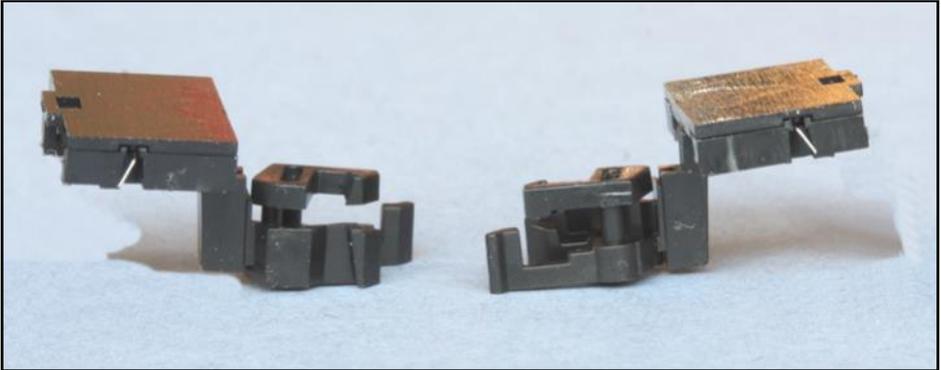
Having got a good set of bodies it is now time to find all the other parts needed. The bogies are a distinctive design and fortunately are the same as those used on the Koplopper EMUs and ICR coaches. These are available from Minitrix so I borrowed a couple of bogies from a spare coach. I then made two bogie mounts from plastic strip and rod to mount the bogies. These are held to the body by double sided tape at present. I will make a more accurate master for the bogie mount later and cast them from polyurethane. This then showed that the wheels will foul the floor of the coach, I



had a look at other wheels I had, quite a range in fact but what I found was that although there are standards for the wheels, axle length is not part of the standard. So for Minitrix bogies it has to be Minitrix wheels. I also found that the wheels for the Koplopper are the correct 5.75mm diameter and are smaller than the standard coach wheels of 6mm used on the ICRs. The only problem I can see with them is the large flange which may need to be turned down

to fit under the chassis or a small hole can be cut to allow the wheel sets to fit.

To connect the coaches together I will use a close coupling mechanism. Fleischmann make a very neat self contained unit which is perfect for the job (see above right), although it will mean using the Profi coupling rather than a solid bar connection into NEM sockets. This saves making the complex holder for the standard close coupler which also needs a fiddly little spring to make it work (above, the small peg on the flat triangular plate locates onto a fine wire spring). The unit is then mounted in a specially shaped recess, without losing the spring and the base added. Where stock runs in a



fixed set I would prefer to use a fixed coupling bar, this reduces the slop in the coupling . With close coupled coaches the coupling cannot be seen so it is not a big issue on this unit.

Paul

- 'Risex' Reflections -

David Powell's e-mail to us the day after 'Risex' addressing himself as El Presidente (making me wonder if he's a closet Spaniard like 'sadmanonatrain' Michael Portillo?) has prompted me to add my two-penn'orth of 'Risex Reflections' from an off-beat point of view (i.e., my own!) – So here goes.....

Senor Presidente y companeros hombres y mujeres del R&DMRC,

Up 'til last year, I used to go to many railway exhibitions (large and small, but mainly large) every year and all over the place, often in the company of fellow clubmates. A question I'd got into the habit of asking en-route home was: "..... Are you glad you went there?"

I found myself at the Community Centre on Saturday well before 09.00 and, as usual by Saturday morning, almost everything had been sorted the night before. (I'd slept through Friday evening after a rotten week that included driving over 600 miles to a funeral just North of Whitehaven and back with a car load of rellies that, cumulatively, left me quite knackered!)

'Small, Family' types of model railway exhibitions rarely float my boat but, don't ask me how, 'Risex' is an exception for me - And after being at over twenty 'Risex's I still can't pin-down why that is - Maybe it's simply that it's 'ours' (?) - Though I suspect it's something a bit more than just that. Anyway.....

Kicking off with a welcoming bacon roll and a cuppa that never fails to help set me up for the day, the last few bits 'n pieces were falling into place nicely around all the stands 'til, before we knew it, it was 'curtain up'. Thereafter, with the feet of most club members rarely touching the ground (especially those of the 'dining department'); and any part of the community centre looking as packed as a Bakerloo line tube in rush hour for most of the day, the Club had what I reckon might just be not only one of the best 'Risex's there's ever been, both attendance-wise and by presenting a very good (possibly one of the best ever) variety of layouts for our visitors (and us) to enjoy too.

Up 'til yesterday, I've NEVER been found to linger at 'N' gauge layouts at exhibitions (except our own erstwhile 'Chiltern Parkway' (a great name for a new station on HS2 around Calvert I reckon, where Chiltern Trains will one day run alongside TGV's/ ICE's/Eurostars?) and the massive 'Copenhagen Fields' - but even that one was mainly while I tried to figure out how the trains all came and went into various sections of back-scene). 'BANBURY' however, found me 'train spotting' for quite a while through the day (when not 'manning' on door duty or talking to visitors about the 'O'kehampton project and it's 'Tors Road' scenic board) and I think the most complimentary thing I can say about 'Banbury' was that, even if it hadn't had its name writ large above the layout, it could be readily identified as being Banbury; and with so much layout detail and a virtually constant stream of 'train action' (including a few nice surprises, such as passing steam specials and the Midland 'Blue Pullman') it was good to see kids and adults alike being impressed by it all.

Together with the rest of the layouts, 'Risex' offered good variety and contrast in scale, era and geographic location too - A good 'mix' that's probably harder to achieve within the confines of the Community Centre than it is in larger venues, where huge attention-grabbing layouts of National/International reputation can be readily accommodated (such as we are fortunate to host and see at 'Railex' every year).

This year, perhaps more so than any previous year, my need for refreshment through the day was very well met - The jacket spuds seem to get better every year and the 'front of house' efforts to keep the queue for food as short as possible (even in the lunch time peak) seemed to work especially well this year. If I was old Mr. Grace, I'd say to all involved without hesitation "you've all done very well"!

So, in summary: What an amazing 'liddle' show this year's 'Risex' was - And, yes, I'm glad I was there!

Pete J.

24 Feb. 2013

Below: Navnegard, the Danish HO layout.





Above: Little Binfield

Below: Roads A-C





Above: Loudwater.

Below: St Marks Yard







Above: the Z gauge layout that was on the Railway Memories stand.

Left upper: Banbury

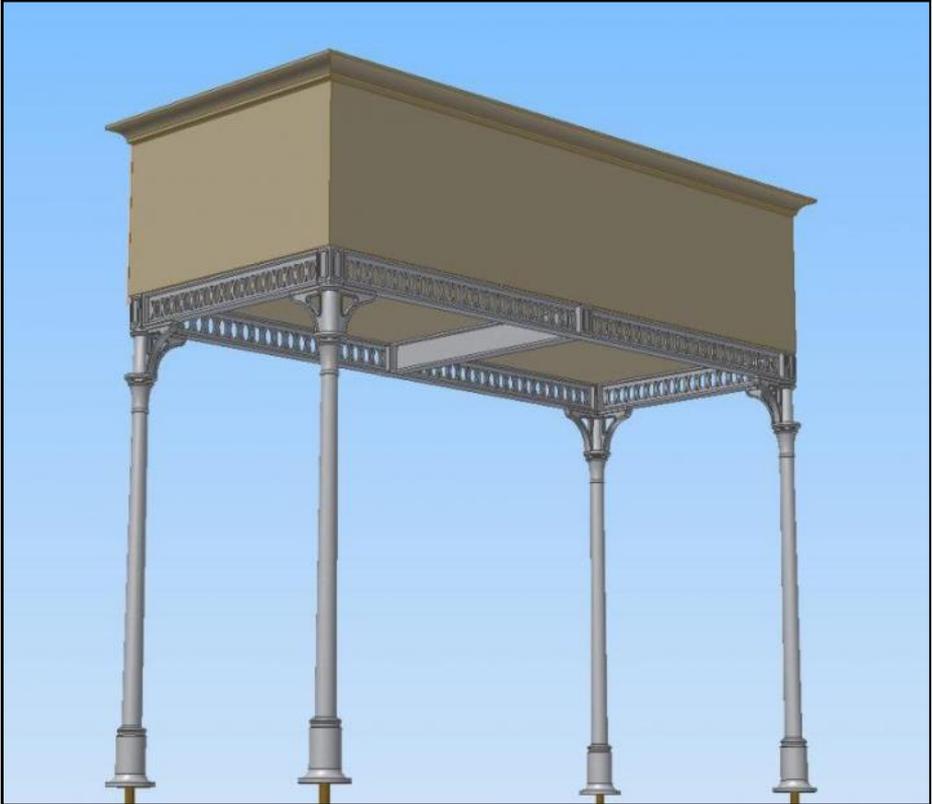
Left lower: Penrhos

Below: Hemyock O gauge.



Aylesbury Update

Been working on drawing the old water tank and coaling stage for Aylesbury I hope to get the bits I need 3D printed, still need to add rivets etc. The tank will be hollow but we won't use the tank part on Aylesbury as it was replaced by



the one Tim is building, the legs, girders and tank are all separate parts the legs will be hollow to allow brass rod to be passed through to make them stronger.

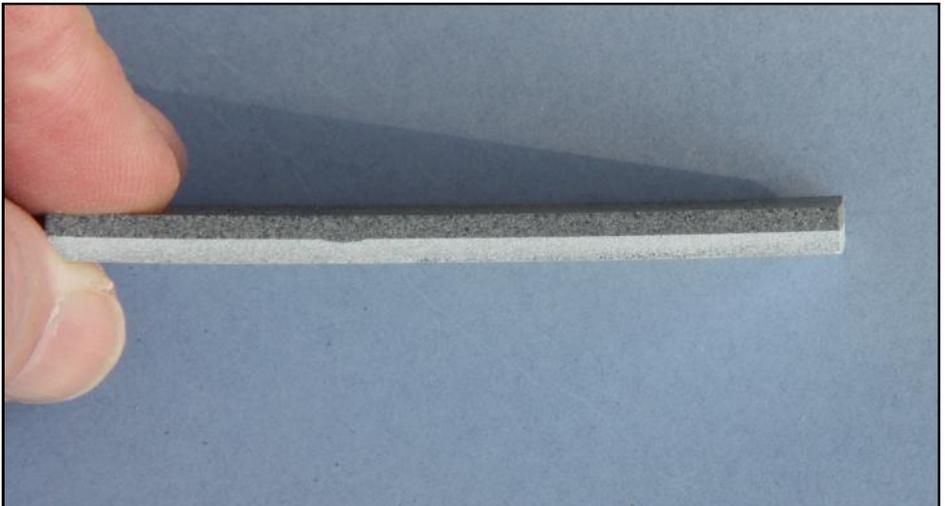
The platform surfaces are being added. The edge stones are made from Plasticard strips which are then scribed for the stone slabs. The gravel centre section is Carrs fine ash ballast which is laid onto wet contact adhesive, see photos.

David



Woodland Scenics Rail-Pal.

This is a double sided track cleaning pad for light (white side) and heavy (dark side) cleaning. It will shift paint etc after scenic work and can be used for cleaning oxidation and general dirt. When the edge becomes worn just trim it back with a modelling knife. This cleaner will not leave debris behind like the Peco track cleaning rubbers.



Okehampton Update:

Scenic work continues on the end board. We are experimenting with a light weight filler and paper towels with PVA to make the top surface over the blue



extruded polystyrene sheets. These boards are quite large and heavy so adding large amounts of plaster may not be a good idea. Some rock work, produced from the Woodland Scenics moulds has now been attached. This will need to be used carefully so we do not get an obvious pattern repeat. The next job is the loading platform and road (now under construction), plus looking at the bridge and wall stonework. Ideally we need to find a plastic stone sheet of the correct type to cover the walls and bridge. Scribing large areas of stonework does not appeal. The large hill to the rear of the board will have hidden storage sidings underneath, extending onto the next 2 boards. Once we are happy with our scenic techniques, they can be applied to all the other boards.

James

From the Internet

The renovation of the Royal Albert Bridge, Saltash

www.youtube.com/watch?v=HxWpZsxH_qw

Amazing film of the GWR/BR Brown-Boveri gas turbine locomotive in Switzerland in 1949

www.zeitraumaargau.ch/?v=e86dgy9d#/detail/e86dgy9d

Cab ride on Deltic prototype

www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9JLTFVgC6s

New Supplier

A new supplier for heat shrink tubing. They have a large range of sizes and colours at good prices and fast delivery:

www.heatshrink-online.co.uk

Stamps

There is a stamp collecting bag on the notice board, proceeds from the sales of stamps goes to a MS charity via John Franklin.

Club Diary

April	6 th 26 th	Modelling Saturday Test track
May	4 th 24 th 25 th -26 th 31 st	Modelling Saturday Railex Set Up RAILEX 2013 Exhibition, Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Aylesbury Test Track
June	8 th	Modelling Saturday
July	6 th -7 th	DEMU Showcase, Town Hall, Burton-upon-Trent

Test Track Nights

Here is the list of proposed test track nights. If you want to make use of the test track then you need to get it out and set it up. Don't wait for someone else to do it. We will also have the small meeting room booked to provide more space.

29th March, 26th April, 31st May

Modelling Saturdays

The following dates have been booked 09.00 to 17.00

Apr 6th, May 4th, Jun 8th

Back page: D&S 486 waits for time at Silverton.

Mick Moignard

