

Risborough and District Model
Railway Club

Jul-Sept 2017 Summer

FOOTPLATE



Who's who!

President	Tim Peacock
Chairman & Footplate Editor	Paul Wright 01844 275748 and 07484 718477 rdmrc@btinternet.com
Secretary	Richard Neil richardneil4@gmail.com
Treasurer	James Aitken jag_aitken@hotmail.co.uk
Members Reps.	Anthony Mead David Lane Mick Moignard
Membership Secretary	Vacant
Publicity and Social Manager	Anthony Mead
Railex Manager	David Lane bigcheeseplant@googlemail.com
Risex Manager	Adrian Harford adrian.harford@tiscali.co.uk
Webmaster	Anthony Mead antmead@googlemail.com

WELCOME

Our main event of the year is now over and we can relax a little. Railex was once again a great show so well done to all those involved in organising it and all those who contributed so much time over the weekend. Please pass on my thanks to non-club members who helped. The attendance was good but not at the record levels we saw last year and we did make a reasonable amount for the club. See photos page 14 onwards.

We have just had a weathering workshop run by Mick Bonwick which was attended by 11 members. Mick was demonstrating the use of weathering using an airbrush and enamel paints. The workshop was very professionally run and everyone seemed to be having fun and learning new skills. Thanks to Mick M for organising this. Further weathering courses can be booked if there is enough interest.

As I write this we are putting together all the information in support of our

charity application which will be submitted very soon.

One sad bit of news was the death of our friend Phil in May. Phil was an excellent modeller and specialised in dirty black LMS locos. After some leg pulling from me about only making black locos he did enter a red loco into Wheeltapper, however, it had so much dirt on it, it looked almost black! We had a good crowd at the funeral which I am sure showed the family how much he meant to us.

Paul

Okehampton Report

Nothing much has happened with Okehampton recently, except for a bit of research on the actual operation of the real place. The goods shed appeared on the club stand at Railex. This is a huge building, nicely built by Adrian.

Future plans include replacing the legs which got broken when we took it to Binfield, and making sure that the layout parts can be erected for the Risborough Festival weekend.

James

From the Internet

Beer deliveries by steam launch

<http://tinyurl.com/y8236n3z>

WHR Beer Festival Trains, May 2017, Featuring 'Vale of Ffestiniog'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9fLptngBYo>

Last runs of Bubble and 6 x 68s at Princes Risborough May 2017

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dy_R1319q1Y

Chinnor and Princes Risborough Event. May 2017

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kr8mfrRTVaU>

40 Jahre Eisenbahnmuseum Bochum-Dahlhausen 29.04

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unhy91Xfbwk>

Front cover: A rather grubby SBB class RE430 loco with a train of tankers passing through Geneva.

Paul

Soundtraxx's UK Econami

Soundtraxx's new UK Econami range of economy (get the name, yes?) sound decoders should go down well with many UK modellers.

This is a fully modern sound decoder. All the 16-bit sound quality of the well-known Tsunami range, some new features, and pretty much all of the niggles of the Tsunami, gone. For starters, the 1-amp Econami is a pretty similar size to the old TSU-750, has better motor control, four lighting outputs rather than two, is a full 1-amp decoder rather than 750ma, is louder, but is not much more than half the price of the old TSU750. It has a US MSRP of \$89.95, which equates to a street price of around £75 or £80 here in the UK; and for that money, is extremely good value. Econami also shares much of its hardware and software with Soundtraxx's premium Tsunami-2 range but with a cut down feature set to explain the lower price.

The 1-amp ECO-100 has plain wires for solder-in installations. It has 4 lighting outputs. There is a 2-amp version, slightly larger, with 6 light outputs, and a 21-pin NEM offering also with 6 light outputs. Apart from size, these are functionally identical. Unlike the TSU750, and the TSU1000, the UK Econami format comes in one steam version, and one diesel version. Steam has 5 different British chuff recordings and 16 whistles to choose from, and it is decently likely that you'll find a whistle to suit from those featured. The Diesel offers class 20, 37, 47, 66/67 and a class 108 DMU, with horns and other selections to match. These are among the most common UK diesels.

Installation is straightforward, same as for any other similar decoder. The 2-amp has a socket for the CurrentKeeper capacitor pack, and the smaller ones come with instructions for wiring one in; the ECO-100 also comes with a 220uf capacitor in the pack. I have tested an ECO-100 with a Soundtraxx CurrentKeeper, and it will run for upwards of 15 seconds or more with no track power. That means that the whole decoder is far less current-hungry than the Tsunami family, which is nice to see.

The UK steam version has plenty of options. For a start, it has the five different, selectable chuff sets, including a GW from a 45XX, two Standards, an LMS 8F and an A4, and even comes with a selectable 3-cylinder effect which you can turn on once you've timed the chuff at 4 per revolution. It has whistles for all of those options and many others. I've installed one in a Hornby J15, and found that the traction engine whistle choice comes pretty close to the Argo Transacord recording that I have of a J15 on the Watlington branch. All these whistle are looped on F2, which means that they play as long as you hold it down. You can have an alternate whistle - particularly useful for the GW choices on F1, with a toot on F3 each time you press it, and a toot-toot acknowledgement on F9. Plus the guards whistle is available on another function.

There's new features, too. New light functions, admittedly some are more use on the diesels than on steam. There's permanently dimmed lights, and a dim level setting for the F7 dim as well. There's three firebox flickers and an ashpan flicker, now - and no

Fireman Fred, RIP. There's no chuff-cam lead. Chuff speed is autochuff only, but it is much better than the Tsunami autochuff at keeping sync at both slow and fast speeds.

All new is the Cylinder Cocks feature, which is spot-on. It has the proper fssss - fzzzzz sound for the two ends of the cylinders, and properly only hisses between the chuffs. You can set it to work automatically, each time the loco starts, and stopping after a set amount of time, or have it work off of a function key, or both. There is a completely new function mapping setup, that enables you to assign any sound or light effect to any function key up to F28, or to have it work automatically. That has the flexibility to set it depending on whether the loco is moving - and in which direction - or stationary in either forward or reverse. Coupled with the fact that all the light outputs can also be directional or non-directional, you have immense flexibility in how you set up the decoder. Indeed it would easily be possible to have 100 of them, all sounding different!

The UK Diesel version has plenty to play with, too. The 6 prime movers I mentioned earlier, and lots of lighting options on those 6 function outputs, several horns and the horn options are similar to the steam ones for different function keys.

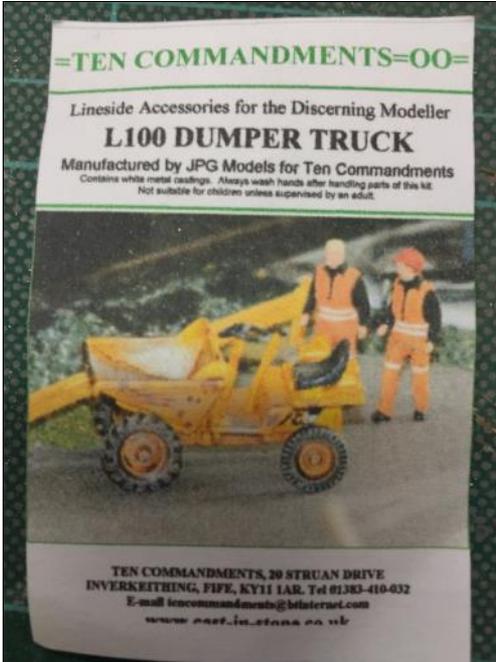
Econami also has many of the favourite Tsunami features; individual volume levels for every sound, the working brake, the Dynamic Digital Exhaust on both steam and diesel - though throttle controlled only - the equalizer, though no reverb, and does all this with 12 simultaneous voices, more than any other decoder on the market. And it's LOUD, if you want it to be. ECO-100 is way louder than the TSU750. The 2-amp and 21-pin are even louder, if loud is what you are after.

There are a few things you need to note. While Econami will work out of the package, just like a Tsunami, you will only get the best from it with some setup of the sounds. This is an area I rather enjoy. Econami needs just that extra bit of care and attention to the programming, because there is so much to select from in terms of lights and sounds. The Good News here is that it does not need any sort of program track booster. I've programmed them with a Digitrax DCS100 Chief with no problem. It can be done with NCE, and with a Sprog, all with no issues. The only snag at the moment is that there are no definitions for the UK versions in DecoderPro. Versions 4.2.1 and above have US Econami decoder settings defined, which makes setting up an Econami really quite simple and straightforward, and is to be recommended. All you need then to do is get hold of the Econami tech reference manual - and the users guide - for Steam or Diesel, and note the few CVs that work differently on the UK versions, and set those with the CV tab in DecoderPro.

UK Econamis are available from SCC, and I have demo examples of both steam and diesel versions courtesy of Soundtraxx if you'd like to hear them. I have two steam installs that can be played with on a test track night, too.

Mick Moignard

Building a Dumper Truck



I keep an eye out at shows for vehicles and lineside items that fit into my 1970s theme on Kirkmellington. Anything that could be seen in and around collieries is of interest.

In 2015, I found a white metal kit for a dumper truck on the Ten Commandments stall (Kit reference L100). This was a white metal kit and was of a suitably old type - Collieries used all sorts of vehicles so I decided this was a good option. I have subsequently obtained some of the Bachmann Scenecraft Holman compressors from Kernow Models which tie in nicely with the dumper.

The kit is formed of decent quality castings with no significant clean up required. I assembled it using 2 part epoxy adhesive. Despite dropping the exhaust pipe casting at the club one Friday (thanks for keeping hold of it Paul), I have eventually completed the dumper and treated it to some paint and a driver. The only significant change



I made was fitting the steering wheel on brass wire rather than white metal.



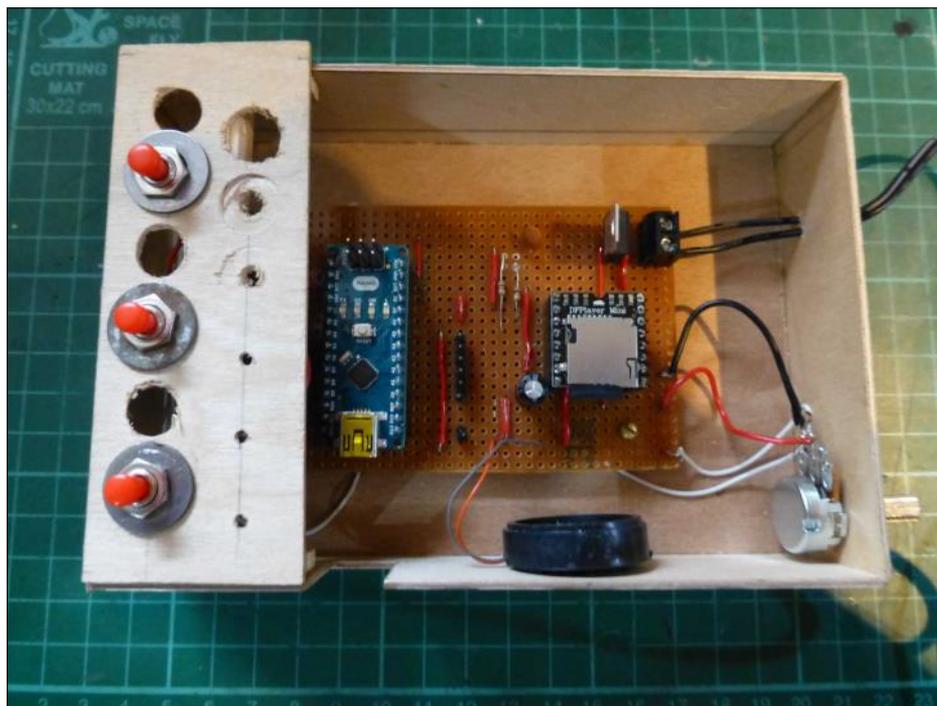


Above: the dumper in place on the layout.

Graham

Adding Sound to the Layout

A few Railex's ago, I was taken by one layout (County Gate by John de Frayssinet) where a small port scene was enhanced (for me) by the cry of seagulls – an inevitable feature of any seaside location. At the time, I was starting to think about Okehampton Goods Shed, and what sort of noises would be appropriate for that structure – cattle and sheep sounds from the loading areas, and probably an external telephone bell. An additional sound source would be that of coach doors slamming, and a guards cry and whistle on departure. Elsewhere, signals and points would clang on operation. I had the opportunity to study a short course offered by the Open University (sadly no longer available, but I may have notes). This featured the use of a piece of software called Audacity (which is free, unlike Photoshop) which allows editing and tinkering with sound files, usually in MP3 digital format. I thought this might lead me to the position where I would be able to provide these layout based sounds, and I submitted a sound file as the course exercise based in this hope. However, I was unable to progress further until I could sort out some hardware less cumbersome to play the sound extracts than the PC I had used for editing them.



I was excited when a recent MERG magazine featured a device (called the SoundPlayer) which is intended for just the sort of sound effects that I wanted to be able to play to enliven a layout, so I ordered up the parts as described and set to. The device responds to the switch of a button – up to twelve in the standard version – or an

equivalent switch on, say, a point motor unit. The initial responding device is an Arduino microprocessor (there are many variants of this and the one used in the project is the Nano). This passes a signal to a DFPlayer Mini unit which uses it to play a pre-recorded MP3 track stored on a micro SD card, through a small speaker. The sound tracks are named according to the number of the input switch activated.

So – you need first to build the unit, then download a provided Arduino Sketch from a PC to the mini USB port on the Arduino. The sound files, appropriately named to the standard form, are loaded onto a MicroSD card, and this placed into the DFPlayer Mini card slot. A volume control is also in the circuit. A 12V DC power supply is used, with stepping down to the lower voltages needed by the Nano and DFPlayer. A photo is attached.

The main problem is getting hold of sounds. There are online resources, but often there is a cost to accessing them. I managed to get hold of an English telephone ringing (plenty of American phone sounds!) and, using a digital voice recorder, I recorded a blackbird from the dawn chorus – no background noise from Aylesbury's inner ring road at 6am. Cattle 'moo'ing. I couldn't find – I think a site visit to a cattle market would be needed. Noises such as coach doors slamming, and cries from the guard are possible (but we'd need a Devonian accent for Okehampton). The BBC used to have a 'Radiophonics' workshop for producing sound effects for plays, etc. Perhaps we need one of our own.

MERG (a clumsy acronym for Model Railway Electronics Group) is a society for all things to do with the application of electronics to railway modelling (and is not exclusive to any particular product or methods). This year it celebrates 50 years, and the local area group (3 Counties) will be having an open evening on 12th July to promote the application of electronics to railway modelling. Details are on the MERG website at:

<https://www.merg.org.uk/meetings.php>

Adrian

Rubbish and Recycling

Please remember to put a black plastic bag in the dustbin before use and empty it when full. There is a wheeled metal bin at the end of the community centre; please put our bags in there when they are full. Spare bin bags are under our fridge.

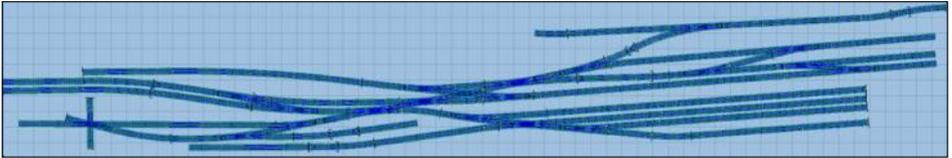
Recycling will be collected each club night, this includes card, plastic bottles and cans. Please leave it in the kitchen.

Padfracombe (!)

My own layout has been thought about for a few years, and has changed location a few times as well. Always being an ex LSWR location, I have dithered between Plymouth Friary, Lydford, Padstow and Ilfracombe. In the end, I considered what I wanted from a layout. It had to be a reasonably busy location with significant freight, as I'm primarily interested in wagons and their loads. I also make models of planes and military vehicles. I looked at various potential locations near army bases, or fighter bases, but couldn't find anywhere which had everything I wanted.

Eventually I decided that a freelance location would be the solution, so looked for existing places I could use parts of. Padstow had the dock and the 70' turntable for the Bullied Pacifics. Ilfracombe had the extensive sidings, so perhaps an invented place with elements of the two would do. It was Pete Joels who coined the name of Padfracombe!

The final layout plan is as follows:



The main elements are:

- Rear right – this is the dock line with fish shed on the right.
- Front right – 3 sidings, two having a gap big enough for a vehicle. The space on the right is enough for the station building and end loading dock.
- Middle right – a single platform with two faces, goods shed line and good shed run round.
- Rear left – headshunt for goods shed line.
- Front left – turntable represented by the vertical track segment, engine shed line and engine shed run round.
- Middle left – up and down main line with cross over.

The board area is 31 feet long and 5 feet deep, but most of the track is within the first 3 feet so can be reached. Individual boards vary in size some being just over 2m long. The space at the rear of the layout on the left will be used as an airfield on which my planes will stand, in a raised area as if they were perched on the top of a cliff. In between the dock on the right and the cliff on the left will be a beach scene, where a landing craft will be practising an amphibious assault. This gives me an excuse to display my collection of tanks and military vehicles.

So far the 7 boards on which the track will lie have been made. There are 3 to do which will be for the airfield and the beach.



The track boards are made of 9mm ply tops with 9mm thick fronts and rears. The ends of each board which contain the captive nuts and bolt holes are made from 15mm ply which gives the boards a lot more rigidity. Cross braces are added at about 300mm centres, but carefully positioned not to coincide with any point motors. You'll notice that the layout is supported on I beams also made from 9mm ply, and brackets on the walls of the shed. There are only 4 legs. Track is progressing with a number of elements made already.

Left: This shows one of 4 double slips on the layout with all parts made using Exactoscale components.



Next steps are to complete a few more track elements so that the first part of the track can be painted, and laid on the boards. My plan is to concentrate on the incoming double track main line right through to the platform, and then expand outwards completing all the track eventually. The reason for this is that, with some wiring done, trains can be run more quickly.

I'd like to thank various club members who have helped me both in the shed and at the club for getting me this far. I could not have done it so quickly without you.

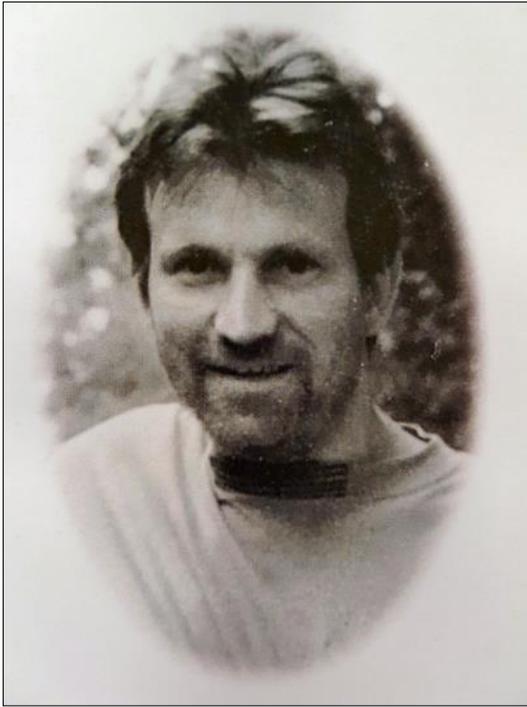
James

Obituary: Phil Baxendale

25 12 1949 – 16 5 2017

Phil was born in Birmingham in a creative family. His father was a silversmith and his mother an illustrator of children's books. Phil's working life centred around creative projects having done a degree in industrial design. He worked variously for Lesney, Raleigh and Plessey producing designs for Matchbox cars, bicycles and phones. His last job was for Orange where his creative talents were applied to solving phone network problems – in particular making sure foreign calls were routed through the Orange network rather than that of a competitor.

Phil's interests outside of work were no less creative. Cars, railways and warships all featured heavily. He co-owned a lovely Triumph Gloria and his other pride and joy was a Willys Jeep – authentically kitted out plus trailer. He loved sharing his cars and would readily invite friends to have



a drive – the jeep being particularly interesting. He of course had the full uniform of a captain in ‘The Screaming Eagles’ to complete the picture.

Modelling started at an early age and he was a convert to P4 very early on. He started out with the North London Group but working abroad precluded significant involvement. He joined the Risborough club in the autumn of 2011 and quickly established himself as an enthusiastic and committed member of the club. He scooped the Wheeltapper trophy in the spring of 2012 and every year entered one or

more of his large collection of engines. He didn’t always win but was humble in defeat and gracious in victory. In 2015, he was awarded member of the year for gripping the Aylesbury P4 layout and establishing himself as project manager – something he was actively continuing up to 36 hrs before his death.

Phil was generous in sharing his skills and knowledge and would readily come up with innovative solutions to knotty modelling problems – nearly always elegant and simple. Humour was a large part of Phil’s character and his ready smile and daft and devilish sense of humour will be much missed.

Phil fought bravely against the bowel cancer that eventually beat him. He soldiered on despite feeling pretty rough on alternative weeks and was keenly pursuing his aim with the help of his friends to make a layout of Camden Shed to display his large collection of locos. Sadly, he ran out of time and this goal was never realised. Phil leaves his wife Judith, and three grown up children – Hanna, Ollie and Jenna and our condolences and sympathy go to them and their families.

Tim

Railex 2017



Devil's Bridge above and Westcliff below. All photos by Ant.





Iain Rice presents the plaque for best model on a layout to Bob Jones for the viaduct on Fence Houses.





Heybridge Wharf above and William Smith's Wharf below.



Washes and Masks

The range of washes (called shades) by Games Workshop has now been repackaged into larger pots. These are now twice the size but the price has not doubled so they are better value for money now at £4.55, while the standard size pots are £2.55.



I needed to buy some Humbrol Maskol recently so went to Hobbycraft in Aylesbury. They had Maskol for £4 for a 28ml bottle but they also had Artists Blue Mask at £2 for 60ml. Apart from the colour, it appears very similar to Maskol but is aimed at artists. I have tested it on some vehicle headlights and can confirm it works well. So at a quarter of the price of Maskol it is a very good deal.

Paul

End of an Era

The class 121 DMU is now approaching the end of its service life in passenger use on mainline British Railways. Chiltern Railways will withdraw the last 2 remaining in daily service on 19th May 2017. The class was built by Pressed Steel in Linwood (Scotland) and introduced to service from 1960 across the Western Region. A total of 16 class 121 'Bubble Cars' were built along with 10 trailer cars.



Chiltern Railways brought its first class 121, 55020, into service in 2003 to work the peak hours Princes Risborough to Aylesbury shuttle, releasing a more useful Turbo for longer distance workings. The unit had been fully refurbished after its previous departmental use and fitted with central door locking and was painted in all over Chiltern Blue. In 2011, a second class 121, 55034 was bought from preservation and refurbished to provide cover. Painted in BR green, the unit has continued to share duties with 55020 on the Branch. The units have occasionally been freed from their captive branch line work to operate Raitours and 'Specials' over the wider Chiltern mainline network and have regularly worked the vintage shuttle in connection with events at Quainton Road and Chinnor.

9 of the class 121 DMUs have been preserved with two examples, 55023 and 55024, already at the Chinnor and Princes Risborough railway.

Sources:

<http://www.railcar.co.uk>



<http://www.chinnorrailway.co.uk/>
Wikipedia

Graham

'WEATHERING HEIGHTS' WORKSHOP - 17th June

The day dawned well (i.e. I got up in good time) with an early passing thought it'd be far too sunny a day to be cooped up indoors; and yet; even before the workshop kicked off at 10, it had become far too hot to spend any amount of time outside. So, with all doors and windows open, even without much air passing through, it was probably one of the best places to be that day that didn't involve a swimming pool.



Having done loads of workshops of one sort or another over the years ranging from good to bad through indifferent, my first impressions of this one as I walked into the room was how well planned the entire set-up looked. It was

well kitted out for twelve participants to 'do' various mucky stuff – Thus, just right for the 'dirty dozen' of us in attendance anticipating loads of 'hands-on' that all good workshops should offer.

The intro' element ran on beyond the mid-morning fag break. This was just as well since it appeared a few of us needed that time to gain confidence and learn some basic stuff about the properties of different paint types used in conjunction with weathering techniques; on top of familiarization with the airbrushes provided for us – all very nice Iwata stuff.



Above: weathered and clean tank wagons by James (I like clean stock) Aitken. It does make a difference. Photos by Paul.

Initially, I wondered if I'd bitten off too big a subject item for this workshop as most of the 'dirty dozen' were working on smaller items of rolling stock, mainly in 2 & 4mm scale, rather than the (comparatively) whopping great 7mm lump of an 'N' tender loco I'd brought along to get down 'n dirty with. As it turned out, 'size' didn't seem to matter at all as, by the end of the day, I'd managed to transform that ex-works pristine-looking loco into something approaching the tatty looking state of the prototype (31856) I'd cabbied at Bude station in '62 prior to our 'Atlantic Coast Express' journey home from a family holiday.

After just one day, the 'N' is not yet finished of course, needing some further, more detailed, mucking-up to complete the job. However, the layer(s) of grime applied during the workshop day look to be a good 'foundation' that I'm perfectly happy with the prospect of building upon in future.

With hindsight, I'd say this was one of the best 'hands-on' railway modelling type of workshops I've ever been on; and thanks for that must go to the confidence-inspiring guidance we had from Mick Bonwick who led the workshop throughout the day; and not forgetting our Mick M. (who sourced Mick B.) and enabled it all to be so well fixed up for us all.

All-in-all, a brilliant way to spend a day!

Pete J

Modelling Saturdays

The following dates have been booked 09.00 to 17.00

July 15, Aug 12, Sept 9, Oct 7 (Openday), Nov 4, Dec 9.

I try to arrange modelling Saturdays not to clash with other events but this is not always possible. If you are involved in or know of events that are likely to be of interest to our members then let me or Ant know so we can put them in the diary.

Paul

Test Track Nights

July 21, Aug 18, Sept 15, Oct 13, Nov 17, Dec 15

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 in the Cherry Baker room. Don't wait for someone else to do it.

Articles for Publication in Footplate

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

Laser Cutting Materials

In stock we have:

0.5, 0.75, 1, 1.5 & 3.2mm white plastic (Rowmark) with some 1.5 & 3.2mm in black. Sheets are 1220 by 610mm.

Clear acrylic in 0.5 & 1mm. Sheet sizes vary but some are 1000 by 1000mm.

MDF in: 1.5, 2, 3.2, 4 & 6mm, sheet sizes are 1220 by 600mm

The max size the cutter takes is about 350 by 450mm. The larger sheets will be cut down to approx. A3 or A4 and we will calculate the prices.

Club Diary

July	1	Beaconsfield MRC Exhibition, The Beaconsfield School, Beaconsfield
	8	Risborough Festival club display, with Aylesbury Town, Okehampton and the test track.
	15	CMRA Modellers' Day, Parmiters School, Watford
	15	Modelling day
	21	Test Track
	22	3D CAD workshop by David Lane using Fusion 360.
August	12	Modelling day
	18	Test Track
September	1	Start of R&DMRC Financial Year, Subscriptions Due
	1	Railway Talk by David Powell , "Col Stephens, the Man and his Railways"
	9	Modelling day
	15	Test Track
	23	All Things Miniature at Haddenham
	23-24	Scaleforum 2017, Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Aylesbury
	30	Workshop —Introduction to weathering by Mick Bonwick.
October	7	Club Openday
	13	Test Track
	14	TAD-Rail 2017, Cottesloe School, Wing.
	20	Railway Talk by Geoff Plumb , "That was the Year that was - 1967"
November	4	Modelling Saturday
	4	Wycrail, Cressex Community School, High Wycombe
	10	AGM (Annual General Meeting)
	17	Test Track
	25-26	Warley National Model Railway Exhibition, NEC, Birmingham

Back page: Iain Rice presents the plaque for best layout to Gordon and Maggie Gravatt for Pempoul which has now been retired from the exhibition circuit. Photos by Ant.

