



The MKMRS Quarterly Newsletter will only survive with your help, we need you to provide articles -

- ❖ These can be write-ups on exhibitions you have attended, modeling titbits, or anything that you think other members would find interesting.
- ❖ If you would like to be included in our "Meet the Members" articles in a future Newsletter, please send in your notes for inclusion.
- ❖ The articles need to be sent in by email to Newsletter@MKMRS.org.uk they need to be the words that you want to appear, include any pictures that you want in the article. All can be sent to the above email address for inclusion.
- ❖ Hoping for lots of copy for the newsletter.

Deadline for articles for the Summer Edition is the 25th May 2018 with the Newsletter being published by the 1st June 2018.



Issue 194

Spring 2018

CHAIRMAN'S NEWS

It hardly seems any time at all since I was writing notes for the last Newsletter, but a lot has happened since last November - I have become a Grandparent for the first time, the Christmas tea collection resulted in a handsome donation to Willen Hospice and just recently we held another very successful exhibition.

Once the dust has settled on that event and the Committee has had time to digest the good and bad aspects of the exhibition we shall begin planning in earnest for the next one. As 2019 will mark the club's fiftieth anniversary we want to do something special and we intend to set up a dedicated exhibition sub-committee from within the membership to assist because it has become just too much for one person to do alone.

I would like to welcome two new members this quarter, Mick Gowing and Ashley Goodall. Mick joins us from Men in Sheds and Ashley decided to come along after attending the exhibition. Their photos appear elsewhere in this edition of the Newsletter so you can recognise them in the clubroom.

As we start another new modelling year we are learning what the various manufacturers have in store. I think we have all now seen what both Bachmann and Hornby have up their sleeves and the recent Nürnberg Toy Fair has highlighted what the European companies intend to introduce. I note there is yet another new name about to appear on the British scene, Accurascale, from Ireland. Their first product is to be a BR built 24½ ton hopper wagon, to be sold in four packs of three, at rrp £59.95 each so that a 12 wagon train can be made up with all different running numbers. With the large number of models now being offered or in the pipeline I do wonder if it is all sustainable or whether there is about to be an almighty crash? Following difficulties, I had in obtaining a particular Trix locomotive in December it became apparent that the European manufacturers seem to be producing only sufficient quantities to fulfil pre-orders. So far I do not think British manufacturers are doing this but it may be wise to pre-order from your chosen dealer for newly announced items to avoid disappointment.

No photo this time but I hope to have some German steam pictures in time for the next edition from the forthcoming Plandampf in Trier, where for a weekend in April many of the local trains will be steam hauled.

Chris Hughes
Chairman



Ceynix - Scale Model Railway Trees

30% discount on all trees for MKMRS members, email or at shows just produce your membership card when you see me at an exhibition.

Contact Details
020 8864 6596
jacqui@railwaytrees.co.uk
www.railwaytrees.co.uk

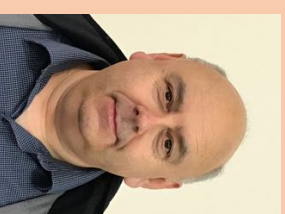
Phone Number
Email
Website

Member Updates

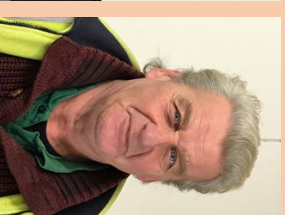
Please join us in welcoming the following new members to the club. If you see them in the clubroom please introduce yourself.



Mick Gowling



Ashley Goodall



Keith Oldfield

Forthcoming Events

Date	Event
04 March 2018	Chesham Model Railway Club Annual Exhibition 10am to 4pm at the White Hill Centre, White Hill, Chesham, Buckinghamshire.
20 March 2018	Committee Meeting
24 March 2018	Thetford & District Model Railway Society Open Day. 10am to 4pm at the Charles Burrell Centre, Staniforth Road, Thetford, IP24 3LH
24 March 2018	London Festival of Railway Modelling. Alexandra Palace, Alexandra, Palace Way, London
07 April 2018	The Association of 16mm Narrow Gauge Modeller - National Garden Railway Show. 10am to 5pm at the Peterborough Arena, East of England Show Ground, Peterborough
07 April 2018	Tring and District MRC- Beacon Rail. 10:30am to 4:30pm at the Pistone Memorial Hall, Vicarage Road, Pistone.
14 April 2018	Luton Model Railway Club Exhibition. 10:30am to 5pm at Stopsley High School, St Thomas Road, Luton
17 April 2018	Committee Meeting
29 April 2018	German Railway Society - Globalrail 2018. 10:30am to 4:30pm at the Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire OX11 7JN
13 May 2018	Beds & Bucks Narrow Gauge Modellers - Model Railway Exhibition. 10am to 4:30pm at Barton Village Hall, Hexton Road, Barton Le Clay, Bedfordshire MK45 4JY
15 May 2018	Committee Meeting



I am sure that many of you already know that Antony at AGR Model Railway Store gives discounts to model railway club members across the three counties.

This discount is 5% up to £50 and 10% over this amount. Please note however, that these discounts do **NOT** apply to items purchased via his website. That applies even if you purchase on the web and collect from the store. The reason for this is that the web price is already discounted and as you pay when you order it is not possible to retrospectively apply the discount.

These discounts will **ONLY** be given, if you produce your MKMRS membership card. Anthony has informed me that he will strictly enforce this rule from now on.

This follows a recent incident when a customer demanded the discount but did not have his membership card. The incident then turned ugly with a member of staff being verbally abused and the customer was asked to leave the store and take his business elsewhere.

Anthony did not have any idea which club this person belonged to, but, the committee hopes that it was not a member of our club.

So, the moto of this story is always carry your membership card.

Exhibition 2018

By Ian Bartlett

What a show! 43 layouts, 30 traders and a final total of **2,750 visitors** attending, an increase of 500 on the previous year – that's over 20%. Also, and perhaps most importantly, a considerable boost to club funds as well as the reputation of MKMRS and knowledge of our existence within Milton Keynes.



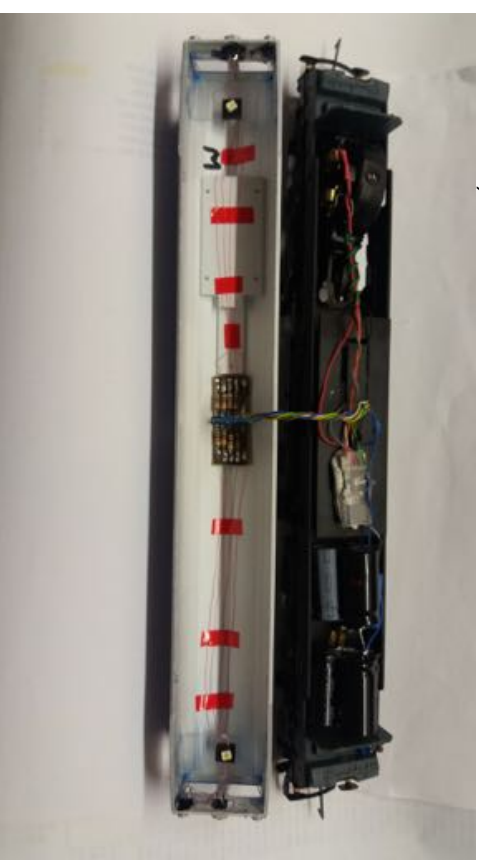
Thanks to those who made it happen

Huge congratulations and thanks must go to Terry Silver for, yet again, pulling together such a successful show, with so many excellent layouts. The amount of work involved in organising the show over twelve months and in the run up to the show each year cannot be over stated and, given the positive impact the show has on the Club's finances, he deserves a big round of applause.

An honourable mention should also be made of Russell Horne for leading the car park team. This is always a difficult task, but is even more complex when the number of visitors is so great and the

4

See here the loco body already connected and ready to be closed. Note that there are also to cab lights (yellow squares – SMD LEDs) added.



Here you see the engine ready with its headlights on.



So – when are you going to join the DCC community?

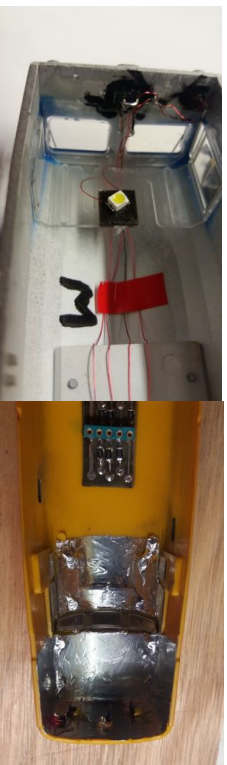
On the board I can also add the necessary resistors for the LEDs. See here the board and the connector.



The connector – both male and female part – are made from sockets for integrated circuit components. They cost nearly nothing and work quite well.

The area around the lights has to be blackened as the light may shine through the plastic of the body shell. This can be done with black marker pen or with self-adhesive aluminium tape. This is the tape used to glue insulation boards together. It is very thin, very elastic and follows also complex shapes.

Have here an example for the marker pen (class 59) and the aluminium foil (class 37)



For the wiring I use enamelled wire. It is available in all sizes, it can be very thin as we will not have more than a few mA flowing over it and as it is a single wire it will stay where you put it. The enamel coating will burn away when you contact the wire with a soldering iron, so also the removal of the insulation is not an issue.

weather not especially pleasant. Several of us did a stint in the car park and, under Russell's direction, major traffic queues were avoided, although it did get a bit tight from time to time!

The ticket selling teams, led by Dave Court, also deserve our thanks; without them there would be no ticket income! With the show being so busy, the ticket teams were kept on their toes all day, and constant battles to make sure there was enough change and to process the queues as quickly as possible were handled with aplomb. All involved in this deserve recognition for their efforts.

Catering, more about which later, was an 'interesting' experience for some of us who helped out with making the lunches for visiting layout owners. It was great to see an 'all hands on deck' approach to this with many club members rallying to the cause without even a hint of complaint when they were needed. Never has so much pulled pork been delivered by so few...



Our own Chairman, Chris Hughes, spent a couple of hours with the Mayor, showing him around the exhibition, taking some pictures and directing him towards one of our best photo opportunities when he travelled on the MKMIES miniature railway (see picture above)! Thanks to Chris for taking the time to do this and hopefully winning us another friend within the Milton Keynes political arena!

The bus operating team, who spent most of the day outdoors, are also to be thanked for their efforts. The bus was especially popular this year, with one or two runs being close to full up. Given that the weather is often both cold and wet in February, and certainly was for the show, this is often a quite unpleasant task!

A big thank you must be given to Dennis Lovett who managed to get our exhibition leaflet into the Bachmann Club magazine mailing and also provided a link to our website from the home page of the Bachmann website. This sort of visibility is extremely helpful to us and we are very grateful to Dennis for his support.

Finally, thanks are due to all members who helped set up the show on Friday, undertake various tasks as required during the day, operated layouts and then stayed behind to help put the show to bed on Saturday night. None of this can be done without individuals' contributions and those contributions are greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Great feedback

Never mind how much advertising and publicity we do, the key to a successful show is the quality of the layouts on display; this year, there has been considerable positive feedback about the layouts which were clearly considered to be well worth seeing. One comment received from a member of the public on Twitter was especially pleasing and said:

'Milton Keynes should be proud of having this show'

It was also great to see so many families and children attend the show. This was very noticeable this year and bodes well for future shows as we need to encourage younger interest in the hobby as well as adults who may not ordinarily attend a model railway exhibition. Our show proves that if you put on a good event and tell enough people about it, then they will come. Again, the feedback from these visitors has been excellent – our show was a new experience for many of them and they seem to have gone away impressed by our show and railway modelling in general.

We have heard that attendances were also up at other shows which took place recently, so maybe interest in railway modelling is

And now the capacitor battery. There are 6 x 3300 μ F in parallel giving a total capacity of 19800 μ F. This is not necessary; it works well also with one or two capacitors of this size but as there was space I went for more. Behind the blue shrink tube a charging resistor and a diode are hidden. The resistor is necessary as otherwise the DCC controller would see a short circuit when the locomotive goes on the track as the huge capacitors will draw a lot of current out of the system to be charged.



As I said before – when the loco is already open we should add also lights:

I will add headlights, red lights and cab lights. To have neat wiring it is advisable to use a connector between the decoder cables and the loco body. To do so I made myself a small PCB. It would work also without, but the board makes things easier.

But one after the other. This is the victim, a Lima class 59. Bought second hand at a show for little money.



There is a lot of space in this model, every size of decoder could be used. I use a Zimo MX600 as

- a) I have one spare and
- b) It is cheap for a Zimo (20€).



This decoder needs a ground connector for the stay alive. The position to solder this lead in (on the picture it is the grey wire) is very well described in the decoder instructions “Zimo small decoders” which you can download from the web.

experiencing a surge at the moment. Whatever the reason, it was great to see so many attendees.

Once again, we received many positive comments from layout owners and traders about the show, how friendly everybody was towards them and how nice it was to see lots of families with children. Many of the traders reported excellent takings and this is good to know as it encourages repeat bookings for future years. Andy Dayton, the Wrenn Specialist, told me he had experienced a good show over the previous weekend at the two-day Stafford show, but had taken even more at our show in a single day!

Layouts

The Best in Show awards this year were won by Brinklow (Best Club Layout – see *picture right*) and Arigna Town (Best Visiting Layout – see *picture below*). Both layouts epitomise the quality of modelling we all enjoy and were well deserving of their awards.

However, it was a tough



decision as so many great layouts were on show.

Others which stood out for me were Leicester (Belgrave Road), Kingsfield and Hampton End, but others will surely have their own preferences. I'd also like to mention Martin Shenton's ever popular Lego layout,

Brickville Town Harbour. I observed this for a few minutes and was impressed by how popular it is with our younger visitors – this is

backed up by the fact that I am often asked about it specifically by parents who are considering attending the show.

Overall, we had an excellent range of layouts, scales, eras and operating systems on display. This has been commented on in much of the feedback we have received and has also had the knock-on effect of helping us to source layouts for next year's show.

What didn't quite go to plan

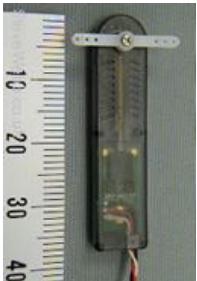
For the most part, the exhibition ran very smoothly. Setup on the Friday night was pretty straightforward (once the floor in hall 2 had been sorted!), the show itself ran smoothly and the break down on Saturday evening was swift. This was fortunate as Terry was suffering from a nasty chest infection throughout and any major upsets might have knocked him flat.

However, we know some things didn't go so well. Without dwelling for too long on the negatives, we should acknowledge that the crowds were uncomfortably busy at times, the catering was quite badly understaffed (hence the need for members to help make visiting layout lunches) and Stantonbury Leisure Centre itself seems to be in need of a little care and attention. The building only being opened up at 7.45 on Saturday morning was most inconvenient and really gave the impression that nobody senior was in charge of the staff. We were lucky that all our layouts and traders were sympathetic and simply got on with setting up in rapid time but opening late is unacceptable and we had hired the hall from 7.00am.

We will be looking at these issues and reviewing what can be done about them. John, the catering manager, spoke to Terry and I after the show and apologised for not having enough staff and said this would be remedied next year; there might also be scope for having a tea/coffee/snack van outside to help manage the queue inside the café.

Diesel from stuttering around at high speed into a smooth-running locomotive.

And of course – once you opened the model you want also to add some headlights...



I used this technology on a Jägerndorfer ÖBB 1163 shunter. As it is a shunter I also added automatic couplings on both ends. Unfortunately, these are working only with the standard continental coupling systems. These couplings allow me to uncouple a train from the loco wherever I like to. There is a miniature magnetic coil in this coupling which opens the coupling when energised. The uncoupling is of course controlled by DCC.



Also, here a video is available on Flickr showing the pantograph movement and the uncoupling.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/137050108@N03/38414315196/in/dateposted-public/>

A word about stay alive: This is probably one of the biggest advantages of DCC. With that you can convert an old Lima

He also agreed not to charge us for the visiting layouts' lunches, so that was decent of him.

The hall and associated crowding is a more difficult issue.

Stantonbury is a large space and we haven't yet seen anything else big enough. We are open to alternatives, but if we do try to move, we will need to find somewhere quickly in order to book exhibits for next year.

On a more positive note...

Back in December, Terry and I were both quite worried about how preparations for the show were going and that publicity was not as extensive as previous years. We were concerned that we didn't have enough layouts booked and that, with the franchise change on London Midland, we were not going to be given the free advertising on stations from Watford up to Rugby that we had benefited from in previous years. We didn't think the show would lose money, but we did want the show to do more than simply break even.

We had a push on layout invites and quickly got those up to over 40 and made sure all our booked traders were confirmed. I developed some basic posters and, once these were printed, members (most notably Paul Wakley) distributed them around shops and public spaces in Milton Keynes.

I organised our annual pre-exhibition press conference for the end of January. On the day, I was a little disappointed by the turn-out, but the Mayor did come along as did a photographer from the *Milton Keynes Citizen*. Both seemed interested and some good pictures were taken.

We were all a little disappointed when, in the following week's MK Citizen, there was only a tiny mention of the event.

However, we shouldn't have worried; in the following week's paper, published in the week of the exhibition, we had front page coverage and several pages inside. This was a massive help in publicising the show and was a useful reminder of just how important it is to hold the press day.

Another success this year in terms of promotional activity was Facebook. For the first time, the Committee authorised a modest spend on a Facebook advertising campaign; this was set to run for the two weeks leading up to the exhibition. I created a short (30 second) video giving key details about the show – date, time, location, admission cost etc. – and published this in a post on Facebook. The advertising budget was then used to target it at Facebook users in Milton Keynes and surrounding areas where we know visitors to our show have come from before, e.g. Leighton Buzzard, Bedford, St Neots, Hemel Hempstead etc.

The campaign was hugely successful; the advert was shown to over 55,000 people and actually viewed by more than 38,500. I supplemented this with daily posts on a wide range of Facebook groups and considerable discussion and sharing took place, helping to spread the word about the show. Website traffic increased by around 50% compared to last year and advance ticket sales increased from 500, to around 850.

The lesson learned from this is that time and money spent on targeted promotional activity is very effective and that social media is now a

See here an application on a Swiss multisystem locomotive
Bombardier RE 474

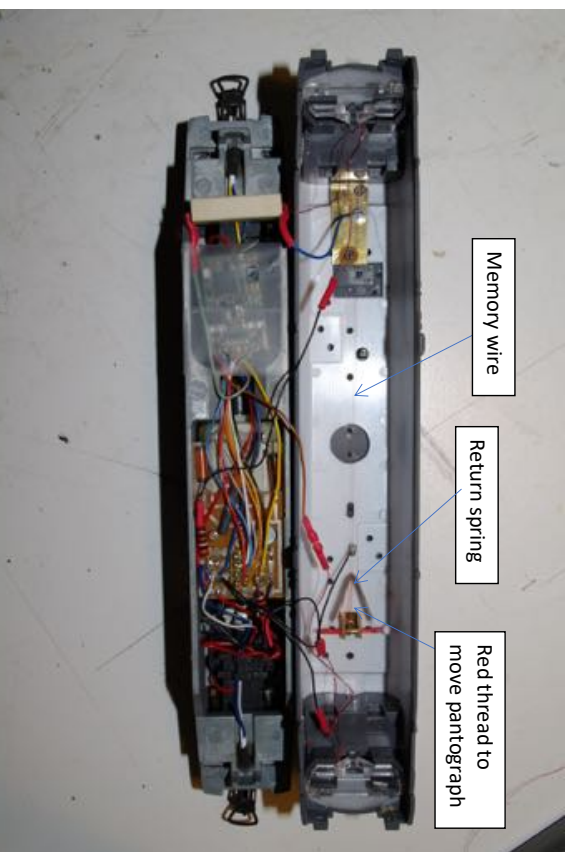


There is a video available on Flickr where you can see the pantographs moving. Open the link and when you see the picture press the “run” triangle in the middle.

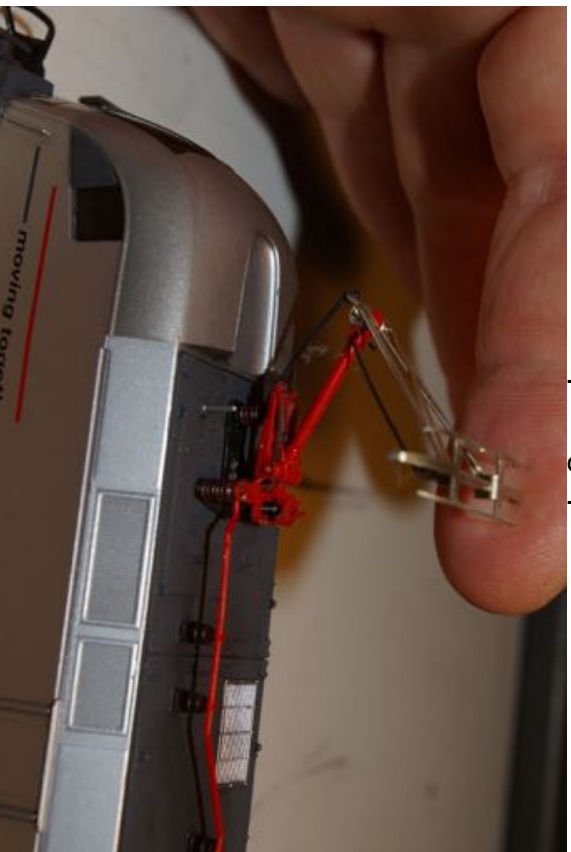
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/137050108@N03/38414315196/in/dateposted-public/>

Memory wire needs a minimum working length of approximately 10 to 12 cm. In case of a locomotive with a central cab you have to go for another option. I used a miniature servo from the Japanese company Toki. You can see here the servo which is only 37 x 8 x 4mm, so it opens new possibilities.

See here a memory wire application for the pantograph movement built into a Piko ES 64U



It is practical impossible to see from the outside that there is a mechanism built into the pantograph.



very important tool for letting people know about our exhibition. It seems that if they know, then they come along!

Here we go again...

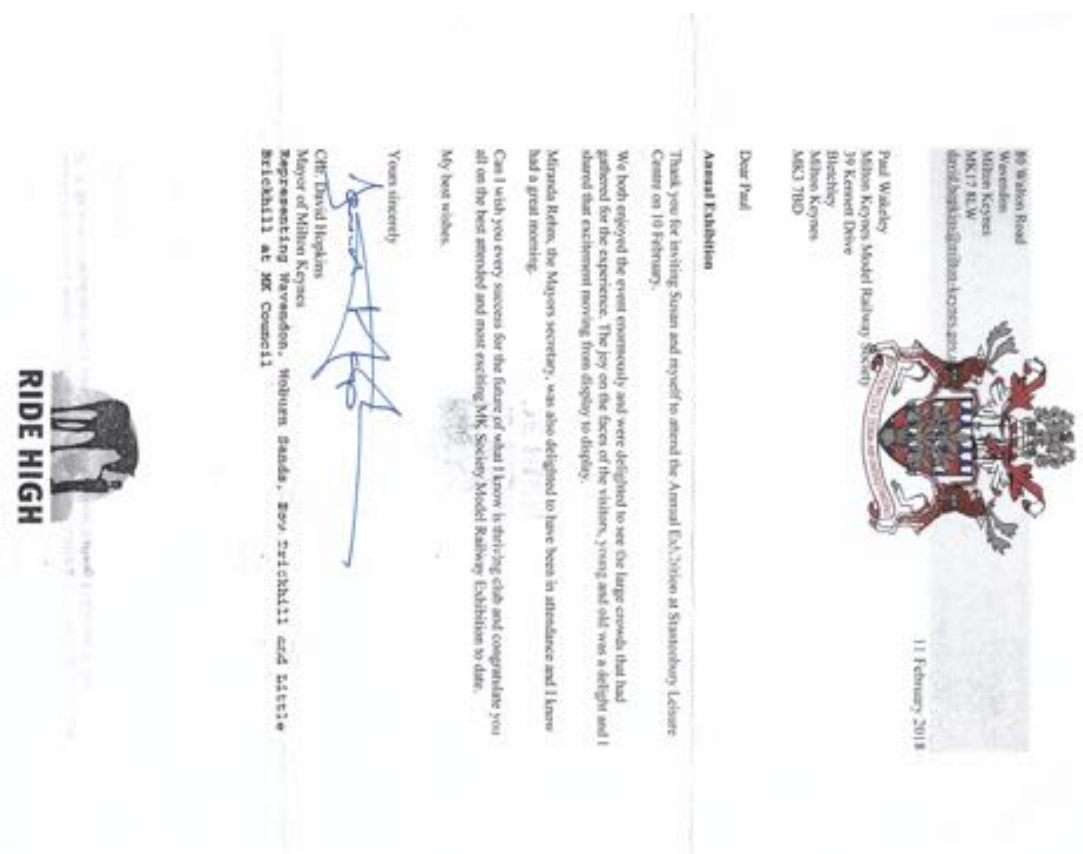
So, at the time of writing (two weeks after the 2018 show), we are already making plans for the 2019 exhibition. This will be the Club's 50th anniversary year show, so we would like to do something special; we've had some thoughts on that but can't reveal anything further at the moment.

However, I would like to make a plea for your support and assistance over the year ahead. The show has grown over the years to become a well known event in Milton Keynes and takes many hours of work to organise. To be honest, this year our resources were spread much too thinly and in order for our annual show to continue being a success, it will need more hands on deck.

We are looking to set up an Exhibition Planning Committee. More about this in future but if you are able to do so, we really appreciate your help over the next year as we plan for an even bigger and better show in 2019.



A very nice letter from the Mayor of Milton Keynes about our exhibition.



switching between dimmed and full headlights. When we have enough channels, we can simulate light locomotives or suppress the rear light in case we are pulling a train with it. Only your fantasy is the limit...

Newer generations of decoders give you also the possibility to use small RC servos in your locomotive or in your coaches; this opens even more possibilities like moving pantographs or opening doors.

Before servo control came on the market, some 15 years ago, I started experimenting with shape memory wires. Shape memory wires are made from an alloy of nickel and titanium, this material has a very low transition temperature between martensitic and austenite crystalline structure. When heated above its transition temperature the material remembers the shape it had during annealing. You can stretch the alloy when it is cold and when you warm it will shorten again to its original shape with great force. This can be used for simple movements as for instance raising a pantograph. The wire is stretched by a steel spring, when heated up it contracts. The movement you get on 100mm length is approximately 3mm.

I heat the wire by sending a current through, using a function channel of the decoder. The current is low enough not to damage the decoder. And of course, there is a current limiting shunt in the circuit, which is dimensioned in a way the decoder doesn't dye even in case of a short circuit.

The power of DCC

By Gerhard Novak

You will have seen a lot of articles pro- and against DCC, starting from the completely wrong idea that with a change to DCC everything has to be re-wired. I can assure you a switch to DCC doesn't need any re-wiring and also no additional drop wires or bus-bars. Why should an engine which was happily running under DC now need more power or more wiring? The current drawn by the locomotive and dependent on that the voltage drop – will be exactly the same as it was before.

Where do I see the power of DCC – it is happening on a different field. First of all DCC increases the performance as the track always is under full voltage – it is the decoder who regulates the power to the motor, therefore you will face less contact problems.

DCC gives us also the possibilities to program the characteristics of a certain locomotive. We can set a realistic maximum speed and also acceleration and brake curves which are realistic. I hate it when locomotives accelerate like a Red Bull F1 car. Even a light engine will have a certain mass, and here we speak about more than a hundred tons. So please DCC users take the time to set a few parameters on your decoder for more realistic movements!

And when you say that shunting is impossible doing it this way – every better decoder allows programming a shunting mode, where all momentum is suppressed with a single button.

DCC gives us the possibility to use headlights also if the train is not in motion – we can add cab lights and DCC also allows

Brinklow is Officially Open

By Wayne Webb

Back in May 2015 new base boards appeared in the club for a new N gauge layout.

The plan was for a show layout, but it also had work for DC and DCC operation. In addition, it had to be suitable to run American and continental stock.

Over the next two years many members would have seen the layout change from bare base boards into a model railway.

In November 2017 the layout was photographed by Andy York for the February 2018 edition of British Railway Modelling.

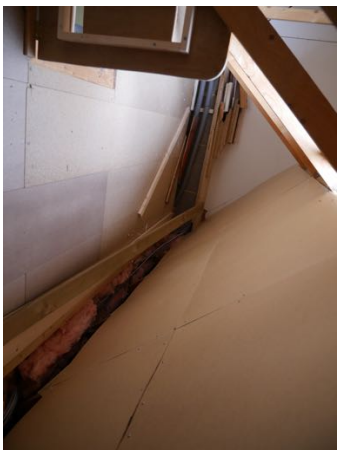


Its first main show will be our club show and hopefully many more to follow.

On the 30th January 2018 the Mayor of Milton Keynes, Cllr David Hopkins cut the ribbon on our new N gauge layout at our press day launch.



Brinklow is now officially up and running!



Picture 15 Hardboard covering battens right down to within 1 foot of eaves, leaving access to a cable run along the front.



Picture 16 Under the front eaves, showing the loft safety hinged floor piece.

MAKING ROOM FOR A RAILWAY

by Phil Ramsden.

Phase 2: Construction details.

The floor was the first priority after the pipes had been moved. I used Wickes 4x2 floorboard panels placed onto the existing joists, but with added 2x1 sawn timber along the joists first, so that I could leave the occasional 0.5 inch gap to enable cross-joint electrical wires to pass through. On the R/H side (looking towards the front of the building) there were multiple 22 mm pipes passing from the boiler to the cylinder in the cloakroom, so this area had to have a slightly raised floor, but as it was where track boards were due to be laid, there was no problem. The L/H side, however, had an area of about 14 inches width where the floor had to go up about a foot because of the raised ceiling heights in the back passageway and the study bedroom. This too was going to be where track boards would be positioned, so was not critical.

One of my first priorities was to get a decent amount of light up there to work with in the winter months, so I called in Ramsden Rewires, who installed a row of 8 battenholders linked together with 2 switches (for L/H and R/H loft sides) fitted with 40W Halogen bulbs. Now that LED bulbs have come down in price, they have replaced the 8 halogens, meaning a total consumption equivalent to a 25 Watt bulb for the 8 lights! This excellent firm also put in a similar series of lights in the L/H and R/H loft areas beyond where I was building and a double fluorescent fitting in the third loft area over the kitchen. Let there be light, as they say!

The next jobs to hand were boarding off the 3 loft areas to create an insulated room. Using some of the existing 1.5" deep joists at either end, ordinary hardboard was nailed to the loft



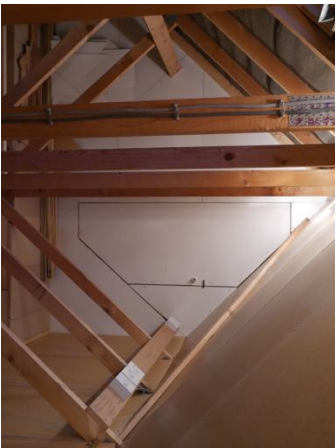
Picture 9 Same area, Different angle with insulation and hardboard going in.



Picture 10 Pipes being covered with insulation and slightly higher floor going in.



Picture 11 One end sandwich wall with door thro' to ordinary loft area.



Picture 12 Sandwich wall and further loft access at the other end.



Picture 13 Rockwall and battens on front lower wall



Picture 14 The partly finished front wall showing construction details

side of the joists, (it was necessary to add a few more joist pieces for extra strength in places), then fibreglass was put into the cavities while white-faced hardboard was nailed to the room side (this done to reflect more natural light), thus giving an insulated “sandwich” wall. A door was constructed for each end to access the loft areas to fit the profile of the joists at each end, which was a bit tricky. All of this can be seen in the accompanying pictures. It would have been nice to have been able to cut out the trusses which are in the way, but unfortunately, if I did this then the roof would have fallen in!!

The back wall (13.5 feet long) had to consist of a vertical area of about 3 feet high, with the rest following the slope of the roof. Vertical joists were added at intervals of about 22 inches (the width between the joists) between the floor and the slope of the existing joists. The vertical section was made in a similar “sandwich” method to the end walls, but using foil-backed modern 1 inch insulation (I understand since that this type has been implicated in the Grenfell fire tragedy, so I've replaced most of it with old pieces of 2 inch polystyrene that I had to hand). The sloping portion was carried out the same way as the top front area by polystyrene sheets between the joists as described below. Hardboard was then added to cover and neaten everything off (see pics).

The Front (eaves) side, I decided to face with hardboard all the way down to within 1 foot of the bottom as this would give me more width (as long as the railway boards were low down) to construct the storage sidings. This area was adjacent to the roof slope, so I purchased some (expensive) Rock-wool insulation (which also cuts down sound as well as being insulation), and put it between the roof joists, holding it in place with diagonal pieces of 4x1 sawn boards (see photos). This was then covered with the obligatory sheets of plain

hardboard. This was carried out to the area below the window. However, above this, I fitted pieces of 2 inch thick polystyrene sheet cut to size, again covered with hardboard. A diagonal strut of 4x1 PAR timber had to be kept at this level either side of the window for semi-structural purposes.

Finally, the 1-foot gap at the bottom of the eaves had to be filled with a framework, insulated and covered with hardboard. Inside here are a lot of wire cables, and I needed access to these in case I ever wanted to modify the wiring for the outside lights. A double-pole switch has been added down here (noticeable in the picture) to isolate the outside supply so that it can be modified without having to switch the mains off. For this I am also grateful to my friends at Ramsden Rewires!



Picture 7 Main floor laid. Note uprights on R/H side, some insulation and part of sandwich wall in.



Picture 8 Kitchen loft access area and uprights. Note diverted central heating pipes, “path” into loft and insulation