

Quarterly Newsletter



Issue 212

Winter 2023

CHAIRMAN'S NEWS

I am pleased to report that following Bob's passing, matters financial have settled down and I now have control of the club and company bank accounts. Things should now continue as before and I will remain as Acting Treasurer for the foreseeable future due to the protracted and drawn out processes required to get the necessary Mandates changed.

We have taken on a two year lease of the recently vacated former Board Room from 1st December, which will take us to the end of our existing lease on the main clubroom in June 2025. It is proposed that the library is moved into the new room and that it will be used for demonstrations, 'show & tell' and other such group activities. It will also provide somewhere to work on the portable layouts we have. Current subscription income and bank balances are sufficient to fund the additional room for the remainder of the current lease but we must be mindful that there will more than likely be an increase in rent when a new lease has to be negotiated in two years' time.

Recently, long time member Tony Winn had to leave the club due to moving away but in a very kind gesture, he has donated all his 00 gauge stock to the Club. Tony was very keen on the LNER and had amassed several complete rakes of crack express trains. Some of the carriages he built from scratch, some are modified Hornby and some are high quality proprietary models.

Tony has also gifted us all his Hornby live steam collection, together with the special controller, which I am sure will see good service in due course. In recognition of this donation, Tony has been granted Honorary Life Membership of the club.

As has now become a regular event, the Club recently put on a display of trains at the Stony Stratford Christmas Lights switch on and raised almost £90 in donations for the church funds.

All that remains now is for me to wish everyone a very Happy and Joyful Christmas and hope Santa brings you what you have asked for.

Chris Hughes
Chairman

Meet Our New Member

Trevor Gilbert



My name is Trevor Gilbert. I am 65 years young. I have made about 7 layouts in the past. I am currently making 3 layouts on 3 different levels. O gauge, 00 gauge, 009 and NTT. I make these with my son Johnathon as he likes helping me. We both enjoy and like the club and think it's great.

Meet Our New Member

Geoff Ward



Hi, my name is Geoff Ward and I have recently joined the MKMRC. I am retired and live in Great Horwood with my wife, my interest in model railways goes all the way back to childhood. But this is the first time I have joined a model railway club and I have been made very welcome.

I have an OO gauge layout in the loft of our bungalow, this is not set anywhere in particular just somewhere in England in the mid 50s to the mid 70s. I like to run trains, steam and diesel from this era, and I like the variety of rolling stock I can have running through my country side.

My layout is not finished yet as I still have scenery to complete and electric points to install amongst other things. But you know what they say a model railway is never finished...!!

Thanks again for the warm welcome.

Meet Our Returning Member

Roger Deacon



I was born in Luton in 1943. Like most boys of my generation, I collected train numbers. Trains through Luton ran from St. Pancras. However, I always thought that trains coming out of Euston were more interesting, so aged 10/11 I used to cycle to Leighton Buzzard, drop a fishing line in the canal, watch the trains and collect the numbers.

My training in Engineering took me into the Motor Vehicle Industry, working in Production Engineering for many of the Major manufacturers. I retired after 42 years at the age of 57. I have always had a keen interest in DIY and modelling, completing 3 x 1/12 scale model Dolls Houses until I ran out of space to keep them.

In 2015 I visited the National Railway Museum in York. My wife's maternal grandfather was a Peppercorn. We enquired at the information desk for books on Locomotives that A H Peppercorn had designed. As a memento I

bought a '00' model of the AI Tornado 60163.

At the time I was living in a retirement apartment and decided that I would build a layout. Realising that the layout would not be very large I exchanged the Tornado '00' for an 'N' gauge.

After moving home in 2019, I acquired a 3.6m x 3.0m shed. I fully insulated it and built a layout around the perimeter with a lifting bridge over the door. This was removed pending what became an aborted house move. Fortunately, I kept my rolling stock and Z21 controller. I am now building a small continuous loop layout.

I first joined MKMRC in 2015, I found members were very knowledgeable about all aspects of modelling railway infrastructure. For a while, when I had a larger vehicle, I helped at exhibitions with Dentdale and Brinklow.

For personal reasons I took a break from the club during COVID restrictions and have now happily re-joined.

Meet Our Returning Member

Tony Frazer



Like most of us in the hobby, I started out with a Triang Hornby OO train set when I was a kid (I think it was the blue 3 car Pullman) and with a bit of help from my Dad with floorboards and a ladder, this evolved into an 8'x4' chipboard and wood framed layout in our loft, with 2 ovals of track, supplemented with a storage yard on a beat-up interior door we liberated from a nearby building site. Apart from limited headroom (which wasn't a problem for me then!), there was enough room to invite a couple of friends around for running sessions. I remember the points were operated by fishing line (which kept snapping) terminated with sleepers. Just like in the modern hobby, plenty of tea and biscuits were consumed!

I joined Morpeth Model Railway Club in the mid 1970s (in the same old rat-infested building in Wheatsheaf Yard as the local amateur radio club.) I remember building yards of trackside fences from balsa wood for their 2-room OO layout. I had to give this up near exam time at school and didn't

re-join a club until several years later when I moved to Warrington. That was when I started dabbling with N gauge - I think my first purchase to run on their layout was a petroleum sector class 37 with a rake of 6 tankers. At home, space was limited so I built a tiny GWR terminus with fiddle yard to fit in the 12-inch gap between my desk and the wall.

When we moved to Leighton Buzzard in 1991, I joined the Milton Keynes club at Vicarage Road - but I was under pressure to do some major jobs around the house so I had to leave soon after that. Over a decade later, I helped set up the National Museum of Computing at Bletchley Park - where my knowledge of ancient electronics (valves and relays) was welcomed to restore and build future exhibits. During a break from project work at the museum, I found myself wandering around the various private collections which were the life and soul of the park at that time. I re-joined the model railway club and used to open up the club at weekends and run the old N-gauge Norgate layout (or live steam outdoors in the summer) for the visitors.

That was when I met up with Wayne and the late Bob Taylor, both of whom were keen to build a new exhibition layout that was able to compete with other layouts on the exhibition circuit. Bob suggested a layout set in moorland. We decided on the iconic Settle and Carlisle railway. At the time, it was not possible to build the layout in the club rooms due to lack of space, but we were enthusiastic about the project and we decided to start work on it immediately as a private project. I researched and designed the layout with construction commencing in May 2012, I layed all the track and electrics and started buying up modern stock to run on the Sunday of two day exhibitions for a bit of variety. Wayne and Bob did an excellent job with all the scenics - areas which I still lack confidence in.

Now I had all this S&C modern era rolling stock sitting in boxes and nothing to run it on between exhibitions! Although we stored Dentdale in my garage (which wasn't ideal as it is damp and has a corrugated asbestos roof). In the summer, only 3 of the 5 boards could be set up a a time. The solution was easy - build another smaller S&C layout that would fit in the house - so I researched, designed and layed track for a 3-board layout based on Lazonby & Kirkoswald that fits snugly in our back bedroom. That was back in 2013 and it spent nearly 10 years stored in the garage. Now that I have retired

and can justify spending unlimited time on it, I have brought it back into the house.

I went up to Lazonby about a month ago and took hundreds of photographs (and visited the Midland hotel for a swift beer of course.) What was particularly stunning about the visit was the vivid autumn colour and clear sunny weather - much rarer to witness up there in the hills. Therefore, this layout will be set in Autumn based on the photographs I took this year.

Having a technical background, I find the most enjoyable and rewarding aspects of building a model railway are the research, design and the technical side (track and electrics), trying to simplify operation as much as possible so that anyone can use it. For example, Bob, Wayne and I were at Basingstoke exhibition and an enthusiastic young member of Basingstoke club asked if he could operate it - of course he could! He got the hang of it almost immediately and the 3 of us left it in his capable hands and went for our lunches! This was perhaps the most satisfying endorsement of my control panel design.

I have one of those digital photo frames we used to take to Dentdale exhibitions - so I will put together a slideshow showing my plans to develop my home layout and bring the slideshow to the club in a month or so. I thought that, eventually, other members may wish to do the same - kind of a showcase of their home projects which other members may not otherwise see.

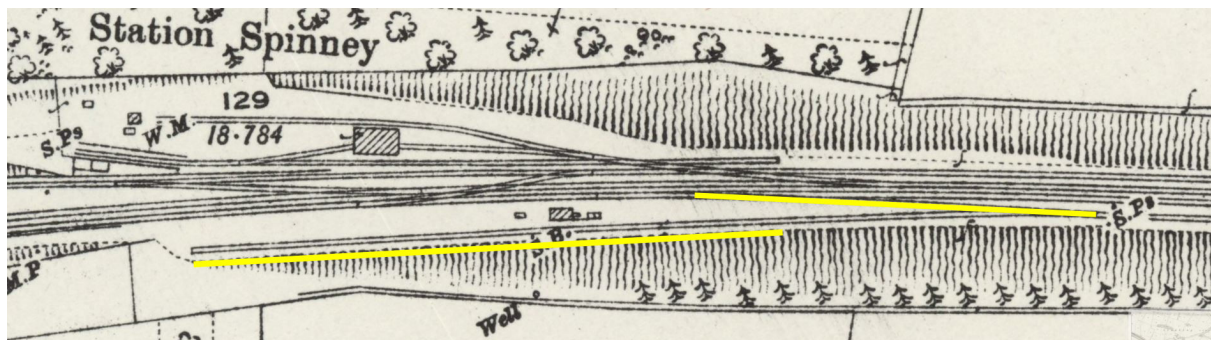
Planned Updates to Brinklow

By Mike Biss

There are changes afoot for the layout over the winter period, with the fourth line that currently ends in the sand drag, to be connected up from the fiddle yard and then “on stage” connected to the current northbound line, via a new pair of cross over points.

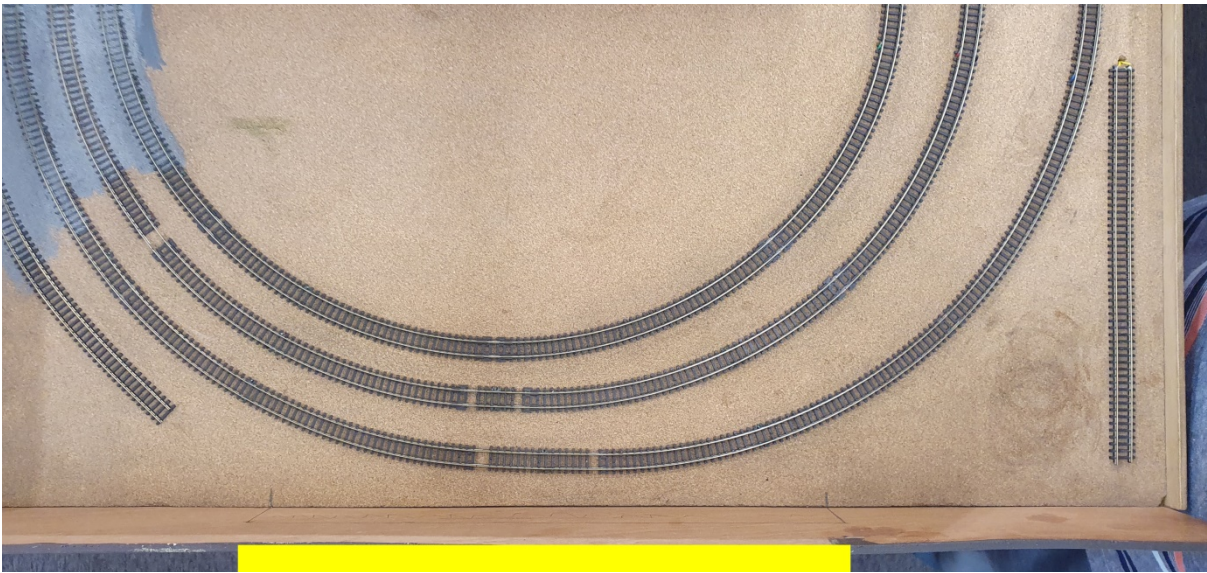


The current dead end would be extended to run behind the signal box, to finish in line with the platform ends. This will make it more prototypical in appearance, although the cross over is a bit closer than in real life, but it does allow for freight trains to come out from the fiddle yard and wait at the signal “on stage”, allow an express through from the fast line, and then proceed via the cross over.



Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

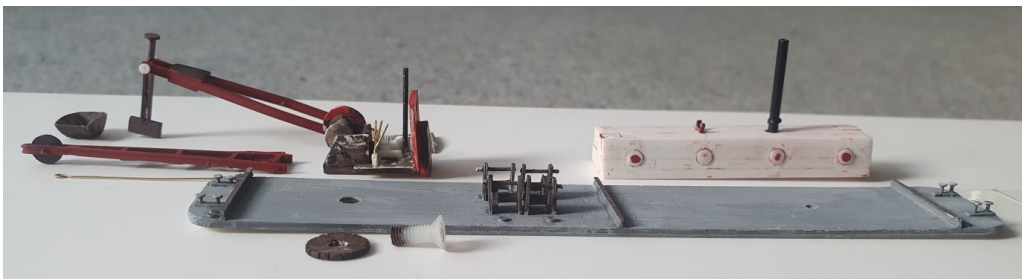
To do this, we will need to put a slight extension on the end board of about 2”, to allow for the new curved bit of track to clear. We have already fitted a new point in the fiddle yard, which needed a bit of a hand-built mechanism to get the point motor to work the point, as it was too close to the frame edge to work in its normal position directly under the point.



Also planned to be included with these changes, are a new pair of working signals for the two lines, which will work in synchro with the points operation. This will entail more wiring and switch additions to the control panel, but it will make operations at shows more interesting, for both the operators and viewing public.

Other thoughts are to make the goods yard more independent from the main line, so it can be operated on DC at the same time as the by-pass line, but may require specific stock to be used to enable uncoupling to take place. The locations of the uncouplers have been worked out, but the actual method is still being thought about. Another bit of operational interest this would add for a show, is with a drop off goods train stopping, taking the required wagons into the yard and shunting them to the required positions and then departing. Later on, this process can be repeated to pick them all up again.

Another addition to the layout is for the canal this time, with a steam powered dredger to be added, moored up awaiting work to start. The spoil barge is already there and the location identified for its placement. This will be modelled on one that worked on the Grand Union. The picture shows the bits made so far.



Visit to Pete Waterman's Railway Workshop By Wayne Webb



Back in June a group from the Milton Keynes Railway Club got the chance to visit Pete Waterman and his team of Rail Nuts.

We set off on a sunny Sunday morning heading to near Chester.

We were given a warm welcome and were filmed for the Making Tracks 3 Episode 11 video on You Tube before we even got inside the workshop. We were then shown Milton Keynes Central layout looking good with excellent detail and with the buildings in position. Afterwards we had a chance to talk

to the group Rail Nuts who told us about the processes they had used to create

the catenary and the number of parts used on the layout to be 3D printed. All the cars used in the layout are 3D printed and hand painted.

The Starship Robots used in Milton Keynes for deliveries could now be seen on the finished layout. The concrete cows had not yet been finished at the time of our visit and Dennis from our club was asked to measure and photograph the concrete cows for their 3D printing.

We were also treated to a viewing of Pete Waterman's O Gauge layout, this runs round the whole room, which is bigger than our club, so photographs do not do it justice. They had a 9F with full load of wagons running for us to see.

All had an enjoyable time.

Editors Footnote

The link for the YouTube video mentioned in this article is as follows –

[Making Tracks 3 Episode 11](#)

This is a 2-hour video gives just a small glimpse of how this layout was built, but it is extremely interesting if you can stay awake. Our members take center stage in the video at the 1 hour and 18-minute mark so you can always skip forward to that point.

Milton Keynes – In Progress



Leamington Spa – O Gauge





Making a Start:

By Will Tregurtha

As a few of you may know, I can be quite busy with work! However, I've set myself the challenge of having a working layout by New Year's Day. Why? Well, I love a challenge and I definitely work better under a harsh deadline!

So - my goal of baseboards down, track laid, point motors, wiring and scenic base is going to be quite the challenge alongside working seven days a week. I'm not fussed about a finished model in the time frame but I'd just like to get my track laid, running and the foam board/alternative landscaping bases in.

I've decided to stick with DC, I enjoy the challenge of wiring it all up efficiently as well as the operational side. I have a lot of older or kit built locos that I'd like to keep in their original spec. I'm more than happy with ambient sounds only and the cost of going to DCC is going to be quite hefty if done. My first mistake was making my own baseboards, I'm no carpenter! I'd built some rudimentary but well-holding baseboards to get an idea of what I wanted and needed but I've come to the conclusion that getting some done professionally was the way forward. I want this to last. I got in touch with GH Modules who have sorted me out very well. I've managed to get a 12ft scenic section and a 6ft "L" branch which will house the fiddle yard tucked behind a scenic section.

My interests lie with 1950's southern steam and so I naturally have drawn up my track plans and buildings in that style. Track wise, I need to make accommodations for my baseboard sizes but my main priority was for operational variability. I've taken inspiration from Sidmouth, Budleigh Salterton, Bude etc. I'll be modelling in 00 using C&L and Peco Code 75 Bullhead. I've already made up a couple of C&L points but I'll be using the Peco points where I can fit them in. My C&L points work well for now, but the Peco's should be more rugged...! I've built the track plan into a concept of the landscape, really putting the railway into the surroundings. I felt it was easier to start with this as it let me get a more natural journey for the train to follow. Flowing, open curves, smooth points and wide-open radius. Whether I can achieve that or not, let's see! ((I've attached a rough track

plan)) Though I'm quite happy with the layout when testing it! I am open to all feedback, I'd love to hear what people think, advise and if there is a real world location that suits the style I've gone for then please let me know!

I've been a bit busy and 3d printed some cottages off. I'll be going over them with a thin layer of modelling clay, scribing details where needed, adding window panes and the small details. Hopefully they'll come out well. Does anybody here have any advice on appropriate paints and washes for a Devonshire red brick?

I guess another bit of advice that I'd like to finish off on is wiring lighting for buildings and scenery - Where is best to find some nice warm, low brightness lights? How do I best go about wiring them up?

Boats & Trams & Trains – Part I

Dennis Lovett travels back in time to visit the Isle of Man

Unlike the mainland where public transport is disjointed and often working against rival modes, a visit to the Isle of Man, provides an insight into how it used to be. Transport is integrated and the purchase of a GO card gives unlimited travel on all public transport operating on the island as well as privately owned heritage lines.

The Isle of Man Passenger Transport Board manages the operation of the horse tram operating at Douglas, the Manx Electric Railway, The Snaefell Mountain Railway, and The Isle of Man Steam Railway.

There are two main entry points to the island from England. Ferries operate between Heysham and Liverpool to Douglas Ferryport or by air to the island's airport at Ronaldsway. The ferries are operated by the quaintly named Isle of Man Steam Packet Company, the name it has carried since its formation in 1830.



Isle of Man Steam Packet Company's 'Ben-My-Chee' enters Douglas with the early afternoon sailing from Heysham.

The Isle of Man Steam Railway

The Island once boasted some 46 miles of 3ft narrow gauge railway. Trains once ran from Douglas to Peel, St Johns to Ramsey and Douglas to Port Erin. Today only the Port Erin line remains, operating from the restored Victorian terminus close to the harbour. Traces of the two closed lines can easily be identified in various parts of the island. The former Peel station still stands and forms part of the House of Manannan museum complex. At the far end of the old station site next to the harbour a section of platform, signal and a restored coach stand by the former loco shed water tower. Parts of the disused lines have been converted into footpaths. All apart from the Port Erin line were closed in 1968.

Once privately owned, the steam railway was nationalised in 1978 and operates the 15½ mile line linking Douglas with Castletown and Port Erin, a small, pleasant resort to the south of the island. Port Erin retains its engine shed and the former goods shed has been transformed into a museum which tells the story of the island's steam railway network. Trains run every two hours.



IOMSR locomotive No. 4 at Douglas station on 23 June.



The Railway Museum at Port Erin includes two locomotives, rolling stock and artefacts.

2023 sees the 150th anniversary of the opening of the first steam line on the island from Douglas to Peel. The Port Erin line followed a year later with both being operated by the Isle of Man Railway. The third line from St. Johns (on the Peel line) was opened by the Manx Northern Railway in 1879. A short branch line from St. Johns to Foxdale opened in 1885. The opening of the more direct route from Douglas along the coast to Ramsey by the Manx Electric Railway in 1898 resulted in the Manx Northern going experiencing financial problems and the company was taken over by the Isle of Man Railway in 1904.

Like many railway companies the IOMR diversified into bus operation. The railway by the 1960s was struggling and closed in 1965 before a rescue package was delivered under Lord Ailsa. Despite attempts to turn the loss-making system around, the Peel and Douglas lines closed in 1968. Rails were not removed until 1975, when the Foxdale branch was also lifted.



The display at Peel, opposite the transport Museum

Sixteen steam locomotives were built for use on the island's system between 1873 and 1926 with all but one built by Beyer, Peacock & Company of Manchester. 14 of them survived. Four are currently available for traffic although at the time of our visit only one was in steam. Of the 30 carriages remaining, 18 are currently available for service.

Douglas is the largest station on the island and the Port Erin line has 9 other stations or halts before reaching the terminus at Port Erin. The line is 15½ miles long.

The Douglas Bay Horse Trams



A journey back in time on Douglas Promenade. The only other regular horse drawn trams can be found in South Australia.

The Douglas Bay horse trams plod along the promenade at Douglas, allowing visitors a panoramic view of Douglas Bay and if heading towards the terminus at Derby Castle, views of Onchan Head. They have done this since the line opened in 1876, although services were suspended during World War Two and more recently during the promenade improvement works between 2016 and 2022.

Each horse, known collectively as “trammers” undertakes a morning and afternoon run which clearly the horses enjoy. It is claimed that each horse knows exactly how many paces it is between stops and after changing ends at the current terminus at Broadway, which is roughly halfway to the former terminus at the ferry terminal, but it is still a 10-minute ride along the sea front.

The horse tramway uses a 3ft gauge double track which runs down the centre of the road. Owned and operated by Douglas Corporation since 1927, the council announced that it would close at the end of the 2016 season. Following a campaign to keep it operational, the horse tramway was taken over by the Isle of Man Government and now operates as part of its transport operation. Go cards can be used or alternatively a single fare of £2.50 can be paid.

The promenade at Douglas has recently undergone major improvements. Initially this work spelt the end of the traditional horse trams, I was told to the delight of animal activists. However, this did not take place following a major campaign to retain them. There are now plans to restore the service back to the ferry terminal when funding permits.

The Isle of Man horses are very well looked after and are rotated daily with up to 24 horses available for traffic. The old stables have been extensively refurbished and include all the facilities required for working horses, including harness rooms, hay store and blacksmiths workshop. The stables are a couple of minutes' walk from the Derby Castle terminus and can be visited. Each horse is delivered by a stable hand who walks it to the station and then takes the other horse back. On their days off the horses are taken to a field whilst those reaching retirement age are taken to the Rest Home for Old Horses, which was established in 1950 and now forms a popular visitor

attraction. It is here that the trammers have the freedom to still welcome an admiring public and enjoy many acres of freedom.

The trammers are mainly Clydesdale horses with 43 horses available. The tram cars are kept in their own shed alongside the station at Derby Castle, which also has a souvenir shop, information centre and ticket office.



The horse tram shed at Derby Castle, Douglas with multiple depot tracks.

Models



The distinctive Beyer-Peacock locomotives are available in 4mm scale as static models which were produced for the IOMR by Oxford Die-cast. They are available from the station gift shops or direct from Hornby. They make attractive souvenirs for visitors and motorising one to run on 12mm track should prove a challenge for anyone inclined to attempt it.

In the next issue we will look at the electric tram systems.

I've Gone Manor Crazy!

By Ian Egerton

With Accurascale announcing their first steam locomotive being the GWR 78XX Manor class I was immediately intrigued by this announcement, in particular as the manor is one of my favorite locomotive class and it had been an incredibly long time since a manor had been freshly tooled in OO gauge. Shortly after this it was announced at the 2021 Great Electric Train show that Key Publishing had commissioned Accurascale to produce a limited-edition model of 'Bradley Manor' a loco I've seen a number of times on the Seven Valley Railway so I pre-ordered.

Fast forward approximately two years Accurascale announced they'd received the first batch of their manors, however Key Publishing had made such a huge error which meant they could not honour all their orders of Bradley manor and I happened to be one of the people to miss out.

I googled around and saw The Model Centre (TMC) had one left of 7812 'Erlestoke Manor' immediately I acted and purchased the model, next day it arrived, Wow I was amazed at the stunning quality of this model, full of incredible detail.

I was so amazed with the model upon finding out AGR now had some manors in stock it resulted in being going over to the shop and buying my second Accurascale manor this time 7808 'Cookham Manor' and then in the later second batch I managed to get my hands on a third manor 'Dinmore Manor'. This now meant I had a manor of three different liveries, all of which in preservation! Must add these models are quite heavy and the boxes are massive which is a pain for storage.





It doesn't stop there as now the challenge of sound fitting each locos. I am a Zimo fan and Accurascale are optimised for ESU, so this does present a little bit of a challenge, especially as Zimo should not go below 8 ohm (for the decoder used MS580) and the factory fitted speakers in the model are two 8 ohm in parallel which gives 4 ohm. Could just take out the tender speaker and that would be simple to do, but for better sound I have removed the speaker in the boiler and added an ice cube speaker which gives off a very good sound. I noted some buzzing for the decoder after number of emails with a Zimo dealer found the problem down to be how ESU/Accurascale have designed the PCB so a change of CV#201 to 11 resolved that issue (that's turning FA3 and FA4 to logic level outputs). So, as you can see a slight headache but issue was resolved. So, a tip if any of you plan on sound fitting an Accurascale model yourself!

One sound fitted two to go!



Another photo of the three manors I have got and as you can see fantastic models. Might note front coupling is missing as you have to put it on yourself and I have done it on one model however it is quite fiddly to do, and I had to unscrew the front bogie to do it.

STEAM – The Museum of the Great Western

By Paul Egerton

I made a decision some weeks ago upon the discovery that the AGM of the National Trust was going to be held in the annals of STEAM – the Museum of the Great Western, to take my camera. Well, that sealed it, I had to be there especially as I had never before visited this outpost of steam.



I had a mad moment and got up at some unearthly hour and arrived in Swindon just before 9 am. This gave me the ideal opportunity for some camera action before the commencement of the AGM and I was pleased to find locomotives that I originally photographed more years ago than I care to mention.



My thoughts? Well, if you are ever in the area of Swindon, do visit especially if your Wife wants to visit the Outlet Designer Shops next door, as there are some interesting artefacts on display which will while away a good few hours more in fact than I was able to pack in in the short time available to me as of course, I was there to attend the AGM which in itself was interesting and an eye opener into the National Trust's governance. But enough of that, here's some pics of the exhibits that will be of more interest than historic building conservation!



Member Updates

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



Trevor Gilbert



Ian Atkinson



Glen Wadcock

Geoff Ward

Returning Members



Roger Deacon



Tony Frazer



The MKMRS 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 MKMRSNewsletter@courtmk.co.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 Spring Edition is the 24th February 2024 with the Newsletter being published by the 1st March 2024.