

Milton Keynes Model Railway Club

Quarterly Newsletter



Issue 219

Autumn 2025

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Contents

Chairman's News.....	3
La Petit Train De La Mure.....	4
2026 Exhibition	6
On The Move	7
Bank Charges	11
Club Members Layout List.....	11
New Club OO Layout	12
Club Library	13
230755 Carol-Anne	14
Littleton Bridge Goes To Lydd Rail.....	15
Ecclesbourne Valley Railway – Club Visit?	18
Are We Supporters Or Just Attenders?	18
East Anstey Plus	19
From 16.5mm To 1435mm (4ft 8½in).....	20
The Greatest Gathering.....	21
Club Annual Diorama Competition	24
A Thankyou To The Club And Some Of The Members...	25
Bowlers Croft Takes To The Roade	26
The Club Play Host To Harefield Road	27
Brinklow Updates - Part 7	30
WhatsApp Group For The Club	31
Club Open Day	31

Chairman's News

Hello all, and welcome to our latest club newsletter.

As always, it has been a busy few months for the Club, with plenty to report on. The biggest Club news of this period is our new exhibition venue is confirmed and that at long last, our new OO Gauge layout is underway.

Firstly, the show, since our last newsletter was published, I'm sure that most of you are aware that we have officially changed venue to the Walton High Brooklands Campus Secondary School. This has been booked and is the same weekend as this year, with setup on Friday 5th June and the show on Saturday 6th June. Work is already well underway for the show, with many layouts and traders already signed up. Since next year will be 40 years since the start of Network SouthEast, there will very much be a NSE theme.

As this year is 200 years since the first passenger train, many events have been happening across the country to celebrate this. The most notable has been the event at Derby Litchurch Lane last month, which several of us were lucky enough to attend. With the actual anniversary taking place this month (September 27th), if anyone has any ideas how we as a Club can celebrate, please let us know ASAP. James Woodley and I are producing a video of a cavalcade of locomotives and stock across the 200 years, this will be one celebration and will be visible to all on our website and social media when published.

Our new OO gauge layout is finally under construction! Since our last newsletter, we have decided as a Club by vote, that the best route for our new OO gauge layout is to create a "roundy, roundy" to replace Barton Crossing, rather than the original idea of an "end to end" layout. After the success of our show, funds have been released to start it and over the last couple of weeks the first wood has been cut and the first of many baseboards have been constructed. This is a Club project and therefore anyone who wants to be involved with building the layout, is more than welcome to help. Work will be happening in the smaller room most cubnights (Tues and Fri), so come along and help. Don't be afraid to ask questions and hopefully we will all be able to learn and share our knowledge as well.

I hope to see most of you at the Club and if anyone has any suggestions at all please feel free to speak to either myself or any other committee member. Communication is key to our Club.

Tim Byrne
Chairman

La Petit Train De La Mure

Prior investigations as to what attractions there are in the Rhone-Alpes Region of SE France, led me to a small (relatively) heritage railway located within the village of La Mure. For those that do not know the area, picture a map of France and La Mure is in the bottom right-hand corner of the country, with the nearest city being Grenoble. So a visit was a must, as it is not one that I had been aware of before.

Some history. The line was constructed to metre gauge over one hundred and thirty years ago, with the line serving a coal mine producing high quality anthracite. Steam operated from the outset, but electric traction was tested over 6.635 km in 1903, and was the world's first high voltage DC electrified train. The line closed in 1988 and following a short period, a purely tourist operation began in 1989. However, operation was suspended in 2010 by a landslide, roughly half-way along the line, and it was unable to re-open until 2021.

Landslides and man-made activity have conspired to truncate the line at Point de vue Belvedere, where there is a viewing platform (and restaurant) overlooking a hydro-electric power station and a lake, which in itself, utilises a former quarry. Despite the obvious scar on the landscape, the dam and lake present a scene which is pleasing to the eye and well worth spending the hour or so at the now line terminus.

The train ride proceeds at what I might say is a stately speed of around 10 to 15 mph, as the line twists and turns around the valley. Passing through what must be one of the longest tunnels in railway preservation, the scenic gems have to be the Viaducts de Loulla and Vaulx, which in UK terms, gives Glenfinnan viaduct a run for its money. At the terminus, passengers then take a 400 metre walk through a former (lit) tunnel, to the panoramic restaurant/platform mentioned above.

If you intend to visit the line in the future, I would caution not to hang out of the windows, as there are frequent incursions into the carriages by lineside vegetation that in the UK, would have been cut back severely. However, this does add to the line's charm, but apart from the obvious signage warning of high voltage wires, little else appears as a nod to modern day health and safety requirements.

If my little piece has whetted your appetite to visit, further details can be found at <https://lepetittraindelamure.com/en/home/>.

And now, here are a few of the photographs that I took on my visit.





Paul Egerton

2026 Exhibition

With this year's show done and dusted, I thought it best to give you all an update with plans well underway for next year's show.

Just before this year's show, I was sent a quote from the Ridgeway Centre for the same date and size. They informed me that the new price would see an increase of almost £1500. For me the price we were paying was expensive for this year's show. So, I set about speaking to various venues around Milton Keynes, to find somewhere suitable and for a price that I felt was more realistic for the Club.

Eventually, I have been able to get a deal done with the Walton High School (Brooklands Campus), Fen Street, Milton Keynes, MK10 7HE. They offered us a venue that is slightly smaller than the Ridgeway Centre, but for a price that was almost £3500 cheaper. After Mike Biss and myself went there to measure for the floor plan, we were able to negotiate adding the school canteen, which the school has kindly given us this for free.

Another benefit of moving to this new venue, is that it is also available on the Sunday, so should the show be a success in the future, then we could look to extend to a two day show, if the Club chooses to do so.

Currently I am well into booking layouts to attend next year and it looks like we should be having 25 layouts, two of which are large OO roundy-roundy layouts. Next year is the 40th anniversary of the introduction of Network Southeast, so I thought it would be a good idea to celebrate this and have part of the show dedicated to NSE. As such, we will have one of the two main halls filled with all things NSE, there should be 6 layouts, one Demo stand of NSE multiple units, plus I am hoping to have the Friends of Network Southeast with their Society stand. Dennis has also been in contact with Chris Green, who was the Managing director of NSE, who plans to attend as the guest of honour.

Now for my plea for help!

It was pointed out that this year during the setup, I was running around trying to do jobs, while also firefighting problems that arose. It was suggested that we have dedicated teams to do certain roles and then I could step back and oversee everything. At the moment, we feel that we need four teams, Floor marking, Wiring, Table assignment, Layout and Trader transport helpers (it's a longer walk from the car park to the halls for setup). If you would be willing to help in any of those roles, can you please email me Carl@leap-som.co.uk, so that I can allocate your preference.

The second job that needs doing is PAT testing. For this to happen, we need to take an inventory of all the items that need testing. John Higgins and Ashley Goodall have both said they are willing to make a start on this, but any help you can give them would be appreciated.

Carl White
Exhibition Manager

On The Move

As some of you may know, I moved house at the end of last year. Such a move has of course also to take into consideration what to do with the workshop and storage space for the model railway and its various items.

In my last house, I built my layout Donnersbachkogel in such a way that it just fitted into my garage. In a later move, I swapped the workshop with the layout and had then the workshop in the garage and the layout in an outbuilding.

In spring 2024 I found a new house, which (minimum this is the plan) should be the last one in a number of house moves in my life. It was actually removal no 11.

What was one of the points for buying the new house was the detached double garage, a model-makers dream.

This is the garage in its original state, a single brick building with a slightly rotten single glazed window. It also had the column between the garage doors twisted, from an accident with a van or lorry.



First things first, repair of the column and a new double glazed window. The window I did myself, it is tilt and turn (yes, I am from the continent). It went very well and I saved more than 50% of the price of a fitted one...





To make the whole thing dust free, I invested in a PVC garage floor. British racing green...

Then comes the ceiling. To have some additional storage, I decided to board the whole ceiling with 10mm plywood. Between the joists, I put 75mm PIR boards as insulation. To access the loft, I installed a loft ladder.



Ceiling insulated, now I am attacking the walls with mineral wool and a damp break membrane...





Finally it comes to the plasterboards. What looks like a snowman in the background, is Mrs Novak (in a paint suit) painting the plasterboard walls...

Finally the walls and the ceiling are done. Here is a rare look of the empty garage, waiting for furniture...



And we didn't have to wait long, the furniture (IKEA kitchen from the last garage) arrived.

With the working workshop part finished, the garage was a long time used for other things, like kitchen furniture and flooring storage for the main house. Work was done on some shelving, of course high enough to have the layout running underneath.

And finally, a week ago, I could put up Donnersbachkogel for the first time.



It is a little bit crammed with the workshop on one side of the room, but I did know that from the beginning (My wife always asked me why I build such large model railways...).

It seems like a huge project, and yes it was, but on the cost side, I could keep things down by doing everything just with the help of my family or completely myself. Was it worth it?

Yes, absolutely!

Gerhard Novak

Bank Charges

Not a subject that you would expect to find within our newsletter, but I must inform members that our Club's charity account held with Lloyds Bank, will from 13th November, be subjected to bank charges. What does this mean for the Club? Well, we have 100 free transactions of all types (both credit and debit), we are not likely to breach these 100 free transaction limits by the time our next AGM comes around.

Given that the highest charges that will be levied are attracted by cash deposits, we need to reduce the number of cash transactions wherever possible. So how can we do this?

From time-to-time, members may purchase donated second-hand stock, with the proceeds benefitting Club funds. Traditionally, these transactions have been by cash, so if you can, transactions through the Club's credit/debit card machine would be preferable, as these transactions are amalgamated and credited to the bank as a single transaction thus avoiding numerous credits and attendant bank charges. If this is not something that appeals, a direct bank transfer using the same Sort Code and Account Number that you pay your subscription into, is equally acceptable. Cheques made payable to "Milton Keynes Model Railway Club" are also another way, as direct credits and cheques paid into the Club's account by means of the Lloyds Banking app, are not charged.

Occasionally, we also receive cash donations, either in the form of birthday treats or for services provided by the Club. Whilst it is not the intention to discourage these in any way, a straightforward transfer of funds by electronic means, ensures that the cost to the Club is reduced.

Whilst the gradual decline of cash as a means of tender is deplorable, we must move with the times and adopt online solutions, as that is the way the banking industry is moving.

As ever, if you have concerns or questions, please either drop me a line at treasurer@mkMrs.org.uk or speak to me in person on a clubnight.

Paul Egerton
Club Treasurer

Club Members Layout List

The Club is looking to expand its layout list on the Club website, by including a separate member's layouts heading. This can be useful for other members to see what others are building/running, especially if the layout is a 'home' only one. It can even be one that is still under construction. If you are interested in having your layout included, then please contact the Editor, at newsletter@mkMrs.org.uk. Please include as many of the details shown below as you have available.

- Name of layout
- Gauge/Scale
- Size of the layout
- Background details
- Pictures of the layout
- Track plan (if available)
- Contact details (but not for publishing, unless requested)

Members who already exhibit their layouts, or those that would like to, can have this fact shown against their layout, so that any exhibition managers who peruse our website, can see what's available.

Mike Biss

New Club OO Layout

The construction of our new Club OO layout has started, and progress is currently one baseboard per clubnight. If you would like to learn how to make a baseboard (including legs, supports and board connections), then please come along to an evening and find out, plus you can also have a go yourself, with plenty of supervision available. All the boards are only screwed together, no glue is involved. There are twelve boards to build in total, so this will be happening for a few weeks, so plenty of time. Action takes places in the library room.

The pictures show Ian having a go at assembly and then the first board (1) completed, with two leg sets, and the first of the piggy back boards (2) done, with a single leg set. Board 8 will be another two leg set board. The boards 6 & 7 will be suspended between the two rows.



1	2	3	4	5
6				7
8	9	10	11	12

A Name Required

The Committee thought it a good idea to begin looking for a name for the new layout, so, if you have any suggestions, please place it in the envelope on the noticeboard in the Club room (*or send it to the Editor*) and we will then discuss them over the next few committee meetings and pick the best one. The one option we don't want to use please, is one which has 'Bond' in the name.

Updates on the build of the layout will hopefully become a regular feature on the Club's Facebook page and in the newsletter.



Some scenic impressions added - Tracks in station are wider apart than in this version

The Committee

Club Library



Finally the club library is now organised! Thanks to all concerned on the night and to Carl who gave the exercise a positive nudge a few days beforehand! An additional matching shelving unit was installed, providing the much needed extra space!

The library is of course available for all to use and a system will be in place to allow books to be loaned for a

reasonable period, with a simple logging book procedure. Essentially, the library has been sorted into topics to aid location, and in due course, this will be further refined, but basic sorting is thus:-

- Railway modelling topics
- Railways by grouping (and constituents) - Southern/LNER/LMS/Great Western
- British Railways - i.e. post 1948 - Steam
- British Railways - i.e. post 1948 - Diesel/Electric
(I suggest this is still a work in progress, as the majority is of much earlier subject matter)
- Continental

In addition, there is a selection of DVD's which could certainly be taken on loan, which could make some good watching!

It is the ultimate aim to prepare a spreadsheet log with titles organised by subject (book name) and by author, which will allow members to scan for titles & subjects remote from the clubroom, should they desire.

The shelves have started to be labelled, to further assist book selection!

A further exercise has taken place to remove duplicate titles, so expect some books to become available in the first instance for club members to purchase.

What more to say about a library? The plan to further refine has been said above as we progress. One matter highlighted recently, is the lack of books with more modern content. This has much to do with the past demographic from where many books will have originated, when 'steam reigned supreme' as the saying goes. As the club relies mainly on donations, library wise, I am in anticipation how we can source later material moving forward. Food for thought.

Enjoy your future (bedtime?) reading!

Ashley Goodall
Librarian

230755 Carol-Anne

Let me introduce the loco I'm working on. This is, or soon will be, CAROL ANNE 230755

There is a rather poignant reason I will be naming this loco Carol Anne. Earlier this year, my good South African friend of almost 20 years, Carol passed away. She loved steam trains. Before I became a Club member, we both came to the model railway exhibitions, when they were held at Stantonbury Campus.

Before Carol came to the UK to work, I expect as a youngster she may well have seen those amazing South African locomotives, especially those Garrett locomotives and then she was hooked.

I bought this motor-less Triang Hornby A3 at our last exhibition. I guess I felt sorry for it, seeing it looking so sorry for itself.



I gave the loco a strip down and a good clean. I replaced the drive gear and fitted a X04 motor. Then I painted the wheels satin black, replaced the front bogie for a later finer scale one and I also gave the loco body a couple of coats of satin varnish. I must admit, in my opinion, the black wheels look so much better than when they were green.

When I purchased the loco, the Flying Scotsman name plates over the centre wheel splashers were missing, also the cab side numbers were in a poor state and I later removed the numbers.

With no name or numbers, and after some thought, I decided to name it Carol Anne in memory of my friend Carol. The cab side loco number will be her birth date, which was 23rd July 1955, so the cab side loco number will be 230755.

The name and loco numbers will be bespoke etched metal ones, in LNER style, brass letters and numbers on a black background. I'm considering making from scratch, smoke deflectors similar to smoke deflectors on those fantastic South African locomotives. Then putting the name plate on them with a Springbok logo (as in attached photo), below the name plates.

If I don't fit the smoke deflectors, the name plates will go on the sides of the smoke box, just like on the B1 loco Springbok. The Springbok logo will go over the central wheel splasher facing forwards. I also plan to re-paint the white boiler bands etc a brass colour, so the loco livery resembles the Springbok's rugby team's colours, as Carol was a Springbok's supporter.



I need to have the picture I have of the Springbok logo, shrunk down to 00 scale size to fit over the central wheel splasher. Can any Club member help me with this? Thanks.

Peter Hoare

Littleton Bridge Goes To Lydd Rail

In early 2024, I started construction of a new N gauge layout based in Kent in the period 1986-1994. The layout is 8ft x 3ft and has a 2-track mainline and engineer's sidings. Before I even started, I knew I had a deadline of taking it to Lydd Rail, which is a friend's private show in Kent. Lydd Rail is held over the weekend of 18/19th July at Paul Wade's house, primarily in his double garage sized studio.

A few of us travel down on the Wednesday to make a long weekend. The layout was loaded into the car on Wednesday morning and proved that there is enough room for everything and two operators. I set off just after 09:00, with the intention of making a detour on route and stopping off at Tonbridge to view the engineer's yard and watch some trains. I arrived at Tonbridge at about 12:00. The yard was full of 12 GBRF class 73's, a pair of which were on a Network Rail test train. I spent about 1.5 hours filming and watching the trains roll by.



I arrived at Paul's at about 15:00. I started setting up Littleton Bridge and I timed the setup, so that I knew how long it would take when I take it out to exhibitions, as this was the first time it had been done. It was interesting to see that I was able to do it by myself in just over an hour. While I was setting up, several other people arrived and started doing the same with their layouts. It was discussed that the DRS nuclear flask train would be leaving Dungeness power station just before 18:00 and we could go and see it at Lydd town level crossing and then again at Appledore station. The consensus was that we would take two cars and take the opportunity to view it.



Thursday morning it was decided that five of us would travel by train to Ashford, to watch the various trains to be seen in this region. We drove to Appledore station and purchased our return tickets for £5.40 each. We spent a few hours in the morning watching class 375, 377, 395 units and Eurostar trains roll past. It was disappointing to see that there were no freight trains running to and from the Channel tunnel. Lunch was spent in the local brewery just outside the station, (we ate here in April when we were at the Aimrec model show) the food and drink is really good and reasonably priced. A couple more hours were spent at the station after lunch, before we headed back to Paul's.



On Friday a few people went to the RH&D railway for a return trip, they also managed to blag a trip around the engine shed and workshop. A couple of others went over to the KESR, as they were holding their Diesel gala. A mate and myself stayed at Paul's and started work on converting a Graham Farish N gauge class 150 DMU, into a Class 456 EMU. This involved cutting off the cabs and replacing them with a new 3D printed cab for the 456 and it also includes filling some of the windows. We also did a bit of work on my layout and had it running really well by the early afternoon. Most of the rest of the weekend guests arrived during the afternoon and set their layouts up.





The show starts for real on the Saturday, with everyone able to run any and all of the nine layouts on show. We also have access to Paul's photographic archive and library. In the afternoon we had Frank Joyce do a talk about his work, starting at Matchbox before starting EFE models. It was really interesting to discover some of the behind-the-scenes information behind the way models are designed and made in China. Saturday night is BBQ night, followed by the annual Lydd rail film. The films are full of satirical humour that is aimed at either the people at the weekend or the hobby in general.

Sunday follows much of the same lines as the Saturday, but with many of us leaving during the afternoon. I set off about 16:00 and the layout was back in the loft by 20:00 that evening.

As usual, everyone had a great weekend and it's great to spend time with mates and being able to speak all things about the hobby.



Carl White

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway – Club Visit?

Recently, a bit of research has led me to a past visit made by the Milton Keynes Model Railway Club to the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway, which runs for 8½ miles between Duffield and Wirksworth in Derbyshire. As some considerable period of time has passed by since we last visited, I wondered if the Club might wish to consider a return trip on Saturday 3rd October, when the Incline service will be running – for those not in the know, this is a ½ mile branch that climbs a 1 in 27 (or 3.7%) incline to Ravenstor.

Services start from Wirksworth at 10:50, so it is easily reached without having to rise for an exceedingly early start from Milton Keynes. Travel time is about 1¾ hours.

Fares are normally, £21.50 which gives day long rides but by booking online in advance, this can be reduced to £19.50 or £17.00 for concessions. However, if we get together a group of more than ten people, group discounted rates of £15.50 for a return journey can be obtained. One option would be to add an afternoon British Cream Tea or Luxury Afternoon Tea to the booking, which of course would be extra and depend on numbers.

If you are interested in a day out, please drop me an email at treasurer@mkMrs.org.uk by the end of June, and I'll investigate further and advise the membership.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway
Wirksworth Station, Station Road, Coldwell Street, Wirksworth DE4 4FB

Paul Egerton

Are We Supporters Or Just Attenders?

When do you attend the Club? Is it for the pleasure we get from running our own trains or watching other member's trains or just the social interaction of meeting like-minded people? I ask, as it appears to me, as a relatively new member of 18 months standing, that I am seeing fewer members on a Tuesday and Friday clubnight than when I first joined. Is there something putting members off coming down? Do you have concerns about coming down or what may be happening in the Club that you feel you cannot talk to anyone about this? I ask, as this Club is yours and mine. We all have a voice in the running of the Club and must not be afraid to ask questions about the health of the Club.

I have had use of the Clubs' facilities and have learned more about railways in 18 months and spoken with knowledgeable members about modelling, than I have gathered in the last forty years of trying to "play trains". I find it is just a case of not being afraid to ask anyone, with members sometimes saying "I don't know but Fred or George will know". Don't forget that you can always approach our committee members, it's part of being a committee member after all.

Anon

East Anstey Plus

I have been showing East Anstey at shows for a year now, and a joke was made about adding on the next station. This is no longer a joke and is now being worked on. I have added another eight feet to the layout, which will incorporate Yeo Mill halt and the houses close to the station. This will make the layout eighteen feet four inches long.



History about the halt, which was opened to passengers in 1932, was to serve the hamlet of Yeo Mill and the village of West Anstey, which was a mile away from the station. The station was looked after by staff from East Anstey.

The platform was made of a wooden construction, just long enough for one coach. It had a small waiting shelter and was lit by two lamps. You would have to be in the first coach to get on or off at Yeo Mill.

Hope to have it finished for our Milton Keynes show in June.

In the meantime, East Anstey will be featured in the September issue of Model Rail.

Wayne Webb



From 16.5mm To 1435mm (4ft 8½in)



Some people manage to attain a job when they grow up, that they wanted to be as a kid and as these pictures prove, the eight year old James deed indeed fulfil his wish.

As a lad, James was keen to help with a train game that we used to fundraise at Church Fetes. We used original Hornby Clockwork engines, with wagons or coaches, on a figure of 8 layout with various features, such as a station, signal, tunnel, bus, haystack, house, etc., set out at intervals around the track. All the features were drawn on cards and each was then sold/hired by punters, at 30p each. The point being that if one had the card of the feature where the train stopped, they won a prize! Of course the astute ones would expect the train to stop in the same place every time, but James would add or remove a wagon or coach or two, so that on a full wind, the train would come to a different halt each time.



For several years, James joined us at exhibitions to run Hornby Dublo Trains on a 9' x 4' layout. This is maybe where the seeds of a future railway career were sown; who knows? James was always very keen to be involved. The rest they say is history.

This is James, having just arrived with a train at Bedford station. All that is missing is that 'Engine Driver' cap!

Roger White

The Greatest Gathering

On the 1st and 2nd August, Tim and I were lucky enough to visit the Greatest Gathering at Derby Litchurch Lane works. The event was the highlight of the calendar of events to celebrate Railway 200. It was an absolutely amazing event, which saw many aspects of the railway celebrated all in one place. The scale of the event was awe-inspiring and even after spending two days at the event, we still didn't quite see everything! It was a very special couple of days and something I will remember for a long time to come! I have too many pictures to count from the two days but here is a selection below.



A selection of the steam representation at the event.

Here is one of newest vehicles to enter preservation. The first preserved Class 150 Sprinter, which will be based at the Watercress Line in Hampshire. It's enough to make you feel old!



A Class 99, one of the newest locomotives on the network.

Tim and I repping in our club tops, whilst queuing for the exhibition train.



The Class 89 which featured in the "Electric Avenue" area.



There really were all sorts of different aspects of the railway industry on show, this is a loco from a university engineering competition, trying to find ways to push and develop railway technology ever further.

Not every day you see the behind of a Eurostar...



There was a great atmosphere across the site. It was great to see a diverse group of individuals and families, not just your usual enthusiast stereotypes.



I wonder how long it will be until the first Pendolino is preserved!



Being able to mingle with the locos was a great experience.

Not an aspect of the railway you see every day!



A Class 50, with its adoring public...

The quietest fairground you've ever seen, and it was free!
I guess there were too many trains to see!





Locomotion No1, the reason we're all gathering in the greatest way!

Midland Compound 1000 tucked up in the shed, ready to meet its visitors.



This was a Thameslink simulator for people to try out. No, I didn't have go, but I was tempted!

On Saturday, Tim and I saw the UK premier of a documentary celebrating a certain blue engine and all his friends. It celebrated the impact the railway series has had on railways around the world, something poignant in the 80th anniversary year!



This Freightliner Class 90 has been painted into this retro livery and named "The Greatest Gathering". I'm sure this will not be the only legacy of the event, as it will live long in the memory and hopefully inspired the next generation of railway fanatics!

James Woodley

Club Annual Diorama Competition

A new Club idea. It's to have a sort of cake box challenge.

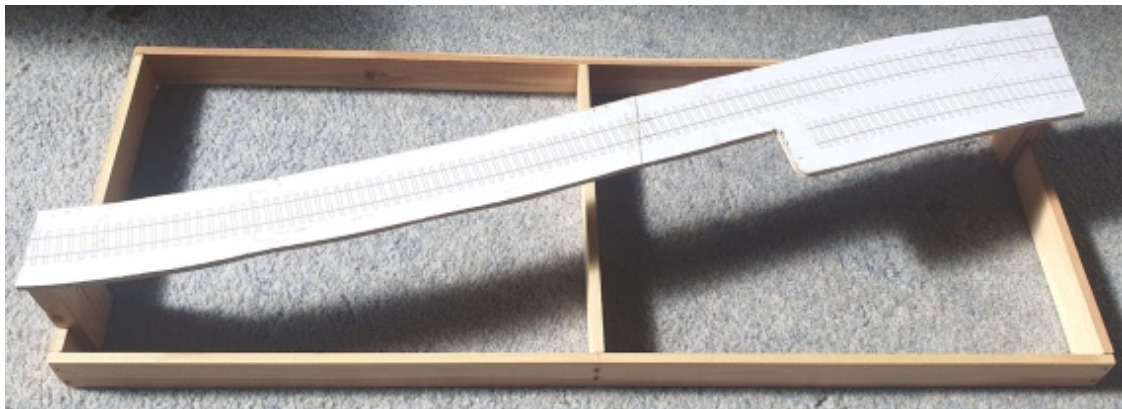
Having a baseboard of 500mm x 200mm, the person can build a 'railway related' diorama. It can be any height, but not go beyond the size of the baseboard dimensions. This would be a great way to try out different ways of doing things, of using materials or practices wise, possibly prior to working on your actual layout. This can be done in any scale (although G scale might be pushing it James!), so you could have a go in a different scale to what you normally work in.

This will run from June up to the AGM, with the judging then taking place at the AGM. Those getting an award for best diorama will receive a small trophy 🏆.

So get your thinking caps on and start building that little bit of 'railway life'.

Care to show your 'Work in Progress' pictures, then please send them in to the Editor.

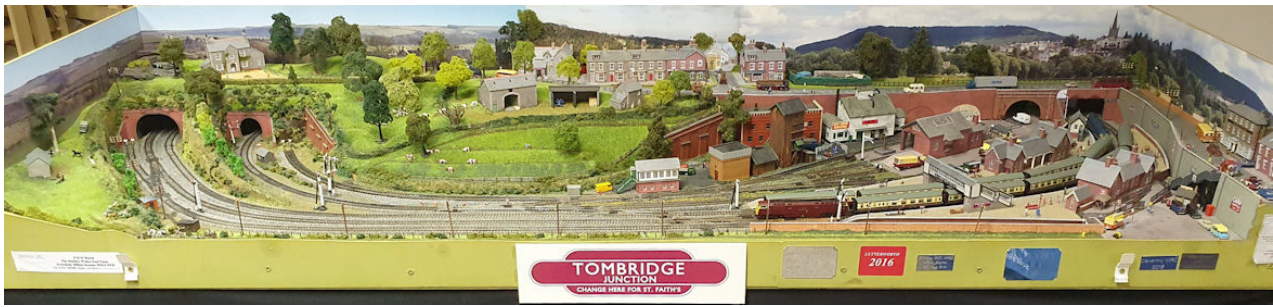
Wayne Webb



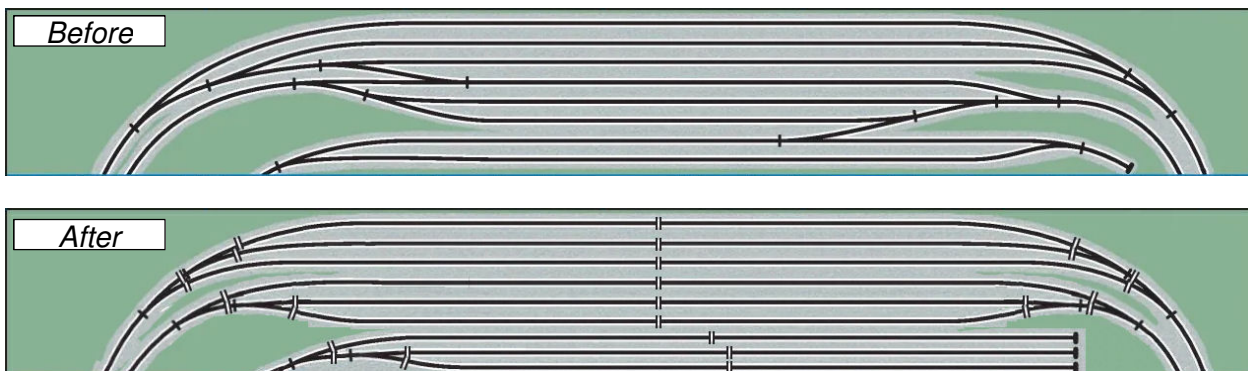
ED: Here is the current situation with the frame for my diorama and it is made from 24x6mm strip. It will be an open top format, with the track 40mm above the frame level. The track base is 3mm ply and held by one screw each end and is surprisingly rigid. However, there will be another support in the middle somewhere, when I've made up my mind for the exact positioning of the scenic features.

The process for making this frame is the same as for the Club's new layout baseboards, I'm just using smaller screws (and still no glue involved), so why not have a go at baseboard building on a much smaller scale! You could still use the size of wood you want to use for your own layout, it's just I used what I had lying around.

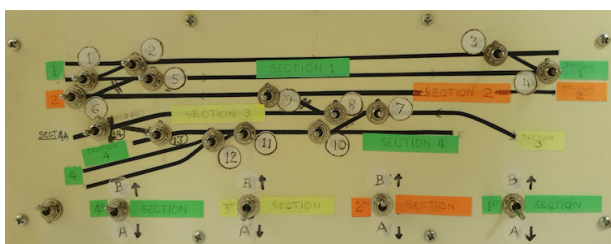
A Thankyou To The Club And Some Of The Members



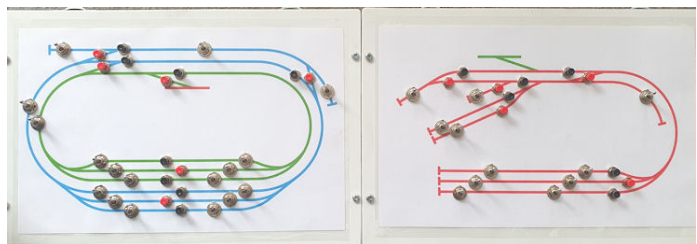
Just in case you haven't noticed, but my layout, Tom Bridge Junction, has, like Elvis, left the building! So now there's room to move in the small room. The layout has been in the Club since June 2024, after the Club's show. For those that don't know, there was a major electrical fault, and it was decided to take the layout to the Club and try to sort it out. It worked reasonably well for the open day two weeks later. So, after that I spoke to Tim about repairing the wiring and so with the help of members, a close examination revealed that the wiring was at fault and a minor fault on the power unit had caused many problems. So, talking with our clubs' experts for N gauge, Mike Biss and Wayne Webb, it was decided to replace all the wiring. I also asked if it would be possible to alter the fiddle yard lengths for the main lines, to enable two trains to be stored on each of three fiddle lines per main line. The branch station platform and goods yard fiddle yard would be made up to three lines. Then we would fit new point motors to the points in the fiddle yards, to make operating easier. Then I decided that separating the branch line from the main lines, so the branch and goods yard are a separate circuit, it would need its own power pack along with its own switchboard control for the points. This would also ensure that there would be no chance of a collision between it and the main lines.



So, the work commenced with stripping out all the wiring, switchboard controller and the power controller, this took up nearly the whole evening. Ashley Goodall also took the old Codar power unit away to check and test and found it to be faulty. It needed replacement capacitors and other components to be replaced, it now works correctly and for a fifty-year-old unit it has some modern attributes. It will be used on another layout in the Club, that depicts early model railway layouts.



Old Control Panel



New Control Panels Main / Branch

As the branch line was being separated from the main lines, a power supply was needed to be able to run the branch and goods yard. A Gaugemaster GMC-W walk about controller was obtained and this will, with a separate control switch box for the point motors in this area, make it into a totally standalone section. As a group it was decided to replace all the point motors, as most were now in poor condition. So, 24 new point motors were purchased. The fiddle yard was stripped out, the track was re-laid, using Peco Flexi-track and points in the fiddle yard, with the new additional point motors, to give extra space for the branch and goods yard along with extra space for the main lines, with smoother curves for entry to and from the fiddle yard. This also meant modifying the backscene divider. On its removal we found that the backs of the houses had been finished to as high a standard as the fronts! At this stage it was pointed out to me that three of the structures on the layout were American or Continental. Once pointed out, I could not un-see them, so I removed them and purchased new structures from the Metcalfe models range and these were then built by Carl White and will be placed on the layout when he has finished building the second one. The outer main line track at the curved station platform edge was too far away from the platform edge and was replaced, along with a set of worn points. Two separate control boxes were made, along with brackets to mount the power supplies, by Wayne Webb so the operator(s) could move to different points around the layout. Mike also carried out a lot of work ensuring that the mechanics of the layout were stable and he and Wayne worked together making these changes. It is with grateful thanks to all the Club members and the Club itself who worked on getting my layout working and functioning to such a new high standard. I have also spoken to Tim and James about making a donation to the Club as a way to say thank you to the Club for allowing the layout to stay so long at the clubroom.

Paul Sucksmith

Bowlers Croft Takes To The Road

Milton Keynes MRS was represented at the Northampton & District Model Railway Club's exhibition at Roade on Saturday 19th July by Bowlers Croft. This is a two rail 12' x 5' layout, which operates trains from Hornby Dublo and Wrenn (the successors of Hornby Dublo).

The team of Tim Byrne, Mike Biss, James Woodley and Dennis Lovett had a successful day with plenty of trains in action on the four-track mainline. Thanks also to Wayne Webb who helped transport one of the sections in his car. Wayne was working on Steve Walker's EM Gauge GWR branch line terminus. Work remains to be done to get the central section operational before its next outing (fortunately it does not yet have one!). The layout generated considerable interest and there were many cries of "I had one of those!".



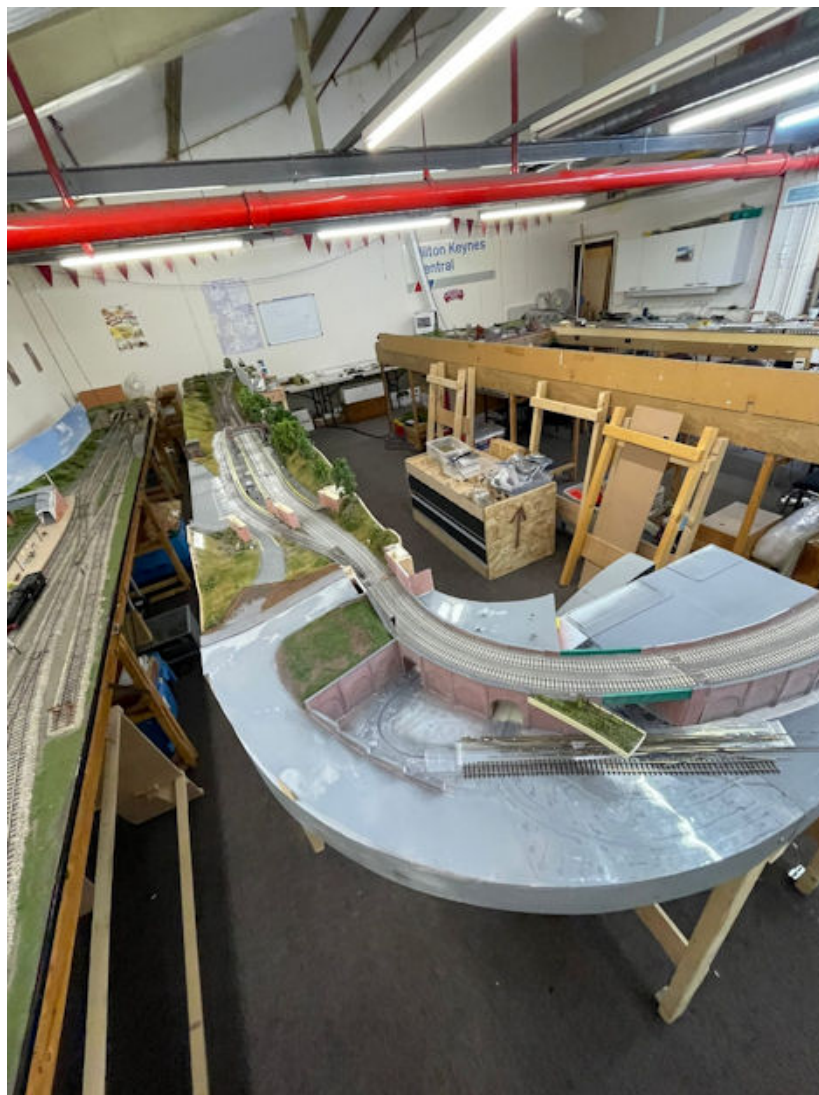
Dennis Lovett

The Club Play Host To Harefield Road

A couple of months ago, I was approached by Eric French (“Underground Eric” on YouTube) who asked if the Club had space and would be willing to allow him to setup his OO Gauge Underground layout “Harefield Road” in full, so that he could work on the scenics and test various upgrades, before taking it to the Greatest Gathering.

It was discussed with the committee and after measuring up, we agreed that it would just fit in the space between Barton Crossing and Frimingham, with the temporary removal of the Brinklow N Gauge layout.

Eric brought the layout to the Club on Sunday 20th July and work commenced.



The picture above shows the condition of the layout when it was first set up on the Sunday.

Much of the work over the next 11 days was done on the town scene, on the end closest on the picture, although there were jobs to be done over the entire length of the layout. Eric and his friends must have spent about 100 hours up the Club, during the time the layout was set up.



While the layout was with us Eric, was happy to allow Club members to have a play with the layout and the below picture show Tim and Stephen being given lessons on how to use his DCC system.



Eric and his team dismantled the layout on the Wednesday 30th and loaded the van for their drive to Derby on the next day.

Eric has a YouTube channel and here is a link to a video he made while with us <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5j0YE6FmKY&t=6s>

The below picture shows the layout setup, in the model zone at Derby, and it is very evident the amount of work that they did.



Carl White

Two gents were wandering through a forest, when they come across a set of tracks.

The first gent says "Ah, they're rabbit tracks".

The second gent says "No, no, no, they're deer tracks".

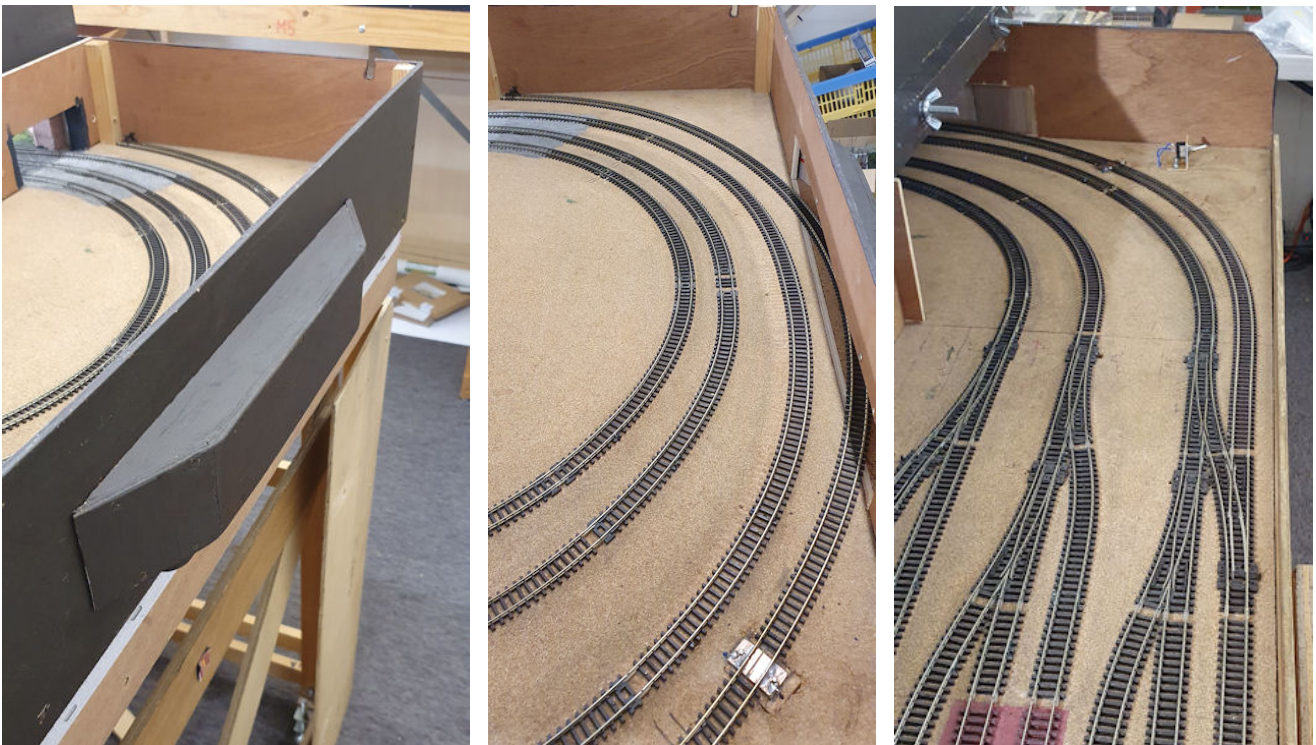
They were still arguing half an hour later, when the train came.....

Brinklow Updates - Part 7

Whilst Brinklow was dismantled, to allow the visiting Harefield Road to be setup, another addition to Brinklow has been completed, with an extra kick-back siding on the Blue line, at the right hand end. For exhibitions, this will allow the storage of a train that doesn't need to come out on a regular basis and can just make the odd guest appearance, most likely a breakdown crane combination.

We put another 2" boxed section on the end of the baseboard, the same as the other end, to fit the extra bit of track in. A track join was required on the bend, so a bit of copper-clad fibre board was used to solder the track down, using a curved Tracksetta piece to hold it in place whilst soldering. An extra point was also fitted and the wiring for the siding was just jumped across from the track next to it, with a switch to isolate the siding.

The point is manually operated, so no extra wiring back to the control panel is required and the operator just throws the point, and the isolating switch, and the train is good to go.



There are still a few more things we can do to make things more interesting at shows, the biggest challenge would be creating the option of separating the goods yard control from the Green control panel and have it operated by its own controller.

This would allow another operator to do some shunting in the goods yard, without impacting on trains running on the 'Up Slow' line, which it would do at present. The challenging bit will be trying to minimise (or prevent) any new inter-board wiring, but we do benefit from most of the goods yard being on only one board.

But that is for another day.....

Mike Biss

WhatsApp Group For The Club



The WhatsApp group for the Club is up and running, and has been used to good effect to answer some questions and also to see if something can be looked at on a clubnight. Join up and have a look, it can become a useful tool for the Club.

WhatsApp is available to download from your usual mobile phone App store.

To get access to the group (**which must be adults only due to legal reasons**), there is a QR-Code image on the Club notice board. Open WhatsApp and then click on the camera symbol and point it at the QR-Code. It will then allow you to join the 'MK Model Railway Club' group.



Alternatively, you can use this link <https://chat.whatsapp.com/JWo9Pc1ynRU3vhxYm8Smyj> on your phone's browser to gain access. Any questions, just ask someone who uses their phone a lot!

NOTE: Younger members can have their questions asked via their parent/guardian, using the group.

Club Open Day



Our last Open Day of the year is planned for Saturday 25th October, so please make a note in your diary. Open days are a great way to welcome potential new members and show people what we do, although successful open days rely on club members getting involved! So why not ask your friends, neighbours or work colleagues about having a look at what we do and see if they will like to join in with the activities we do.

Therefore, we will soon have a sign-up sheet on the notice board in the club room, so we have an idea of how many members will be able to help out on the day! If you can't get to the club room to add your name to the sign-up sheet, then please contact James at secretary@mkMrs.org.uk and he will add your details.



The MKMRC Newsletter will only survive with your help,
we need you to provide articles please –

- These can be write-ups on exhibitions attended, modelling titbits, trips out, holidays, modelling updates on your layout or anything else.
- Members will find a variety of subjects interesting.
- Articles can be sent either as an attached file or with the words in the email. Pictures that you want in the article can either be in the attachment or sent separately.
- No need to spend time making it look nice, that's the Editor's job!
- Please email articles to newsletter@mkmrs.org.uk

**Deadline for the Winter Edition is:-
23rd November 2025**

**With the Newsletter being published
in the first week of December 2025**



*Mike Biss
Newsletter Editor*