



## NEWSLETTER 88 : Aug 2020

**Newsletter Editor : Andrew Chrysler**

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### **Editorial.**

With the gradual easing of lockdown, my wife and I were able to take a much-awaited holiday, which enabled our builder to replace what was left of our bedroom ceiling - mainly held in place by a layer of artex - as well as replastering the wall, where the plaster was held mostly vertical by a layer of wallpaper. A problem that is, I am sure, not completely unknown to occupiers of Victorian houses in Southport. It wasn't exactly the easiest of jobs, and Damon Noone (a familiar name? He's Peter Noone's - of "Herman's Hermits" - kid brother ) finished work at 6pm before we returned the next morning.

We were initially unsure about what would and would not be open, and booked a caravan at Haven, so that we would have lounge, kitchen, garden etc available, but in fact we found several pubs and restaurants open - all with sensible precautions.

On our return journey, we stopped for a couple of days at the Crown Inn at Grewelthorpe, which won "Four in a Bed" earlier this year. Situated in the beautiful Yorkshire village of Grewelthorpe, it is as far from an identikit chain hotel as it is possible to get. Paul, an experienced chef, serves hearty portions of excellent food, while Deborah tends the bar, and creates a very friendly atmosphere where B&B guests are as welcome as the local regulars, and conversation - "banter" - flows freely. Just a few miles from Ripon and Masham, in a popular walking area,

you could be a million miles from civilisation and the lack of a mobile phone signal merely enhances this (but there is excellent wi-fi if you really must communicate to the outer world). Three letting rooms, including one on the ground floor, are charming and quirky.

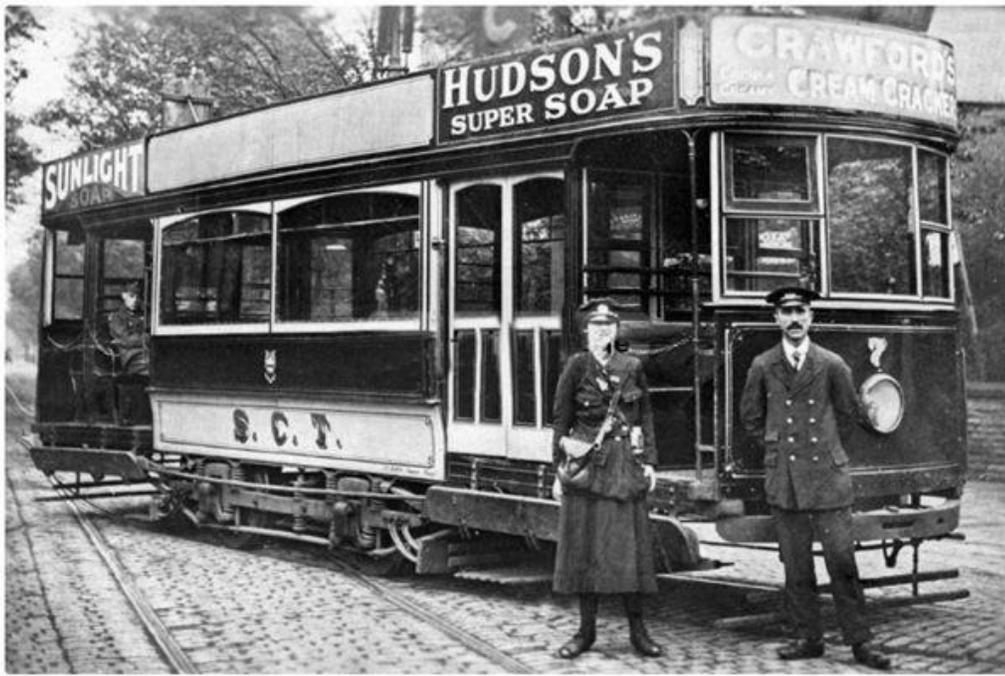
No money has changed hands for this recommendation, but I will be expecting an extra - equally excellent and local - sausage on my breakfast plate on our next visit.

### **Events Diary.**

Once again, this is mostly blank for the moment, with the exception of the weekly "zoom" meeting.

### **Chairman's Notes.**

I was recently reminded by your editor that he was awaiting my contribution for the August newsletter so before getting diverted on to some other activity I thought I had better respond. However, I am struggling a little to find much to say. Of course the main event this last month was the sad passing of John Bunn, a former member and a friend of our club. Our secretary has provided a very nice eulogy (see below).



I have been busy "finishing" (adding downspouts and painting) the main building of the 2mm model of Birkdale Palace Hotel that I started some time ago. I have now progressed to making the restaurant and ballroom extension. This has entailed some further trawling of

the internet to find pictures showing what it was like so that I can draw up plans. Unfortunately there seems to be a lack of them, and those that I can find are either of an indifferent quality or are low resolution. But in this quest I did come

across a rather splendid photograph of a Southport tram and its officials. Unfortunately there was no indication of location or date (suspect some time during The Great War). Perhaps someone might wish to continue where Harry Moore left off and produce a Southport Tramways layout on a more manageable scale.

Over the last couple of weeks or so, there have been slightly fewer attendees to our Friday night zoom meeting. Perhaps this is a reflection of the easing of lockdown with people managing to meet up with friends and relations again, even though in a restricted manner. We have had a few 'member's interludes' (ie short presentation) but it would be nice if we could have a few more. It could be a video of your layout, a description of a railway setting, or indeed anything else of interest - 5-10 minutes is all we are asking for. Whilst on the topic of presentation, Andrew is always looking for copy for the newsletter - anything from a full blown article down to a simple captioned picture will do.

I will leave you to enjoy the rest of the newsletter, which I am led to believe is quite extensive this month.

Ian S.

### **Secretary's Notes.**

Well, another month, another funeral! The sixth of my railway friends since Christmas has taken that journey with no return ticket, I am sad to say.

Yesterday I was invited to attend the funeral of our former member, John Bunn, by his sister Sheila. It was a dignified but simple affair at Southport Crematorium at which we heard quite a lot of serious music which was an interest of John's. I was not aware of this but it is surprising how much you learn about people that you thought you knew well at their funeral service - a bit of a shame really because you are no longer able to ask them about it! I attach the Order of Service, which includes two pictures of John himself.

John was a gentle, thoughtful and kindly man who originally joined our club around 10 years ago when he moved to Ainsdale to be near his sister. He lived alone and had spent 30 years in the electronics business, having left school at 15 with no qualifications and taught himself this subject. He rose to a senior position and retired at the age of 57, and toured the UK in a motorhome with his dog and a friend for a number of years before the death of both of these companions encouraged him to settle in our town.



The family would like to thank everyone for their attendance here today and for all the support shown to them at this sad time.

The family are gratefully receiving donations on behalf of  
**Queenscourt Hospice**  
in memory of John.

Moisters Funeralcare  
8 Station Road, Ainsdale, Southport, Merseyside PR8 3HS  
Telephone: 01704 575 282

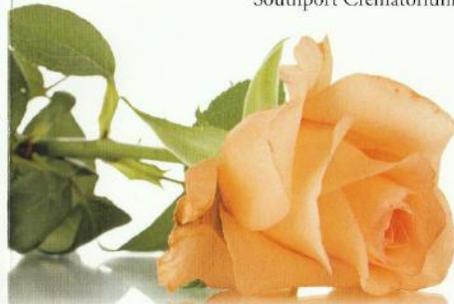
*In loving memory of*



*John Albert Bunn*

12th December 1944 - 9th July 2020

Wednesday 22nd July 2020 at 10.00 am  
Southport Crematorium



John often attended my birthday BBQ which is normally open to all members and ex-members and would normally take place this Saturday, but for obvious reasons is not happening.

About five years ago, John indicated to me that things in his life were changing and he decided not to renew his membership, nonetheless he remained in close contact with many of us and would often make himself available to help at exhibitions, often manning the admissions desk with Peter Clare, another former member who was also present at his funeral alongside three other former members and Tony Kuivala. As requested by Ian, I passed on our condolences as a club to Sheila.



Instead of the BBQ, Fiona and myself are heading out to Wales for three days in Porthmadog, where we have booked on the Heritage trains to TanyBwlch on each day. I asked her what she wanted to do in Wales and she said "Go on the train of course!", and when I asked her which day, she just said "every day". We never tire of the Festy and are missing our regular visits there. This trip we hope to catch sight of or maybe even travel behind Welsh Pony, the only remaining Large England loco remaining which has just been restored after 80 years.

Another recently restored loco was the subject of a mini-talk that I gave in last week's Zoom – Rio Grande Southern Number 20 which was originally Cripple Creek Number 20. This loco built originally by Shenectady survived the closure of the RGS by virtue of its use in the Film "A ticket to Tomahawk" which is remembered as it features Marilyn Monroe in a minor role, one of her first screen appearances.

<https://coloradorailroadmuseum.org/2020/07/02/news-release-rgs-20/>. Those club members who accompanied us on the epic tour across America by Railroad in 2015 will be interested to hear that she is returning to the Colorado Railroad Museum at Golden just by the Coors Brewery. We spent a very pleasant few hours

there and where hosted by the Denver Garden Railway club who kindly operated their garden layout for us.

Whilst on the subject of overseas correspondence, members may be interested in the following email which I received from Denmark:-

Email: [lars@vibefilm.dk](mailto:lars@vibefilm.dk)

Subject: Five small films about Danish model railroad

Message: Hi Southport Model Railway Society I recently produced five small films about Danish model railroads, which I believe might be of interest to your members. The films focus on a specific model railroad club in the Danish town Ribe. The three members have been working on their model railroad for more than 30 years, which has resulted in a unique friendship, a passion for the work – and not least an impressive railroad landscape. In the films, they also share some technical tips that might prove useful to other model railroad hobbyists. If you're interested, you can watch the films for free on my website: <https://vibefilm.dk/rhjms-english/> The spoken language is Danish, but all the films come with English subtitles. I was wondering if you would like to spread the word to your members? I really appreciate any help you can provide. Best wishes Lars Rasmussen Vibefilm Høgelsbjerg 27 6200 Aabenraa Denmark tel: 0045 4074 1433 mail: [lars@vibefilm.dk](mailto:lars@vibefilm.dk) web: [www.vibefilm.dk](http://www.vibefilm.dk)"

Jim

### **Where's Andrew? (or where's Andrew's wife if you insist?)**



First response last month with a correct answer was from Frank who also reminded me of the "white knuckle" ride along one section of track in particular. Mike was a close 2nd with Barry gaining third place. The photograph was taken on the Isle of Wight just outside the Ryde tunnel. The Isle of Wight may well be unique in that the preserved railway could well be running younger stock than the main line!

The pre-war ex-London Transport rolling stock is due for imminent replacement, with 1980 stock from the same source. The Ryde tunnel limits stock to a smaller loading gauge than

normal main line, while Ryde Esplanade has a sharply curved platform which also limits options for replacement stock.

This month I am (or Joan is) at a preserved railway, several hours from Southport, in the area formerly served by the GWR .

I was there as well... somebody had to hold the camera.

This picture was taken at a station where the platform passes under the aptly named Bridge Road.

On the same site is a 5" gauge miniature railway, an OO and N scale model railway and a 2ft gauge line on which a steam tram runs, clockwise, on an almost completely circular track.

### **Lost Property**

Jim Ford tells me that he has mislaid his clubroom key. He does not recall if he has lent it to anybody, and last used it in February, before lockdown. He requested that I ask if anybody has seen it or knows of its whereabouts.

### **Rolling stock weights and derailments**

**Ian Shulver**

I was reading an article recently, I think it was about operating a layout, and one of the points made was that for reliable operation and more particularly reduced frequency of derailments, one should pay careful attention to the weight of the rolling stock. The article referred the reader to a NMRA standard which can be found on their website ([www.NMRA.org](http://www.NMRA.org)). I have reproduced the text of this standard at the end of this article for convenience. As this is an American modelling standard the units are effectively in "old money".

This got me to thinking about why a train, particularly in N gauge, should run reliably for many circuits and then for no apparent reason either uncouple or derail. Perhaps there is something in this weight thing after all. My own experience is principally with N gauge and I know for a fact that many of the wagons are extremely light with the slightest knock or gust of wind upending them - of course coaches are a little heavier and less prone to this. So taking a Farish brakevan and a GWR coach, I weighed them and they came out at 6g and 26g respectively. Looking at the table below for N gauge, you can see that the recommended overall weight for the brakevan is 21g and for the coach it is 36g - both seriously higher than the actual weights. Perhaps it is time for me to be looking carefully at adding some lead, or similar, to the underframes to bring the weight closer to the recommended. Of course there is a downside to this increase - the overall weight of the train increases and so the loco may not be able to pull

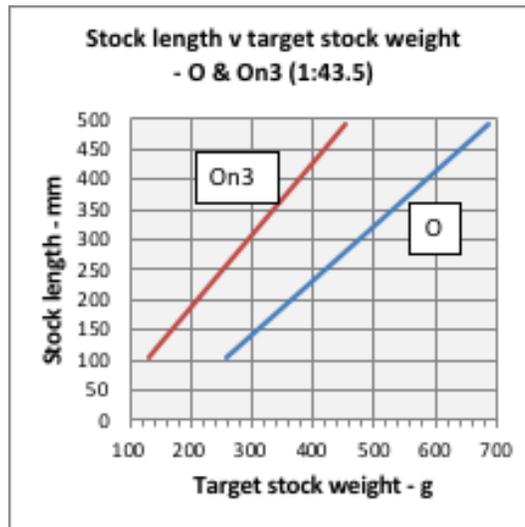
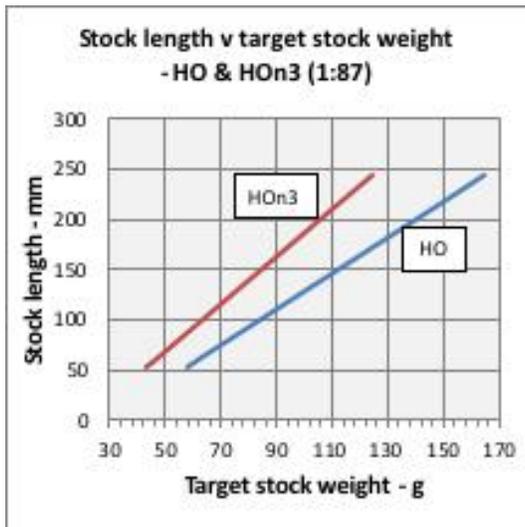
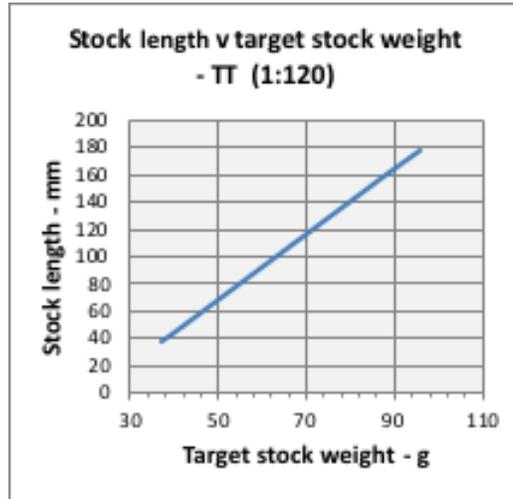
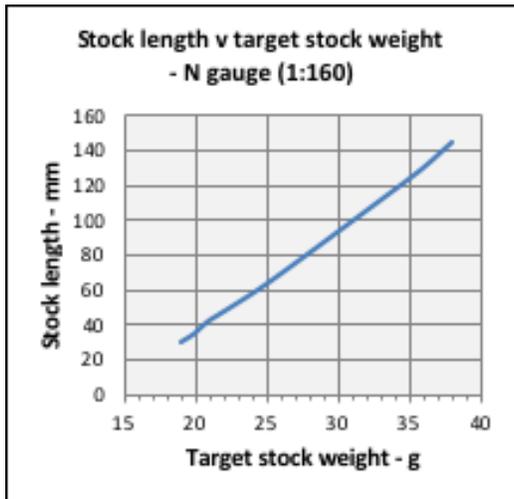
quite as many wagons or coaches. But surely this is a small price to pay for better running.

Although I have little experience with other gauges, I do have one Dapol OO coal wagon. This weighs in at 34g, still some way short of the recommended 63g. Perhaps you OO modellers should also have a look at this aspect.

Scale		N	TT	HO n3	H O	Sn 3	S	On 3	O		
		14 8	12 0	87	87	64	64	43 .5	43. 5		
NMR A	Initial weight (oz)	0. 5	0. 75	0. 75	1	1	2	1. 5	5		
	Additional weight (oz)	0. 15	0. 38	0. 38	0. 50	0. 50	0. 50	0. 75	1		
Metr ic	Basic weight (g)	14 .2	21 .3	21 .3	28 .4	28 .4	56 .7	42 .5	141 .8		
	Additional weight (g/mm)	0. 2	0. 4	0. 4	0. 6	0. 6	0. 6	0. 8	1.1		
Over all targ et weig ht (g) of stoc k	wago n	17. 5'		20	40	47	63	75	10 3	14 5	279
	brake van	21. 0'		21	44	52	69	84	11 3	16 6	306
	6 wheel ed	31. 0'		25	54	67	89	11 1	13 9	22 4	384
	57'co ach	57. 0'		34	82	10 5	14 0	18 0	20 8	37 7	588
	63' coach	63. 0'		36	88	11 4	15 2	19 6	22 4	41 2	635

The following graphs can be used to quickly assess what the ideal weight of an item of rolling stock for the various gauges scales that we use. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be a values given for OO (1:72), but I would imagine they

would not be too dissimilar to those for HO. Similarly the values for N gauge are for 1:160 rather than British 'N' (1:148).



**NMRA RECOMMENDED PRACTICES - RP-20.1 Car Weight (5/19/98)**

Carefully documented tests, show a decided advantage in performance past obstructions in the track for cars weighted to an optimum weight. Since the radial forces tending to cause derailments are greater in longer cars, this optimum weight will vary with car length.

While cars of less than optimum weight will often perform satisfactorily on good track work, increasing weight to the optimum will improve the safety factor with which rougher track will be negotiated. Mixing light weight cars into a train of heavier cars is not recommended because of the possibility that the lighter weight cars may be pulled off the track in sharp curves.

Weight in excess of the optimum will seldom add to the ability of a car to roll down a given grade since the additional weight is almost exactly balanced by the

increased friction of the axles in their journals. Extra weight simply adds to the drag of a train and adds more weight to be lifted to the summit of a grade. Cars should be constructed to keep the lowest possible center of gravity. Supplementary weight added to bring the car to optimum weight should be kept as low as possible.

To find the optimum weight of a given car enter the Table below in the desired scale and find the "Initial Weight". Then find the "Additional Weight" and multiply this by the number of actual inches in the length of the particular car body. Add this weight to the "Initial Weight" for the total Optimum Weight of the car.

SCALE	INITIAL WEIGHT (ounces)	+	ADDITIONAL WEIGHT per inch of car body length (Ounces)
O	5	+	1
On3	1-1/2	+	3/4
S	2	+	1/2
Sn3	1	+	1/2
HO	1	+	1/2
HOn3	3/4	+	3/8
TT	3/4	+	3/8
N	1/2	+	.15

Note: Many factors besides car weight affect car performance:

Track Railhead should be smooth and without obstructions. and should conform to STANDARD S-3 (Use the GAGE of RP-2).

Wheels should run freely and truly in free-swivelling trucks. should be of good contour (See RP-25) and conform to STANDARD S-4 (See RP-2).

Weight on each wheel should be approximately equal - springing, if used, should permit free equalization of the trucks for the car weight used.

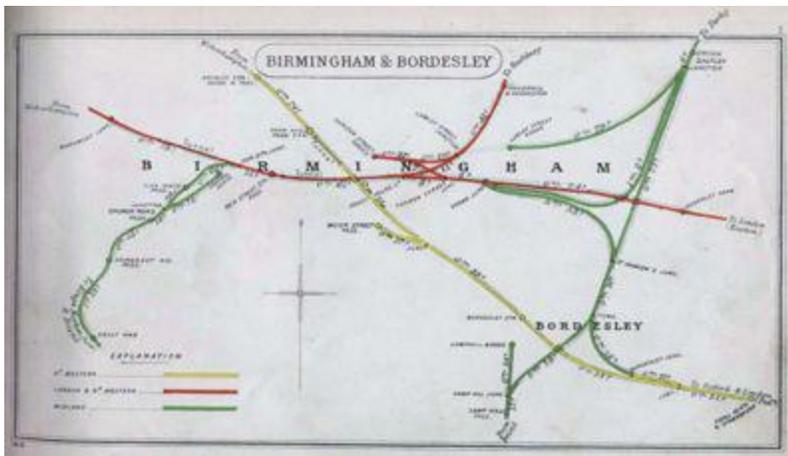
Coupler and diaphragm bind due to un eased and reverse curves should be eliminated.

***1. Moor St. Station History***

Birmingham's city centre still bears the scars of the inter railway company rivalry of the 19<sup>th</sup>C. The Duddeston Viaduct at 50 chains length with 58 arches was never used and stands as an embodiment of the futility of such rivalry. It signifies the intransigence between the London and North Western Railway and the GWR and the former's failed attempt to keep the GWR out of Birmingham. The GWR did eventually enter Birmingham from London, initially in 1852 via Oxford and Banbury (the Great Way Round at 16 miles longer than the LNWR route). It took until the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for the GWR to obtain a more direct route as part of Walter Young Armstrong's projects for the GWR in the West Midlands. The building of Moor St. station was the final piece of the jigsaw for these projects. The station, positioned at the entrance to the Snow Hill tunnel and within yards of the Bull Ring provided increased passenger capacity for the expanding suburban lines, freeing up the limited two track Snow Hill tunnel for the new and faster expresses. Expanding the Bordesley Viaduct from two to four tracks enhanced further this capacity and the new goods station and yard provided a substantial goods facility right in the Birmingham city centre meaning goods no longer had to be transported the two miles by cart from the Hockley Depot to reach the Birmingham markets.

Such a small station therefore had a profound effect on GWR capacity yet it's existence relied heavily on good deal of luck and good fortune. To understand this we will need briefly to delve into the history of the city of Birmingham. In 16<sup>th</sup>C Birmingham city centre had shifted from the area around Moor and Park St (known as Little Park) to the higher ground to the north west of the Bull Ring. The area now occupied by New St., Corporation St. and Colmore Row. It was in this newer area that Birmingham erected it's major public buildings that can be seen today. The splendid Municipal Building and the famous Town Hall, modelled as a stand alone Corinthian temple. So when the GWR began the planning of Moor St at the turn on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries little property of civic value remained in the Moor St. area, indeed few mourned the loss of the so called 'Old Public Offices' the demolition of which enabled the development of the goods yard. The second slice of luck came even earlier. Birmingham had been settled in the 7<sup>th</sup> C on the high ground above the slopes than run down to the River Rea. The site had ben chosen as the slopes were well drained and provided a good defensive position over the fertile meadows of Digbeth and Deritend. The station was built at the head of this

slope providing the ideal contours for substantial underground good yards. Approval to build the station was given by the GWR Board in August 1907, construction started a year later after all the necessary permissions had been obtained and Moor St. station opened in 1909. The Bordesley Viaduct expansion was completed in 1913 and the substantial upper and lower good sheds were completed in 1914. The significant delay between the opening of the passenger station and the goods yard was due to the time taken by GWR to acquire the land adjacent to the passenger station occupied by the Old Public Offices which at that time was being used as the main police station. Consent to purchase and demolish the building was not given until the new police station in Digbeth was ready. GWR used the time to erect Goods Shed B. The shed was constructed using ferro-concrete pillars and can still be seen today as the site is now used as the basement level for the Moor Street multi storey car park.



The layout of railways in Birmingham City Centre in 1915 is as follows.

Moor St upper goods shed with the station just visible on the left. The station canopy is to the right. The spire of St. Martins Church is just visible behind the wagon hoist.



The final station and goods complex consisted of a passenger station with three platforms. The two main platforms were provided with a standard pitched canopy. A shorter canopy was provided for the third platform. Because of space limitations a pair of transversers were installed between the platforms. In addition to a large upper shed two low level sheds were built, Shed A and Shed B. To

facilitate movement of wagons between the levels three wagon hoists were installed.

## **2. Moor St and me**

My early years trainspotting were spent in and around eastern Birmingham at Acocks Green station with the odd foray to Stetchford and very occasionally into town to Snow Hill. Then, for reasons that were never made clear to me, my father



decided when I was 11 to send me to a grammar school in the west of the city and any time I had for train spotting was substantially curtailed. Travel to my new school required me to travel into the city centre then out again to the other side of the city. Everyday I would come into the city from the east, eventually up the slope from Digbeth and past Moor St. Little

did I know that very soon I would be spending even more time in the station vicinity. The music master at my new school, Geoff Fletcher, was also Head of Music at St. Martins in the Field, Birmingham's parish church which occupies the Bull Ring next to Moor St. He used his position in the school to find new talent for the church choir. In our very early music lessons he would get boys to individually sing a hymn. I thought this was strange and thought nothing of it until a letter plonked on the doormat inviting my parents to let me join St Martin's choir. Geoff had used these school lessons to audition the new intake of boys so before I knew it I was a chorister at St Martins, resplendent in a red cassock, ruff and white surplice. (Photos did exist of me in these but unfortunately they have been somehow lost). Being a chorister involved spending Wednesday and Friday evenings (practise), most of Sunday (services) and sometimes Saturday, if we had a wedding at St. Martins. My bus to and from home was outside Moor St station and so began my intimate relationship with a strange station just over the road. Despite being shipped out of Birmingham to Liverpool in the great social engineering exercises of the 1960's I returned to my roots as a student and my commute to Aston University would take me past Moor St. and along past Curzon St. station facade towards what today is called the Aston Triangle. You can take the boy out of Birmingham but not Birmingham out of the boy.

## **3. Modelling Moor St.**

When it came to begin a model railway Moor St seemed to me to be the obvious choice. A choice subsequently confirmed in a number of articles that have been published in the model railway press suggesting it as a suitable project. The station has a number of elements that make it, if not unique, very rare and provide interesting modelling opportunities. It is not a simple GWR branch station. Apart from its city centre location numerous innovative elements were built into its design, transversers, wagon hoists and underground goods areas. This in addition to the splendid architecture of both the main station building in blue and red bricks, it's airy concourse and long platform canopy. Add to that lines running into the platforms from an expanded viaduct and an adjacent mainline. There was more than enough to be going on with.

### ***3a. Moor St. Version 1***



The model has undergone a number of iterations since its inception in 2005. Version 1 was a small exhibition layout which had its first outing in 2006 at our very own SMRS exhibition. The layout had a single track approaching from the viaduct into the station platforms and an upper goods yard. The good shed, wagon hoist and the station canopies had all been scratch built and one transverser was

operating (manually) between the second and third platforms. The layout was DCC using the Hornby EZ Command System, relatively simple to operate system as was required by the local operative for the day. All points were manual and there was a limited fiddle yard. Some attempt had been made to illustrate the contours on which Moor St is based with a lower level road and market stalls. In order to build the layout within a reasonable space the platforms and upper goods shed have been truncated, the number of roads in have been significantly reduced and artistic licence has allowed the market to be moved from the Bull Ring level to the lower level of Digbeth.



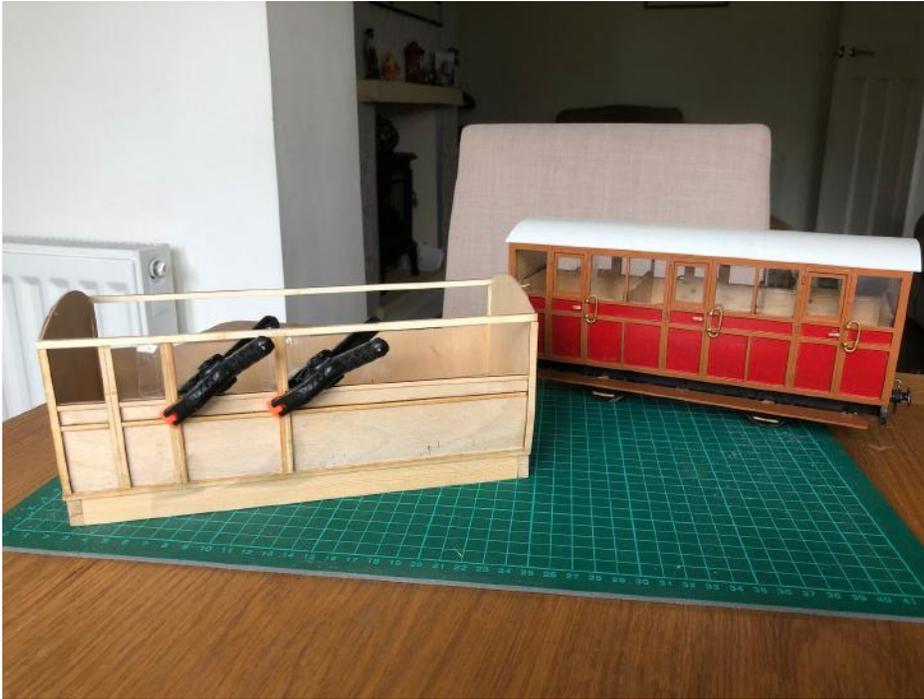
The model is viewed from the perspective of the main line (not present). This perspective is unusual as it would have (and continues to be) difficult to view

the station from this direction. Significant further artistic licence has been taken with the viaducts and roadways. As a first version it provided a useful testing ground for ideas and a reasonably compact exhibition layout. However as with all layouts it was to change.

***To Be Continued...***

### **A grounded coach for Moss Park L R**

### **Frank Parkinson**



This is my attempt at building a grounded coach, this is a layout feature which, for me, conjures up a perhaps romantic image from an easy going but now long-lost idyllic period of time in the history of railways. I have taken inspiration from the scene in *The Titfield Thunderbolt* where the villagers "borrow " Dan the old driver's home to form a replacement carriage for their train.

This in turn was no doubt inspired by the Talylynn volunteers recovering a Corris coach formerly being used as a summerhouse and shed in a Welsh garden. Hence my scratch build replica of the I P Engineering Talylynn coach No.3 shown in the picture.

I am building this from a variety of hoarded "never throw anything away" items in the scrap box including the sprue from said I P laser cut ply kit and coffee stirrers from the likes of KFC and well known coffee shops (remember them?). The sprue parts are particularly useful being laser cut as they can reach down to 1mm dimensions, virtually impossible to achieve by hand. I can therefore confidently say, told you it would come in handy! I appreciate much of this could be achieved in Plasticard but apart from preferring to work in wood I feel it readily gives more depth.

The model has moved on since this picture was taken and with continued lockdown should be close to completion by the next issue. Watch this space.

## **Tips for Modellers**

**Ian Shulver**

***Craft knives*** - I imagine that everyone has one of these in their toolbox in some shape or other for cutting paper, card and styrene sheet, or other nefarious activity. Over the years I have used a variety from the good old Stanley knife to some of the more exotic sets that you find occasionally in the likes of Aldi or Lidl. However, for general modelling purposes my preference is for a Swan Morton No 3 handle which fits the hand nicely. Ideally you should go for the Swan Morton scalpel blades rather than generic replacement types which do not seem to keep their edge quite as long. Whichever brand you use, they are very, very sharp but brittle, so do use them as a screwdriver or for prising off paint pot lids. Also take care when replacing blades otherwise there is a tendency for your work to get speckled with blood. There are a wide variety of blade shapes but I tend to use the pointed 10A blades which is ideally suited for thinner card and styrene and can help get a nice neat cut right into the corners of windows etc. The more rounded blades are better for cutting thicker card but, of course, are not as good for producing tricky shapes.

***Cutting mats*** - I have two sorts of cutting mats - the normal self healing one and a sheet of glass. Of course you could also use pieces of plywood, hardboard or even the kitchen table (although that may not go down well with the authorities). For cutting paper and thin card or styrene, I prefer to use a piece of glass. Using quite a light pressure with a 10A blade held at a shallow angle produces a very clean cut - no edge curl or whiskers.

It is best to use a piece of float or plate glass rather than old sheet window glass which is not always perfectly flat. 6mm thick glass is ideal and should be about A4 in size. To prevent you cutting yourself, the edges should be chamfered (use a fine carborundum stone with some water or oil to get a smooth finish). It is also useful to stick some small pieces of felt on one surface so that the glass does not damage your best table.

A further benefit of this glass sheet is that it can be used as a flatness plate to make certain any kit or scratch built model you are making is "level". This is particularly useful when constructing wagons or loco chassis which do have a habit of twisting as the glue dries. I have recently found when working with styrene and liquid poly (Mekpak or similar) the styrene sticks to the glass. But do not despair, as long as you let the assembly dry thoroughly, the careful use of a scalpel blade separates it from the glass. There may be a little flash left on the piece but this is

easily cleaned off. Whatever you do, do not try to separate until everything is dry and set otherwise - disaster.

### **Next Month**

Next month's newsletter will contain the continuation of the two articles commenced this month, together with other contributions which I am sure I can expect over the next few weeks.

Next month, the newsletter will be produced with the assistance of the wi-fi at Brooke House B&B, Shanklin, Isle of Wight. Again no money has changed hands for this mention, and I already get a second sausage at breakfast and don't think that I could eat three (but I might well try).

### **And Finally...**



Whilst not exactly connected with model railways, I felt a curious compulsion to share this cartoon.

Hopefully by the time of the next issue, we will have had an opportunity to meet in a non-virtual way.

Until then...

Andrew.

**apc253@gmail.com**