

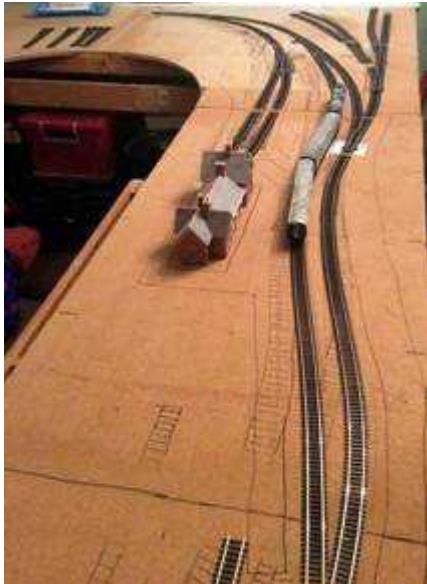


Newsletter

Issue 44 July 2015 Editor: Peter Mills

Editorial.

I spoke in the last issue about the benefits of working with someone or a group like a model railway club. In Dalegarth, we have a model railway club based on the Eastbank MRC model that Comrade Trotter and myself are part of. We have no clubrooms, no assets, no subscription and no constitution. All the layouts, rolling stock etc are all owned by the individuals. What we do have is a connected group of people with a wide and diversified interest in railways, both here in the UK and around the world. We don't always meet on the same day of the week or even every week. Because of the nature of being a steam train driver, our modelling days are restricted to our individual rest days or evenings. Sometimes, after 12 hours driving a steam train on a hot day, all you want to do is relax and not do much. We often meet and chat about whatever railway topic comes into our heads when we get the chance at various locations including the local hostelries!



We are doing our bit to keep the hobby going as is everyone at Southport MRS in the Portland Street clubrooms. As I am exploring DCC, it makes me think that maybe that as we try to compete with the game thrones and computer generation, which may be DCC represents the last fling for a hobby in the search for new modellers. The continuing struggle to survive is getting harder. If you look at the age range at exhibitions and clubs, we are all not getting any younger and it seems that the hobby is not attracting new young modellers in the numbers required. However we can only continue to encourage and entertain, whether that is in Dalegarth, Portland Street, or our fantastic annual exhibition in the hope of attracting new talent.

Peter Mills.

Chairman's notes.

As hoped, courtesy of my son's Father's Day treat, the Good Lady and I paid due homage at the temple of railway modelling which is Pendon. This was for me, a lifelong held ambition finally realised. I say finally but it won't mean a final visit because there is so much to take in and you can't hope to do it justice at a first viewing, so further visit(s) will be necessary. I have heard this from others who have been before and can see what they mean, the modelling is inspirational. I will be going again, even my son as a non -modeller feels the same, if you have not yet visited I would urge you to go, you may even see us there.

I was aware that whilst being away enjoying this new experience, that I was unable to give support at this years Woodvale show. My conscience was a little eased however knowing that our very effective and supportive team were busy and more importantly also enjoying themselves. One strong point that became apparent to me at the museum and I am sure was similar at Woodvale is the atmosphere of friendliness that this hobby of ours can engender. It was good to see the interaction between museum staff and visitors with a wide cross-section of ages and interest. Bringing that mixture of youth and friendship to the fore is surely a vital element in the furtherance of our hobby.

Frank Parkinson.

Woodvale Revisited.

As most of you will know, and probably experienced at first-hand, Woodvale occurred recently. Tony did his usual sterling job in organising us into a more-or-less coherent group of operators with their layouts, and a pleasant time was had by all. The weather could have been better at times but also could have been a lot worse. Outside the tent, sorry marquee, the rest of Woodvale was happening.



Now I may have missed something in my fairly brief excursions away from coaxing Middleforth into something resembling proficient operation, but it seemed to be all a bit samey and lacking in real interest. Most of the expected elements were there, amusement rides, dancing competitions, craft stalls, veteran vehicles, car boot sales, etc., but it seemed to lack focus, a central theme, even perhaps a reason for existing. I have no idea of how attendance

figures are holding up, but just looking around the site did not give the impression of large numbers of visitors from all over, perhaps more of a day out for loyal local families.

This is not a criticism of the organisers, who have done well in keeping the event going, after summary ejection from RAF Woodvale left them with not only no show ground but also without its mainstay of operation, flying model planes (and occasionally real ones). But perhaps now is the time to reconsider what the event is for, and how it could be refocused and rejuvenated. At a chance meeting outside the paintball stall I mentioned this to Tony, who agreed it needed repositioning, possibly dropping the Woodvale moniker and reinventing itself as Southport Transport Festival.

Now that seems a possibility. In the North-West we have a fair bit of transport heritage, and perhaps the various interest groups could be encouraged to participate in an event aimed specifically at showing off the best preserved, veteran and classic vehicles in the region. Some form of competitive element might also stimulate interest. It would attract a wider audience and hopefully be an event which exhibitors would want to come to. The existing attractions could still remain, but more as sideshows rather than the main event.

What does the team think? No, I am definitely not volunteering! **Derek Pratt.**

Exhibition Manager's Report.

The progress continues with the 2015 exhibition. An excellent visit to Greenbank has supplied the detail for the first view of the Floor Plan which will require much tweaking as is ever the case. Something even better. No, not the insert Location Plan for the Exhibition Guide or the Fire Exits etc, Greenbank's in-house Catering team will be supplying our hot exhibitors lunchtime meals on similar basis to that we are used to whilst David Reames and his team will run the Café on same format. Both operations will as usual be sharing the same resources. I have to admit that this was the subject that had been causing me greatest concern. Alison had told us privately prior to 2014 Exhibition that this would be her final year as she was moving to Winged Fellowship in Southport as their Catering Manager which was not only a bigger job but a seven day operation.

We will have three new Traders. Country Park Models from Rhondda with massive stand of spares, The LocoShed from Manchester, another large stand with lovely range of new/pre-used, and Trains Books & Coaches from John & Angie Green here in Southport.

Layouts.

Much longer report than usual as numerous events happening in short time scales.

Portland Street. Apart from thinking through the method of inserting a minimum option DCC facility, apparent progress has been made over the last few weeks. The inner track is now operable. Both tracks have now been tested and are resilient. The present track layout is now final.

1. Hugh Barker is one of our Members in Residential Care. He is a venerable gentleman in his 70's with vast knowledge of Railway history and activity. Initially we were to build him an N gauge for which the boards are in situ in his room. Objectives changed early this year as health dictates that a larger scale at desk top height would be better. The new Layout, unnamed as yet, is to Exhibition standards in OO and will debut at our Exhibition in November. It is a 1930's GWR branch line in finescale depicting rural Herefordshire with LMS running rights on three 4ft boards approx 21" wide. Two are to reside with Hugh in Elm House for his enjoyment. The third is a fiddle yard with a circular traverser. Our thanks go to Terry Tasker for building the boards which are at Portland Street . We, Peter Clare & I, will be trialling the track plan to make sure it fits. Then Allan Trotter will review our handiwork prior drawing up electrical plan which we can work to for isolation breaks etc. Hugh is generously funding all materials and purchasing suitable rolling stock, some of which has already arrived. SMRS as the managers of the layout are to take it to whatever exhibitions they may wish. In due time everything will become our property.

2. In 2014 Hilary's Christmas present to Club was a 5ft by 2ft baseboard built to exhibition standards by Terry as one of the central portions of an end to end OO on a modular basis in DCC, eventually to be 20ft long. There is a track plan. As soon as we hand over the two boards for Hugh to Allan, we will start on testing this track plan for viability. Hilary has yet to decide what code track she will be purchasing. Peter Clare, John Bunn & others will lay the track. We

have to hand enough cascaded materials for a 5ft Fiddle yard. No time scale is decided yet for Exhibition but 2015 looks a bit too optimistic.

3. For reasons that will become apparent as time passes, SMRS now have a working 009 Layout. Hilary purchased Namur on our behalf from Mike Sharples at Woodvale last weekend. Mike needs the domestic space. Some stock is included. Within SMRS we have access to a significant amount of additional stock although passenger coaches may not directly fit with a 1930's Belgian semi urban tramway whilst goods stock should.

Sound Capsules. Our next step will be to trail a Capsule inside a coach or long parcels van which will act as a "sound box" to amplify sound. I've seen this work very well on another layout but each layout and its surroundings will have their own acoustic footprints. We have just renovated a room which may or may not assist.

For greater technical detail please see www.train-tech.com or Webshop at www.dcpexpress.com

Building Report.

Inside - Frank has redecorated the last wall in Portland room. Still finishing off required. Maybe a bit of understatement as repainting of windows and floor edge boards, installing new ventilation grills and some ceiling work are next. These will not affect any electrical work on Portland Street which will be sheeted as required.

Outside - We have set out the recommended footprint for the Garden Shed. Some significant but crude removal of part of the massive sycamore tree stump will be essential. But we have a plan of action. Whether it will work? Watch this space! Wood and floor for shed are being acquired. **Tony Kuivala.**

Monthly Talk.

The June talk was given by Ian Shulver and was titled "Quakers and the Railways". Ian was pressed into visiting a tapestry exhibition by his good lady during a recent visit to Kendal, The Quaker Tapestries. Apparently it was quite interesting, telling the story of Quakerism in a series of sixty or so tapestry panels. One of these panels was devoted to Quakers and the early railways. Researching this further, Ian found that many of the early railways (Stockton & Darlington, Liverpool & Manchester, and many more) were bankrolled by Quaker individuals. Furthermore, many of the innovation we now take for granted were developed by Quakers. Names that are worth a mention are the Darbys of Coalbrookdale (really before the age of railways but were instrumental in the production of iron), Edward Pease (S&DR), Charles May (railway chairs), George Bradshaw (timetables), Thomas Edmondson (the railway ticket), the Ransome family (agricultural and railway engineers) and the Worsdell dynasty (locomotive engineers). There are many more. The restrictions placed on Quakers (and other nonconformists, as well as Catholics) meant that they would never be part of the establishment and so very able men had to find other outlets for their energies, for example business, commerce and banking. They had a well established network of contacts which enabled successful investments in new technologies (of which the railway was one) to proceed.

Those who attended this talk found it fascinating, and it provoked some lively discussion at the end.

The next talk will in fact be a 'hands on' demonstration. It will be on Tuesday 14th July and will be overseen by Hilary Finch. The topic will be "Painting Backgrounds" and at the end of the evening Hilary hopes that everyone will have produced a short length of backscene to use (or not) on their layout. All equipment will be provided.

Forthcoming Events:

July:14	SMRS: Painting backscenes. Hilary Finch
August: 11	SMRS: Statfold Barn. Tony Kuivala
October 3-4	Wigan Exhibition
October: 13	SMRS: USA Excursion: Tour Members' photos
November 7-8	SMRS: Annual Exhibition
November 17	SMRS: Railway safety. Derek Pratt
November 28-29	Warley Exhibition
December 22	SMRS: British Railways in the 1960's. Allan Trotter.

Historic Photographs.

If you are trying to re-create a representation of actual station, building etc, you may be interested in checking out the following site. It includes more than a thousand negatives from the London Midland and Scottish Railways' photographic collection, dating from the 1880s to the 1930s. Originally taken to promote places of interest served by the railway company, this fascinating collection captures images of villages, towns and cities across the country, many of which have been irredeemably changed over the last century.

<http://archive.historicengland.org.uk/default.aspx> (this is the address for the full archive)

http://archive.historicengland.org.uk/Results/Results.aspx?parent=1844599&s_o=dateoldestfirst%3E (this is the address for the LMS collection). **Ian Shulver.**

Venice Simplon Orient Express, the early years.

After the demise of the Night Ferry on the 31st of October 1980, it seemed that a dedicated through train and ship services between the UK and Continental Europe had now become permanently extinct.

However, in the 1980's, the political regime in the UK took a severe lurch to starboard. The British Railways maritime operation, Sealink was assimilated by the Sea Containers Group and opportunities subsequently became accessible for private companies to operate train services. One of these operations, also a Sea Containers undertaking, was the Venice Simplon Orient Express or VSOE. Due to the presence of the English Channel, two separate trains were of course required.

The VSOE commenced operation on the 25th of May 1982 and operated a twice a week service between London Victoria and Venice Santa Lucia Stations. The British train ran from London Victoria to Folkestone Harbour where passengers transferred onto a ship for the crossing to Boulogne Maritime. From here the Continental train departed for Paris and eventually to Venice.

Despite a misleading promotional poster published at the time, the passenger cars did not cross the English Channel on a train ferry. There were two completely separate trains, the British Pullman set for daytime travel only and

the Continental set comprising of completely restored CIWL Type Lx Sleeping Cars, a Service Car, a Pullman Lounge Car, two Dining Cars and a Bar Car.



The British train was usually hauled from London Victoria to Folkestone East by a Class 73 electro diesel. As a reversal of direction was required, a Class 33 diesel electric was attached to the rear of the train and a cautious descent was made to Folkestone Harbour. Whilst the passengers alighted, both locos changed ends ready for the return working to London. On departure, the Class 33 would lead and the Class 73 push for

the ascent back to Folkestone East. Here the Class 33 was detached, the train reversed and the Class 73 took the train back to London Victoria.



Meanwhile at Boulogne Maritime, a pair of SNCF Class 67 diesels brought in the Continental train from Amiens. The locos would then run around ready for the afternoon departure. With the eventual opening of the Channel Tunnel and the closures of both Folkestone Harbour and Boulogne Maritime Stations, the operation across the English Channel changed and not for the better.

Passengers now have to alight from the UK train at Folkestone West and transfer onto buses, yes buses, for the dubious privilege of travelling through the Channel Tunnel in a bus incarcerated on a vehicular carrying shuttle train! On reaching France the buses resume their journey to Calais Ville Station where passengers alight and board the VSOE Continental train.

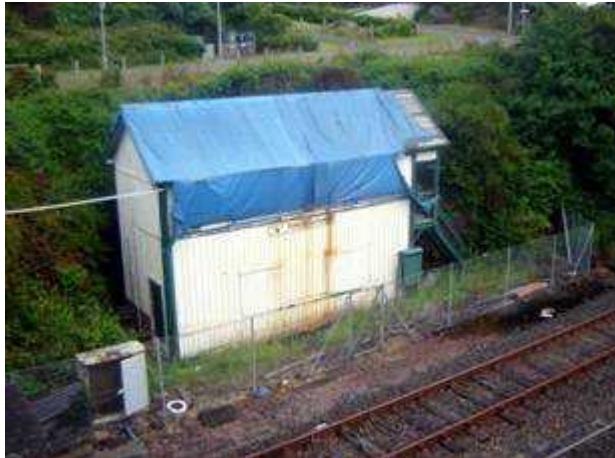
How much more convenient for customers it would be today if the Continental train departed from London St. Pancras direct to mainland Europe? Once the Channel Tunnel and the Continental loading gauge line had been opened, there is no sensible reason for this not being the situation. No doubt because of the present day petty politics of fragmented rail privatisation, misleadingly information on available line capacity, compatibility of signalling equipment and autocratic rulings by over zealous (you can't do that) Health & Safety minions, will ensure that direct train services from around the UK to a multitude of European destinations will never materialise.

If it is considered unsafe to allow CIWL cars through the Channel Tunnel because of a perceived fire risk concerning the marquetry within the cars then why is it deemed acceptable to have shuttle trains carrying people enclosed in automobiles filled with petrol and diesel?

For more images of both the British and Continental trains in operation in the mid 1980's at London Victoria, Folkestone Harbour and Boulogne Maritime see the Eastbank Model Railway Club web page: www.eastbank.org.uk/vsoe.htm

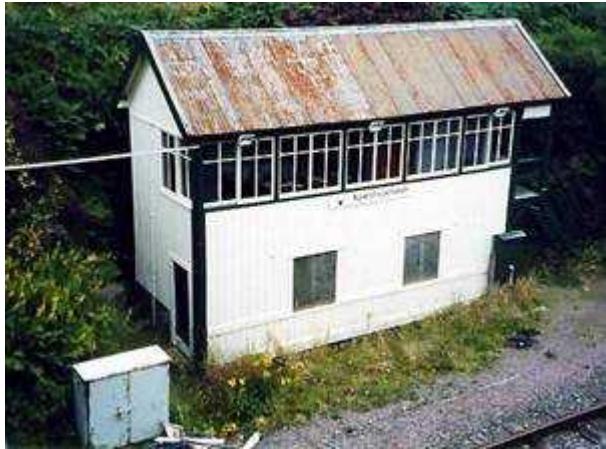
Allan Trotter.

Model Railway in a Box



I first ventured up to the West Highlands of Scotland on an LCGB rail tour in April 1982 to Kyle of Lochalsh. It started in Liverpool Lime Street and I was picked up from school by my father, he took me to Lime Street and I met up there with my brother Frank, my aunty and Grandfather. At that age, it all seemed exciting, a weekend away sleeping on the train as you went. But from memory, the train was made up of MK1 compartment stock with a buffet car and a restaurant car which provided hot meals and snacks etc. I was too

young then to enjoy the cool refreshments on offer. We had reserved two compartments, one we all used during the day to sit in and we used the two at night to sleep two in each compartment. The train was about 12 coaches long and coaches were added and taken away at various points over the weekend. I remember that you could pay extra and have a cooked breakfast in the restaurant car and as a wee nipper that was really exciting, probably the first time I had done it!



When we arrived at Kyle of Lochalsh, the weather was appalling, you could see about 50ft ahead through the swirling rain and mist. We then boarded a ferry that took us on an 8 hour trip around the Isle of Skye. This was met with equally poor weather and the crew did their best to keep us entertained including trips to the bridge to see how the radar worked, more exciting stuff a 10 year old, wow, radar! I suppose these days, parents would be done for infringing a child's

human rights, but it was good character building stuff to a boy of my age. When we got back to the Kyle, we had plenty of time to potter around the metropolis that is Kyle of Lochalsh, taking in the local shops and the impressive local fish & chip shop. We explored the surrounding area and passed over one of the road bridges that were by the signal box down in the cutting on the exit of the station. I think that at that time, I'm not sure how much it was used and if it was still manned. The track had been rationalised by then to a run round on one side of the platform and a single line on the other.

I remember looking down on this slightly disgruntled signal box, not at all like the shiny Hornby one I had at home.

What I didn't know then was that I had fallen in love with the area and Kyle of Lochalsh. I have been back many times over the last thirty years and every time I go, I always took a walk past the signal box to see what state it was in. It has long been out of use since the electronic token system came in. Over the years, the state of disrepair of the signal box became worse and worse. First the glass was smashed, then there was a fire, it went on and on, finally a large blue tarpaulin was placed over the box in an effort to protect it from the elements. It stayed dormant in that state for years; it was constantly threatened with demolition.



Last December, I travelled up to Inverness on the sleeper with the intention of meeting up with Mrs M in Aberdeen. I had all day to play on trains and this was a good opportunity to maybe see the Isle of Skye in snow. To do this, you have to rely on the sleeper getting in to Inverness on time in the morning. But if it does, you have about a 20 minute connection for the first train to Kyle of Lochalsh. This then gives you about 50 minutes at Kyle of Lochalsh before returning to

Inverness on the same train. Another short stop in Inverness and then onto Aberdeen getting there about six O'clock in the evening. Well, the sleeper got in to Inverness on time, I made the connection and set off for Kyle of Lochalsh with the entire carriage to myself! The weather was beautiful with stunning sun and snow on the tops. The journey was sublime with heard after heard of deer passing the window. For those who don't know the line or haven't been on it yet, once the train heads West at Dingwall, sit on the right hand side of the train and you will be treated to a fantastic view of Loch Carron from the train window. We made it through to Kyle of Lochalsh and the helpful train crew said I could leave my things on the train. As usual, I had a potter about the place and the usual tour via the bridge next to the signal box.



Well I got the biggest surprise; I'd heard that the friends of the Kyle Line had the signal box in its sights for potential use. Well the rumours were true. It had been completely restored as accommodation in the bottom where all the wires, pulleys etc used to be housed. It includes a double bed with a single bunk bed above it at 90 degrees. It has a toilet, shower, kitchen and seating area with a settee, table and chairs etc. then above where the lever frame used to be is a model railway which is based on the line and runs the full length of the box.

What a surprise and what a transformation from dilapidated ruin to modern and unique holiday let. It is in the style of a bunk house that pops up in the Highland area at railway stations. Full details can be found on the 'Friends of the Kyle line' website. Bookings can be for weekends or a full week and prices and can be found on the friends of the Kyle line website. **Peter Mills.**

Leyland Tiger PS2/5 CRN993, built 1950



(Images show August 2013 during exterior re panelling, April 25th 2015 in Southport on Promenade outside the pier, May 01 at Llandudno and May 23rd at Chipping).

This was one of a batch of 20 ordered by Ribble Motors and delivered in 1950. Allocated Fleet Number 2793. In 1960 was sold to Southport Corporation with two others of same batch. At Southport's Canning Road Depot was converted to Open Top and allocated Fleet Number 12. It commenced Open Top tours in 1961 and remained in service until 1985. Then it was sold to a coach operator in Rhyl where saw some service before taken off the road. Stored at the rear of Rhyl Funfair, neglect and vandalism took their toll. Then subsequently purchased for restoration but was never completed.

Twenty years later it was acquired by Graham Ryder who brought vehicle back from Wales to Burscough near Southport for restoration within the Merseyside

Transport Trust's facilities. After two and half years hard work CRN993 had its first run to Southport in 30 years prior to making trip to Llandudno the following weekend for its debut over first weekend of May 2015.

Graham Ryder was a founder member of SMRS when it came out from Steamport in 1973. He and I are Deputy Chairman and Treasurer respectively of the Friends of the 502 Group based in Burscough where we commenced that restoration in summer of 2012. One day not long after, Graham announced that he was buying a bus. Our first thought was that he had crossed to the dark side. But no, it was an Open Top ex Southport vehicle. When it arrived, well when what was left of it arrived, we were all taken aback. Vast amount of work was required. When Leyland built this batch of 20 during 1949 into 1950 there was the post-war shortage of steel and good quality woods. The longitudinal chassis members were steel, the cross members were wood which suffered from wet and weather. Everything was rebuilt from this upwards. New steel work, new hardwoods and new side panelling. Neither Graham nor I have ever undertaken anything of this nature before. Along the way we have learned much, some to our detriment, how not to do things but mainly to our benefit, there are better ways to achieve an objective.

For two and half years we pressed on. At long last we have completion. Well, more or less, there were and are still finishing touches required. Like putting the passenger seats in the day before setting off for Llandudno. It got us there and back without much ado. The engine, gearbox and transmission are the originals. Graham stripped, cleaned, reassembled and they worked, after some persuasion it should be said.

I claim little credit other than I am The Sorcerer's Apprentice. **Tony Kuivala.**

Short Circuits No. 22. Visual Route Indication

Having a visual route indicator can be very useful to a layout operator. As you will now have come to expect there is no single correct way of achieving this. There are two fundamental choices. One is to have a stand alone panel as an overlay to the control panel and the other is the integration of the point control switches, the sections switches and the illuminated display on a single panel. It's all down to personal preference.

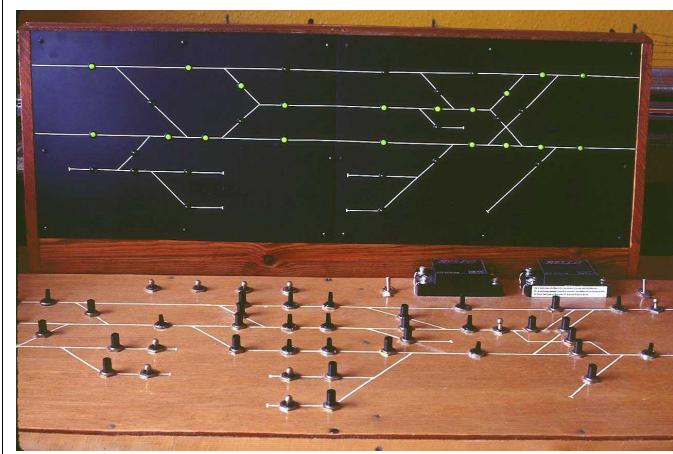
The first method is illustrated by showing a previous Eastbank MRC H0 scale Amtrak layout, Pennsburg. This had the route display panel added on to it after the layout became operational and was located behind the main control panel. The other illustration show the integrated method as is used on the South African Railways H0 layout Magersfontein. Although the wiring or in modern parlance, programming, is entirely different the principal behind the design of the circuitry is just the same. Remember that every track formation has to be designed individually.

Which system is best? There is no easy answer to that question. It depends entirely on your own opinion or even if you would find that a route display panel would even be a useful adornment to your layout.

How is it wired? That's for next time. **Allan Trotter.**

Separate panel & route display

Integrated panel & route display



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