



# Southport Model Railway Society Newsletter

No 40: March 2015 Deputy Editor - Allan Trotter  
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## Editorial

The Southport MRS March 2015 newsletter once again has a temporary editor this month whilst our editor Peter Mills is recovering. As has been mentioned previously, the Southport MRS newsletter can only live long and prosper if contributions are received from the membership. If you have any modelling or prototype interests you are able and willing to share with the rest of our members, please submit them to the editor. After all, information and images are only beneficial if they are shared with others.

**Allan Trotter.**

## Chairman's Notes

Whilst some members recently headed north for the Glasgow model railway show I headed in the opposite direction for a similar distance and destined for Narrow Gauge Southwest 2015 at Shepton Mallet. This was a one day presentation by the Small and Delightful Railway Group who are members of the 009 Society and whose show has a wide representation of narrow gauge scales with a variety of layouts including 009, 09, 0n3 and more, plus a good support from related traders. Not only that, it is recognised that a lot of visitors just attend for the cakes as provided by the local Ladies! I can affirm to this as I allowed myself to be tempted to sample their wares, in the interests of scientific studies you understand. I was later musing on how we are prepared to literally go to such great distances for one day in the pursuit of our interests. Enjoying the luxury of being chauffeur driven, sitting in the back seat of a fellow member's car, trying not to doze too much, might be one answer of course. I concluded also that it's not only for the cakes and you're either a fan or you're not but I'll let you decide.

I look forward to seeing you all at the AGM on the 6th March. **Frank Parkinson.**

## Secretary's Report

### AGM:

The 2015 AGM will be held on Friday 6th March at the Scarisbrick Bowling Club on Falkland Road. Please note that we intend to start the proceedings shortly after 19:00 since we can only have the room until 22:00. As usual there will be light refreshments at a suitable juncture during the meeting. The formal calling notice is on the Club notice board as is the signing up list for the various Club officers. If you wish to nominate someone, you must get their prior agreement. If you wish to have any topic discussed at the meeting, it would be useful for you to let Hilary know. You can also let Hilary know of any nominations, but she does need to this information by Tuesday 3rd March. Please note that nominations for vacant officer positions will only be taken at the meeting if none have previously been received. **Ian Shulver.**

### Monthly Talks:

Last month's presentation was at Southport Football Club on Haig Avenue (many thanks for their hospitality) and was given by guest speaker Dave Fenton. Dave gave a brief talk on how and why he developed his Mega Points control system before demonstrating its versatility. In summary each control control box is capable of operating up to 12 servo units controlling direction of travel, speed of operation and extent of

movement. These servo units can then be used to move points, operate signals, complete with a realistic bounce, or even rotate level crossing gates. There also a memory function which effectively allows a one button push to operate up to twelve of the servos (great for route setting). Of particular interest was the fact that it is possible to link units together and drive the second unit from the first but using only two wires (this would save an enormous amount of wiring in a fiddle yard. As a matter of interest, if you have 10-12 (or multiples) of points to operate, then the unit cost works out at no more than for a simple Peco solenoid unit. Have a look at the website - [www.loolee.org](http://www.loolee.org)

### **Illustrated Presentations:**

As noted last month, I am looking at our programme of talks for next year (2016). Although 2016 seems a long way ahead, it would be nice to think that we have got an outline programme with at least some talks scheduled. As yet I have had no offers so please could you let me have your ideas and offers of talks or demonstrations. The exact title not required at this stage but subject matter would be useful. Although it has been said before, remember this is your Club and to make it vibrant does require some active input from you, the members. **Ian Shulver.**

### **Layout reports:**

#### **Portland Street:**

An update on where we are up to with the Portland Street layout. On the evening of Friday 27th the final support should be installed and some remaining supports taken away. We could do with a little support again please to help with assistance in the tidying and cleaning of the floor plus recovery of materials. It is very dusty so be prepared to get a little dirty so old work clothes are advisable. I would also suggest that any member who wishes to have their modular layout back should collect it at their earliest convenience; otherwise they, the modules, not the members, will be disposed of as we need to make room to recommence with Talisker. **Frank Parkinson.**

#### **Redecoration of Portland Street railway room:**

Portland Street layout has now been moved back to its permanent position although some bracing need completion and its level checked. The outer wall appears to be drying out nicely so perhaps next month it should be possible to paper and paint it. It is now up to the OO fraternity to renovate the track work as some of it seems to be damaged. The electrics need checking out and the scenery needs reinstated. Before that the room needs a thorough spring clean. **Frank Parkinson.**

#### **Monsal Dale:**

There has been virtually no progress this month due to the effort being spent on relocating Portland Street. **Ian Shulver.**

### **Exhibition Manager's report**

February has been a very interesting month. Exhibition Planning is running 6 to 8 weeks ahead of where we were at 12 months ago. Our 2015 Theme is North America with specially invited Layouts. There will be a further churning of Traders; more details will emerge as the months progress. I'm contemplating some changes in the way we deal with our Societies and/or Demonstrators; this will be touched upon at Annual General Meeting on 06<sup>th</sup> March. There are anticipated changes in catering arrangements under consideration. Nothing stands still for very long these days. We are no exception.

**Tony Kuivala.**

## Forthcoming events

### March Monthly Talk

Our next presentation continues the American theme when Allan Trotter will give a slide show entitled "**Amtrak: Trains and Travel**". It will be held on Tuesday 24th March (note date change) at Southport Football Club.

### The programme for the next few months is as follows:

#### March 6th

#### Southport MRS Annual General Meeting.

March 24th

Amtrak: Trains and Travel. Allan Trotter. [Date change.](#) [More?](#)

April 14th

A life in 86 minutes. The work of Geoffrey Jones. Jim Ford.

May 12th

Chicago, South Shore & South Bend Railroad. Allan Trotter. [More?](#)

June 9th

Quakers and Railways in Great Britain. [Date change.](#) Ian Shulver

June 20-21st

Woodvale Rally.

July 14th

Painting backscenes. Hilary Finch

August 11<sup>th</sup>

Statfold Barn. Tony Kuivala

September

No talk (depleted membership)

October 13<sup>th</sup>

A celebration of the North American tour. Members' photos.

#### November 7-8th

#### Southport Model Railway Exhibition.

Ian Shulver.

## Member's News

### Peter's Progress 2.



In my last edition, I described the process of buying my track and how I got the best price. Also, of being a member of a model railway club which brings positive benefits to a modeller than if not a member of a club. Well good news, the track has arrived and in a few weeks, I will be able to start putting the track down. **Peter Mills.**

### Excursion to Modelrail Scotland.



Model Rail is the biggest exhibition north of the border and is held every February. It is organised by the Association of Model Railway Societies in Scotland and represents the majority of Model Railway clubs and societies in Scotland and is responsible for the running of the Model Rail Scotland exhibition in Glasgow each February. It is the first big exhibition that I go to each year and is one that I really look forward to. It represents the best from our Scottish

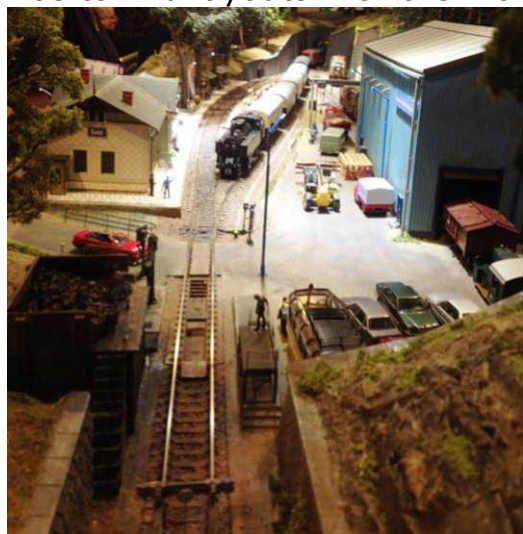
modelling brethren and it gives me a chance to visit this vibrant city with Mrs M. In recent years, SMRS has had a contingent which has travelled up to enjoy the exhibition. For me however, one day is not enough as the exhibition is quite large and deserves more than one day. So I planned a weekend visiting the exhibition and catching up with fellow Eastbank members visiting the exhibition on Friday and Saturday.

The train got me to Glasgow Central for just after 10:30 on Friday morning and I recognised some familiar faces from Preston and other model railway clubs on the way.

After a short transfer from Central low level, I arrived at the SECC exhibition centre to a long queue over several hundred yards, made up of hundreds of model fans. Fortunately, I had purchased and advanced ticket which meant that I didn't have to queue. I could proceed to the entrance and go straight in.

As normal you hit with the noise and mayhem of a big exhibition from the moment you cross through the entrance. The first thing is that you get stamped on the hand to allow you to pass out during the day. The fevered few dashing to grab the bargains without even looking at the layouts, a common feature of a big exhibitions.

It's a big space to view, so it's good to plan how you're going to get around the hall. I'd just started on my adventure when I bumped into Mr Tasker, helping out on a layout, it's a small world. My fellow Eastbank comrades soon arrived and we began in earnest to see all that the exhibition had to offer. For me, DCC is the order of the day. I have been looking at various DCC systems and have narrowed it down to two and my primary aim was to find layouts with them on and talk to the operators and even have a play!



We weaved our way up and down and across and back discussing what we saw, what we liked and of course, what we disliked too. Unlike many exhibitions in our area, the association which hosts the exhibition try to include as many layouts from its member clubs in the exhibition as possible. This sometimes comes at the price of quality or entertainment. To be fair, most of the exhibits were of reasonable quality and ran well. Some layouts needed frequent finger poking from above, something that's always annoying and unnecessary. Problems should be sorted out before a layout ever gets to an exhibition. As a new comer to the world of DCC, some big layouts seem overly complicated with laptops, control panels, much

scratching of heads and various levels of noise. Some seem to stay on permanently, are quite loud and compete with all the other noises to be heard. It must be a bit of a distraction to all close by and reiterates how important it is to get the noise level right, to keep at the entertainment level and stop it going to the annoying level.

As normal, you bump into old friends and walking about, it gives everyone the chance to put the world to rights as they say and discuss their individual projects. Overall it was an excellent day, but as I said a day isn't enough for means I could look forward to tomorrow and a chance to catch up with my fellow Southport members. If you haven't been, you must put it on your exhibition list for next year. **Peter Mills.**

## **Features:**

### **Short Circuits No. 19. A Dead End Job.**

If you have a terminus station on your layout it is usual to provide a short isolated track section adjacent to the buffer stop to allow the isolation of a locomotive whilst another locomotive is brought on to remove the train. A simple on/off single pole switch is all that is required for the job.

Once the train has departed, the incoming locomotive is left in splendid isolation but it is all too easy to forget about it and bring in another train on top of it, with embarrassing results. So how can we alleviate the potential for making this error? Well, the simple way is to use a double pole changeover switch with the second contact unit causing a reminder lamp or LED to illuminate. This indication only reminds you that the switch is



operated and the end section is isolated but not however that a locomotive is located at the end of the line

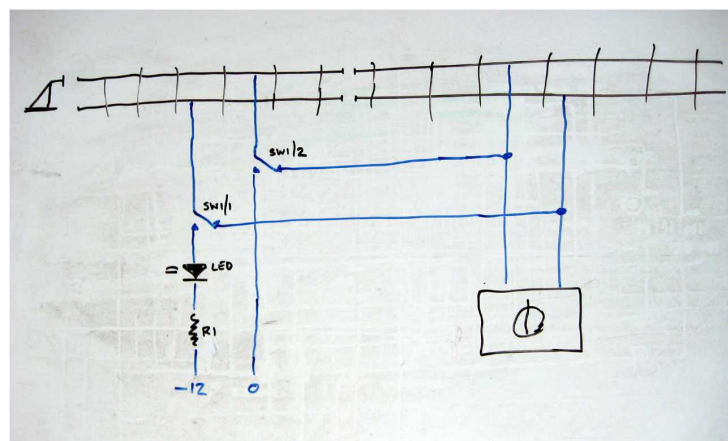
There are of course other possibilities. Using a double pole changeover switch, with this circuit the indicator is only illuminated if a locomotive is left isolated. A static locomotive presents a low impedance or resistance across the running rails and because a small lamp or ideally a LED draws very little current, this will have negligible effect on the motor. If no locomotive is present no indication is given. If the switch is operated when no locomotive is present and if you then run a train into the isolated section it will stop automatically, albeit abruptly but that is the better alternative than demolishing the buffer stop.

Once again though using our old friend common return we can save on a bit of wiring. As long as one of the rails is the common return or earth common then only a single pole changeover switch is required.

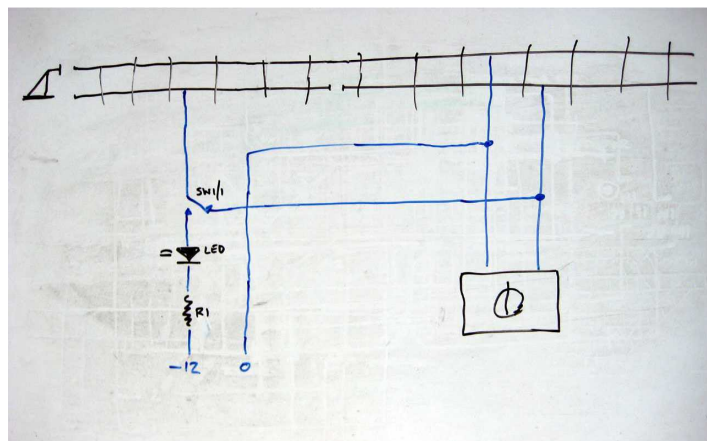
Just as a reminder, as with all common return configurations, the line controller and the indicator -12 volt supply must be derived from totally independent sources.

Check out the diagrams for the wiring solutions. As always, diagrams are much more intuitive than text can ever be. There are more dead ends next time. **Allan Trotter.**

Not common return. Double gap.  
Double pole switch.



Common Return, Top rail common earth. Single gap. Single pole switch.



For previous **Short Circuit** articles see <http://www.eastbank.org.uk/circuits.htm>

Continuing the water theme in railway modelling from last month we now have:

### **Modelling a Rail Bowser, Tri-ang Hornby style.**

Britain is not usually noted for droughts but very occasionally they do occur. In the South East corner of England in Kent this happened in 1990. Both Ashford and Margate depots had water shortage problems but fortunately there was a supply available at Dover Priory station. How do you get the water to where it was needed? The solution, clean and convert a regular tanker into a rail mounted water bowser.

Southern Region was not noted as having a large number of spare locomotives so an ingenious solution was required. This was in the form of the Motor Luggage Van (MLV). These ten vehicles normally operated off the 750 volt DC third rail but they also had batteries, charged from the third rail, which gave them a restricted range away from the

power supply. They could also haul a limited load of either vacuum or air braked vehicles. This was the ideal solution to haul one single tank wagon.

The Hornby R020 four wheel tank wagon is readily available on the pre owned model market and crucially for this project, it will be very inexpensive. The wagon consists of three major components plus a roof walk and a ladder. The first stage of the process is to carefully dismantle the wagon by prizing out the lugs that hold the tank sections to the chassis. The tank is moulded in two sections and these are normally held together by being fitted onto the chassis. Unfortunately this join line is very visible so therefore it is advisable to plastic weld the two tank sections together. Of course the line is still visible but it can be eliminated by gently rubbing over the join with fine sandpaper until absolutely smooth. As supplied the model is unpainted so after removing any existing logos on the tank and again smoothing the surface, a repaint of the tank section in grey is all that is required.

The chassis is finished in unpainted black plastic and requires the painting of the side frame in red. Once the paint has dried the wagon is reassembled and the roof walk and ladder sections are clipped back into place. The wagon number is predominantly displayed on the end of the roof walk and this may be fabricated simply with a piece of white plastic card onto which the number may be applied. Other markings may be applied in a similar way. Once dried, a fine coat of mat varnish will protect the transfers from lifting off when handled.

There you are then, a very simple modelling project to produce an unusual wagon and the best of it is, you only have to make one of them. The Motor Luggage Van is an MTK kit powered by a Tri-ang X3121 power bogie but that story is for another time!

**Allan Trotter.**

Tri-ang Hornby Water Bowser



The real thing at Dover Priory



**End**