



# Newsletter

Issue 74: June 2019 Editor: Allan Trotter  
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## Editorial.

As the more astute of our members may have noticed, the May 2019 issue of the SMRS Newsletter was conspicuous by its absence. This was due to your editor being incarcerated in the Royal Liverpool Hospital for several weeks and not able nor even fit for any non verbal communications. Things are now slowly improving and I hope to be able to resume some sort of normal service soon.

I would like to thank, on behalf of Ruth and myself, all the telephone calls of best wishes, the cards and especially the personal visits of a number of fellow colleagues to the hospital. These visits were very much appreciated.

May I remind members that articles, anecdotes, experiences of any visits to places of railway interest or any other events would be of great use for inclusions in forthcoming SMRS newsletters. As always, please **do not** embed any images within the text of your document but attach them as separate jpeg files. This makes my task of editing much simpler. If the location of images in relation to text is imperative please mark the requested location with an identifier such as *image 1*. I look forward to receiving your copy for future issues.

If you are able to identify or even guess the location of the enclosed "Where's Allan?" photograph, do have a go at an answer. You might even be correct.

## Events Diary.

Fri 7<sup>th</sup> June SMRS visit to Merseyside MRS, Birkenhead. 19:00 – 21:30.

## Chairman's Report.

Most of February and all of March were a difficult time for me as those who came to the clubrooms during this period can testify. All my joints and muscles were so stiff that I could barely get up the stairs and doing any manual work (i.e. HS3 construction) was virtually impossible. Fortunately a short course of steroids worked wonders and although not 100%, can at least carry on pretty much as normal. I was therefore grateful for Graham, Mick, Frank and Albert for cracking on with the woodwork for HS3. The basic track bed has now been completed and levelled but we have decided to add a bit of extra bracing all around. It is easier to do now than when any track and electrics have been laid down. A fair bit of painting of the woodwork has also been done and this has improved the look immensely. We need to continue with this over coming

month with an estimate of completion in 4-6 weeks. A bit of a spring clean upstairs will then be in order before we can get down to the interesting bits. The OO circuits will be the first to be worked on and it was decided that the electrics would comprise of heavy duty wire bus bars with droppers to each length of track to minimise any voltage drop across fishplates. I know this involves a fair bit of work but with a continuous run of over 70ft the last thing we want are locos slowing down to a crawl at certain places.

You will have noticed that around Christmas time we were donated a lot of books, videos, DVDs and stock which was cluttering up the back room. John and Jim have now made significant inroads into sorting this into items which we wish to keep, to sell on, donate to other organisations or simply to dispose of. You will have also noticed that the stones and shingle that Derek carefully laid in the garden has now reappeared thank to the efforts of Frank and David in cutting up the old barrier supports and cutting down the weeds.

In terms of our armchair activities, we had a most interesting talk by Fred Kerr on the PEP family of rolling stock. The historical development of various liveries around the country was illustrated by many photographs. The following week John put on one of his famous/infamous video evenings. This time there was a selection of films from the rest of the world, Australia, South Africa and North and South America. It was a most entertaining evening with some of the railway activities on show leaving health and safety aficionados squirming in their seats. **Ian Shulver.**

## **Secretary's Report.**

First of all I would like to welcome Allan back into our fold. Allan has been in hospital in Liverpool for a number of weeks following surgery but has now made a substantial recovery and is home and has resumed his editorship of our newsletter.

I am amazed by the level of activity in our clubrooms as our club test-track takes shape, and much of this enthusiasm has been engendered by the recruitment of our new members. Some of these members have valuable technical experience which they are willing to share, others have an absolutely phenomenal ability to work on challenging joinery projects (my own ability to put up shelves that stay up atrophied many years ago), and others have a never-ending supply of anecdotes to entertain us, and not forgetting the most important contributor of all, the tea maker.

The plans for the test-track (also known as the race track, HS3 and HS2.5) were inspired by visits by your esteemed editor and I to the Model Railway Club in London with their free-standing test-track design turned inside out and affixed to our upstairs walls as designed by our chairman.

We are working on the 16.5mm gauge shelf first of all, and in this newsletter I am going to update you on progress and plans for this "shelf". I say the 16.5 mm shelf because it is intended that this test track can be used by all 16.5 mm

gauge trains whether to 3.5, 4 or 7mm scale. So the double track will be wide enough to allow our O16.5 stock to pass, whilst the curves will be generous enough to enable "finescale" 4mm trains to run.

The line will be level and even and the cork sheet to ensure this has already been installed. A solid bus bar electrical supply at mains capacity is being fitted all the way round with soldered droppers to each piece of track. Only nickel silver code 100 Peco rail is being used of which we have a large stock. This should be equally suitable for the older Tri-ang Hornby locomotives with 'steamroller' wheels and the newer daintier stuff which can't pull a skin off a rice pudding!

Connection to the controller will be by substantial electrical plugs so that three different types of supply can be attached as alternatives – straight DC, DCC, and Hornby live steam. The latter requires heavy wiring (hence the bus bars) but the nature of the test track should allow the live steam A4s to go through their paces, especially with the generous curves.

Don't forget our trip to Merseyside Model Railway Club on 7th June which has been organised by Frank Parkinson and our upcoming participation in the Big Model Show at the Floral Hall on the 10th August. Also, an early invite for your diary to my 65th birthday BBQ celebration on Sunday 28th July when the Portmadoc and Llyn, the Cripple Creek and Isle of Man Southern railways will be operating.

## **Where's Allan?**

For this first of the new series of the "Where's Allan" competition I was overwhelmed with only one response. This first and only correct answer to the April 2019 "Where's Allan" was received almost instantly from John Howard.

*"Thanks for the picture of a Northern Ireland Railways Hunslet diesel having just passed through Belfast Central northbound. The lovely Black Mountain is in the background. These locomotives used to work the Belfast-Dublin Enterprise trains alternating with CIE as it was".*



For the July 2019 "Where's Allan", the overseas theme still continues, because just as in the previous quiz, if you try walking there, you will get wet. However, there is still a slight Irish connection to the location but it is not in Ireland. The station building still exists today but the railway and trains do not. Where am I?

## Members' Contributions.

### Weathering Model Trains - Techniques

I am not an expert on painting in general – I have a terrible eye for colour, and of course weathering is a *bete noir*. We see many weathering attempts at exhibitions – some more successful than other. Generally I feel that the degree of weathering is overdone, but of course it is all a matter of taste. The majority of this article comes from one that can be found on BRM Express but I have made various modifications.



### Introduction.

In our modelling exertions we spend a great deal of time and effort making the layout to look as realistic as possible and, therefore, weathering should be considered a very important part of the modelling process. It's something that modellers of all abilities can do themselves and once you have completed a few projects you should have the confidence to tackle anything.

There are a number of techniques that can be used, but it does need some practice to get the effect right. However, do not make your first attempt on new or valuable models, use old or unwanted items. Your first attempts should be on light coloured models as it is far easier to see what you are doing.

The key thing is that once you start weathering, it is important that it is applied consistently across the layout. In other words, if you chose to weather the buildings, do them all. Similarly, weather all the wagons in a train (or none). Of course, any weathering is a matter of taste and you may prefer light effects or heavy effects, and it is fair to say that without care, model railway weathering can easily be overdone.

The good news is that there are many different model railway weathering techniques for you to utilise. All are capable of producing great results with a little practice. Whilst it is true that buying an airbrush can be a sizable investment to start with, it doesn't cost too much to run and other weathering techniques need very little in the way of expenditure. The investment is more in time than in consumables.

### The Need for Observation

Since you are emulating the effects of the real world, it is essential to know how the effects build-up in the first place. A key element in weathering is therefore observation of the real environment, and then you just need the skills to replicate what you have seen. For example, rain will wash deposits from outdoor items and this will lead to streaks and accumulations in other areas. Similarly, items stood on the ground are weathered by the rain hitting the ground and splashing the lower regions with dirt.

When you are out and about, look for weathering effects and what has caused them. Then think about how you could go about weathering your model trains to replicate the effect.

## Weathering Techniques

There are many techniques for weathering models. For example, you could first spray the model with a faded colour to tone down the whole finish, adding a wash to replicate dirt trapped in corners. To finish off you could drybrush colours to simulate missing paint on raised areas. Experiment and select the best method for your desired result

### Weathering Powders/Pigments

**What**

**you**

**need:**

Weathering powders/pigments

Application tools (sponge, tipped blunt tool, brushes etc)

Clear matt varnish

### Pros and cons:

| Pros   | Cons  |
|--|---|
| Very little equipment needed<br>Cheap<br>Can be removed easily if you make a mistake. A great technique for beginners. | Needs sealing afterwards with a varnish<br>Only suitable for matt surfaces, so may need a preparatory coat of matt varnish. |



*Most paint manufacturers make a range of weathering powders or pigments. One bottle goes a long way and only a few basic colours are required.*

*The rust effects on this wagon floor were achieved by rubbing smoke, rust, sand and iron oxide weathering powders onto a matt black paint finish.*

### Method:

Your model must be clean for the weathering powders to adhere properly. This is likely if the model has had any use and has been handled. Washing with a mild detergent is a good idea first. If the item being weathered is a locomotive then separate the chassis to avoid getting the mechanism wet.

You need to consider the finish of the model. You will get the best adherence if the finish is matt. Gloss probably won't work at all as none of the weathering powder will adhere. If in doubt, spray the model with a matt varnish such as Humbrol Matt Cote. Don't spray moving parts – separate the body from the chassis beforehand or use a mask.

To apply the weathering powder, use a blunt tool such as a cotton bud. Even better, use a sponged tip tool – many weathering powder sets come with these as an accessory.

Give the paintwork an overall coat with a light colour to fade it and replicate the bleaching effect of the sun. Apply the powder to the application tool and rub it in lightly on the model using a gentle circular motion. Apply other effects locally. For example, if moss has been growing on a damp wall below a damaged water pipe, then rub the powder gently in at that point.

**Tip.** *If you don't like the effects you have achieved then wash the model in mild detergent, dry and start again.*

When you are happy with the finish, you need to decide if a sealing coat is needed. If the model won't be handled, eg buildings, then you can leave the finish as it is. If the model will be handled then you should seal it using a varnish to match your preferred finish. If you have problems with the varnish disturbing the finish, then try spraying from further away. The varnish will likely tone down your pigments so don't worry if it looks overdone beforehand, however, you can repeat the technique a few times to gradually build up the weathering in layers if you wish.

**Tip:** *Wearing white cotton gloves when handling and applying the powder will prevent perspiration from damaging the finish.*

**Drybrushing**

**What you need:**

- A paintbrush(s)
- A rag to wipe excess paint off paintbrush
- Paints

**Pros and cons:**

| Pros                                 | Cons   |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Only a brush and paint are required. | Limited affects possible. Best combined with other methods, particularly washes. |



*The vertical black streaks on this industrial locomotive were made using the dry brush technique as were brown rust streaks on the corrugated iron roof.*

**Method:**

Take a brush and dip it in your model railway weathering paint of choice. Now wipe most of the paint off onto a rag and drag the brush lightly across the surface to deposit small amounts. It does take practice to get the right balance between the amount of paint on the brush and the pressure to use when applying it.

You will find this technique particularly effective for highlighting raised

surfaces. The technique isn't so good for producing fading effects on a large area as it is difficult to get an even finish. It's the 'hit and miss' action of this technique that is its strength.

**Tip:** Try brushes with different hairs. A hog's hair brush can produce some interesting effects.

**Airbrush**

**What you need:**

- Paint and thinners to match
- Airbrush and compressor
- A facemask that will work with small particle sizes,
- Ideally a spray booth with 'access' to the outside of the premises

**Pros and cons:**

| Pros  | Cons   |
|---|--|
| <p>Wide range of effects possible<br/>Airbrush can be used for respraying models too with much better results than with a brush</p> | <p>You need a quality airbrush, compressor and somewhere to spray.<br/>Can be an expensive initial outlay for the best equipment.<br/>Takes longer to learn than other methods.<br/>Harder to reverse mistakes.<br/>Airbrushes need regular maintenance and proper care.</p> |



*The soot marks around the exhaust ports on this diesel roof were made by spraying with an airbrush loaded with matt black paint whilst the oil streaks from the engine bay of this diesel e were made by spraying a light coat of matt black paint and then dragging a slightly damp brush wetted with thinners over it in a vertical direction.*

**Method:**

Dust the model first with a clean brush to remove deposits. If the model has been handled a lot, or has high level of dust accumulation, wash with water and a mild detergent may be necessary and thoroughly dry. If the item being weathered is a locomotive then separate the chassis to avoid getting the mechanism wet.

You can use any model railway weathering paint and thin to the normal consistency that you use for general airbrushing. You may have to spray from a close distance to get some effects.

Hold a piece of card in front of the model and spray onto this until you

are happy with the amount of paint being deposited. Then, keeping the airbrush control in the same position, move the card out of the way so that the flow is directed onto the model.

Any airbrush will allow you to add a general overall coat for fading effects, but for more controlled weathering you will need a dual action model with a narrow nozzle that is capable of producing fine lines.

**Tip:** For the best light, work near a window or even outside.

## Washes

### What you need:

- Brushes,
- Paint
- Thinners to match the paint used

### Pros and cons:

| Pros                               | Cons  |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Little equipment needed.<br>Cheap. | Limited affects possible. Best combined with other methods.<br>Good ventilation needed.<br>Can affect existing paintwork so care is needed. |



*The walls on this sand house were weathered using layers of washes as was the fading on the Shark.*

### Method:

Washes are diluted layers of paint used to produce translucent affects and deposit paint into recesses. It is a good technique to combine with dry brushing.

Ensure the model is clean. Small accumulations of dust can be removed with a brush, but for finger marks and heavy accumulations of dust you will need to wash the model with a mild detergent. If the item being weathered is a locomotive then separate the chassis.

Deposit some of your model railway weathering colour into a small container. Now add an appropriate thinner. The amount to add will need some experimentation, but the greater the opacity the stronger the effect. I would use at least 50% thinners to paint, but might go as high at 90% if necessary. Remember that you can always wait for the affect to dry and then add a further layer.

Brush the wash over the model in a thin layer. You will find that the pigments in the paint tend to accumulate in the corners of detail. If there is too much of the underlying paint being covered then wipe off the

excess with a cloth or cotton bud just leaving it in the recesses.

The one drawback to this method is that the thinner could disturb any paint or decals already on the model, therefore, you might like to test it first on an unobtrusive area. Don't overwork the thinner by brushing it more than necessary. If you know what paint was used in the existing layer then use another for the weathering layer.

***Tip:*** *This technique is great for adding rust around rivet heads.*

## **Conclusion**

Weathering model trains is a really effective way to add realism to your layout and it's achievable by modellers of all abilities. It's a real trial and error technique but you'll soon be producing impressive results on your model railway trains and buildings. **Ian Shulver.**

**END**