

August / September 2019

Summer's here! And as the mercury rises my modelling output goes down. Fortunately, this isn't the case for everyone and I've had some cracking articles for this issue. I do try to keep things going over the summer months, but that wretched grass won't stop growing no matter how little rain we have and the Paint Shop (our conservatory) gets so hot that the paint is dry and baked before it hits the model. I really must try some of the retardants available for paints these days but, given my luck, it'll start snowing the day I try it and the paint will never set!

One good thing about the summer is that it means holiday time. Living in a seaside town it generally means clogged roads and no parking spaces anywhere, but it also gives Christine and me a chance to get away. This year I was lucky enough to be able to re-visit the French railway museum, the Cité du Train, in Mulhouse, France. This is a spectacular museum, reckoned by some to be the largest in Europe. Certainly, the exterior is spectacular, in a rather bright way.



Guess where!

However, the interior contains a spectacular collection of French locomotives and rolling stock from all eras. The only thing I dislike about the museum is the lighting in the first hall; very dark and moody. It works well for the audio-visual displays and set pieces, but it's the very devil for photography unless you take a dozen synchronised flash units!



Out of the gloom

I rest my case!

By the way, a surprising number of the exhibits say 'Made in America' or have strong American ties.



ALCO overseas



Builders Plate on ALCO

Our route this year included Nuremberg, home to the DB museum. Now this is an example of why we should do our research properly... We arrived in Nuremberg on a Sunday afternoon and having discovered where the museum was (just outside the old town walls), planned to visit on the Monday. Doh! It turns out that all German 'State' museums are closed on Mondays and all means ALL! Oh well! it's a good excuse to go back.

Help Needed

The only membership list I have for the UK (and European) members of N-Trak is my list of email addresses, used to get this newsletter to you. I need to keep this up to date or you won't get any more newsletters. For this reason, if you change your email address, or know of anyone who has changed theirs, please let me know as soon as possible and I will update my list.

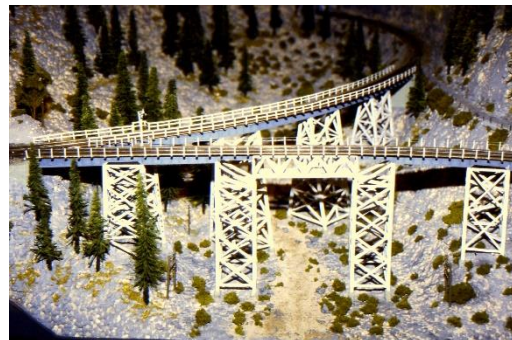
With this in mind, if anyone knows Tony Allen, formerly, (mahbcallen@talk21.com), could they please ask him to contact me with his current email as the one above no longer works.

Peter Pedlow

From Alan Cross

I was sorry to notice Peter's name in a brief note in the last Roundhouse so I thought I'd add a few more pertinent words as he certainly left his mark on me as he did on others.

Peter had been a member of N-trak for a long time and brought his original Feather River layout to early meetings of N-trak at Sands, High Wycombe. As you know, this in part inspired Barry Peacock's later Mohawk Valley layout. Peter went on to build an extension to his layout that included a compacted representation of the triangular junction and impressive bridges at that location. His layout was impressively scenic, signalled and had a small automated yard behind the back board.



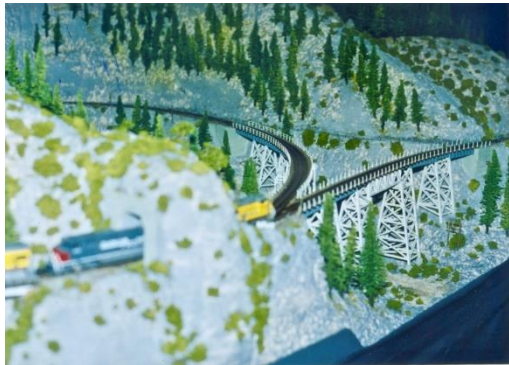
Feather River - March 1999 at Torquay



The Y under construction (Alan Cross)



In place on the layout (Alan Cross)



In action (Alan Cross)

He also had a large N scale layout at home above his garage, based, if I remember correctly, on the Rio Grande and, again, automated.

Both layouts were from the DC era, Peter never delved into DCC. However, his layout automation and route selection was all done with relays and diodes, the trains slowed by reduced power sections at stations and yards. He also fitted DC non-flicker engine and train lighting with a slow fade-away feature, even finding a tiny unit available from the States that fitted to the very prone front of an articulate engine. He was not shy about weathering and all his rolling stock was well weathered down. Most of his rolling stock and engines came from the mid-70s and early 80s.

Peter's early life meant that nothing was throw away if it worked, so why clutter the place with newer items? This meant that first generation diesels predominated and were the

best of the Minitrix and Rivarossi (early Kato) Fs and PAs. He never converted from Arnold couplers, siting them as the most reliable.

Peter was originally from Northern Ireland, the son of a country GP. When old enough, he used to accompany his Dad to home child births and hunt around for newspaper which he swore was still the best protection for a birthing mattress. He still used newspaper in his own home around an electric cooker to stop splashes, only exposing the rings to be used, honestly - I've seen this!

His career took him into gynaecology, practising as a consultant in and around Stevenage. His other pastime that never wavered from school days was swimming, his speciality being time trials, for which he won many records for Northern Ireland and England. He was quite modest about his swimming achievements, I only found out during a Sunday visit where he still insisted on an afternoon swim. Like many others, he gradually faded out of the N scale scene, mostly due to his hearing which made socialising quite difficult and with age creeping up, transporting his heavy layout.

I believe Peter had a family although most of us will remember chatting with his long-time partner, swimmer and layout carrier, Beryl.

Diamond Crossings

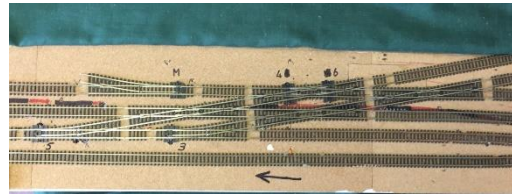
From Roger Beech
Gosport MRC
(Photos Roger Beech)

At the last Gosport Model Railroad Club's show, I decided to dust off my British layout and give it an outing, the first time in well over a year. Although the layout performed well enough, I was not too happy with the fiddle yard track design. One of the problems involved the junction tracks joining the main tracks at one end of the yard. So, I decided to alter the old configuration which was complicated to negotiate by inserting three diamonds crossings and one single slip and so simplify the entry.

The crossings and the slip would be joined together forming a large diamond shape within the four parallel yard tracks. First off, I removed the original diamond crossing and its two entry points – we're talking British outline for the moment – and laid the three diamonds and one single slip in their place. Each diamond and the slip had to be insulated from the others to alleviate any shorting problems between the frogs.

Once I was happy with the position and appearance of the tracks, I started on the wiring phase of the alteration. Diamond crossings and slips, double or single require both of the frog polarities to be changed depending where the trains enter the diamond. I used Seep point motors as they not only moved the point blades but fed the correct polarity to the frogs. The original layout design with the one diamond crossing and two points meant that the Seep point motors changed the

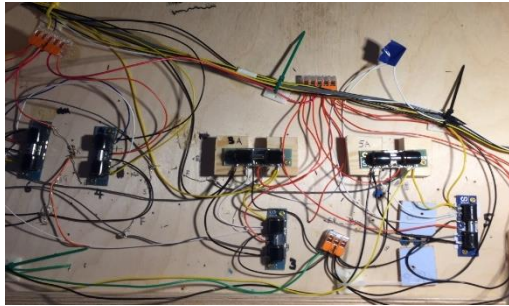
two frog polarities on the crossing as required. I had wired the motors together so they operated in opposing directions and controlled them with just one toggle switch at the control panel.



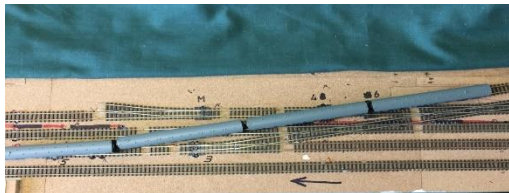
The new design meant that I had a more complex system with plenty of additional wiring. The first picture shows the new track layout with point # 3 with two diamonds, and point # 5 with one diamond and one slip. So how to change the polarity of all eight frogs? Well, for the points and diamonds I added another 'stand-alone' Seep motor wired to the first point motor but not connected to any track. Naturally the first point motor moved the points blades. When the toggle switch for point # 3 was activated the two motors moved in opposite directions thereby sending the appropriate power supply to the two frogs of each diamond crossing. This enable me to change the point blades and the two polarities with only one toggle switch.

The track with the single slip was a little more complicated as the slip itself required two point motors # 4 and # 6. Point # 6 was linked from point motor # 5 but point # 4 required its own toggle switch. This meant that two toggle switches were needed for trains to run diagonally through the crossing, Points # 4 and # 5. The other two movements through the diamond only required point # 4 to be used, provided point # 5 was in its correct straight

through position. Not a problem, provided I remembered to do so.



Before the actual wiring began, I drew diagrams of all the wiring routes to ensure I didn't mix the positives and negatives. Apart from the track feeds the majority of the wiring was underneath the module but I lost count of the number of times I turned the module over to check my handiwork. The second picture shows the complicated wiring under the module and the two 'stand alone' Seep motors which are raised on blocks. Point # 3 is linked to # 3A and point # 5 to # 5A and # 6.



Once I had completed the wiring it was time to test the new installation with some trains. After a few minor wiring changes, my new fiddle yard crossings worked perfectly, just as I had planned, see third photo. When I explained my new system to fellow club members during the re-build, they suggested it would have been easier to use frog juicers and save on wiring hours. However, they did acknowledge it was a feasible idea. Anyway, as I had some Seep motors readily available in my spares box and yards of wiring to hand, I didn't need to buy any juicers

so saved a bit of money on the project and had some fun streamlining my fiddle yard!

The Barber Shop

From Hans Sodenkamp
The Netherlands
(Photos Hans Sodenkamp)

Sometimes a photo is enough inspiration for a small model project. For example, I recently came across the photo below as inspiration for "The Barber shop". Although it is not immediately clear that it is a barber shop, the text is vague somewhere on the façade



First, I drew the facade in scale N on paper to determine the dimensions. The facade consists of three parts. The lower part includes the access stairs and door with, to the right, the windows that are partly covered with old posters. Above that the apartments with the fire escapes in front. Finally, at the top a narrow frame that forms the top of the building. This is unfortunately not visible on the original photo. The facade is, in N scale, only 90 mm high and 48 mm wide!

I used 1 mm thick styrene sheet to cut the lower part. This part consists of the facade with the double door on the left and the windows and panels on the right. The staircase is built as a separate part. The middle part is made of styrene sheet with a brick pattern from which the windows are cut. The last part is the top frame that is made up of corner profiles and styrene strips.



Before I glued the parts together, I painted them first, which of course is a lot easier. The stairs are painted gray (matt 145), the lower facade, top frame and windows green (matt 30) and the brick wall orange-red (matt 85). I still had a set of fire stairs in stock. I attached these to the brick facade.



Meanwhile the characteristic posters and facade texts of the photo are pasted as separate images in PowerPoint and printed in the correct scale. After the paint has dried, I glued them on the facade. Finally, I cemented the facade parts together. It took only a few evenings to complete this little nice building



(Ed: On my bookshelf at home I have a book simply entitled 'Store Front'¹. It is full of the sort of image which set Hans off on

¹ Store Front, The Disappearing Face of New York; James T and Karla L Murray; Gingko

Press, Berkeley, CA; 2010; ISBN 978-1-58423-407-4

this project. Perhaps combining the techniques described by Hans with the content of such books might lead to some interesting structures?)

New from N-Scale Architect

(Photos by Russ Kaufman)

The New York Central 'Lines West Station' kit is now available.



This kit is based on a standard design used by the Big Four, LE&W, NYCS and Nickel Plate railroads at dozens of joint locations in Pennsylvania, New York, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan. It is designed from prototype drawings and historical photographs of the station that still stands in Lafayette, Indiana. Our thanks to Ralph Schiring and the New York Central System Historical Society for their assistance with this project!

Each kit features laser-engraved limestone stonework, self-stick brick

& limestone accents, single piece self-stick roofing material and a micro-plywood support system (no stripwood needed!).

The finished N-Scale kit (#10049) measures 9¾"L x 3½"W x 2½"H and retails for \$89.95.

Out and About

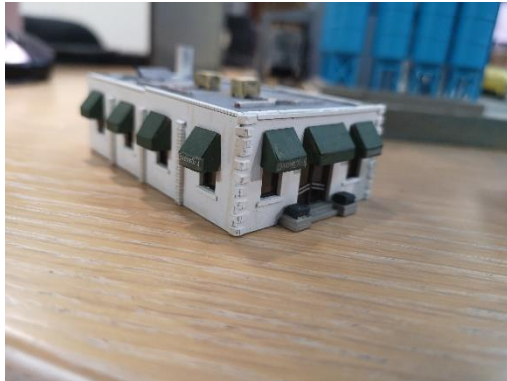
At the beginning of June, I had the chance to visit Burton-upon-Trent and Mech Model's 'Americana' open weekend. This is a show with a difference being based around Mech Model's well stocked shop (on an industrial park a few miles from Burton), with layouts displayed in the space that normally houses the factory machinery. Black Diamonds had one of their usual large modular displays in N but there were layouts in other scales to tickle the fancy.



Also exhibiting was Simon Ansell and his N Scale Laser range of laser cut wood kits. This range of high-quality kits keeps expanding but Simon did also have some Tomix plastic silos that he'd brought in from

Tokyo. If you're interested in these, please contact Simon directly, he may have some left. (www.nscalelaser.com).

I've included some pictures of some of his kits that were on display but this is only a small fraction of the range. Details at the website above.



Italian Restaurant



Storefronts (Is this a theme developing?)



Decals on Trucks

Simon has started producing decals for trucks etc. and the photo above shows an example of these.

It's a fairly quiet time for shows and exhibitions at the moment but one to remember is The International N Gauge Show at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre on September 14th-15th. Normally Black Diamonds would be taking part, but Steve Dennison tells me that this year, they will be attending the Dutch N Gauge Show in Hilversum. Now that sounds interesting!

Next Issue

First, my thanks to those who have provided material for this issue. Without such contributions it would be difficult to produce a meaningful newsletter. My plan is for the next issue to appear around the end of September / early October so I would like any contributions by mid-October please. You don't have to wait till then though. Material can be sent to me at any time and I'll store it away for publication at the first opportunity. Again, details of dates for meets, shows etc. would be most welcome.



Dear Fellow N-Traker,

26th N-Trak UK Convention

It's that time of year again when we need to collect reservations for the 2020 Convention in Bournemouth, our 26th annual gathering. If you want to attend, please complete the attached form and return it, with your cheques, to Russ Cook at the address shown on the form **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** and **NO LATER THAN 31st OCTOBER 2019**.

Sorry if this sounds a bit draconian, but in order to guarantee the room rate and the accommodation we must have 35 confirmed bookings by November 2019.

So please, if you intend to come, please let Russ have your response well before the deadline.

Members and friends overseas are advised to contact Russ by email at Russcook1@hotmail.co.uk for details of making bookings by credit card etc.

Also, if you're coming, why not try and persuade a friend or fellow modeller to come too? We'd love to see some new faces and it always makes the conversation in the bar or round the layouts livelier!

Ralph

On behalf of Russ Cook



2020 Bournemouth Convention Booking Form

Friday 6th March to Sunday 8th March 2020
The Trouville Hotel, Priory Rd, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 5DH

Names of those attending:-

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

The Trouville Hotel charges:-

£117 per person for two nights (Friday, Saturday) - Dinner, Room and Breakfast for those sharing a twin/double room. Six single rooms available at no extra charge. Sole occupancy of twin or double room charged supplement of **£15** per night

For those who wish to stay extra nights before / after the convention, a special rate (subject to availability) of **£53** per person (Thursday) and **£42.50** per person (Sunday) will apply. These rates include dinner, bed & breakfast. Lunches are not included.

Hotel accommodation required:-

Single rooms ____ Twin rooms ____ Double rooms ____

Arriving: Thursday 05/03/2020* Friday 06/03/2020*
Departing: Sunday 08/03/2020* Monday 09/03/2020*
(*delete as appropriate)

Special Needs (Diet etc.) _____

No deposit necessary but full payment will be required by **31 October 2019**. Cheques can be post-dated and sent now but **will not** be cashed until after this date.

I enclose a cheque for £_____ payable to 'The Trouville Hotel'
I also enclose my registration cheque for **£3** (Members) payable to 'R Cook'. No charge for 'non-rail' partners

Please return this completed form together with your cheques to Russ Cook at 91 Pilsdon Drive, Canford Heath, Poole, Dorset BH17 9EJ as soon as possible and by 31 October 2019 at the very latest.