

Wealden Railway Group Newsletter

August 2021

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Cover Pictures

Top Left; His story is told at last in this issue, a reborn C50, sort of

Top Right; The reason for Angus McPhwatt's longer trek, as outlined in the Editorial

Pictures Andrew Knights

Left; Giles Barnabe has been on the road and busy too. Article within

Picture Giles Barnabe



Editorial

Some sad news to start with. Just after the July edition of the Newsletter went out I received an e mail from Derek Ashcroft's son to say that his father had passed away. Derek was one of the first workers in the group of loft workers which became known as FoMaP (Friends of the Mertonford and Pine Tree). As such he helped in the detailing of much of the lines early scenery and building construction, and causing the Editor to actually finish the thing off. Mertonford's Hopper House (Night Hawks) is mainly the result of his and David Willett's work. Derek was an exhibitor in his own right from quite a few years ago, as well as with WRG. I found a picture of him in a copy of Railway Modeller from some time back. He also came and drove on the KLT (Kitland's Light Railway) and the MaP more than a few times. He will be missed by many more than just our modelling fraternity, as he did a lot of charity work in the real world too.

And there it was. Gone! What? Well looking at Pine Tree is a whole lot easier now. Admittedly Angus McPhwatt now has twice as far to walk to the work shops, but it now nestles into the hillside at the far end of Pine Tree. May be it will be warmer in long New England winters?

The building used to sit centre stage towards the front of Pine Tree, full view or completely in the way. After about four years of working around it, the other day I finally decided that it was time to

rearrange things. The kit shed which forms Odie's Clockworks workshop has been placed on some card to raise it above the point mechanism, above which it now sits. Not quite hidden by the Grundy's stone hopper and loading plant. The MaP workshop now sits alongside this. In fact I think I much prefer this arrangement of buildings it seems to look more natural. The original site for the workshop has been populated with a shed of many a purpose constructed by Giles B- Oil store? A good purpose for it at it is alongside the diesel oil tank. The original workshop lighting wires are now hidden beneath a pile of "brambles".

Altogether on car length has been lost from the main sidings, but as this is ½ a car per road that really doesn't matter. The Grundy's road will now only hold the three hoppers it was built to accommodate, but other incoming commodities can always use an adjacent yard road.

I have been thinking about some traffics moving around once the Thunders Hill project is running. This will spread the work load and car spotting more evenly through the system. You will all be told of the changes once someone knows what they are.

The KLR has seen little use recently. Two main reasons for this. The weather being the main one and the encroaching into the loading gauge of a number of wanted Hollyhocks. I suspect that a degree of hand shunting will be employed soon as there are plans to move a few heavy planters around in the garden very soon. If the winds continue as at present, the hollyhock may not be too much of a problem for much more of the summer running season.

Interesting and in need of a little more research. The other day, for use on Wandleford Junction, I brought the latest Bachmann 4 BEP unit home from the local model shop. When I placed the order I also collected a Hornby 2nd open BR Mk1 coach. The idea being to make as much use of the 4 BEP as possible, given its ridiculous price. Opening up the Bachmann box the coaches do look superb. All pipe work and handrails being wire. Many parts are added components too. The Hornby coach was a very basic affair compared to these. All details moulded on. Those plastic dovetail widgets which act as NEM boxes until they drop off into the track. The Bachmann cars have full close coupling mechanisms, with simple through electrical collection. In fact the only difference between a Hornby RailRoad series coach and this £40 one was that it did have metal wheels. More research will involve digging out the BR Blue Grey set of coaches from Summer Springs. I am certain that some of these are Hornby, and have close coupling fitted?

Anyway, the main thing is that the 2nd open does fit into the 4-BEP and converts it to a second 4-CEP for Wandleford. So we can now run 2 x 4 CEP, 1x 8 car 4 CEP or an eight car 4-CEP/BEP combination. Two stoppers and two through trains. If you ignore the missing buffers on the BEP buffet car, it could also find employ on Summer Springs in blue grey mode, so these two cars and the units do have several possible future uses.

I do now have the mounting card to construct the retaining walls on Wandleford Junction, so once the holiday season is over, and before too much of the exhibition season cranks up (assuming it is able to), I hope to complete this part of Wandleford's construction. Two metres of concrete retaining wall and the back scene above will be real scene setters for the rest of the project. The Sea Foam/moss crop is beginning to flower now and redden up. Soon it will be time to let it all dry out. This year that may mean moving the barrow under the car port. I have also begun to harvest some of the Meadow Sweet growing around in the garden. Once it has performed as a cut flower I propose to hang these up and dry them out and then try them as tree armatures, as was suggested in a recent magazine. I will let you know the results. At least it may result in some different looking trees compared to the sea foam (Teloxys) ones.

As usual we are running close to the wind or the bottom of the editorial sack, well W10 folder, so would willingly accept notes and the such to help prevent these pages being all the sayings of Yours Truly. I am sure you too would like that to be the case! So drop me a mail, GPO or e mail about most things to do with railways, real or model. Please not in italics, or in Apple word format, that's all. If you use a Mac, then RTF or TXT is fine..

The Start of Something Small – Practical OO/HO Part 6

by Andrew Walters

This part of the article covers designing, constructing and operating for reliability. The thoughts are presented in several sections, though are not exhaustive nor the only way of doing it. What has been written here is the result of planning, trial and error on the part of the author.

Secure, Consistent and Accurate Fastening of Baseboards. This is to ensure good track alignment and height

This was achieved for Le P'Ti Pot / Osbornia by : laying the baseboards onto a level table, and bolting the baseboard joints firmly together.

Other options available are : metal dowels & inserts, wooden dowels & corresponding holes.

Standardised Display Tables and Legs. This is to provide a level surface with step-free joints

This was achieved for Le P'Ti Pot / Osbornia by : Having one master table with folding legs either side, and two piggy-back tables resting on a shared pair of legs, using packing to provide consistent even step-free height between the baseboards.

Other options available are : fitting adjustable feet at the ends of each leg, using packing shims underneath each leg.

Secure Rail Ends. This is to protect the track when the layout is being set-up, taken down, in transit or in storage

This was achieved for Le P'Ti Pot / Osbornia by : having very small baseboards to minimise the risk of damage, and laying the track across the board joints before cutting the rails with a mini-drill disc cutter.

Other options available are : avoiding rails ends protruding beyond the edges of the baseboard, using copper clad sleepers to anchor the rails at the board joints, avoiding sharp angles for tracks across the board joints, using protective end boards to pack the baseboard in transit & in storage.

Tried and Tested Track Geometry. This is to minimise the risk of derailments, poor operation, or stock fouling other track, and also to maximise the operating potential

This was achieved for Le P'Ti Pot / Osbornia by : confirming train formations and lengths, and sizes of loops / radii of curves for the proposed train movements laying the track loose on the baseboards and placing / moving the stock by hand, then lightly attaching the track to the baseboards and placing / moving the stock again.

Other options available are : this approach should apply to any layout

Tried and Tested Wiring. This is to detect and correct short circuits or electrical discontinuities, and also to ensure that the wiring / controllers provide optimum operation

This was achieved for Le P'Ti Pot / Osbornia by : checking continuity along rails and on switch contacts with a resistance meter, checking isolation between rails with a resistance meter, checking power continuity with a voltmeter or light bulb on two wires with crocodile clips, and finally by connecting a controller and running a locomotive on the tracks.

Other options available are : this approach should apply to any layout. If the layout cannot be set-up in its entirety, set it up in segments with bridging wires & crocodile clips across the board joints to give electrical but not mechanical continuity.

Tried and Tested Rolling Stock. This is to get optimum performance and operation

This was achieved for Le P'Ti Pot / Osbornia by : planning train formations (be ready to change them in the light of experience!), , ensuring wheels and pickups are clean(ed), trundling train formations without motive power around the layout loops sidings etc. to check gauging, overhangs etc. , and doing similar with the train formations powered. This stage should also highlight any problems with couplings, buffer locks or sideways-forced derailments caused by overhangs on curves, and back-to-backs of wheel sets. The second part of this stage develops what was already achieved in the first part : establish what controller settings give consistent speeds for different

motive power and/or different train lengths/weights, carefully segregate operational stock from display stock so that the stock run publicly is the most reliable, and finally check for delicate and potentially unnecessary detailing on stock, especially below floor level, that could become detached or get broken off and cause problems.

Other options available are : this approach should apply to any layout

Safe and Secure Buildings and Detailing. This is to protect the buildings and detailing, either in operation or when the layout is being set-up, taken down, in transit or in storage

This was achieved for Le P'Ti Pot / Osbornia by : a vulnerable street lamp at the front of one of the baseboards kept getting broken off until it was protected by a removable cover made from the plastic lid of a slide box, otherwise place delicate items where they are best protected at all times, and ensure that anything that is attached is attached securely. Lastly, before taking-down the layout ensure that all removable items have been removed (and don't assume that all your helpers know exactly what is removable and what is fixed).

Other options available are : this approach should apply to any layout.

Practise Makes Perfect. This section has a few general tips on helping make a success of running and exhibiting the layout. Have as many dry-runs and trial runs as possible. It's fun as well as being beneficial, and do this well before any scenic detailing is added so that changing the track geometry in the light of experience doesn't damage anything. NOTE : there is a possible contradiction here. Before permanently attaching scenic or structural items near the tracks, place them and carefully run trains past them to ensure that there are no unexpected impact zones (if so, move the item, or as a last resort change the train formation to something that doesn't cause problems with an immovable vital feature).

On the Road

Giles Barnabe

The roads of Isla Blanca have always taken second place to the railway on the layout, nevertheless quite a collection of road vehicles has been acquired, mainly from job lots on-line, which provided models cheap enough to repaint or alter. Consequently, my motor vehicles mostly date from the late 'teens to about 1930, while Isla Blanca is set c.1955. The fig-leaf that islands are often the home of ancient vehicles much mended, patched up or remodelled has thus been exploited to the full.



One of the first conversions was a copy of one from my Majorcan layout, Alcudia, and was inspired by a light lorry owned by the railway for deliveries in the Palma area. A Yesteryear Crossley was given a closed cab, topped with the spare wheel, which gives it more of a 1920s look. At present the front corners of the cab are too boxy and could do with rounding off. A damaged Packard Landaulet, missing most of its bodywork, was given a new box body and a semi-enclosed cab – I was aiming at the look of the lorries on the Madder

Valley - while a complete version has lost all chance of becoming a shelf queen by having the passenger compartment hacksawed off and replaced by a flat-bed cargo area. A spare dashboard and windscreen has also been added, changing the appearance considerably. At the start, my vehicle collection contained three road tankers, two of them Yesteryear Fords, the other a plastic version by

an unknown maker; the latter lost its tank to a railway chassis, and the remains became another flat-bed lorry, with a rear deck of coffee-stirrer planks. Meanwhile, one of the Fords became a firefighting railcar and the last will probably be turned out in the livery of the island's state oil company, Gasoblanca.

Other light commercials on hand were another Crossley and a scruffy Talbot van, missing a rear door. The latter had its upper body behind the cab removed to become a pick-up, but the result looked too short. A suggestion from a friend resulted in card overlays being superimposed onto the cargo area to extend it by 10mm, which improved its proportions. I also fancied adding a canvas cover over the rear, so three semi-circular hoops of brass wire were glued into the body, which were then covered in thin, flexible paper with a top layer of tissue to give some texture. Painted in Khaki drab this gives a good representation of a canvas tilt. The Crossley has been given a similar treatment, with a square tilt complete with rolled-up rear sheet.



Public service vehicles, too, have made an appearance. Two Swedish Post-buses fitted with skis were bought by accident (don't ask!) and once the skis had been removed one became part of the fleet of the Paseo motor bus company, while the other is now an unpowered railcar mounted on a goods brake under frame. At Arenal, arriving passengers wanting to get to the beach-side hotels are greeted by a large vehicle, complete with a roof-rack for their luggage. This was converted from a Rolls Royce Silver Ghost family saloon, which arrived in play-worn condition, needing name boards to cover the damaged roof-rack and a re-paint. Finally, there are two other vehicles yet to be tackled, both in good

condition and only needing repainting or weathering - a Model A van and a breakdown truck.

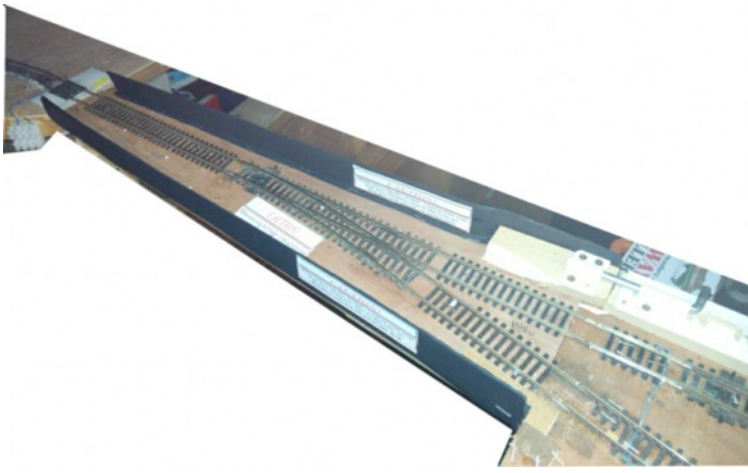
Cars are in the minority, but include a small roadster, which has benefitted with the addition of a Crossley canopy and some restoration to replace a missing radiator grille, plus touring cars by Hispano and Ford. A Dinky Toy Model T is slightly too large but parked away from other vehicles looks OK. Is it collectable and should I repaint it? Who knows, so at present it still is primrose yellow with a German soldier in the driving seat. Less controversial is a Ford "Woody", rounding out the collection. This is too many vehicles to display at once, so those on the layout are rotated from time to time to provide variation when photographing the trains, which of course are the stars of the show.

Just another point

Andrew Knights

A while ago while washing up a thought occurred to me. A thought that used up that rather damp Saturday's afternoon.

Back a short while further. I was involved in a telephonic conversation. The subject was a desire to construct a GWR branch line. Not that the world as a whole needs yet another example of the species, but I must admit to a liking for the same. Anyway, as usual, I would like to do things a little differently. I would like to have an excuse for Castle, Saint, or King to rattle past on a mainline. A station to accommodate this is large enough to need a garage, let alone a two metre baseboard. However if what is on that board is the Branch yard, all of the interest of branch line operation is to be had, with out the investment in mainline stock, passenger and freight. Only that , and a little more, required for the branch is needed, both freight and passenger.



Mainline first. A rake of passenger coaches, enough to pose as both London bound express and semi fast or stopping service. Which is determined what is on the point. Express- Castle or King. Stopper/local- Hall/Saint. A longish freight would have the same sort of motive power defining subject.

The Branch, wagons needed for all the duties determined by branch customers. Yes, although only one station is to be not quite modelled, the whole of the branch and its track plan is required, either copied from prototype of

concocted. Passenger, a short rake of passenger coaches (B Set?) and possibly a rail car and or push pull.

Operation. Passenger trains are as expected timed to meet with the stopping services on the mainline and possibly for local convenience, in other words as and when and when you do not feel like doing shunting work!

Freight. The main yard dumps a load of wagons into the branch yard. Here they are sorted into trains for destinations on the line. Some may need to be placed so that they may be dropped off on the trip to that idyllic branch terminus. Others have sidings needing to be served by the returning train. In which case other wagons could have been collected en route.

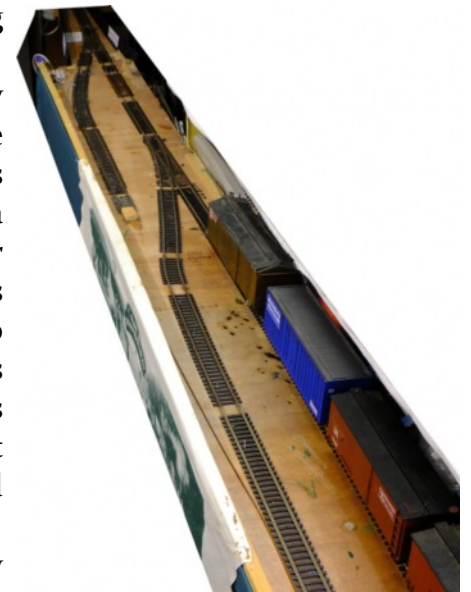
As you may gather this is a style of operation that could be well served by The Fiddle Yard. A couple of roads being used for the mainline. The others for both end of the branch line, especially handy for the freights adding and dropping cars depending on the above routine.

I like the idea and will probably do little about it. However, we now come to the picture shown here. It is a point added to the track re laid bridge on the MaP Bedford Falls- Borchester Branch, at what is known as Lawnton Virtual. Not quite a fiddle yard and not quite a staging track. Freight cars for the branch are dropped in the rear siding. The Lornton operator drops cars into the front siding as inbound branch traffic. How cars are collected and delivered is up to the branch operator. Usual rules apply, five cars maximum, plus caboose. Passenger trains, usually a Doodle bug, to meet with trains at the "Real" Lornton depot. Before this work, the Doodlebug just trundled up to the sidings,"met " the other trains and then toddled off back down the branch.

There is a slight problem with the branch. The Doodlebug usually lives at Bedford Falls. If anything is to be left at Bedford Falls or collected from the main siding, then the Doodlebug cannot remain. It would be in the way occupying a track at Borchester, not unworkably so but likely to be a pain. So, it runs to Borchester. Formerly in the way of which siding to block, or lift it off.

Now we have a bay platform, same as the one supposedly at Lornton.

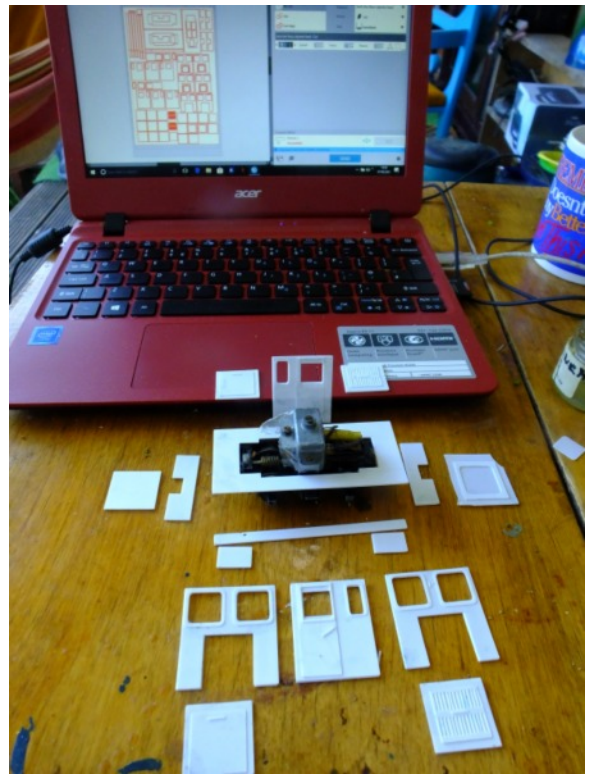
How does this relate to the above? Well after putting this in, I realised that the Branch Operator is in the same position as the operator of the GWR Branch Yard layout. The main difference being that the shunting along the line needs to be done for real. Also, if this is an operating session, that doodlebug will have to "meet" with the passenger services passing through Lornton between Pine Tree and Mertonford Town. Alright we are set in a fictional county deep in Vermont and not a fictional town in Devon on the GWR/BR(WR), but in most respects all is the same. So may be this is another reason for not constructing the above branch line. Oh Well!



New at 60!

Andrew Knights

A while back I received a copy of Continental Modeller. Apart from reading an article by one Mr Barnabe and seeing what had been done with some scribblings of my own, what caught my eye was an article on the production of a kit loco. A model of the Hungarian produced C50 four wheeled diesel switcher. As soon as I saw a side on picture I thought of the Tri Ang Dock Authority chassis. I have several of these and most have had their flanges ground down, using a Dremel and cutting wheel, so that they can run on code 100 track and through most PECO streamline points with no hopping. A relatively simple, if brutal procedure. Running the chassis at full pelt while holding the edge of the Dremel cutting disc against the flanges to reshape them. Once the deed was complete, the chassis is totally stripped down and



cleaned of any disc matter or steel filings! Much under rated these chassis can run quite slowly enough for On30/O 16.5 shunting. You do not have to use their Mach 1 top speed capability! All of mine still have their Tri Ang knurled wheels, a sound of pure nostalgia. Anyway enough, for now of the chassis.

As usual for a month or so nothing happened. Then another small project popped up, one that could use the Silhouette cutter. The same cutter that sulked and was part of the reasons for the current state of no progress on the Mertonford HO project.

What was needed was a simple to draw out and easy to test cutting model. Something like a small shunter. I brought the chassis downstairs and ran the ruler over it. As the article had no diagrams the MaP loco is "inspired" by the prototype, not a model of it.

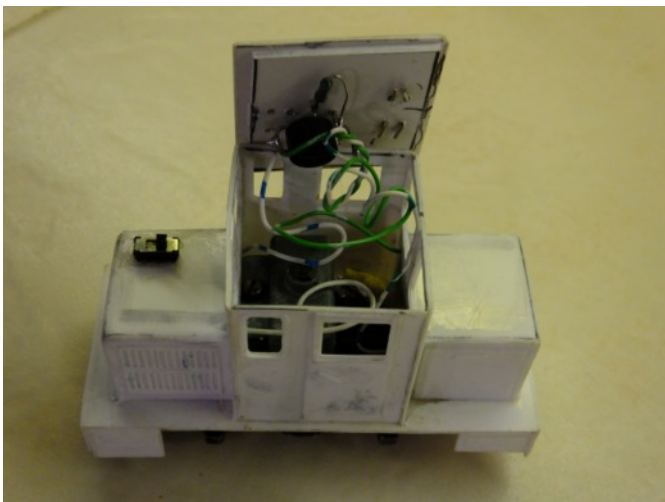
Essentially three boxes on a plank, once I had decided on the size of the cab, the rest fell into place quite quickly. I made as much use of the A4 sheet as I could, many parts nested within other part's cut

outs. A couple of hours later and it was time for the test. I brought the Silhouette out of the Reading Room and set it up in the kitchen. Loaded in a sheet of 10thou plastic sheet, and then booted up the PC and re read Alan Monk's coach building article from March WRG Newsletter. I adjusted the cutter settings to suit, by which time lap top and cutter had found each other's Blue Tooth. Hitting send, the cutter sprang into life and did what it should. About ten minutes later I had an exceedingly well chopped sheet of plastic.

I lifted out all the parts and checked them over. Most were in threes. Off to the "stores" and located the bottle of D-Limonene. A short while and the veran-

dah table had two cab ends, two cab sides, four bonnet sides and two bonnet ends, plus a set of doors and hatches the sans boxes and chassis sides plus the running plate all laminated and left to set over night.

Next day I ran some PlasWeld over all the edges to ensure a good fixing between the laminations, just in case there was any missed Limonene. Later the same day it was a simple case to assemble the various body parts. The holes on the chassis sides even fitted onto the fixing lugs from the old cow





catcher fitted to the original Tri Ang designated user of this chassis, not the Dock Authority.

Some 2mm plastic sheet was cut to provide a roof and the tops of the bonnets, this was glued in flush with PlasWeld. Another night to allow glue to dry and joints to harden.

Next day all the corners of the body and roof were filed to a rounded profile. As the body did not fall to bits after or during this process, the model was deemed ready to be wired up.

I made a couple of headlights from some soft wire and brass tube. The tube was a tight fit on a 5mm LED. A MaP switch was found, a bridge rectifier and resistor, the required white LEDs and some wire. Just in case, I'll explain the MaP switch. There not being many isolation sections in a largely fully live layout, these switches are used to isolate a loco where other means cannot be found. The switch is in one leg of the motor feed, the headlights of all locomotives are permanently live,

indication power supply status to the engine.

The head lights had LEDs forced into them and were then secured to the cab roof the LED tails were fed through more holes and a bridge rectifier was soldered to feed one side directly and the other via the resistor. The AC feeds from the rectifier were attached to wire tails to be fed from both track pick ups of the chassis. I unsoldered the insulated brush feed wire of the chassis, attached one side to a wire from the MaP switch and the other thin flexible jumper applies power to the motor brush. The switch itself being super glued to the bonnet top.

A home moulded bell and horn were added to the roof and a length of round plastic rod was glued to the end of the switch, to partly disguise the switch as something to do with the loco exhaust.

The model was power tested at this time, then left overnight. Next morning it was painted, using Citadel acrylic paints.

Acrylic glazing was added to the cab and a stripe over the boundary between the two tone green livery. All that is needed now is to add Kadee couplers and our little almost Hungarian-"Granville" will be able to run the new two car service from Lawnton Junction to Bedford Falls, making a change from the equally venerably Tri Ang Met Cammel powered doodlebug.

I suspect that this particular chassis is actually in its mid to late fifties, but sixty sounds better!

The bicycle? Well as the loco is almost Hungarian, and a well-known "Open All Hours" character was known for his squeaky bike wheel, our new loco "Granville" just had to have a bike attached. A PECO O scale bicycle, good enough for this , even if it does miss having the delivery basket!

A Request from the Editor

Andrew Knights

After watching several issues of YouTube Sam's Trains channel, I know that he is a tad "Marmite", but often has some good bits. One such has been his use of a 3d filament extrusion printer. I suspect that he is using PET, and has turned out some interesting bits and pieces. Basic chassis, some rather odd vehicles: coaches, vans and open wagons. More interestingly a replacement gear for a Hornby locomotive. This worked, if not a long term part, but definitely an idea.

With growing interest in the Mertonford HO project, where chassis construction would be a great help, as well as for other parts involved in the project, the time approaches when I think I must consider one of these devices for myself.

So, has anyone experience of the beasts, what would you look for, and which did you buy/borrow?

I know of one member that has used these and would be interested to know of any others?

Drop me an e mail if you have any thoughts on the subject.

Thank you.