

model railway constructor

november 66

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Staines West Layout

The Staines Model Railway Society was formed just over a year ago and now has some thirty members, working mainly in OO and TT gauges. As meetings are held each week in a room of the Town Hall, all club layouts have to be fully portable. In order to devise a satisfactory method of producing a portable layout within the modest budget of the club, we first embarked on the construction of a test track. This took some three months to build, and having learned by our mistakes, in January of this year plans were laid for the first of the club layouts. These were to be in OO and TT gauges, and had to be built in less than 11 months in order to be shown at our first exhibition.

The OO layout was an ambitious project, and to cater for all tastes was impossible, so any ideas of a freelance layout were abandoned. Also, we wanted our layout to be absolutely realistic, with authentic operating practices, realistic speeds and scale length station. As a result of this we selected the local GWR branch terminus as the prototype for our model.

Baseboards

The baseboards, some half a dozen in number, are constructed from Sundeala board, on 2in by 1/2in framing. They consist of three 4ft by 3ft boards which carry the main station area, and two 2ft by 4ft boards which carry the approach tracks. The hidden siding and fiddle-yard are mounted on a single 1ft by 4ft board. All the baseboards have folding legs, and are coupled by coach bolts and wing nuts, which makes assembly literally a five minute job.

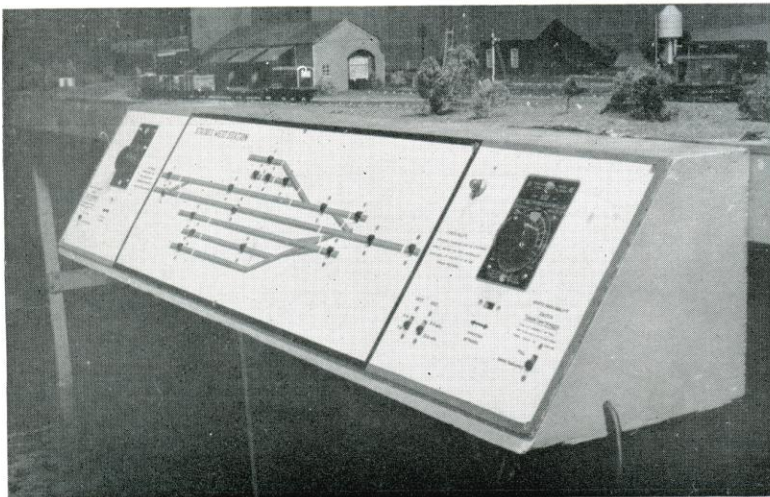
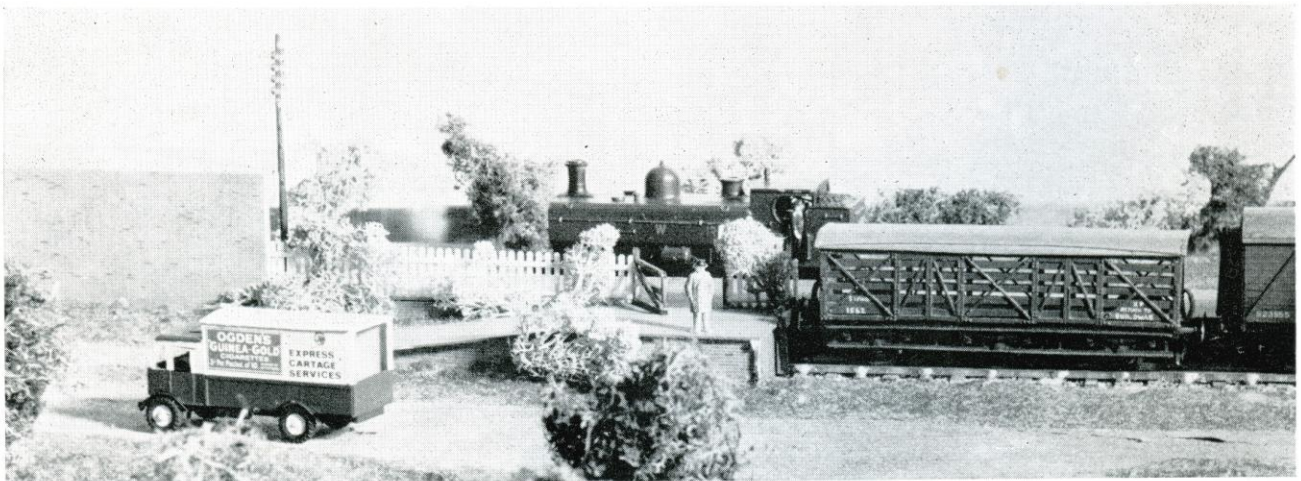
Trackwork

To capture the effect of a real branch line, bullhead track was essential, and with a limited budget, this meant scratch building. All trackwork on the layout, with the exception of the fiddle yard, has been built by members, and includes eight points and a double-slip. The sleepers are cut from 1/16in thick balsa, laid on W&H cork sheet. The bullhead rail is soldered to 1/2in brass gimp pins inserted through every fourth sleeper. Pointwork is constructed in a similar fashion and live frogs are used throughout.

Control & Wiring

We are extremely proud of the control panel, which is the work of two or three club electricians. All control apparatus is contained in an attractively finished panel some four feet long. H&M panel mounted controllers are used, but all other equipment, including the double-pole, double-throw section switches, we purchased from surplus stores. Two controllers are provided, and either one can work any part of the layout. A track diagram, with appropriately placed switches, mounted on the face of the panel, provides for quick selection of a controller and the energising of the track.

Wiring is easily accessible beneath the baseboard, which stands higher than most exhibition layouts. All inter-baseboard wiring is carried through multi-way plugs and sockets. At present most pointwork is manually operated through levers and rodding, but electric operation is now being installed.



- 1 A view of the road approach to the goods yard and end loading dock at Staines West. Class 5700 0-6-0PT stands in the main platform.
- 2 The attractive control panel, showing the track diagram and section switches, and the H&M controllers. The panel has now been modified for full electric operation of points.
- 3 General view of the country end of Staines West, with a railcar from West Drayton entering the station.
- 4 Class 6100 2-6-2T No 6167 stands in the locomotive yard at Staines West. In the background, a 2-6-0 waits to depart with a parcels train.

Described by the members of Staines Model Railway Society

Buildings

The main railway buildings on the layout are largely the work of one club member and are based on actual structures. The station building itself captures well the gigantic appearance of the prototype and is built in card. The design is most unusual for in an effort to save money, the station was converted from a large Georgian-style house. In keeping with the station building, the prototype goods shed is built from yellow brick and is over 80ft long. This was demolished in 1963, and the model was constructed from drawings and photographs taken some years ago. The engine shed, a wooden structure, was demolished about 10 years ago, and the model is based on memories and guesswork, and is believed to be a reasonably accurate reconstruction. The signal box too has long since been demolished, and the model is based on that at Lambourn. All buildings are made from card covered with Superquick brick papers, or balsa wood in the case of planked buildings.

Scenery

The scenery employs the age old method of crumpled newspaper, covered with Polyfilla. When dry the Polyfilla is covered with suitable green paint, and rayon flock powder is sprinkled on while the paint is still wet. The stream at the back of the station is worthy of note, as the effect is really convincing. The river bed was painted with suitable mud colours and given several coats of varnish. These were applied in rapid succession with the result that the surface became uneven and tiny ripples formed. The result is quite amazing.

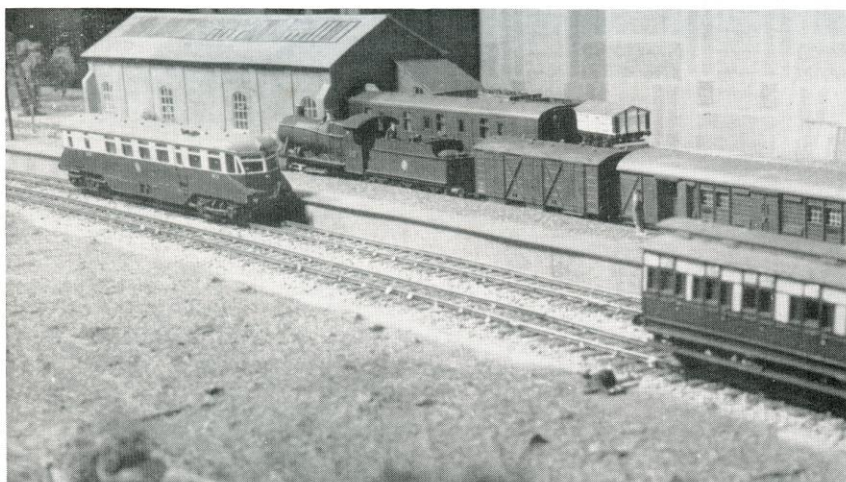
Miscellany

There are many points of interest in the layout, especially in the detail items built as homework jobs by club members. The greenhouses in the station garden are real gems, and even have tiny plants growing in flower pots on the shelves. A goods yard crane is provided near the goods shed and this employs an Airfix jib, and numerous clock gears in its construction. The engine shed has a neat inspection pit, and the station booking office can be illuminated to show the interior detail, including the stairs up to the living quarters.

Exhibition Rolling Stock

All rolling stock is provided by club members, and for exhibition running only the most suitable stock is used. At this year's exhibition the theme will be "Staines West 1930-1965" and the stock will be representative of nearly all the types of train used on the line during this period. Three types of autococh will be in use, these being a converted steam railmotor trailer, No. 187 of the 1930s and No. 244, one of the last cars built in 1954. Diesel railcars feature quite prominently, and these included ex-GW and Pressed Steel types. For the steam lovers there is a wide collection of ex-GW types including examples of almost every class which worked the branch during our period. Among these will be an O-4-2T No. 1436 seen several times in past issues of *mrc*. Other classes in evidence include panniers, prairies, a 2251 class O-6-0, 6300 class 2-6-0 and a Dean O-6-0.

A selection of typical freight stock will be worked into the station, and a large proportion of this has been hand built by members.



Staines Model Railway Society

This layout will be among the
exhibits at the first
exhibition of the Staines MRS

November 19, 1966

Staines Town Hall, Market Square,
Staines, Middlesex.

11.30am – 7.00pm

Admission 1s 6d – children 9d
Refreshments available

