

Newsletter – DECEMBER 2025

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Chairman’s Message – December 2025

By Mark Peddle

Hi to everyone who loves model trains.

As it is said, the “Silly season has arrived!”

This past month, we had the Model Train Expo, which went off very well over the two days, 1st and 2nd November, at the Birchleigh Community Hall. The event featured a diverse mix of model displays by clubs and layout builders, as well as many traders selling train-related items.

We head into December with the Hobby Show, which is taking place at Nasrec on 5th to 7th December. The club will be displaying and operating its modular system there, and the N Gauge Guild will also be joining us with some of their displays. Watch our EMRIG Facebook page as we will be posting some action reels from the Hobby Show. You can also go to the website shown here for more information. Website: [The Hobby Show | Exhibition](#)



As the year is coming to an end we want to wish everyone a blessed Christmas, and may 2026 be a good year for you and our great hobby.

Please note that we update the newsletter regularly with events, to ensure you are up to date with what's happening.

Ensure you have subscribed to our Facebook page as well, to get updated postings.

That's all for the moment.

Until next time, keep your trains running.

Mark Peddle

Chairman



January 2024..... (first reveal of "mini-modules at EMRIG AGM) ->



-> November 2025 (EMRIG members' layout displayed at TGMTE) (less than two years later!!)

Other Club News

By Brian Dawson

Recent Membership Changes...

Eish... things can change quickly if you're not paying attention! (And maybe that has something to do with the fact that I'd been more "Western" than "Eastern" for the past few weeks, as WFG rushed to try and get its layout [where I was also "a bit" involved] finished in time for the recent Expo.)

Last time I looked, James Job was called "New Guy" (as introduced to you last month). Now all of a sudden he's called "Noodle"! It probably went something like... "New" Guy -> "Noo" Guy -> "Noodle"? (One never really knows how the minds of the residents of the Far East work....) Anyway, James has told me that I can confirm that he is now known as "Noodle" around these parts.

But the really good news is that we now actually have **one MORE new member** at EMRIG, in the person of "Mrs Noodle"! Yip – James' wife Robyn has also, for some unknown reason, decided to join EMRIG! And she runs trains!! And has already bought herself a club shirt, to confirm that she's part of the club, and is here to stay! And in a communiqué on the club chatgroup, she signed herself off as "Mrs Noodle"!.....

Robyn, I have no idea what possessed you to want to also join this bunch of strangeness, but we warmly welcome you, too, to the club. And from the way that you have joined in and absolutely made yourself at home, and helped out with the layout etc., right from the start, we know that you will fit right in and enjoy yourself, and also be an asset to the club. So nice to have another lady member in the club, says Mia!

And then we know that there's also "Baby Noodle" out there in the background (but not [yet?] joined us). At Benoni Junior, where she visited us, she also had a brief session of running Dad's train on the layout, using Dad's phone, but then did seem to be rather more interested in what was on *her* own phone screen after that. But we've discovered that she bakes a GREAT batch of very tasty cupcakes! Yes!!!...

It's also been good to see Johan de Villiers, Terrence Marx, Jimmy Mattushek and Eugene Saayman all coming back and active as members of the club during this year.

The Expo

On behalf of... myself, **THANK YOU** to all the club members who participated, for all that you did to make our involvement at the recent Expo such a resounding success! To all those who were there early on the Friday (unlike myself!) to do the setting up – THANK YOU! And if you had to take time off from work, or put in leave to be there, THANK YOU especially! Your commitment to the club is duly noted, and very much appreciated! (I know that for some of you it was not possible to get off work to be there, much as you wanted to, but you still helped in other ways and at the times when you could...) Special thanks also are due particularly to Niel and Mark for all the planning and arrangements that went on in the background.

I truly believe that EMRIG did itself proud at the Expo, having a really great layout that looked good and functioned well, having (impressive!) trains running all the time, with minimal technical hitches as a result of all the effort that was put in early on to get things running smoothly. Well done, guys! I decided not to

come and spoil the party by coming over and trying to run a trainload of those little troublesome British wagons as part of the suite... I'll leave that for the Hobby Show, shall I?! ☺

The great club spirit was also very evident – quite loud at times, very audible from the WFG side of the hall ;-), but most definitely a positive and happy vibe was going on. And good to see so many members wearing club shirts, identifying as EMRIG members! This club now oozes positivity again!

Scheduled Layout Set-ups And Future Activities



In just a few days we'll be on display again at **THE HOBBY SHOW**, taking place at NASREC on the weekend 5th to 7th December! We are planning to have an extended layout (i.e. including the inverse curve), and as big as possible, using all available modules. In fact, it should be nearly identical to the layout we had at the EXPO. We will, however, also have a small table-top N Gauge layout from the N Gauge Guild there as well, also Duncan's N Gauge Duck Harbour, and a couple of other displays in our area.

We will be positioned right in the entrance hallway, where everyone entering from the car park to attend the show will be walking in past us, directly opposite the ticket sellers/checkers. And we'll have our neighbours there, as mentioned previously!

And here's another example of how things can change..... Last I had heard was that Riekus van der Westhuizen and Rene' Bosch would be setting up the same South African "Cape Gauge" (12mm track) layout that they had built for the TGMTE Expo (which is what I told you last month). They have recently confirmed (Facebook is the ultimate authority here ☺) that they WILL be there alongside us, but I gather now that they will apparently have a somewhat different version of their layout on display. Rene' says they are still burning midnight oil to get the "new" version of the layout finished! ... apparently it's much of what they had on display at the Expo, but with some new additions? So it will be interesting to see what they DO end up bringing to the Show... What I am sure will be a GIVEN, however, is that they will have on their layout at least some of those seriously impressive locos that Riekus is involved in assembling / decoding / painting / weathering, so we'll have these magnificent trains running there, looking and sounding absolutely superb alongside ours.



Pics by Riekus van der Westhuizen

Mark has set up a roster for the operation of our layout for those three show days (Friday, Saturday and Sunday), based on the responses he received, when asking who would be available to man the layout on the various days. The free access passes for the event will be issued based on the roster, where we have 9 persons attending on the Thursday (for the setting up), 11 for the Friday, 15 for the Saturday, and 12 on the Sunday. Free access to the Hobby Show will unfortunately be restricted to only those members who are on roster and have those passes, and only on the day/s for which those passes apply. We have to have the layout operating all day (09h00 to 16h00), on all three days of the Hobby Show, so Mark has arranged time-slots for members to be on duty each day, and also to be selling our raffle tickets. We need to have a good variety of trains / locos there, in order for some trains to have a bit of a “rest” between running sessions.

We had decided NOT to offer to set up our layout at the Richie’s Toy Fair which took place on the weekend in November directly following TGMTE. It would have been just TOO much, to have to set up all over again less than a week later, after all the effort put in at TGMTE. The Hornby “club” (HRCASA) were then offered the opportunity to set up their portable layout there instead.

And, likewise, we also decided NOT to set up our layout at the recent EMRIG Swap Meet at Northmead Mall at the end of November, with this being less than a week before we would need to be setting up again at NASREC for the Hobby Show.

We are planning to have many more opportunities in the new year, where we will get our layout set up, where all club members will once again be able to participate and have some fun running their trains. Nothing has been scheduled for 2026 as yet, however, other than for the Swap Meets in February (ours and NTMTK’s), but watch this space....

Brief Mini-modules Updates

I can confirm that Terrence’s cattle ranch modules must have experienced some of the recent, very welcome (for them), rain, as there is now green growth in evidence! The cows look to be most relieved! And Mr T has bought a water tank, and also has a water trough and feed trough, to add before the Hobby Show!



And I heard that Kallie actually already has ~~three~~ modules (no – make that four, with the additional one he bought on Saturday!), and is considering expanding to six, as he develops his staging yard for the layout...
Sterkte met al die lekker werk wat tans aan die gang is daar, Kallie! Ons sien baie uit na die nuwe Yard!!

The Noodles have also already got their first module pack, and James bought some track on Saturday, to start with his track-laying! Now that's commitment for you! And they have a scenicking design in mind that they will be working towards. They're now looking for the appropriate structures.....

And Ash has promised that he'll be doing some work on his modules as soon as the school holidays begin! He has been practising his scenicking skills on his home shelf layout (I saw the photographic evidence!), and he definitely knows how to go about it! Now it's just about finding the time to get on with developing the modules (which he has already assembled!).

Niel has now come up with a new module shape ("depressed centres", rather like those freight cars), on which bridges can be established to create an overpass scenario! That's going to be an interesting one to watch... who's going to be brave enough to be first to attempt a river-crossing module? And it sounds as if there might be some other new module concepts in the pipeline in future too!

Last month it was Ralph's recent developments with Can-Nat On Sea that had impressed me so much... This month I was absolutely blown away by the finished product of Kobus' Three Sisters module set!! It's been taking a while to come to fruition, but oh is it worth it! Admittedly, he did get some outside help with the painting of his Three Sisters backdrop (Mervyn Mark did an amazing job of painting the scenery!), but the end result, with all the additional detail (vehicles, lighting, vegetation) that Kobus has added, is truly stunning. See my photos in the Expo article below for the detail.... Well done, Kobus! It's been worth the wait!

Our "English" Branch

It would appear that our club now has a new "branch" set up in the UK a couple of weeks back! Glynn and Kevin Chamberlain happened to meet up with Brian McMahon at The National Festival of Railway Modelling in Birmingham, England, on Saturday 22nd November. Apart from sending us numerous videos of what was obviously a very impressive model train show (videos available on the club chatgroup, if you've got lots of data available! ☺), with LOTS of stuff happening there, Glynn also sent us a photo taken of the three members of the "England Model Railway Interest Group" together at the show!



Swap Meets Feedback and Schedule

The last EMRIG Swap Meet for the year was held on Saturday 29th November. It was brought forward by a week (normally held first weekend of December) because of EMRIG being at the Hobby Show at NASREC on the weekend (first weekend of December) when our swap meet was originally scheduled.

If you missed it – sorry! We did do our best to let everyone know well in advance that there had been a date change...

It seemed to be another good one! We had 23 traders, with 66 tables!! (We actually ran out of tablecloths..... what's happened to them? – we used to have 70...) Many traders said it was a good one for them!

It was SO good to see Mervyn and Minnie back at a Swap Meet again, with Merv's customary 7 tables! Really good to see those yellow tablecloths in place as Mervyn relaxed and had a cup of coffee with friends before the rush began!! And I know that the buying public was really excited to have him back, with buyers standing three deep around his tables, waiting for the bell to ring. (And I couldn't help myself from spending money on some of his stock once again! Yip – a beautiful BNSF SD45 loco, and also a few other little N gauge odds and ends I found in his "scratch-patch" ...)

Matthew couldn't wait to ring the bell for us to signal the start of the sales (although there seemed to be an awful lot of buying [or at least "reserving of items"] going on before that bell was rung!).



Once again there was something for everybody... from bargain basement ("Black Saturday?") specials to real high-end items. It was great to have Francois Delpoit there from Pretoria as a new trader (selling off his Dad's collection), with two tables covered in high-quality N Gauge locos and rolling stock! (It's very seldom that there is any significant amount of N Gauge items for sale...) There was rolling stock galore, lots of choice American freight car items again, especially from Dianne & Steve looking after Tish Goodenough's tables for her; Len Swanepoel had his exquisitely crafted SAR (mostly) buildings, while his brother Toppie (our new "Tree Man") had a couple of tables filled with his beautiful trees; Danie Pienaar's range of resin-cast items for scenicking our layouts or adding wagon-loads just seems to grow and grow – at each swap meet there seem to be new items to choose from, and I'm very happy to see his N Gauge range expanding

too; there were lots of cars to choose from, and even a few planes for sale... Three of our EMRIG members were there as traders (Niel, Ralph and Eugene), while the rest of us were there as part of the buying public! (Yip – I saw every single EMRIG member present buying [or selling!] stuff!!)



Steve and Dianne setting up



Toppie's Trees



One of Andrew Mabin's tables



Some of Tish Goodenough's rolling stock

Mark took three videos – during the setting up of the tables; while the traders were setting up; and once the Swap Meet was underway – all of which he immediately posted as reels to our EMRIG Facebook page, exhorting our 1000+ followers to come on down to Northmead Mall and join us at the Swap Meet.

And then someone from Northmead Mall must have come along and taken lots of photos of the Swap Meet getting under way, and posted those to THEIR Facebook page, advertising that the Swap Meet was happen-

ing! They had also posted an advert for the Swap Meet on their page on 24th November already, promoting the Swap Meet.



Len and Toppie setting up (These pics from NMM's Facebook page) Mervyn's "scratch patch" area

Thank you, Northmead Mall Management, for allowing us to continue holding our Swap Meets here, and for assisting and supporting us in this way!

Other Swap Meets

There's very little remaining of 2025 at this stage! What's left of the 2025 Swap Meets calendar looks like this....

~~December 6/12/2025 EMRIG~~ **It was moved forward by a week, so if you missed it, you've missed it...**

December 6/12/2025 Bothasig Toy Fair Bothasig, Cape

December 13/12/2025 PMT John Vorster Technical High School Pretoria

But because planning for 2026 got going early, here we have the provisional Swap Meets calendar for 2026, for all those Swap Meets that have been confirmed thus far. Additional dates can/will be added once they are provided.

February 7/2/2026 EMRIG Northmead Mall (*) Benoni



February	28/2/2026	NTMTK	Voortrekker Monument (*)	Pretoria
March	28/3/2026	PMT	John Vorster Technical High School	Pretoria
May	30/5/2026	EMRIG	Northmead Mall (*)	Benoni
June	27/6/2026	PMT	John Vorster Technical High School	Pretoria
August	28/8/2026	EMRIG	Northmead Mall (*)	Benoni
October	3/10/2026	PMT	John Vorster Technical High School	Pretoria
November	28/11/2026	EMRIG	Northmead Mall	Benoni
December	12/12/2026	PMT	John Vorster Technical High School	Pretoria

(*) = intending to have the EMRIG portable layout set up and running at these events

(Other * info will be added once the Committee has had a chance to discuss and decide...)

Here it is, in poster form, in case you wish to copy and paste, and forward to anyone else interested...



Christmas and New Year Greetings from the whole EMRIG Editorial Team 😊 (You know what I mean!)

I'm not a big one for celebrating Christmas early! It gets me going a bit (in a negative way!) when I see Christmas decorations appearing in the shops and hear those jingling bells from October!!... But seeing as this will be the last newsletter from me before Christmas (and most likely also before New Year, but I haven't planned things quite that far ahead yet), it's time for me to wish all our readers a very merry 2025 Christmas, and a happy and prosperous New Year in 2026, even if it is still a few weeks away!

(I've just recently received a very "Christmassy" newsletter from the Hornby Railway Collectors Association of SA, which is what reminded me to include this section! *Thank you for the reminder, Andrew!* 😊 😊 😊)



Hopefully there will be a model train item or two for you in your Christmas stocking this year, even if it's a gift "from me, to me"! (You see – you should have taken Ralph's advice, and bought yourself something at the Swap Meet!)

And may the new year bring you many opportunities to run and enjoy your trains, whether you're happy going round and round, or prefer prototype ops with lots of shunting, whether you are busy building or working on your new modules, or even contemplating building or extending your home layout in 2026... Whatever you're going to get up to, may it bring you much joy and fulfillment. And make a pleasant memory or two (*and write an article for our newsletter while you're about it, too, please!*)!! 😊😊😊

Cheers!

The Editor (BrianD)

EMRIG Newsletter "Index" Available and on the Club Website

An "Index" (actually a listing of content by month, and by article title / author) has been compiled, covering the period February 2017 to December 2023 (in January I will expand the Index to include 2024 and 2025 as well). This is available as a PDF document if anyone wants a copy of it. You can just email me your request at editor@emrig.co.za. It is also available on the club website, under the Newsletter section, right at the top, for ease of reference.

Club Communications Media (our routine monthly reminder)

These are our Newsletter, our Website, our Whatsapp Group, and our Facebook page, and occasional general Email correspondence...

The club's **Website** address is emrig.co.za.

The **Newsletter** is uploaded to the club's website each month, and a link to the website location is posted on the Whatsapp Chatgroup once the latest newsletter is available, and also sent to a number of other "friends of EMRIG". Members who have requested such, are emailed a copy of the newsletter.

The **Whatsapp Chatgroup** is administered by Niel Wilson. To be added to the group, you need to be an active paid-up member of the club. Send Niel a message at 078-305-5248, and he will add you to the group.

The **Facebook page**... Type "EMRIG" in the searchbox at the top of your Facebook homepage (this assumes you are on Facebook). This will bring up the club's page. And if you like it, "Like" it!!! 😊

Emails are sent to club members when there is something urgent or "special" that you need to be notified about. You need to have been added to our "Google Groups" mailing list... Let Glynn know if you aren't receiving mails this way, have paid or are paying your subs, and believe you should be receiving mail.

Letters To The Editor

Editor's Note: I received an email back in October 2021, which inter alia suggested that we routinely have a **Letters To The Editor** section in this newsletter... 😊 😊 😊

Come on, guys and girls! Let's hear what you have to say... about the newsletter (what you do and don't find interesting!), about our railroad modelling hobby, about prototypical trains... in fact, anything train- or club-related!!! Send your comments / suggestions / contributions to me by email at editor@emrig.co.za.

EMRIG AGM 2026 – AGM Early Notice

Notice is hereby given that:

Our club AGM will take place on **SATURDAY 24th JANUARY 2026**, starting at **10 am**.

The venue will once again be Niel Wilson's home, at 157 Meyer Road, Marister AH, Benoni. The AGM will be followed by the customary bring-and-braai.

The Agenda for the AGM will be provided in the January 2026 edition of this newsletter, and also emailed to all club members. (*Photos below are of some previous AGMs.*) Please come and join us!



2017



2022



2025

The 2025 Great Model Train Expo – We Were There!

By Brian Dawson

(Most of the photos here have been copied off the TGMTE Facebook page, where contributors such as Neil Bennett [N Gauge Guild], Mark Peddle [EMRIG], Terrence Marx [EMRIG], and Willie or Caroline Vorster [TGMTE Organisers] had posted them)

The first Great Model Train Expo to be held in Gauteng (are there any others held anywhere else in South Africa, that we need to know about?) in seven years – that’s right, the last one took place in Randburg in 2018 (*and we were there too - see pic below*) – was held in Kempton Park on the 1st & 2nd November 2025!



*EMRIG setting up the two old Exhibition layouts (N gauge on LHS, HO gauge on RHS) at **TGMTE 2018***

The biennial 2014, 2016 and 2018 TGMTEs were organised primarily by Marinus Korts, who has sadly since passed away. And then Covid hit us, while Marinus was busy getting ready for the 2020 event (decided on a new venue, making arrangements, etc...), and that put an end to that run of events. With Marinus passing away, nothing has happened for a number of years.

But Willie Vorster, who used to arrange the Planes, Trains and Automobiles event at the Rand Airport, under the auspices of the SAA Museum, decided to make things happen again, along with friend Danie Pienaar!

Willie told me, around a year ago, at our December Swap Meet last year, that he was planning for the 2025 TGMTE, and that he wanted the (what was at that time still the relatively “new-fangled”) EMRIG mini-modular layout to be there as part of it. EMRIG had started with the development of the new layout earlier in 2024, and what we had at the time was still just a small oval layout – the four corner modules, just two of them scenicked, and a few straights. But Willie was impressed enough with what we had at that stage, to want us to be part of what he was envisaging.

Things have grown and developed a bit, for us, in the meantime!... ☺

The Expo took place in the Wynand Marais Hall in Birchleigh, and filled the hall to capacity! There were six primary model train layouts on display, exhibited by EMRIG, @Trainz, WFG, N Gauge Guild, HRCASA (Hornby) and the Pienaar family's cute "Coca Cola" layout, with three or four additional much smaller layouts also associated with a couple of these clubs (Duncan's small Duck Harbour N gauge layout, and three Z gauge layouts – one of them in a suitcase! – up on stage with the N Gauge Guild).



Z gauge in a suitcase! (N Gauge Guild)

On the patio just outside the hall there was a live steam demonstration set up, with a massive loco chuffing away on a rolling trackbed, along with displays of the finely-engineered locos in various scales that Carel is building.



Live steam, courtesy of CSME

There were 20 traders present, filling at least 61 tables with model railway bargains and delights of all sorts! Jean Dulez, one of those traders, also had his static demonstration module and many of his locos on display, and Brian had had his arm twisted to set up his rather tired "teaching modules" display once again.



What do I need next?



Part of Jean's loco collection

But unless you had come to the Expo primarily to buy stuff, the main attraction of the day had to be the various layouts there, all with trains running!

EMRIG probably occupied the most floor space, with our expanded “fat L” layout including the inverse curve, the five corners, and 26 straight modules. Sadly, Richard Mustoe’s four Scaledale modules were not available for inclusion this time, so the layout was slightly smaller than originally intended (like we had had at Benoni Junior), but it was still a most impressive layout.

The EMRIG team, with the exception of yours truly, had arrived there early (09h30) on the Friday morning to do the setting up of the layout, and everything was long since ready and waiting – but still untested – for when Brian finally arrived with his modules at about 12h30 (having had to go via Krugersdorp to first help with the loading of the WFG layout, and transportation of some of its component parts, due to his “divided club loyalties”!). Brian quickly unloaded and separated his EMRIG modules, and they were then slipped into position and connected up by the rest of the team (while Brian got on with WFG stuff), and the layout was tested and all was found to be in order. Kobus had been diligently checking track alignments while they waited...



EMRIG setting up, waiting for Brian's modules



Kobus sorting out track alignment

But by early afternoon the EMRIG layout was ready (Brian's modules now included), and Niel and Mark declared the setting up process completed (thanks for waiting for me, guys!), and they could all go home.



EMRIG layout set up and ready on display!

The @Trainz guys – Riekus and Rene', with their partners, and a couple of labouring assistants – were also set up by then, having brought their very-newly-built SAR Cape Gauge (12mm) layout on a bakkie and massive trailer, and were running trains and checking that their layout was in full running order.



The @Trainz 12mm Cape Gauge layout all set up

The Hornby layout (which is on a single board, so does not require assembling) was in place in the foyer, covered over with a cloth, so it too was presumably ready to run. They would just put down their loose structures and add their trains when they arrived early on the Saturday.



The Hornby layout in operation on the Saturday

The younger Pienaars, who presumably had been helping Pa and Oom Willie with setting up the hall early on (setting out trader tables, name plates, bottles of water, etc.) were busy connecting up their layout (looked like it was two modules that bolted together). They had trains running by early-afternoon.

The stage, where the N Gauge Guild would be setting up, was still empty, but they, also being a nomadic club, and very accustomed to setting up quickly in the different venues where they operate, would bring their modules (all of them tried and tested) and quickly assemble their layout early on the Saturday.

The WFG guys, having first travelled from Randburg, Roodepoort or Hartebeespoort to Krugersdorp to load up their layout, were the last of the layout exhibitors to arrive, with the bakkie and trailer with their large modules only getting to Birchleigh after 13h00. Their modules had all been pallet-wrapped in layers of plastic to prevent wind-damage during transportation, and, once this plastic covering was removed, assembling of their layout could begin. (As a confidential piece of relevant background information, their layout had been specially built for the Expo, but had never actually been fully assembled before, so a few teething problems were encountered!) The WFG guys then received the shock of the weekend, when Willie announced at 14h20 that the hall needed to be vacated and locked up promptly at 15h00! Eish!!! They had been anticipating being able to work until at least 17h00 or maybe even 18h00, to get the layout together and tested... And here they were, being kicked out so early, with so much still to do! The layout assembly process then had to be abandoned at 15h00, resuming at 06h30 on the Saturday morning, and it became a serious scramble to get that layout operational.

From early on the Saturday morning (Willie said the hall would be open from 06h00) the traders (and layout operators) started to arrive, and they filled their tables with their stock, in anticipation of the hordes! Poor old WFG were still struggling to get their layout running, due to electrical connectivity issues between the modules (despite all of this having been tested back in Krugersdorp a few days before). But at least their layout was great to look at, in the meantime!

At 09h00 the front doors to the hall were opened, and the hordes streamed in! Saturday morning was

really busy! Things quietened down quite a bit in the afternoon, and then Sunday morning was nowhere near as busy as Saturday had been. The Expo officially ended at 14h00 on the Sunday, but by 13h30 some of the traders were already starting to pack up.



What was there to see at the Expo? There was a very large amount of HO and OO model train stuff on sale, and even some N Gauge items! I saw an O Gauge loco on one of the traders' tables too. There were some great bargains to be had, apparently (I didn't do any shopping on this occasion). There was a very wide range of locos, rolling stock, new and second-hand (already built) structures, kits still to be assembled, complete model railroad starter kits, track, scenicking materials, vehicles, 3-D printed and laser cut items, all sorts of accessories for the building, decorating and operating of model railroad layouts.

On the EMRIG layout there were a few new developments... As mentioned, it must have rained a bit, as Terrence's cattle ranch had sprouted some grass / green shrubbery. Ralph's yard, which actually forms part of his SAR home layout, had a new roadway and some new small buildings on it. But a really wonderful aspect to see on this latest version of the EMRIG layout was the amount of work that Kobus had put in, to finish off his set of four Three Sisters modules in time for the Expo. The four-module backdrop painted for him by Mervyn Mark, with the Three Sisters koppies brooding over the town, is absolutely spectacular!! And then he had a few "olden day" vehicles with headlights and taillights (tiny LEDs) burning, a horse-drawn wagon, some hay bales loaded on another cart, lights on inside and on the front porches of all of the houses, and a guy busy welding in the workshop. Nice work, Kobus and Mervyn!!





Kobus Pelsler's four Three Sisters modules (upper pic = LHS, lower pic = RHS)

We still had one of our corner modules unscenicked, and a few other bare areas here and there, but Brian had, as usual, brought his box of random buildings, and he and Colin dotted them, and the two station platforms, around wherever there was a blank bit of module showing.

Someone (who shall remain nameless) from another club spoke to me a few days after the event, and said he thought that EMRIG should try and arrange a bit more “conformity” with their modules, to have more scenic “flow” from one module set to the next. Yes, we have dead-end roads, or roads that don’t quite match up, Karoo farms next to British villages, or rail sidings that could but don’t actually meet up. I explained to him that we are a “freestyle” club, where members are welcome to model whatever scenes they like, and that as we set up the layout in different configurations each time we get together, it was not really practical to try and achieve that “flow”... We don’t mind the scenic diversity!

The quality of scenic workmanship on the @Trainz layout was something to behold! Rene’ and Riekus had burnt lots and lots of after-midnight oil to get their layout together in a fairly short space of time! And it showed in their amazing attention to detail. They had working catenary (in order to be able to show off the E1 and 5Es and 6Es to best effect), a mielieland that must have taken absolute ages to plant, a Merc sedan and a truck both throwing up roosters of dust as they raced across the scene on a gravel road, and all the buildings prototypically correct for a truly South African scene, with beautifully weathered SAR locos and rolling stock running on 12mm track.



Riekus' consist of SAR Class 33 diesels on their layout

The Coca Cola layout was something quite unique! I knew that Danie Pienaar was a great fan of all things Coke, but it was amazing to see that the family's Expo layout included Coke branding on almost everything on the layout – Coke locos, Coke freight cars, a Coke caboose, numerous Coke delivery trucks, Coke billboards, Coke curtaining, a Coke shack, and even the gondolas on the operating (turning) “Big Wheel” are set to look like Coke cans! Much of the layout was coloured in the distinctive red and white of one of the most recognisable brands in the world!



The WFG layout, like the @Trainz one, had also been purpose-built for the Expo, over a period of six months. WFG is an “operations” club, where their trains are typically run “end-to-end”, with lots of shunting happening, but for the Expo they had built a layout which allowed both for running around on a double mainline (in an American Mid-west setting, so running on the right-hand track, unlike the Brits and South Africans at EMRIG) as well as a variety of shunting operations. They had a dedicated forestry / logging line, with a Shay locomotive hauling logs from the logging camp up on the mountain module, down to the (scratch-built) sawmill next to the lake at the other end of the layout, where the logs would be dropped off the scratch-built trestle bridge into the lake at the “log-drop”, for later recovery into the sawmill. They experienced a few technical issues, and the “Doodlebug” (Rail Diesel Car) wouldn't reverse its way back to the main station after dropping passengers at the smaller station near the sawmill (as it was supposed to), and the Shay kept dropping a driveshaft, so both these special locos had to be retired from service. But the old GPs and ALCos, and even a couple of old steamers, were quite happy running round and round, and occasionally picking up and delivering freight cars at the numerous industries around the



layout, helped by the little shunter parked at its service bay, once the electrical issues had been sorted out. A lot of detailing went into that layout too, with numerous little detailed scenes and vignettes around the layout. Much of the material used in the putting together of this layout was second-hand or “leftovers” – four of the modules, track, points, point

motors, structures, even some scenery material – in order to keep costs to a minimum.

Brian (in EMRIG shirt!) with Herman, while manning the WFG layout – photo credit: Andrew Johnson



Lake and sawmill end of the WFG layout



Mountain and logging camp end of layout



The EMRIG layout proving quite a popular attraction!

So when is the next Expo, I think I hear you asking?....

The weekend 31st October to 1st November 2026, according to Willie!!!

With another Transportation Fair planned for Saturday 1st August 2026

Diarize the dates now....

We'll see you there!!! 😊 😊 😊

Depression and an Epiphany:

Part 3 - A Switching Layout with a Barge for Staging

By Glynn Chamberlain

This month is Part 3 of my current model railroading project – a small switching layout utilising “Barge” traffic, where last month I went into detail of the “rough” location / town I want to model. I say “rough” in that, if someone wants to know the town where my layout is depicted, they can get a map book and/or Google maps, and understand where in the world it is, and why barges are applicable. But arguably, from here we go into the modeller’s licence. You see, now I just create a track plan or town / industrial area, and model what I think is appropriate, for instance, wood, oil, LCL (Less than Car Load), scrap, some of the above, or all of the above. The world is limitless.

But before designing a layout plan, I need to know what size modules I will be using, and if and/or where in my small home it can be positioned. Below is a photo of an “alcove” of sorts next to our lounge area. This alcove would be ideal, but the furniture just was not right. This is a spare dining room table, on which I have my PC set up, and from where I work or surf the internet.



In my mind, I could visualise much better furnishings, making the area neater and more functional! I hopped onto the Ikea website, knowing the exact table with drawers I wanted. This I located in short order, and then contacted my daughter to see when she was ordering something and could pop my order onto hers for delivery. I forwarded the product webpage to her, and she responded that she had the exact item I was looking for at home, and they were wanting to replace it with an oak set as opposed to the white set that she had, and that I wanted. Tell me this is not the planets aligning?! Yip, she told me to collect, ASAP.

With some quick physical exercise, the existing table in the previous image was moved out of the way to the

right, and the newly acquired desk from Hayleigh was added on the left!

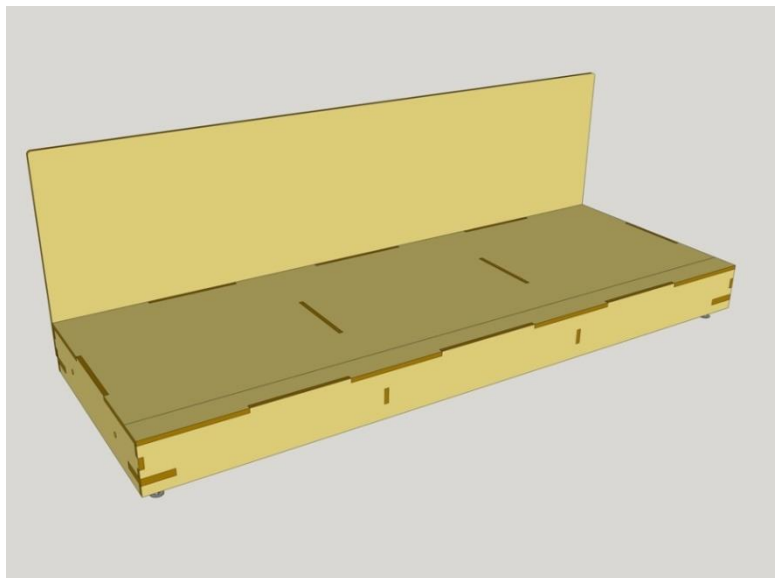


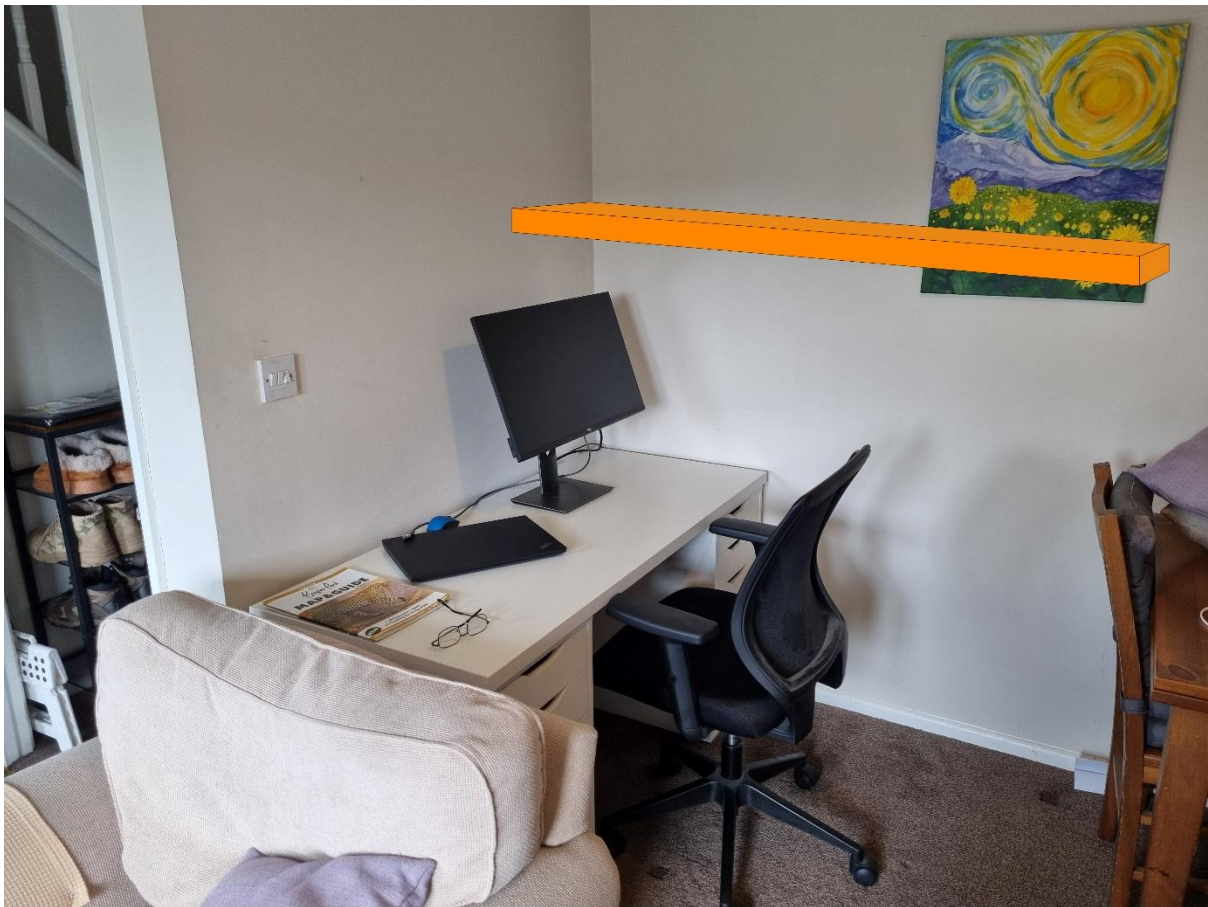
The table on the right will eventually be moved out, creating even more space in that area. But it's baby steps for now....

Now, we need to decide module sizes. How big is this switching layout going to be? Knowing T-trak very well from the United States, and with EMRIG doing an adaptation of the T-Trak (but in HO scale), I knew modules came in 1', 2', and 3' lengths. Looking at the space, I started edging towards a 3' and a 2' module, for a total of 5' or roughly 1,5 meters in metric (my preferred measurement system).

To the right is an example of a 3' module I could purchase in the United Kingdom. Just needing a second 2' module and I would be sorted out.

So, as an overview, here below is the image from the previous page, but with a crude drawing of a module added where I would like to have it. Ideally, I want it just below breast height, or around 1,6 meters height to the rail head. In the image, it may look and/or be a bit high, but once it is in, I will include an updated photo in future articles.





So, now I have location and basic design, together with a proposed length of 1,5 meters.

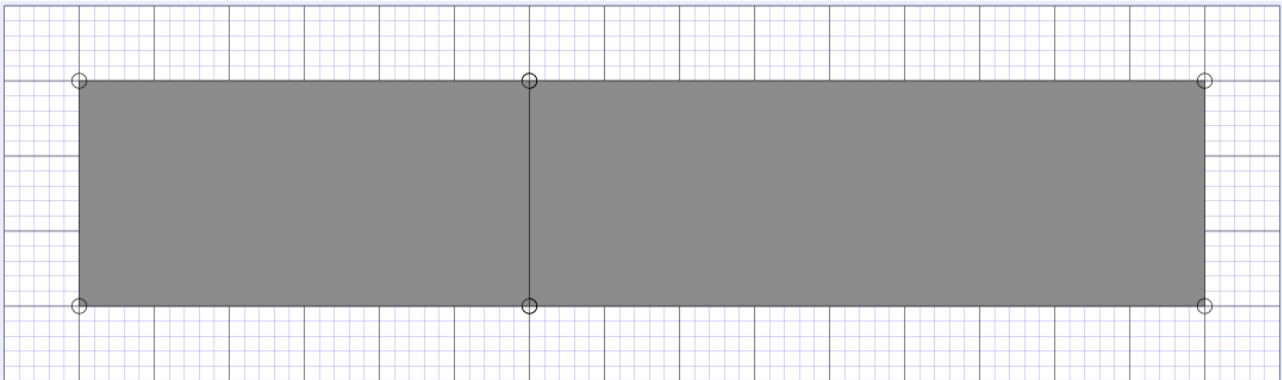
Well, Kevin and I took a visit to TINGS (The International N Gauge Show) here in the UK. One of the main reasons I went was to source said modules as, normally in the past, retailers had various modules on display for sale. Guess what? Nothing!!! So, slightly deflated, while looking around, I see a gent walking around with what looked like a flat-pack module pack. After stopping him and a quick discussion, it turns out there was a retailer selling, but he had run out of stock. I located that seller and went through his offerings, which he could ship to me as soon as I ordered. And, believe it or not, one of his module sizes was 750mm. So, 2x modules and I have my 1,5 meters!

Now it was time to design the layout for the module size I've finalised on – 300mm x 1,5 meters.

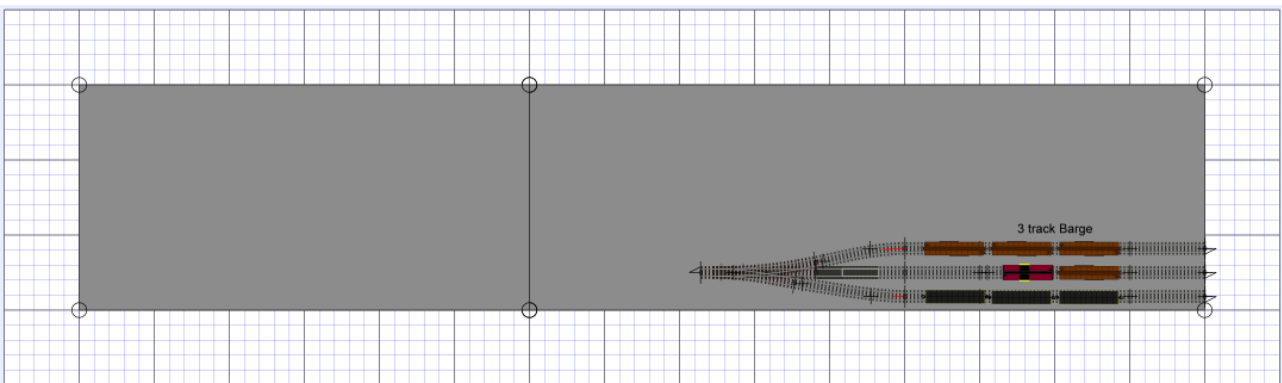
As I have said in the past, it is very difficult for me to put together a plan without actually having the board, and then moving the track and switches around on the module to “see” what works. In the past, I have often tried many of the available track design software packages, but they all have bugs (small market, small budgets)... and the learning curve.

Mike Richardson, one of my operators in the past and also now living in the UK, once mentioned that he used Anyrail. It is free up to 50 pieces of track and/or switches, and he found it to be excellent. I had downloaded it many years ago. It was still dormant on my PC, but I fired it up. I cannot explain it, however, I just started meshing with the program, and am now a converted and happy Anyrail user.

So, I started off with my basic module dimensions as per the image below.



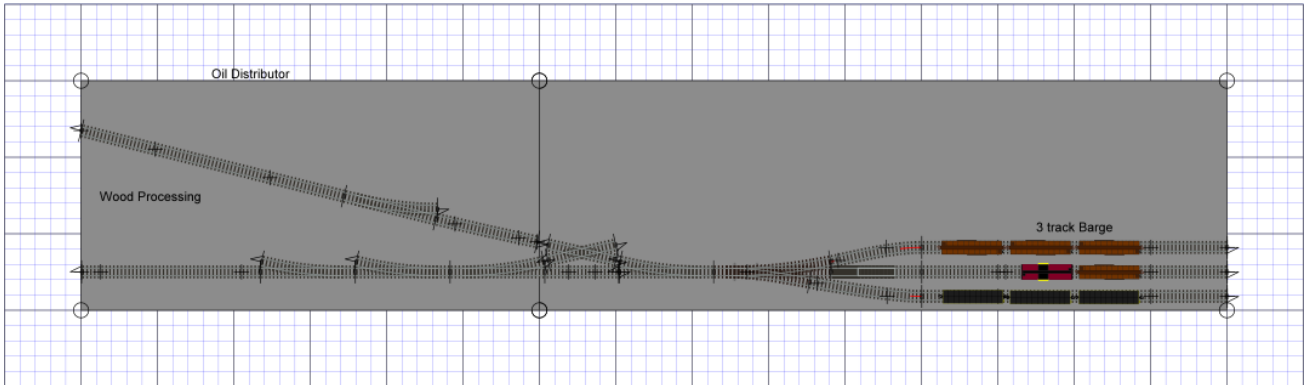
To start off would require positioning where the barge would be located. As seen in the superimposed image on the wall in the photo previously, ideally the barge should be on the right due to accessibility and ease of handling. Furthermore, it should be towards the front of the module and not the back, for the same reason.



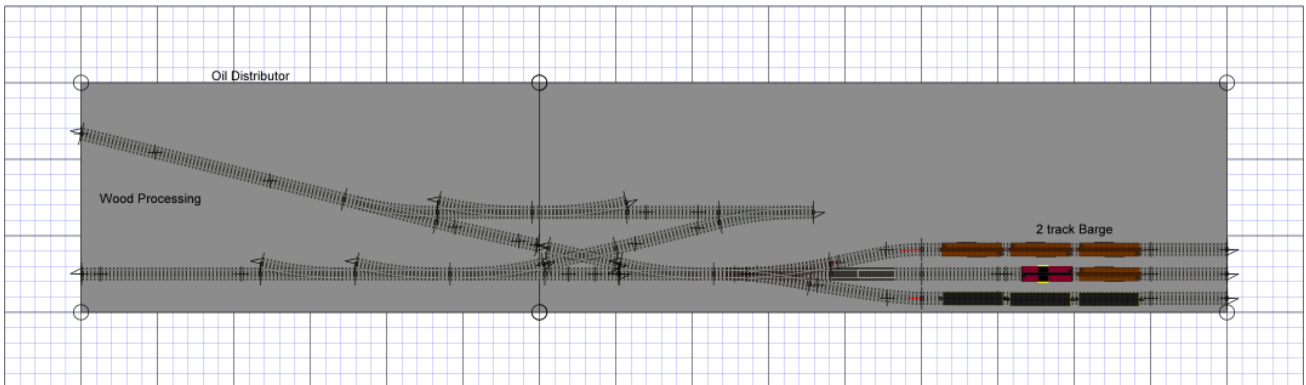
If you remember, from the teaser in the first article showing a rough idea of the plan, I had envisaged having a two-track barge. After much thought, I decided to make it three tracks, rather. You see, the length of the barge was limited, and two tracks would allow for basically six wagons, three on each track. With my Sweetgrass module, I had a locomotive depot at which the locomotives and caboose tied up, when idle or there for the night. Space on this module would be tight, and did I want to lose an area to a locomotive depot? My idea thus changed to rather having a three-track barge. I could then simulate that the locomotive and a caboose would also come over on the barge, as is seen in an image in last month's article. Furthermore, this would allow for one more wagon to be placed on the centre track with the loco and caboose, allowing for a total of 7 wagons to be accommodated on the barge if need be. A further advantage would be that, assuming I have 4 or 5 barges cycling, I could have different locomotives and cabooses on them, and thus have a variety of motive power visit my layout.

Was, or is the caboose necessary, in this day and age? In this exercise – yes! You see, the loco crew and ground crew would be away from their “home” yard as such, and would need somewhere to have their breaks, heat and eat their food, and process their paperwork. Also somewhere to stay out of the rain if need be, carry spare tools... all the reasons that there were cabooses in the old days. Furthermore, it could just add further operational options (hindrances) to the layout.

Moving on, what do all yards need?... A yard lead and or drill track. This allows the locomotive to have the space to get itself and a number of the wagons off the barge with ease, and not snooker itself as such! Also, the space to be able to shunt a couple of those wagons.

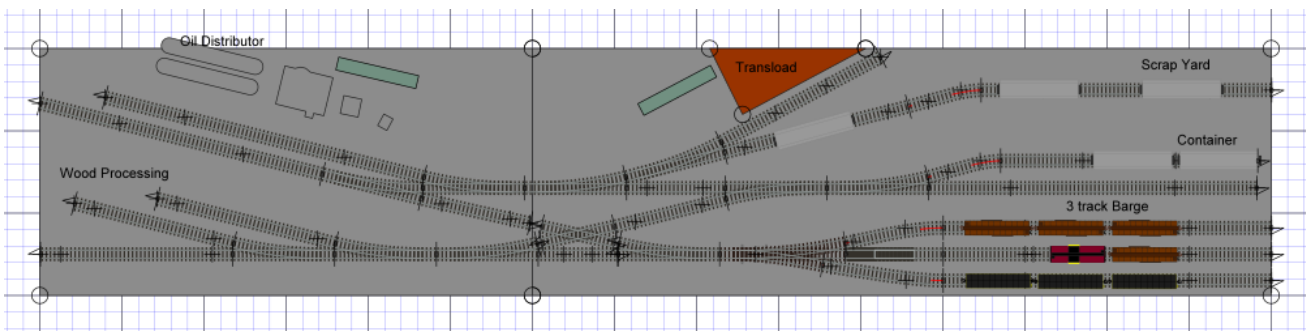


Above shows two possible leads – the horizontal one, directly out of the barge, as well as the angular one going to the top left of the module. One may wonder why the angular one? Well, it serves two functions – a yard lead, as well as fulfilling a second requirement of a run-around track. If there are industries that have trailing points, one needs the locomotive on the other side of the wagons to firstly pull out any loads, and secondly, place the new wagons into.



Above we now have that.

So now, all we have to do is try and place industries! Below is the “final” drawing.



I have managed to put in an Oil distributor, Transload facility, Scrap yard, Wood processing, and, lastly, even

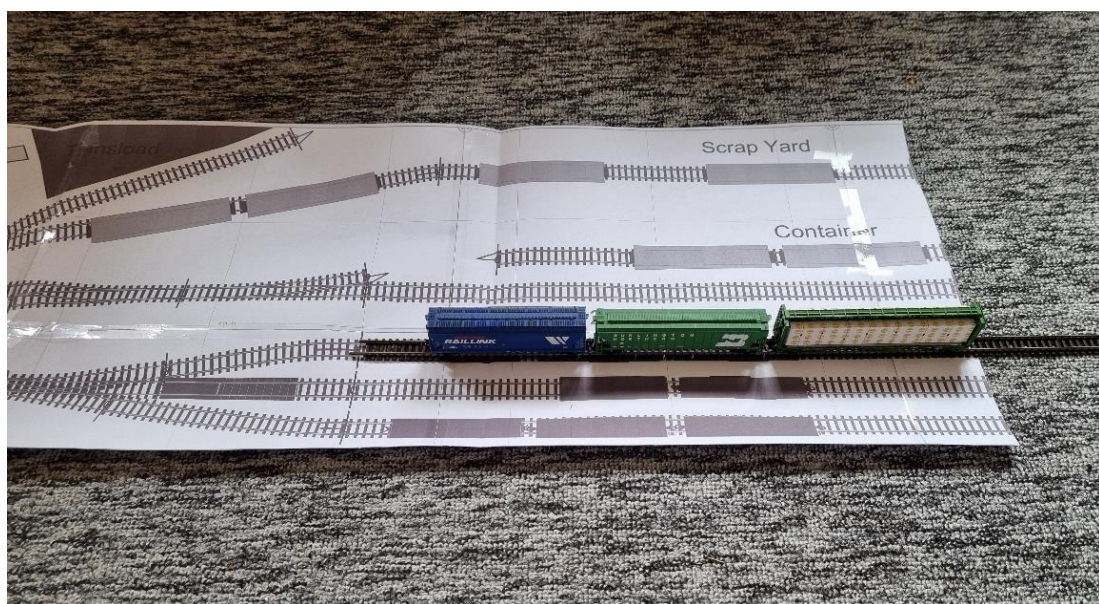
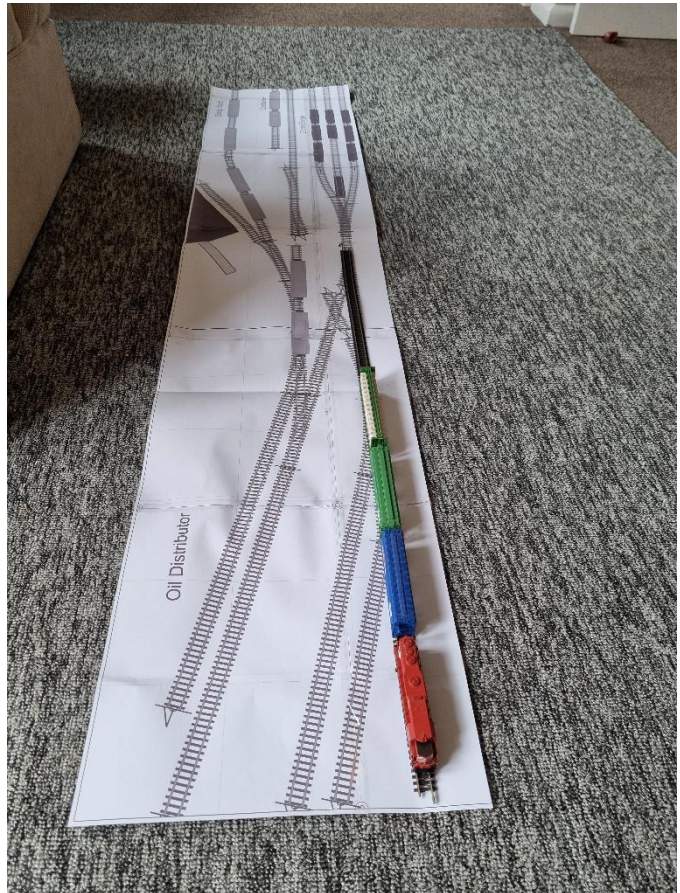
a Container or Team track if need be. All of this may or may not be changed as the build progresses, but it's something to aim for. There is a variety of industries, requiring a variety of wagons. Even a grain wagon can be loaded with a mobile elevator in the team track, if need be. The possibilities are endless...

Now, this is all fine and dandy. But this is a drawing, and I am unable to touchy-feely the design. Will a locomotive and wagons actually fit in the spaces provided?

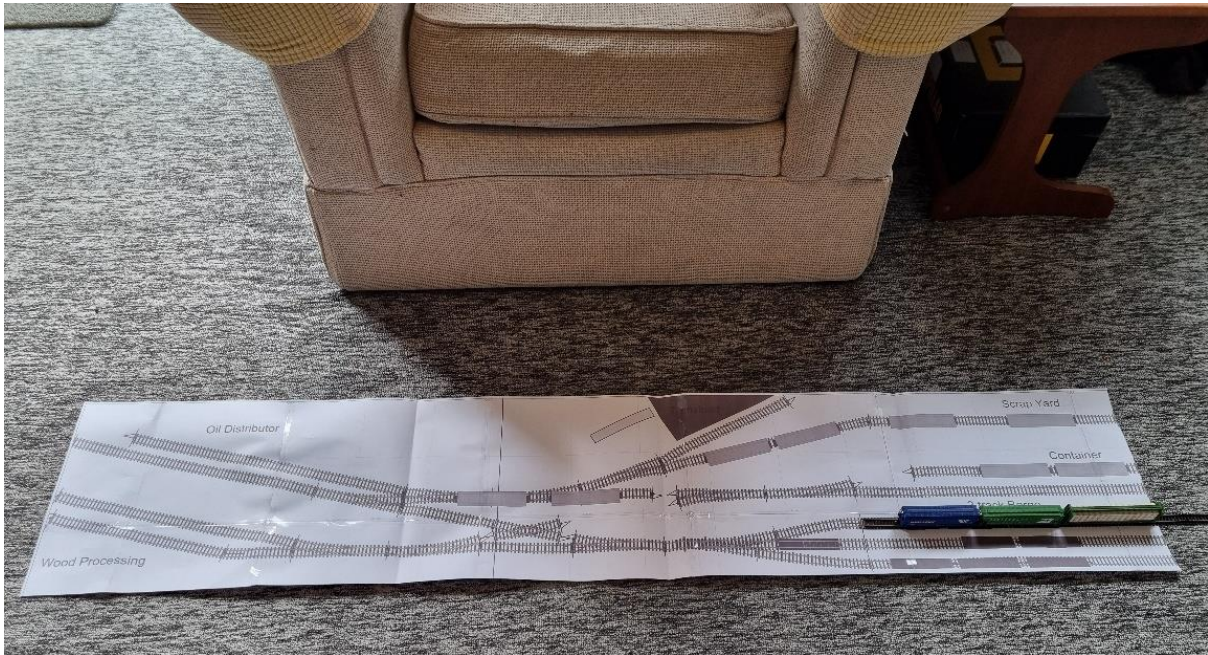
Suddenly I remembered that it is possible to print out the design 1 to 1 on paper. Twelve A4 sheets later, a pair of scissors and some sticky tape, and I had a life-size mock-up assembled.

To the right is the 1:1 mock-up placed on the carpet at home. At the bottom right I laid a piece of track and placed a (red) locomotive (very bottom of layout) with 3 wagons behind it. It's not very clear in the image, but these 4 items clear the switch on the other side of the wagons. This showed that I would be able to pull out three 50' wagons, clear the switch, and then start shunting them.

Again, all fine and dandy, but would three 50' wagons fit on the barge? Below is such a test, and, as can be seen, they fit perfectly! The Barge is thus a go!!



Below is one final overview of the layout on a 300mm by 1,5-meter module...



And so we come to the end of this article... Next month, I hope to be able to show the modules and assembly thereof. I even hope to have it in position and some track-work down. If there is no article, the above did not happen, or else Brian had a full newsletter already. LOL, slim chance of that, hey Brian?

If I do miss that one, I will send an article update as and when it happens. I must say, doing this article series has motivated me unlike ever before, so it is now full steam ahead, pun intended.

Till next time.

Glynn



(Anybody recognise Glynn's old (rather cluttered!) N gauge Sweetgrass module here?) ☺ ☺

Lima Class 5E Makeover: A New Perspective of an Old Favourite A Lima set has their third makeover - Part One

By Ralph Davey

Hi everyone. The views expressed here by me are my own. They are not intended to cast any negative reflection or adverse comment against anyone or any organisation. The views expressed are also not intended to reflect the views and comment of EMRIG or its members.

Looking for Lima Class 5E Locomotives

I have been on the lookout for a set of Lima Class 5E locomotives since returning back to modelling SAR. I have scaled down my collection of locomotives and rolling stock and it is not large, compared with when I had the big Southern Pacific layout.

Currently I have a collection of six SARM SAR locomotives, and I will do an article on these at some time. I have been looking for a powered and dummy pair of the Lima Class 5E locomotives to which to add a DCC decoder, and possibly also add a sound bug decoder in the dummy.

Modelling the SAR

Many of us model the SAR in South Africa. Like modellers in all countries, there is the nostalgia, pride and “home team support” for modelling what is close to the heart and enjoyable. Lima did us all a great service by producing the SAR range that was manufactured in the seventies and eighties. Many of us returned to the hobby due to this Lima-driven product range. Remember when we could go into Dions, Pick ‘n Pay, or hobby shops, and buy so many models and sets that were available?

Our scope of available SAR models is limited to a few sources. The biggest is the buying and selling of second-hand Lima items that were manufactured in the seventies and eighties. This second-hand market flourishes, and is a key contributor and driver for the second-hand trade of model railroad items here in South Africa. This does, however, come with a supply-and-demand price impact.

We also have the specialist suppliers like SARM, SARMODEL in New Zealand, CMD, Riekus van der Westhuizen and others, who produce resin-cast and 3-D printed models. These also come at a cost, but serve the market well.

Why do we have Hobbies?

My take on all my hobbies and pastimes (and I have a few), is first and foremost – why do we do it? A hobby or pastime helps build a healthy mind and body, as it is a source of relaxation and stress relief that we all need at any age (although my wife says I don’t exactly look stress-free when I drop that small part on the floor or carpet and it springs off in an unknown direction!).

The majority of the modern generation do not have the memories or experience of enjoying hobbies. Who grew up with the smell of Humbrol enamel paints, noisy model locomotives smelling of heated oil, fingers and hands scarred by a radio-controlled aeroplane propeller, and the Spanish Inquisition hit-and-pain on the shin from the all metal bicycle pedal?

When a railroad modeller has a key interest in a specific theme or scale, or whatever the collection will be, they do it for the many rewards and self-enrichment one gets from a hobby or pastime. And because of that we are able to still have a good model railroad fraternity here in South Africa.

The Cost of Modelling in South Africa

Like many pastimes, model railroading at first glance appears to be expensive. However, anyone doing another sport activity or pastime will note that, in comparison, it is not an expensive hobby in the bigger scheme of activities we engage in. It comes down to affordability, saving up, not depriving the family in any way, but ultimately getting the enjoyment we deserve in today's hectic and rat-race world.

So, while modelling the SAR looks to be expensive, and the models are costly, measure it in the overall scope of your life and wellbeing. What I have noted is that we are more selective in what we buy, and we do look to spending based on the enjoyment we will get, not the comparison to other options. My view is – make a plan to get what you will enjoy. You may have fewer models, but you will have models that reward your decision.

Buying second-hand old items, like these Lima model locos, always has an inherent risk. The initial observation and inspection should either convince you the models are good enough for the intended outcome and use, or not. Always look at competitive pricing and condition when buying a model.

Acquiring the Lima Class 5E Locomotives

I came across a set of Lima Class 5E locomotives at a swap meet. I liked what I saw at the first view. They were going to need a makeover and refurbishment, and based on this the price was good. The seller kept these for me over several months until I was ready to buy them.

I was happy with my purchase, as the models are going to be a project that I enjoy doing, being a refurbishment and makeover of the models. These models came with a set of decals for use after a possible re-spray.

Refurbishing and Makeover of the two models – First detailed look

The models had been painted in a very gaudy green scheme. (The last time I saw this shade of green was on a Cortina V6 on the East Rand, back in the seventies!) The vents had a rough black paint applied. I could see the paint was very thickly applied and would require some effort for it to be removed.

I ran the power loco on DC and it runs very well. These Lima motors are like an old Chevy, they just keep going... lots of speed and smooth acceleration on the DC power.



Disassembly

Removing the bodies was straight forward. I removed the pantographs and unclipped the bodies. The powered model has a light set up with LEDs. It also had a large weight held in place with a large screw. The weight does not look like it is the original, and I assume it was added for more traction. Heavier than the dummy model weight.

The glazing was damaged and some had been replaced with clear acetate plastic. Some window glazing was a clear epoxy sealant... quite unusual. I removed all of the glazing.



I packed the underframe and components into separate plastic bags for each model, for later use.

Paint Removal

Using my trusted method of oven cleaner as the paint remover, I started on the stripping-down process. This was a full-day activity on a Saturday, and more work on the Sunday. I soon discovered the extent of the thickness of the paint, and, as it was removed, found a very thick white primer undercoat as well. Always work in a well ventilated area, use gloves, and, if need be, a mask for respiratory control.



Give the oven cleaner a good shake so that it is dispensed as a foam.



Let the oven cleaner start its process. Apply further applications as the foam disappears. Depending on the thickness of the applied paint and the type of paint, the reaction can take a while to get going. These two took about an hour before the first paint removal was noted. After a wipe down I was now happy that the oven cleaner had started to lift the paint.

The inside lifted first, as this did not have the thick layers like the outside. I noticed one body was going to be more stubborn than the other one...



So the process continued... Light scrub with a toothbrush. (Don't use the wife's in-use toothbrush – could cause an issue!!)

I keep old toothbrushes as a part of my set of tools, as they are used regularly for cleaning and other applications like paint removal.

This set of pictures shows the progress as it moved on through the day. As the paint lifts, the process becomes easier...

Note the thick paint application that had been applied.

Also the one body with the thick white undercoat was not lifting at the same pace as the other one.



Using a toothpick, gently, with some sideways rubbing, also helps lift the paint.



The body where the paint lifted easier progressed well.



The area where the old decals were placed needed more effort and repeat of the process.

The stubborn one....



The progress by the end of the Saturday...



I was now tired of the process, and, with the fumes, and my hands showing some wear and tear despite the gloves, I called it a day. I applied a liberal spray of oven cleaner, and left it overnight.

On the Sunday I was back at the task and the paint lifted quicker. The end result was a good outcome, with all the paint removed. I was happy that I could now proceed with the third makeover these two models have received in their lifetime. Some of the original Lima red was still visible. Back in the seventies Mario at the factory in Italy must have done a two-time spray in the assembly process.



Note and Warning:

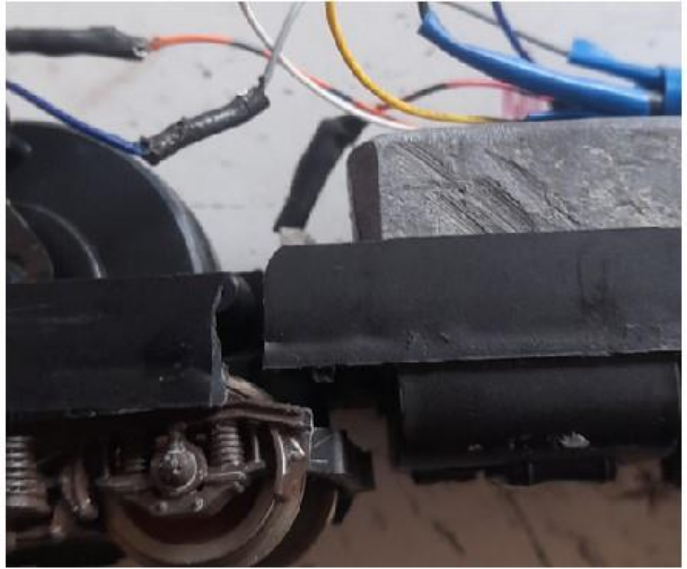
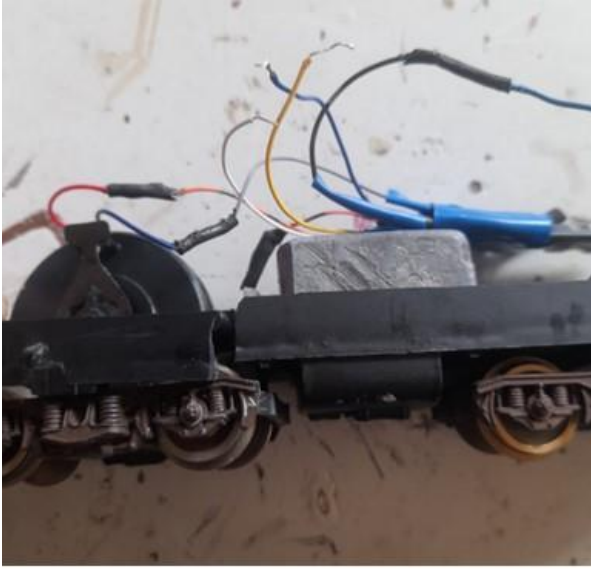
At the end of the paint removal activity, throw all cloths, container, gloves and the toothbrush used, away. None will be re-usable after this activity.

DCC Decoder fit and Frame Damage

While the paint removal process was happening throughout the day, I added a DCC decoder to the powered locomotive.

I did another DC test without the body at this stage. When I tested the DC run to check if it was still fine, I noticed the frame twisted as it ran... Lop-sided! On investigation, I noted that the frame was cracked and damaged. Obviously, while the body was on, the crack and issue was not evident, as the body held it more firmly. This was a bit of a disappointment, but as I do fix up these types of issues, I checked to see how best to fix this. I think the added weight and age may have contributed to the crack over time.

Fortunately the crack had enough of the upper facing frame section on either side to enable me to place a support section to repair it. I super-glued a raised plastic card strip in the frame, and it will also use the body as a support to not have stress on the crack or repair section added.



I let them stand for a week. I then applied a Vallejo Acrylic primer in preparation for phase two of the makeover.



They were looking good at this stage.

So with the frame repair done, and the bodies sprayed with a primer, it was time for phase two and the application of the new coat of paint, decals, and some enhanced detailing.

Next time: Part Two - The new makeover is applied.

A New Series to start in January.....

Some Gauteng Model Railway History:

The????..... (club/organization/activity....)

Hopefully by various contributors, compiled by Brian Dawson

Editor's Introduction: *I have only been involved in the model trains hobby and fraternity in Gauteng since 2014, a mere 11 and a bit years. Many of you out there have been around and involved for MUCH longer than that! During my 11 years of involvement I have joined five model train clubs / groups (and am still a member of four of them, with one of them having since become "defunct" [it still exists, technically, but does not function] in the meantime). Through all these clubs, I have had the opportunity to meet many very interesting people involved in the hobby, and to see quite a number of different layouts (club and personal layouts) around Gauteng. There is still SO much happening in our little part of the model train world!*

*In listening to people, often in my role as the EMRIG newsletter editor, but also through my involvement in the other clubs to which I belong, I have come to realise that there is a LOT of institutional knowledge and "history" out there regarding what has been happening in model trains here in Gauteng over the years. But I've realised that most of that knowledge is tied up in peoples' heads, in their cerebral memories, or perhaps sitting in old lever-arch files in their garages or attics, or here and there on their computers, or in their photograph collections. But relatively little of it is written down **in a form that makes it available in the public domain**. And as we as a fraternity age, so sometimes those memories of ours are becoming a little dimmer, and garages and attics get cleared out (sometimes by our spouses or our kids) and historically valuable stuff gets turfed, and occasionally computers crash (or get stolen), and we don't always have the backups that we should... And so, progressively, we are losing that historical record, or our access to it.*

So I thought it might be appropriate here to try to glean as much as possible of the history of what has been happening in Gauteng's very diverse model railways world, over the past few decades (going back as far as we can), and record it for posterity, before it is all lost. This would include looking at the histories of the various clubs around Gauteng (those still in existence, and also those that have meanwhile ceased to be), as well as the people (some of them also sadly no longer around) who have been instrumental in establishing and keeping those clubs going, and also significant layouts which, in many instances, have come and gone over the years, as well as our collective activities such as the Conventions and Expos that have been held.

I know it's going to be a big task, and take quite a lot of work, and can never ever hope to be all-inclusive, and cover absolutely everything. But I'm hoping that the current members of our wonderful fraternity will be prepared to come to the table with their memories and recollections, and that we will, over time, be able to piece together, and make available, more and more of the history of what has been happening in the model train world here in Gauteng. Oh well – that's my dream, anyway.....!!

As this is not an academically researched history, nor a book, and I'll be needing to produce/obtain information for publication here on a monthly basis, I'm going to be very dependent on the availability of

information, and dependent on when it is made available to me (when I am able to convince people to write down the info that's in their heads!, or to part with precious documents in their possession). So this is not going to be a chronological discourse, or necessarily start with the most or least important and work through an "importance" or "age" progression. It's going to happen in bits and pieces, as I manage to get hold of information...

So club chairmen / secretaries / convenors and others of the "old guard" can expect a call / email / Whatsapp message / chat request from me, asking them to put together something about the history (origins, reason for being, founder members, etc.) of their club or organization, so that we can get this mammoth task underway!

Please, guys! I'm going to need lots of help from you with this!!

MY MODEL RAILROAD HOBBY AND HOME LAYOUT

.....(Not this month!).....

By Brian Messenger (The HOn3 guy in Knysna!)

Editor's Note: Brian Messenger is in the process of dismantling his home layout, and also busy packing up his home to get ready for the move, while still managing to find time to assist another Knysna local (an ex-Gautenger!) with landscaping on HIS new layout. And so, quite understandably, Brian does not have an article for us this month (and might not have, for a while to come, with all that he still needs to do).

Dismantling is going slowly, as the gent who bought the layout is assisting with the dismantle, and is only available on Wednesdays. I guess if he breaks anything as he removes it, then it's his responsibility... Here's a last pic from BrianM below, as we say goodbye to this superb layout that we been following as it has developed over the past few years.....

BrianM, we wish you all the very best for the upcoming move, and sympathize with you the loss of your current layout. But we hope that the new home, and your intention of a new layout there, could provide inspiration for future articles, much as has now become the case for Glynn and Kevin Chamberlain!



Having to say goodbye to this beautiful layout.....

Large Locomotives of the World:

UP's #9000 Class - A Challenger On A Fixed Frame

By Terrence Marx *(Last article in this series)*

In keeping with its quest for high horsepower, Union Pacific again ventured into extreme locomotives in the form of the largest fixed frame in the USA, the 9000 4-12-2.

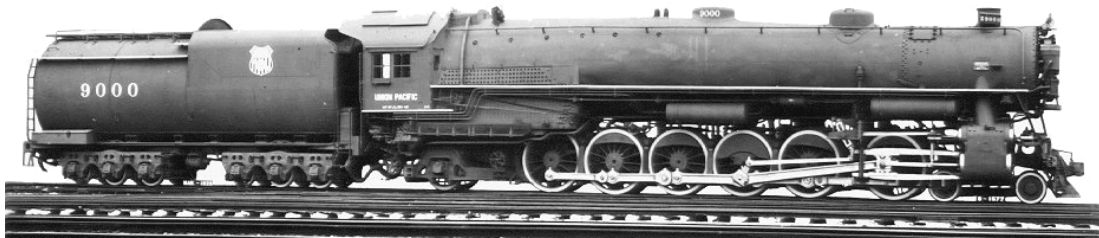


Image 1: UP#9000 builder's photo. Note the 6 wheel trucks which differ from the centipede tenders of the articulateds.

The idea for the 4-12-2 took shape when Union Pacific purchased its first 4-10-2 locomotives in May 1925 from the American Locomotive Company (ALCo) numbered #8000 (numbers #8800 - 8808 were delivered later). Early tests with the 4-10-2s were fairly successful as they could pull more tonnage using less fuel, and thus saved the company money.



Image 2: UP#9043 leads a freight westbound

Their one downside was that the 4-10-2s were not powerful enough and a little on the slow side, not being capable of doing more than 20 mph. Union Pacific went back to ALCo and, after consultation with their designers, ALCo's Dunkirk shops in New York came up with the 4-12-2, a locomotive that featured the longest wheelbase of a conventional steam locomotive to ever operate in the United States, at 102 feet and 7 inches long.



Image 3: UP#9000 on display in Los Angeles

The first model, #9000, was put into service and was given its own subclass as UP-1. Tests with this new *Union Pacific* design proved it was quite capable as a freight hauler, hauling 120-car trains at 50-60 mph across the prairies of Nebraska and eastern Wyoming, far better than being rated to pull trains at around 35 mph.

UP was so impressed by the locomotive that they later that year took delivery of another 14 locomotives designated to the Class UP-2, numbered #9001-9014.

The railroad continued to purchase models of these locomotives and, by 1930, the railroad amassed 88 examples of the 4-12-2 in five classes UP-1 to UP-5, that were eventually numbered #9000-9087 in UP's roster.



Image 4: UP#9505 on Archer Hill showing the wear and tear of hard work.

The 4-12-2s were similar in their overall design and mechanics, except that from the Class UP-3 onwards, they included roller bearing axles, a late-era steam locomotive design, which greatly reduced wear and tear on the running gear. By the 1940s, both the UP-1 and UP-2 classes were retrofitted with this technological advancement. The 4-12-2s utilized Walschaert valve gear, 67-inch drivers, had tractive efforts exceeding 96,000 pounds, and were designed to burn coal. The UP #9000s had two outside 27"x32" cylinders driving the third set of drive wheels, and a third 27"x31" cylinder in the centre driving the second axle.

Interestingly, the quartering of the drivers is to configure the main crank pins 90° apart on either side of each axle. With a three-cylinder steam locomotive, the main driver crank pins would be placed 120° apart provided that each of the three cylinders was in a flat plane.

ALCo placed the centre cylinder on the UP 9000s at an incline of 9½°, the one inch shorter stroke of the centre cylinder and valve timing dimensional settings allowing for the centre cylinder inclination.



Image 5: UP#9514 hauls a freight eastbound in Wyoming

Surprisingly, the class was designed to have the third and fourth driving axles to be “blind” (flangeless) in order to improve curve handling, but ALCo's lateral motion devices on the first and sixth axles (which allowed the axles to slide up to two inches to the side) made this change unnecessary.

While most of these big freight haulers were relegated to the prairies, two classes were used in the Pacific Northwest; Class UP-3 (#9700-9707) was assigned to subsidiary Oregon–Washington Railroad & Navigation Company (Oregon, Idaho, and Washington) and Class UP-5 (#9500-9514) operated on the Oregon Short Line (Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, and Oregon).

Other railroads, while watching UP's experience with these locomotives, were not keen to purchase them due to the apparent failure of the three-cylinder Baldwin 4-10-2 #60000. This third cylinder, it was felt, caused too much of a complication.

Another factor was that, with such a long wheelbase, these locomotives required long stretches of tangent main line, something not regularly found in many eastern lines.



Image 6: UP#9022 awaiting service in Cheyenne

Builder	American Locomotive Company
Years Produced	1926 - 1930
Road Numbers	9000-9087
Valve Gear	Walschaert
Wheelbase (Driver)	30 Feet, 7 29/32 Inches
Wheelbase (Engine)	52 Feet, 3 31/32 Inches
Wheelbase (Engine & Tender)	91 Feet, 6 Inches
Engine Weight	496,500 Lbs
Tender Weight	310,599 Lbs
Total Weight	807,099 Lbs
Tender Fuel Capacity	22 Tons
Tender Water Capacity	18,000 Gallons
Driver Diameter	67 Inches
Boiler Pressure	220 psi
High Pressure Cylinders (Diameter x Stroke)	27" x 32"



Low Pressure Cylinders (Diameter x Stroke) 27" x 31"

Maximum Tractive Effort 96,646 Lbs

Roster

Class	Quantity	Road Number(s)	Owner	Year	Builder
UP-1	1	9000	UP	1926	ALCo
UP-2	14	9001-9014	UP	1926	ALCo
UP-3	15	9015-9029	UP	1928	ALCo
UP-4	25	9030-9054	UP	1929	ALCo
UP-3	8	9700-9707*	Oregon-Washington RR & Navigation Company (UP)	1928	ALCo
UP-5	15	9063-9077**	Oregon Short Line Railroad (UP)	1930	ALCo
UP-5	10	9078-9087	UP	1930	ALCo

* Later renumbered 9055-9062 (Union Pacific).

** Ordered as Union Pacific #9500-9014.

Union Pacific was happy with their 88 units for nearly 30 years, and only replaced them, starting in 1953, with the inception of diesels, and all were retired or scrapped by 1956.

Union Pacific's first example, #9000, was preserved, and today sits on display at the Los Angeles County Fairplex in Pomona, California, the former home of UP 4014.

While the UP 9000s had the longest rigid steam locomotive wheelbase in the United States, there were other countries with equally impressive locomotives. Bulgaria had two groups of 2-12-4Ts, Indonesia had 2-12-2Ts. Russia built one behemoth Class AA 20 4-14-4 (classified as a 2-7-2), which was designed shortly after a group of thirty young Soviet engineers toured the USA in 1930 and 1931 and saw the last of the UP 4-12-2s coming off the production line. Unfortunately, it made one demonstration run during which it tore the track apart, and was summarily stored and later scrapped. Steam locomotive historians consider the Soviet 4-14-4 to be an example of the Russians trying to outdo the Americans.



Image 7: A failed experiment: the Russian 4-14-4 which only ever ran once, proving the limits to fixed wheelbase engines.

MODELS

Models of this locomotive are available in brass from companies such as Westside and Sunset Limited, MTH and BLI have also made models. Costs for these models will set you back R8 000,00 to R18 000,00

Lionel Trains have produced the model in O gauge 3-rail as well.

REFERENCES

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<https://www.american-rails.com/4-12-2.html>

<https://steamgiants.com/wiki/whyte/4-12-2-union-pacific-type/>

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=8052888791404558&set=gm.741150555596204&idrvanity=1166077943472361>

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/30/Union_Pacific_4-12-2_locomotive_9043.jpg

<https://www.facebook.com/61554885011196/posts/union-pacific-4-12-2-no-9514-a-member-of-the-bold-and-innovative-up-5-class-repr/122227427006162833/>

How It All Began For Me...

We have no-one's story again this month ☹️☹️☹️

Those who have told us their stories so far are: John B (May 2021), Jimmy M (June 2021), Colin A (July 2021), Kobus P (Aug 2021), Mia vB (Sept 2021), Kevin C (Oct 2021), Ralph D (Nov 2021), Rene' B (Dec 2021), Brian D (Feb 2022), Mark P (Aug 2022), Glynn C (Sept 2022), Clive S (Oct 2022), Jean D (Nov 2022), Ash P (Dec 2022), guest Don Davidson – from SAG and GFG (Jan 2023), Niel W (Mar 2023), Duncan H (Apr 2023), Shane B (May 2023), guest Brian Stockland – from HRCASA (July 2023), guest Brian Clark – from SAG and GFG (Aug 2023), guest Johnny Everitt – ex DMR and honorary member of John B's Ops Group (Sept 2023), guest Andrew Mabin – from HRCASA and owner of MiniModels (Dec 2023), guest Neil Plumbly from GFG / WFG (March 2024), Brian McM – all the way from the UK (April 2024), Eugene S (May 2024), Terrence Marx (July 2024), Kallie vB (Aug 2024), guest Mike Richardson – from SAG and GFG (Oct 2024), Kevin B (Nov 2024), guest Richard Goodfellow – from HRCASA (February 2025), and guest Michelle Lines-Dovey – from HRCASA (August 2025).

(But I keep bugging Rene' for his personal story, and he says he's busy with it!!...)

The EMRIG Water Tower Challenge...

By no-one again this month

Water Tower Challenge Honours Board

- 2015 October Glynn Chamberlain
- 2015 November Niel Wilson
- 2015 December Terrence Marx (Part 1)
- 2016 January Terrence Marx (Part 2)
- 2016 February Terrence Marx (Part 3)
- 2016 March Terrence Marx (Part 4)
- 2016 April Peter Fish
- 2016 May Colin Anstis
- 2016 June Dave Wynne

- then the ball got dropped for a bit... (no newsletters, change of Editor, etc...)
- 2017 March Brian Dawson
- 2017 April Kevin Chamberlain
- 2017 May Kobus Pelser (Part 1)
- 2017 June Kobus Pelser (Part 2)
- 2017 July Kobus Pelser (Part 3)
- 2017 August *Doug Buchanan didn't participate (write), needs to donate to charity!*
- 2017 September Karel van Breda
- 2017 October Carl Andrews
- 2017 November and December and 2018 January **no contributions**
- 2018 February Margaret Wynne (who stepped in and offered to fill the gap!)
- 2018 March & April ... *waiting for articles*
- 2018 May Ash Pappa
- 2018 June John Henry (volunteered an article)
- 2018 July Margaret Wynne entertained us with her story on trollies!
- 2018 August *Nothing once again...* ☹
- 2018 September Brian Dawson
- 2018 October *Nothing once again...* ☹
- 2018 November ... *same story...*
- 2018 December ... *same story...* ☹
- 2019 Jan to Apl ...*still nothing had changed* ☹ ... *and THEN.....!!!!*
- 2019 May, June, July & Aug Kobus Pelser (*thank you for all your hard work, Kobus!*)
- 2019 September Shane Brinkley (all the way from Perth!!)
- *and nothing happened after that.....* ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹, *until.....!!*
- 2020 April Mark Peddle
- 2020 May George Lagoudis
- 2020 July, Aug, Sept Harry Ostrofsky
- 2020 November Jean Dulez

- 2020 December *No contribution (no one was nominated.....)*
- 2021 January *No contribution – Theuns dropped the ball!, and so I challenged Glynn...*
- 2021 February Glynn Chamberlain
- 2021 March Shane Brinkley
- 2021 April *Mark asked for a month's grace, and then another couple....*
- 2021 August Mark Peddle (who then challenged Craig...)
- 2021 September ... *waiting..*
- 2021 October Craig Beretta
- 2021 December Eugene Saayman
- 2022 January Jean Dulez (*who kindly volunteered and submitted another article*)
- 2022 February Niel Wilson
- 2022 April & May Kobus Pelser
- 2022 July Colin Anstis
- 2022 October Richard Mustoe
- 2022 November Brian McMahon
- 2023 July Glynn Chamberlain
- 2023 August Kallie van Breda
- 2023 September Mia van Breda
- 2023 November Clive Shepherd
- 2024 February Duncan Hornby
- 2024 October Kallie van Breda

Club Diary and Other Upcoming Activities:-

- Weekend 5th, 6th, 7th December The Hobby Show, Hall 5, NASREC
(With EMRIG there taking part! Setting up happens on Thursday 4th Dec)



- Saturday 13th December PMT Swap Meet, John Vorster Tech. High School, Pretoria
- **Saturday 24th January EMRIG AGM and bring-and-braai, Marister, Benoni**
- **Saturday 7th February EMRIG Swap Meet at Northmead Mall, Benoni**
- Saturday 28th February NTMTK Swap Meet at Voortrekker Monument, Pretoria
- Saturday 7th March Richie's Toy Fair, Mosaic Church Hall, Fairland
- Saturday 28th March PMT Swap Meet, John Vorster Tech. High School, Pretoria

2025 Club Committee Contact details:-

The committee membership for 2025 remained unchanged... same composition and portfolios as for 2024...

(What's going to happen for 2026???? Watch this space.....!)

Chairman – Mark Peddle	mark@icemountain.co.za
Secretary – Duncan Hornby	info@emrig.co.za
Treasurer – Mia van Breda	finance@emrig.co.za
Webmaster – Glynn Chamberlain	glynn.chamberlain@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor – Brian Dawson	brian.dawson@iafrica.com
Publicity – Kobus Pelser	swapmeets@emrig.co.za
Swap Meet Manager – Kobus Pelser	swapmeets@emrig.co.za

Club Banking Details:-

Banking details: -

Name: - Eastern Model Railway Interest Group

Bank: - FNB Northmead Square Account No: - 625 483 74149 Branch code: - **250 655.**

Please, ***DO NOT forget to put YOUR NAME as the reference.***



OKAY – IF YOU HAVE NOT YET PAID YOUR SUBS FOR 2025, YOU’RE A NAUGHTY BOY, AND IT’S REALLY GETTING A BIT LATE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT... (YOU’LL NEED TO RE-JOIN IN 2026!)

THE CLUB’S BUDGET FOR 2026, AND THE SUBSCRIPTION FEES THAT WILL APPLY FOR 2026 TO SUSTAIN THAT BUDGET, WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE UPCOMING AGM IN JANUARY. SO PLEASE DO NOT YET PAY YOUR SUBS FOR 2026, UNTIL THE 2026 SUBS AMOUNT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED, IN CASE THERE IS AN ADJUSTMENT NEEDED.

BUT WHEN THE NEW FEES ARE ANNOUNCED, AND IT’S TIME TO PAY, PLEASE CAN WE ASK THAT EVERYONE PAY BY INTERNET TRANSFER IF AT ALL POSSIBLE? – CASH DEPOSITS END UP COSTING THE CLUB MONEY!!!