

Newsletter – MARCH 2026

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Chairman’s Message – March 2026

By

Editor’s Note: *No – this doesn’t mean that we don’t have a Chairman!! It just means that he’s not been able to type up his message for us this month....., which is partly why the newsletter is so late this month. But there’s other reasons too... So here’s my rather long-winded explanation.....*

Mark’s brother has been very seriously ill in hospital in Durban, and so, towards the end of the month, when Mark would normally have been writing up his message for inclusion in the newsletter, he and his son instead went down to Durban to visit his boet. And he only came back late on Monday. Meanwhile, I had been asking him to get, for inclusion in the newsletter, a photo of the new club jacket, and preferably to send me a pic of Mark himself modelling the jacket for us (!) ☺ But the supplier let him down, and said he would only have the sample jacket for him on Friday, so we could only get the pic then. Okay – let’s wait....

I then went off to Marakele on Thursday, to do some Honorary Ranger duty, expecting to receive the pic and Mark’s message while I was away, intending to incorporate it on Saturday night once I was back, finalise the newsletter, and upload it. But Mark STILL hadn’t received the jacket from the supplier (it will now only be available on Tuesday), and Mark has meanwhile developed a rather serious eye infection, so bad that he

can't type on his computer. So he hasn't been able to type up his message. I got back late on Saturday with a car full of wet tent, wet groundsheet, wet gazebo, damp sleeping bag, wet clothes, etc. (you get the picture?). And Sunday was my birthday, with all the family here for the day. Result? – the newsletter ended up on the back burner. So, between Mark's March month from hell (thus far), the tardy jacket supplier, and my busyness, the newsletter has ended up a tad late this month..... Apologies from both Mark and me!

Other Club News

By Brian Dawson (Newsletter Editor)

We have another New Member!

Yip, we have another new guy – is he now “New new guy”? – who joined the club just after the recent Swap Meet at the Mall. **Graeme Neilson** kept coming back to look at the trains running on our layout, and asking questions, between forays around the traders' tables. He spent a really long time discussing technical layout issues with Niel, and just a couple of days later he joined the club! Welcome to you, Graeme!!

And another Surprise!!

Not long after the layout was set up and running, who should come walking along, hand in hand with his wife, but a previous chairman of ours – the one who is currently a member of the “England branch” of EMRIG! We were expecting to see Glynn, out here from the UK to thaw out in the sun for a bit, at John Burkhardt's Ops Session on the Sunday, but had no idea he would pop in and say howzit for the swap meet!! Great to have you visiting us, Glynn and Lindsay! Unfortunately, Glynn had forgotten to bring his new club shirt (yes – he owns one!) on holiday with him.

Mark managed to snap this pic → of two ex-chairmen having a bit of a natter...



Club “Dri-Mac” Jackets

The club has “Dri-Mac” type jackets available for sale. These are in the same blue colour as the new shirts, and also have the club logo embroidered on them.

These will be absolutely ideal for wearing at club activities during the upcoming winter months, where your club shirt would otherwise be obscured by all the other jacket and jersey layers one has to wear to keep the Highveld winter chills off. Think setting up tables for the swap meets in May and August!!.....

These jackets are available at R300,00. Contact Mark to place an order, if you're a member in good standing, and have not as yet ordered one.

(Insert new club jacket pic)..... Oops... sorry.... That's what we (Mark and I) were waiting for.....

We'll have it in the next edition!!!!

Swap Meets Feedback and Schedule, and Toy Fair etc. Dates

We've had two Swap Meets in the past month, just three weeks apart! EMRIG's Swap Meet was held at Northmead Mall on Saturday 7th February. We had 18 traders there taking 59 tables.



The Swap Meet was well-attended, and the traders I spoke to afterwards all said that it had been a good one for them. Even though we had rung the bell a few minutes early (a lot of trading was already underway at that stage!), trading carried on until midday, when the bulk of the traders only then started packing up. I was far too busy running trains on our layout to take any photos (*fortunately Kobus did – the one pic above!*), but I did get to have a brief break-away (Terrence took over while my American train was behaving itself), and I found a couple of little (N Gauge!) items that I was needing!...



Our Swap Meet Organiser and Club Chairman far too busy to buy trains... © (photo credit = Terrence)

The second one was hosted by the Noord-Transvaalse Modeltrein Klub at the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria, on the 28th February. We set up our layout there, right in the middle of the hall, to provide an added attraction for them (and promote our club and layout!). The Swap Meet was held in the Voortrekker Saal, which is right next door to the Museum where the NTMTK club layout is located, so many of the attendees also popped in there to check out the trains running on that layout (just like we used to regularly have happening back when we were downstairs in Shop 23 at the Mall – remember those days??).

This was again a good swap meet (11 traders, 41 tables – limited by hall size and space availability), from the couple of traders that I spoke to afterwards, although the buying public traffic seemed to have largely dried up by about 11h00. Despite this, the traders (and ourselves with our layout) all stayed until 12h00, when it was time to pack up. There was a lovely, friendly atmosphere evident, with a lot of friendly interaction taking place between the traders.

It was also great to have a (tuktuk-powered!) dedicated coffee vendor present, Barbara and JJ's daughter selling cold drinks and waters, and an Oom and Tannie selling the most delicious pannekoek en boerie rolls! (And those of us with the right connections next door were also able to get our tea / coffee and a biscuit from the club's tea table behind the NTMTK layout.)



Traders waiting, inspecting each others' wares ... and once the buying public arrived (photo: Jan Pieterse)



Left: Nice stuff, Marcus! Centre: Something interesting there, Steven? Right: Rudi's detail weathering

(Photo credits: Jan Pieterse)

And if you're intending to go to the PMT Swap Meet at the end of this month, and haven't as yet seen their big layout upstairs, all you need to do is ask one of their club members (the guys in the dark green shirts), who will, I'm sure, gladly take you upstairs to their layout room and show you around.



Here is the **Swap Meets calendar for the rest of 2026**, for all those Swap Meets that we know about. If any additional Swap Meets are arranged and added, the schedule will be amended.

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
<i>This ↑ date might need to change, if we are invited to be part of The Hobby Show again!!</i>				
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 investigated and decided in this regard...)*

Richie's Toy Fair

The first **Richie's Toy Fair** for the year ~~is happening very soon!~~ has already happened, On **Saturday 7th March**, to be precise! Then the other two are on Saturday 25th July and Saturday 7th November.

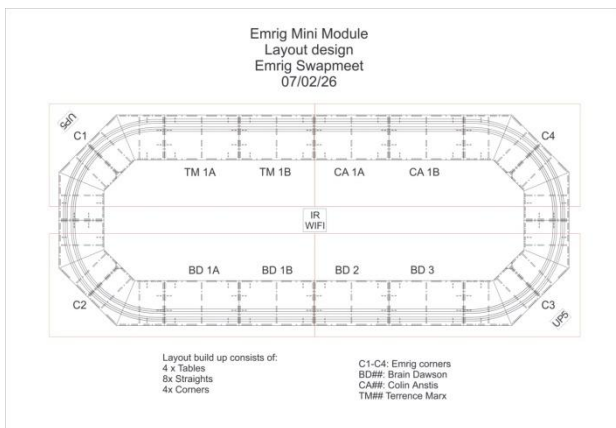
Other relevant dates....

The **Transportation Fair** will be held on **Saturday 1st August 2026**. (See advert later in the newsletter)

The **Great Model Train Expo 2026** will take place on the weekend **24th – 25th October 2026**. Please note that *this is a week earlier* than was previously announced! (Again, see advert later in the newsletter)

We're waiting for confirmation, but the annual **CSME Engineering Fair**, with its live steam action and renowned radio-controlled trucks, will probably take place on the long-weekend 24th to 27th September.

Scheduled Layout Set-ups And Future Activities



We had the first of our scheduled layout set-ups for the year at our **Swap Meet at Northmead Mall** on 7th February. Due to space constraints, this was just a small one, set up between two pillars opposite the Trynergy Gym's Coffee Shop, consisting of just eight member straights (Colin's two, Terrence's two, and Brian's four) in addition to the club's regular corners, making for a compact little oval track. Brian and Terrence ran trains, some British, some American. No photos of the layout or the trains were taken, but a layout plan had at least been provided... 😊

We then set up a layout again at the **NTMTK Swap Meet** at the Voortrekker Monument on 28th February. This was the same (small) size layout as we had at Northmead Mall (just eight member straights), but with a different composition, this time incorporating Kobus' superb Three Sisters modules and (the shorter version of) Niel's very functional yard, for a nice change, along with the club corners.



Mike Richardson (ex-GLOW, GFG and SAG, and out here as a visitor from the UK) in conversation with Niel Wilson, the mini-module concept developer



Duncan checking the alignment (while others chat)... and... off we go! (RHS Photo credit: Jan Pieterse)

With the school holidays starting on Friday 27th March, we can apparently start setting up our layout in the **Benoni Junior School Hall** on that day, run trains that weekend and during the following week, through the Easter weekend, and then dismantle the layout on Easter Monday 6th April, before the schools go back on the Wednesday. Specific arrangements for this will be communicated on the Mini-Modules Chatgroup in due course. Hopefully it will again be a big “expanded layout”, with all available club-member modules included. I wonder if we’re perhaps going to have a bridge module available for inclusion in that layout???

With us being at Benoni Junior School from the 27th, we obviously then won’t be at the PMT Swap Meet on Saturday 28th March, and still need to decide to which of the other PMT Swap Meets we’ll take our layout.

We ~~will also~~ did not be setting up at the first of the Richie’s Toy Fairs on Saturday 7th March, having just been set up at Voortrekker Monument the week before. However, Josh has already booked us to be at the next **Richie’s Toy Fair** on Saturday 25th July.

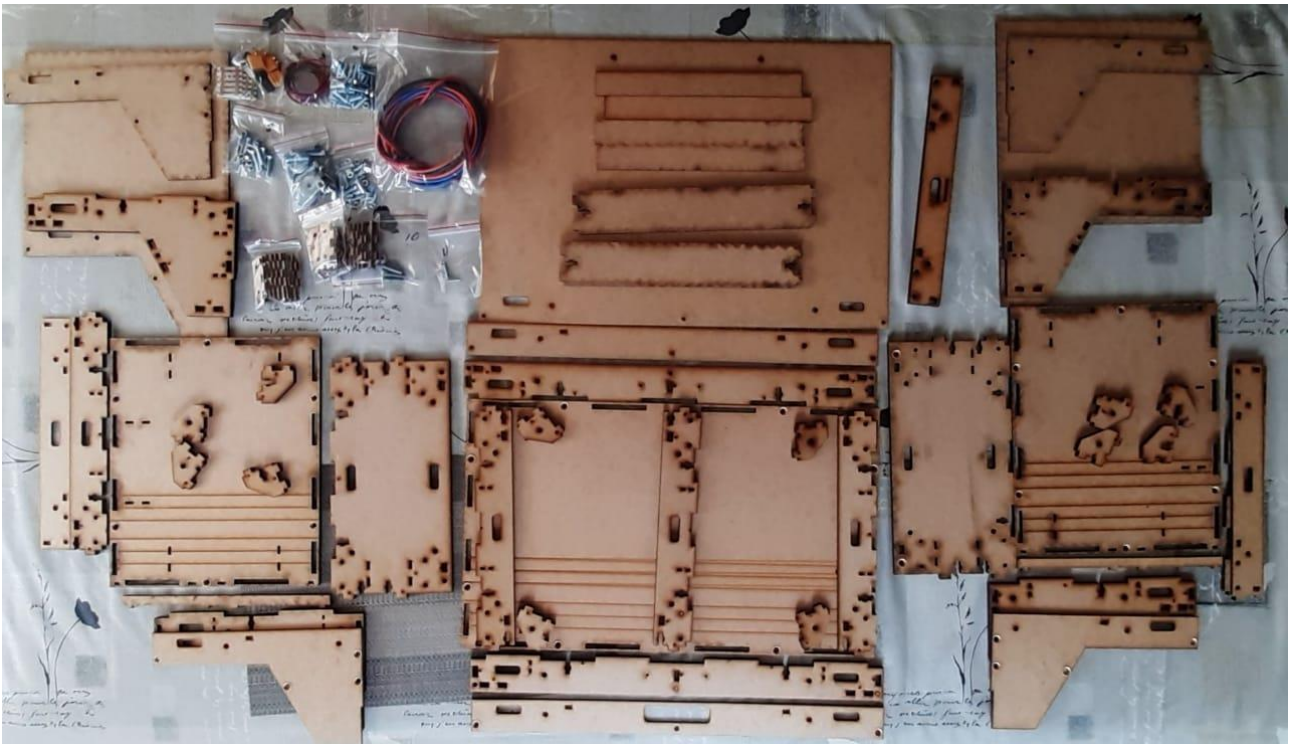
As stated previously, we’ll also be participating at both the **Transportation Fair** in August and the **Great Model Train Expo** in October. (Note the date change for TGMTE, however! Now 24th - 25th October.)

And it seems **The Hobby Show** will now be held at the end of August this year, on the weekend of 29th - 30th, at the Heartfelt Arena, a venue (it's on Google Maps!) in Pretoria very close to the Voortrekker Monument. We are fully expecting (hoping!!) to be invited back there again, free space permitting...

Then Duncan needs to get on and organise a couple of N Gauge running days for those of us who have such things, running the little guys on the club's N Gauge layout in his garage. Come on, Duncan!..... ☺

Brief Mini-modules Updates

Three bridge module kits have been bought locally in the last month!!! (That's in addition to the first one which was bought by the guys in Knysna.) So the race is on to see which of them appears first at a layout set-up near you!.... Good luck, guys!!! I'd seen this ↓ pic of one of them spread out on a table, while the purchaser scratched his head, desperately looking for the assembly manual.... ☺



Okay... it's easy! All you've just got to do is get ↑ ... to look like this.... → ☺☺

... And then suddenly some "progress" pics appeared on the Mini-Modules Chatgroup...





Work in progress in Alberton...



AI-generated scenicking of a module under development in Knysna...



And a conceptual bridge-module design in Randburg!

Yip! Lots of good stuff busy happening!!!..... with each of them looking quite different!

And I'm told that Terrence has bought another couple of straights (I wonder if his cattle have been reproducing, and are needing more pasturage, or if we're in for a different treat?).

Kallie has been a bit stuck, down in Cape Town, while his modules and un-built kits have been sitting back in Benoni, so he unfortunately has no progress to report in that regard right now.

But Ash told me at the EMRIG swap meet that he is DEFINITELY now going to get on and make progress with his two!

It has been suggested that it would also be great to have an "off layout" staging yard, and then some joker came up with this → as a suggestion... Anyone feel up to building (*and then transporting!!!*) it?

Niel has meanwhile been building up stock, and currently has another dozen or so straight modules, a couple of regular curves, and a further inverse curve, all sitting in his stock room in kit form, just waiting to be bought! So if you already have some and are looking for additional modules, or are perhaps just thinking about buying your first one or two, to contribute to the layout, they're available right now! Just give Niel a call!!



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 (the Index will soon [*soon as I have time!*] be expanded 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 www.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, and Follow us!!! 😊

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 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.

Sorry – no Letters to the Editor this month.... 😊

But we do have some adverts promoting up-coming events!!..... 😊 😊 😊



Transportation Fair
For the model enthusiast

When: 1 August 2026
Where: Wynand Marais Community hall
Houtkapper street
Birchleigh
Time: 09h00 to 14h00

Items available
Model trains, Aircraft models/dioramas,
Trams, Tractors, Boats,
Bicycles, military vehicles, Busses, motor
bikes, Diecast cars,

Contact person:
Willie Vorster: 082 563 9283
All bookings to be sent to Willie with pop.

Costs
Bookings essential: Per table = R80
Entrance Fee: R30 per person
Kids under 12 Free



MODEL TRAIN EXPO
24 & 25 OCTOBER 2026
Saturday: 09h00 till 15h00
Sunday: 08h30 till 14h00

TRAINS & ACCESSORIES FOR SALE!

For the Model Train Enthusiast!

- ◆ Amazing Model Train Layouts!
- ◆ Trains & Accessories for Sale!
- ◆ Fun for the Whole Family!
- ◆ Refreshments Available!

Entrance Fee: R30 per person
Primary Scholars FREE!

Venue: Wynand Marais Community Hall
Houtkapper Street, Birchleigh

Contact: Willie Vorster • 082 563 9283
Danie Pienaar • 082 559 6151

Bridging the Gap (Part 2) – Bridge Module Assembly **(with tips and guides)**

By Ralph Davey

Hi everyone.

Last time I introduced us to the bridge module scene I am building.

On returning to South Africa from Australia, I arranged with Niel that I could collect my bridge module set from Rene' at his @Trainz shop.

I was very good, in that I only bought a few items from Rene' when collecting the module set. There is always something to buy at @Trainz, and with an upcoming visit to New Zealand, I had to think about what the minister of finance at home would say if I spent too much. But I got a good look, and June is not far away....

The Module Set

For any members buying and assembling modules, you will benefit from this article in that I have added learnings, tips and improved assembly techniques gained from my build experiences. Also refer to my previous articles on the modules and their assembly for other tips as well. See the August 2024 newsletter article: "The New Modular Design - My Build" by Ralph Davey.

I have now bought and built twenty-four modules, and each one has been a rewarding build experience.

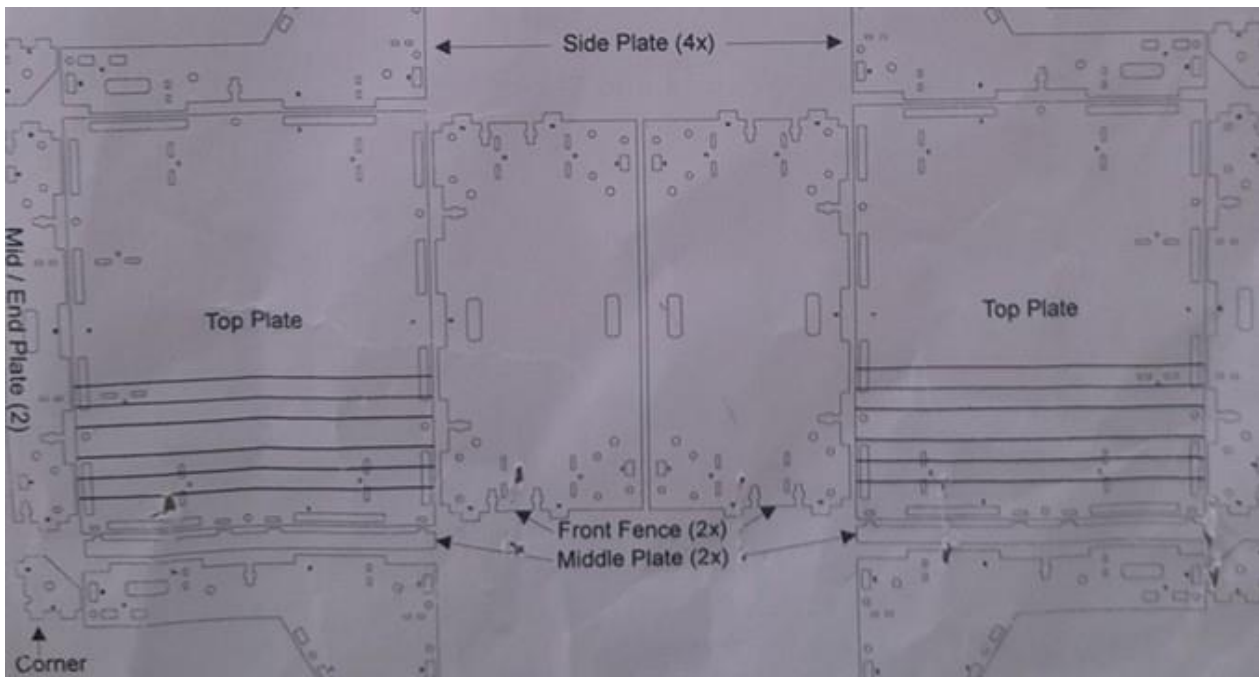
This bridge three-module set is extremely well priced, and the design is very good.

As always, Niel's professional shipping department has all the required components included and ready for the build.



Kit pack with the three module components.

Niel's shipping and despatch manager, Nielsie, has now added component parts drawings, and a component check list. All the component and electrical items are listed if you want to check as well.



The parts list and component drawings.

Assembling the Centre Module

As I progressed and identified the best assembly approach to the other modules as I built them, I identified and applied some easier methods here.

As the module parts are laser cut, some of the tabs that fit into other part slots are very tight or maybe slightly oversized by very minute measurements. The tabs can be over by the thickness of two sheets of A4 printing paper. This is increased by four times in total oversize due to each side of the tab being out.

Don't try to force the tabs into the relevant slot. If just one tab is slightly out in size, it needs to be sanded and filed. Forcing it to go in will cause damage to the slot area.



This is where there can be a minute tolerance oversize.

In my first few module builds I used to sand and file the **slot** on the receiving side. I went and bought a nice set of files and spent hours filing the slots. Besides the long time taken, my hands afterwards looked to be battle-scarred like I had been trying to trim a "Haak en Steek" buffalo-thorn tree. (This tree is aptly named

for its distinct, dual-thorn mechanism: small, sharply hooked thorns that grab you [haak] and long, straight white spines that pierce you [steek].)



My old time-consuming approach.

I noted to myself : “Self, there must be a better way of doing this file and fit process...”

The solution was staring me in the face and very simple. Rather file the **tabs** with a rasp file to fit into the slots. Much easier.

For my builds I do this step first, so that it is done and out of the way. It is the longest step and task in the module build process.

Select all the components with tabs. This includes the corner supports, wire bus holders, and structure sections.

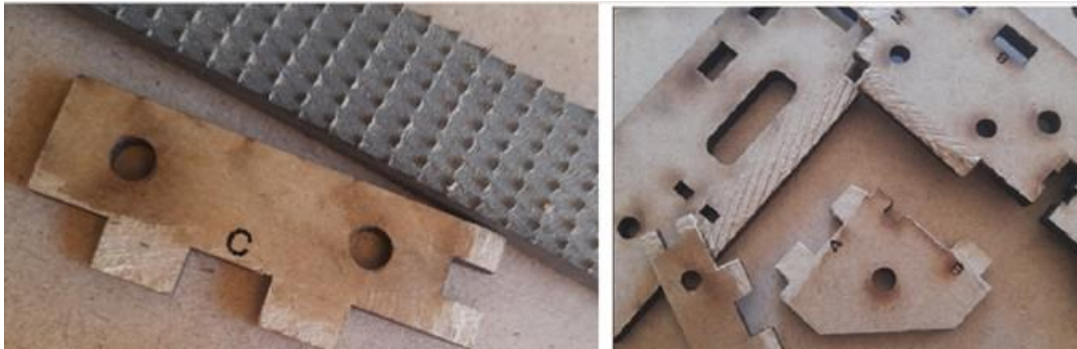


Take a rasp file and sand and file the tabs. Sand them to be in line with the body of the piece so that the tab fits into the receiving slot. Test fit the parts.



Rasp file used to file and sand the tabs. Arrow shows the level of filing to the body line.

I spent around one hour filing all the tabs. Once all are done, then you can start the assembly.



Tabs on each component filed.

I assembled the lower centre section first. This is basically a standard module but with additional design to add on the other two module sections.

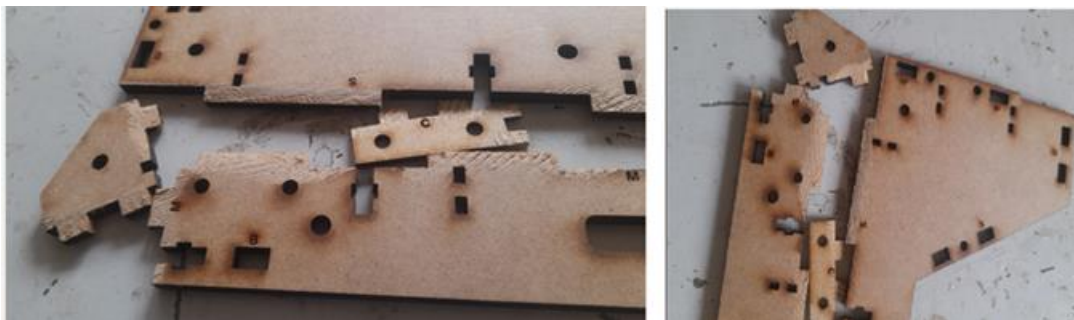
Assembly took about thirty minutes. I really enjoy the assembly process. One screwdriver is all it takes. A modern-day Meccano kit! Preparing the tabs before assembly saves plenty of time.



Assembled middle section.

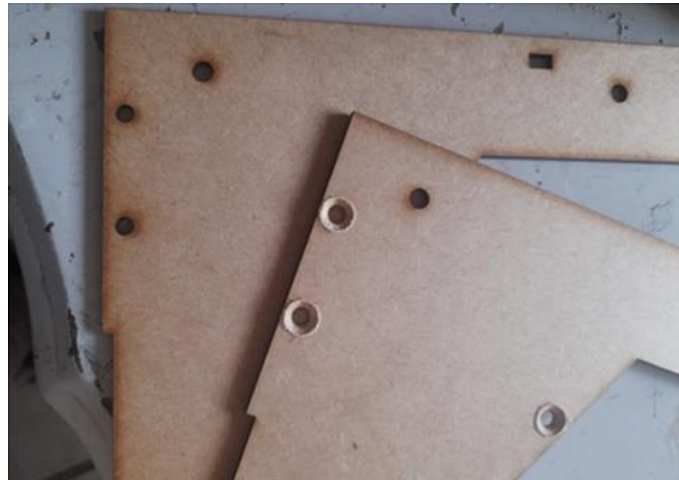
Assembling the Two End Modules

This process followed the same pattern. All tabs for the pieces were filed and test fitted. Assembly took about another hour for both modules.



Tabs filed on the two module sections.

When assembling the back panels and front panels, note that the counter-sunk holes face outwards for the boltheads to be inserted.



Counter-sunk holes.

NOTE: there are four corner support braces that are different to the standard support braces. These are used in the assembly to position bolts and nuts for the assembly of the two sides to the centre module. How do I know this? I did not look carefully, and had to redo two on each module.



Special corner braces for bolt assembly.



Correct ✓ placement and incorrect ✗ placement of these corner braces.

Note the support brace for under the side modules marked X is placed like this...



Additional tips

I glue the right hand module spacer onto my modules. This is so as not to have loose pieces if the modules are being taken to a show. I use the module joiner bolts to hold this spacer in place while the glue sets.

I also apply some wood glue to the cable holder supports if they are loose. But this is not a requirement.



RH Spacer and cable holders

Assembling the full set

About twenty minutes later the full module is assembled.

This modular concept is so rewarding. This whole assembly as noted here took around four hours. One Saturday afternoon, building in comfort. Compare that to the old way, and the time spent, measuring and cutting base board, sides, legs and supports, and crawling under the layout to assemble or add wiring.

Model railroading is much improved with this concept.



The backdrop sections sometimes have a gap between them. I add a support at the back to keep them together.

For this set the bolt heads had a bit of overlap, and this was causing the thin gap. I loosened the bolts and added a thin spacer. This stopped the pinch effect and aligned the boards without a gap. I then glued a strip of wood over the seam join. This assists with the front view in that, when painted or a backdrop picture is added, the seam does not tear the backdrop when the modules are moved. The wood strip is from a spare fence from one of the modules that I did not use. Glue it and peg and weight it down. Once dry, the seam is more secure and less noticeable. I also use other unused bits to cover the spacers I added.



Seam covered at back of backdrop.

I sprayed the set using cheap China Mall paints. The modules need to be painted, as there will be scenery added which will include glue and water. Spraying or painting a protective coat preserves the wood.





Painted module for protection.

I am happy with the built bridge set.

Adding the Electrical Bus

I added the two (red and black) electrical bus wires in one piece, as the three modules will remain joined. I placed the joiners out the back, for joining onto adjacent modules. This is the EMRG club standard. Ensure there is enough lead / length on the wires, to be used when joining to other modules.

Feed the wires through the wire guides for control and neatness.

I am not sure, at this stage, of the scene I want to display on the modules. It will probably be an open rural area with little need for lighting. However I added the accessories bus wires (the orange and blue wires), as they need to be in place for the add-on to other modules.

I added dropper leads at both ends for the track bus and the accessories bus.

Connect the joiners as follows:-

Train Control bus

Red: + lower terminal

Black: - Upper terminal

Accessories bus

Orange: + lower terminal

Blue: - Upper terminal

As part of the module assembly, always add the two electrical bus wiring set up. Add the track and accessory dropper feeds for use when the track is laid. Additional feeds can be added on.

Then the build is complete.



Connection Plug Tip

The connector plug fittings are usually very tight. This is a problem if the connection is connected or disconnected regularly, and in general. Disconnecting the fittings when they are tight can result in damage, as one tends to apply a lot of pull effort, and then they separate and you knock the module, or the force breaks the wire join.

The first time I looked to making this a better fit I spent hours filing, cutting and shaving the fittings.

Again I said to myself, "Self, there must be a better way."

The solution turned out to be very simple. Squeeze the connector pins on the connector gently. Test. And it works. The fittings are easily connected and unconnected.

I recommend you do this to all the fittings.



Fittings fixed to allow for easy connection.

Next time: Bridging the Gap (Part 3).

The track, bridges and scenery applied.

Conclusion

I hope you enjoyed reading this article. I hope that more members will take up the request to get a module section to be used at the club set-up when we visit shows or venues.

Depression and (a Different) Epiphany:

Part 2: My BNSF “TBA” Yard... A project for the future one day???

By Glynn Chamberlain

Is this just a pipedream, or could it too one day become a reality? Who knows...? Dreaming while on holiday..... ☺ Part 2 of Three (so there’s another one to come)

Still no name for this yard Glynn is talking about?!!! There is, but it’s further down this article, **BUT DON’T GO THERE YET.** Read the article through to understand the eventual choice and thus the name.

Also, to justify the choice and info on this yard, towards the end of this article is a **“Secret”** for you. Something that will hook you and make you just love this yard. Keep an eye out for the **“Secret”** towards the end!!!

To clear up some confusion, after I sent Part 1 to Brian, I received WhatsApps from Brian (*Ed. They were tongue in cheek, of course!*) congratulating me and asking what new space I had acquired to start this new and enlarged project. I hoped, and thought, that I had explained that this was just dreaming! Stuff that goes through my head sometimes. If I was to do it again... This is currently **not** a project that I am working on, just something that, if the planets aligned, then it would come to fruition! So, on to Part 2...

During the last month, those on the EMRIG WhatsApp group received a link from our chairman, Mark Peddle, regarding an article in British Railway Modeller, entitled “Exhibition Layouts, should they prioritise Reliable Operation over Scenic Detail?” Believe it or not, I covered some of this in my previous article on page 26 of the 57 page newsletter. However, to save everyone having to go back there, my comment was that many folk want to see trains running, and reliably at that!!! Yes, they love the scenery and will look at it, but trains running will hold them for hours. But, it must not be the same train running round and round.

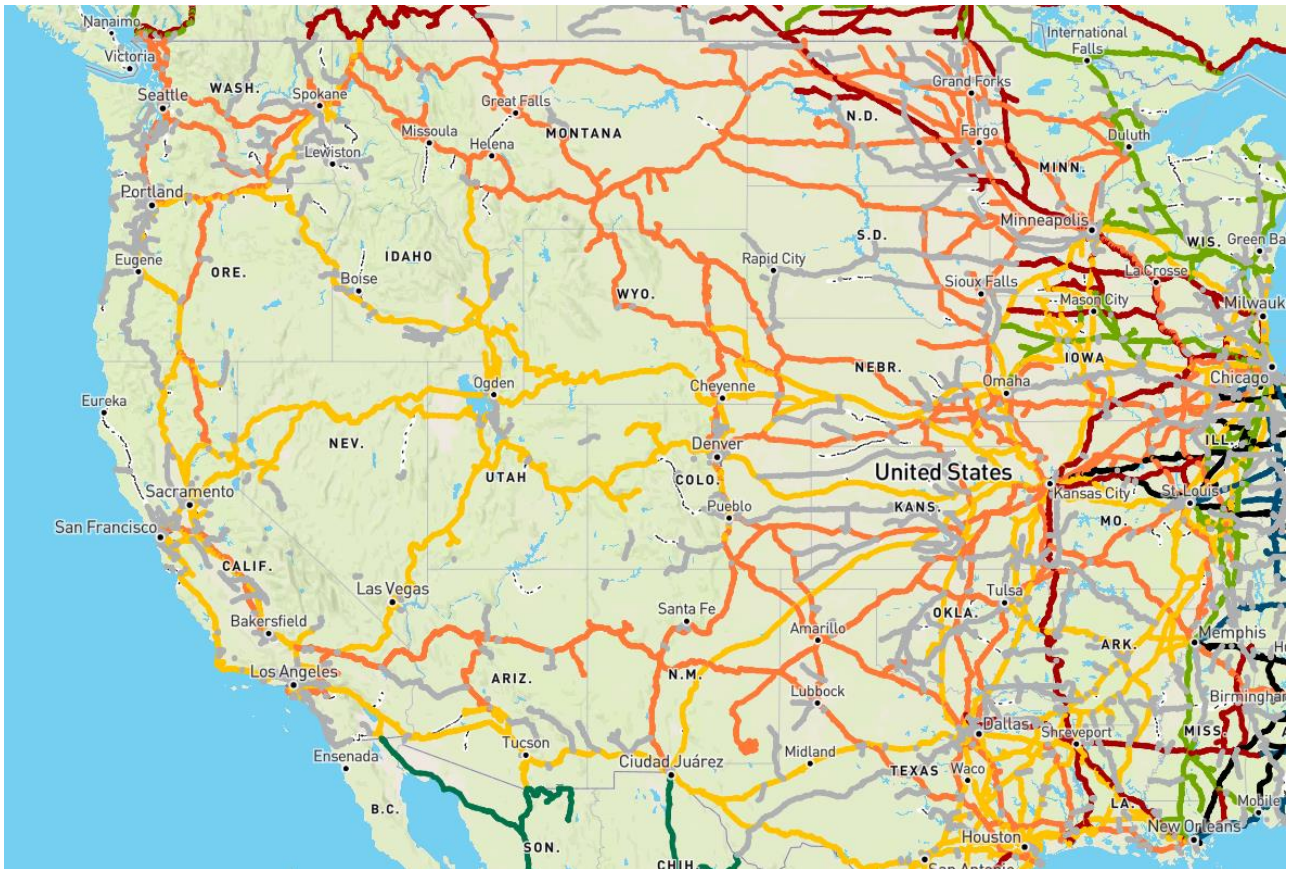
So, from that article, there were some prerequisites.

1 Different trains on each run.

- Those trains doing something apart from just running through and through. I.e.
 - refuelling,
 - meets,
 - switching,
 - attention grabbers, to name a few.

Take note of the above prerequisites, as I will come to them individually after naming the yard in question.

One resource I use extensively is <https://rail.guide> . From this website, the below is what I see: -

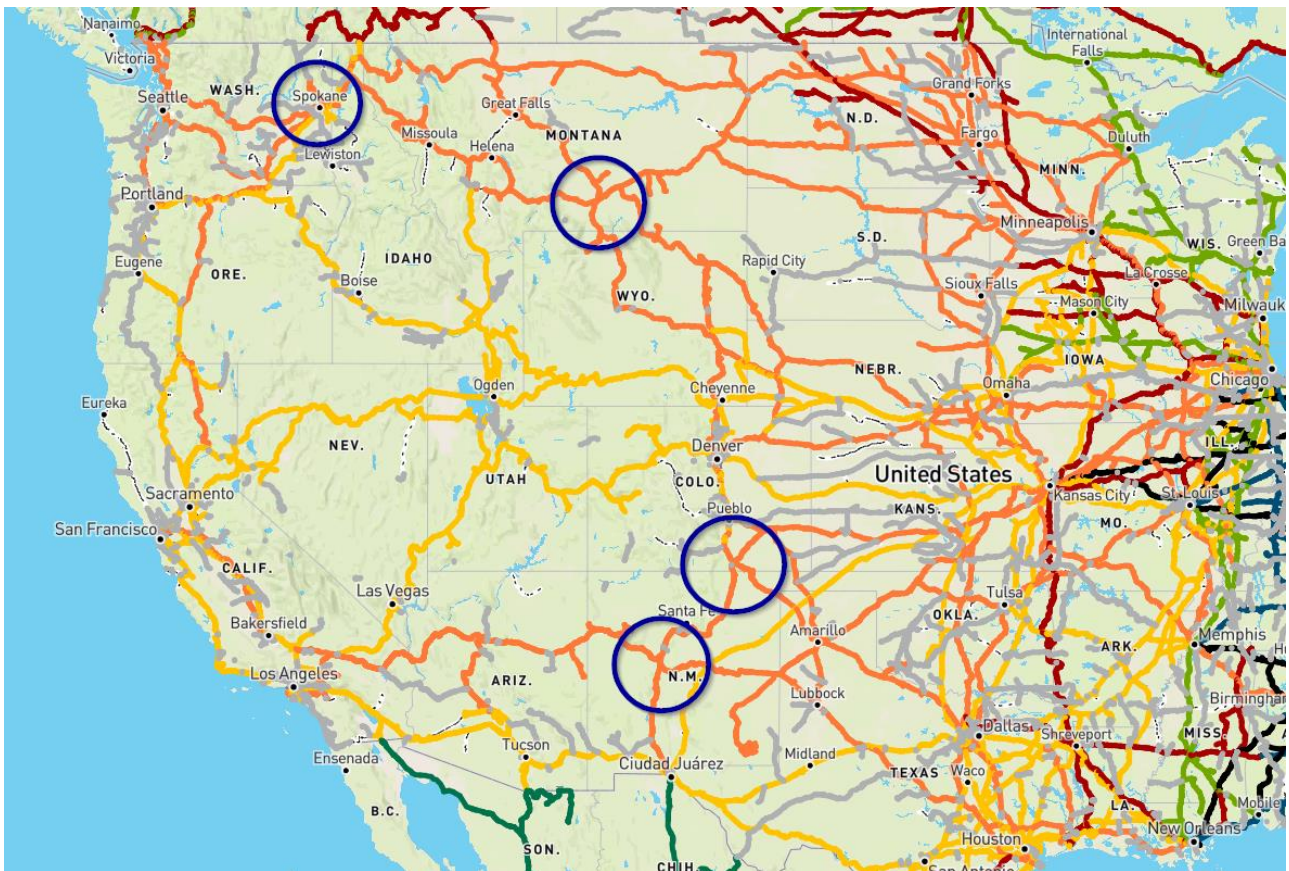


I have only chosen the western USA as this is where BNSF and UP predominantly run. The east coast being CSX, Norfolk Southern and the like, of which I have zero locomotives, and no desire to get any either.

So, where on this map would there be significant action, 24/7? Yes, as mentioned in the last article, major towns would have this action, but yards in major towns often only cater to certain car types. Intermodal yards will only see intermodal cars, tank cars will primarily be around refineries, distilling plants and ethanol plants, and box cars and gondolas will be everywhere else. Is there much refuelling in these yards? Repairs, or interesting actions? No.

So, what about looking in the rural, smaller areas where railway tracks converge? For instance, let's find somewhere where 4, 5 or more routes converge on a spot, and look there. Surely in the countryside, there would need to be refuelling, and the need to classify wagons coming from each of the radials into that town to different trains. What about repairs to wagons, and what about wagons with freight for that town?

In the image on the next page, I have circled four areas where routes converge together. Let's see....



Spokane, top left, I discussed in the last article and although a possibility, was not my ideal choice. So, of the last three, which one would it be? Some internet sleuthing on the three resulted in the following for the yard in question: -

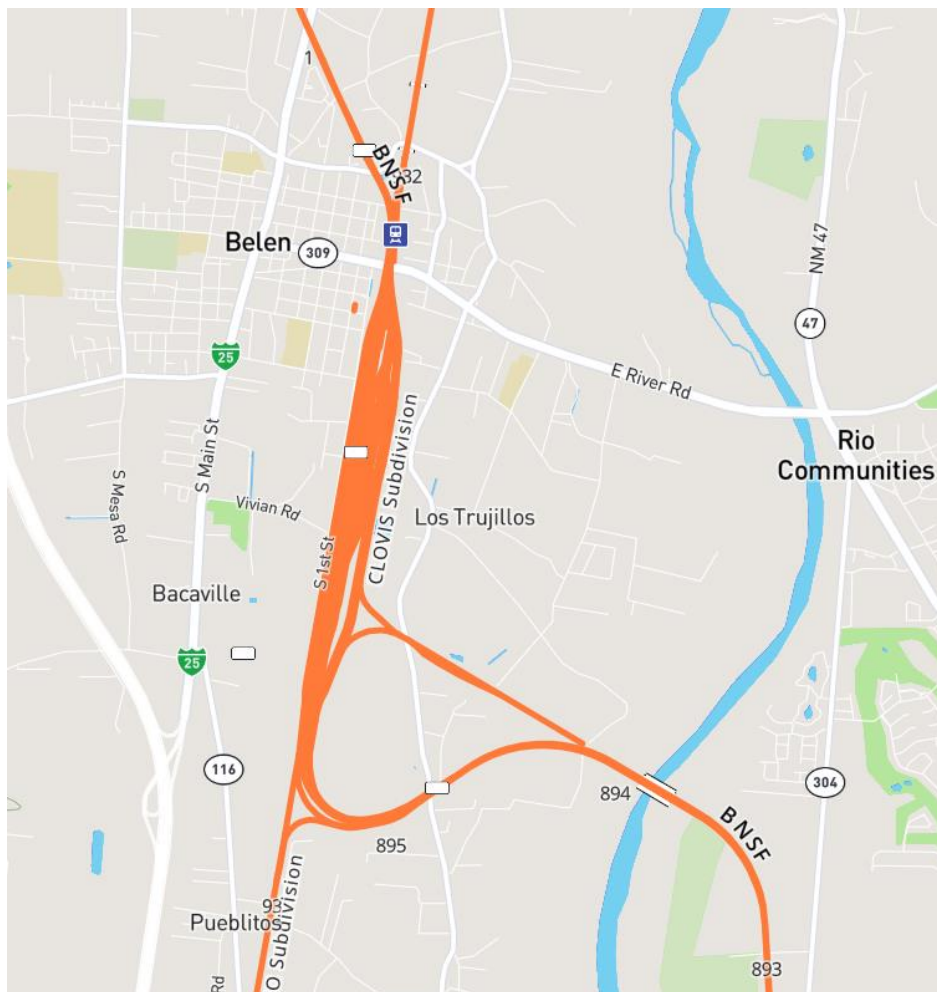
“With four fuel pads for eastbound trains and four for westbound trains, we handle an impressive average of 750,000 gallons of diesel a day, without separating the locomotives from the train. Some days, we even hit over 1 million gallons. And it’s one of the busiest hubs in BNSF’s network.”

“On a daily basis, we see about 80 to 90 trains passing through. The sheer volume of freight that comes through this hub is astounding. We transport everything imaginable, from merchandise and electronics to fuel, feed, coal, grain and more.”

The division of BNSF has a bustling, dedicated workforce. Currently, there are about 400 Transportation employees in total, who work both in and out of the facility, and 100 Transportation employees who are based right here in the city. Additionally, there is an estimated 225+ employees working in engineering and on the mechanical side. Together, this forms the backbone of BNSF in ???????

And the name of the town is: -

Belen, New Mexico



Belen Yard (also known as the Belen Facility) is a major BNSF Railway yard located in Belen, New Mexico. On my image further above with the circles, it is the lowest of the circles. It serves as a key hub on BNSF's Southern Transcon (Southern Transcontinental) route, which is one of the railroad's primary east-west main lines for freight traffic. The yard primarily facilitates trains travelling between Los Angeles (Southern California) and Chicago (Illinois).

This makes it a vital midpoint stop for intermodals, manifest freight, and other trains on the high-volume Southern Transcon corridor, which sees around 80 - 90 (or more on peak days) trains daily through the area. The yard handles traffic moving in both directions along this route, with westbound trains often coming from the Chicago area (via Clovis, NM, and points to the east), and eastbound trains heading toward Chicago (from California via Gallup, AZ, and points to the west). While Belen also connects to other subdivisions (e.g., south toward El Paso, TX, and Mexico via the El Paso Subdivision, or north/west toward Albuquerque), its main role is supporting the high-traffic transcontinental flow between the West Coast (Los Angeles region) and the Midwest (Chicago). Recent improvements, like added tracks in nearby Becker, NM, have boosted capacity on this corridor by about 30%.

So, let's hop back to those aspects that were mentioned before: -

- refuelling,
- meets,
- switching,
- attention grabbers, to name a few.

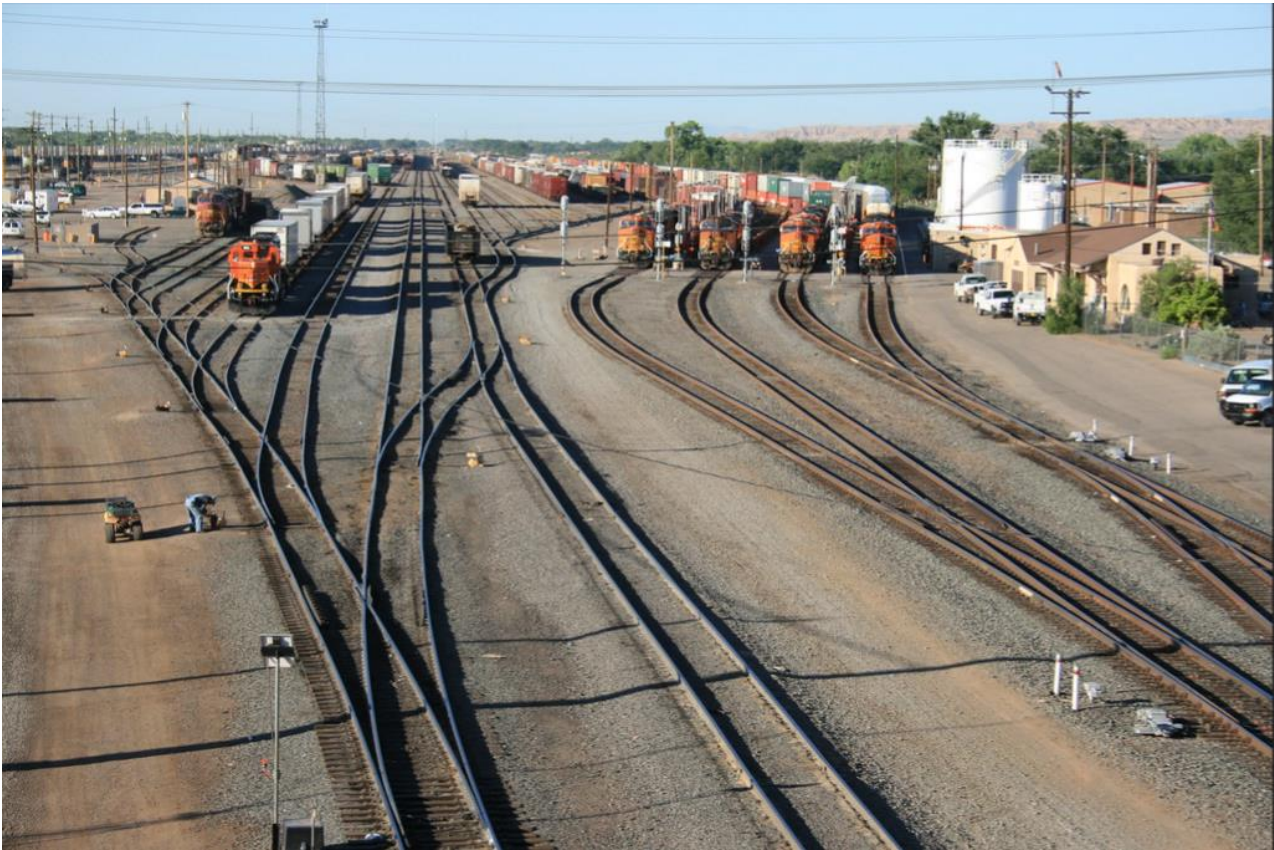
Refuelling: -



As mentioned, Belen has 4 (FOUR) refuelling pads in each direction!!! The image above is the pad on the east side of Belen, for Eastbound trains. Now tell me this is not an impressive image!

Remember, from further above, they handle, on average, 750 000 GALLONS of fuel, EVERY day, without separating locos from the wagons. Simply – they roll in, refuel, crew change, and roll out!

On the next page is a 2nd image, showing more of the surrounds...



Meets: -

Again, as mentioned, the yard sees between 80 to 90 trains per day! If you had 20 trains in staging for a layout, you would have more than enough meets to keep you busy for hours. And, if you were at a show, spectators would be enthralled by the action.

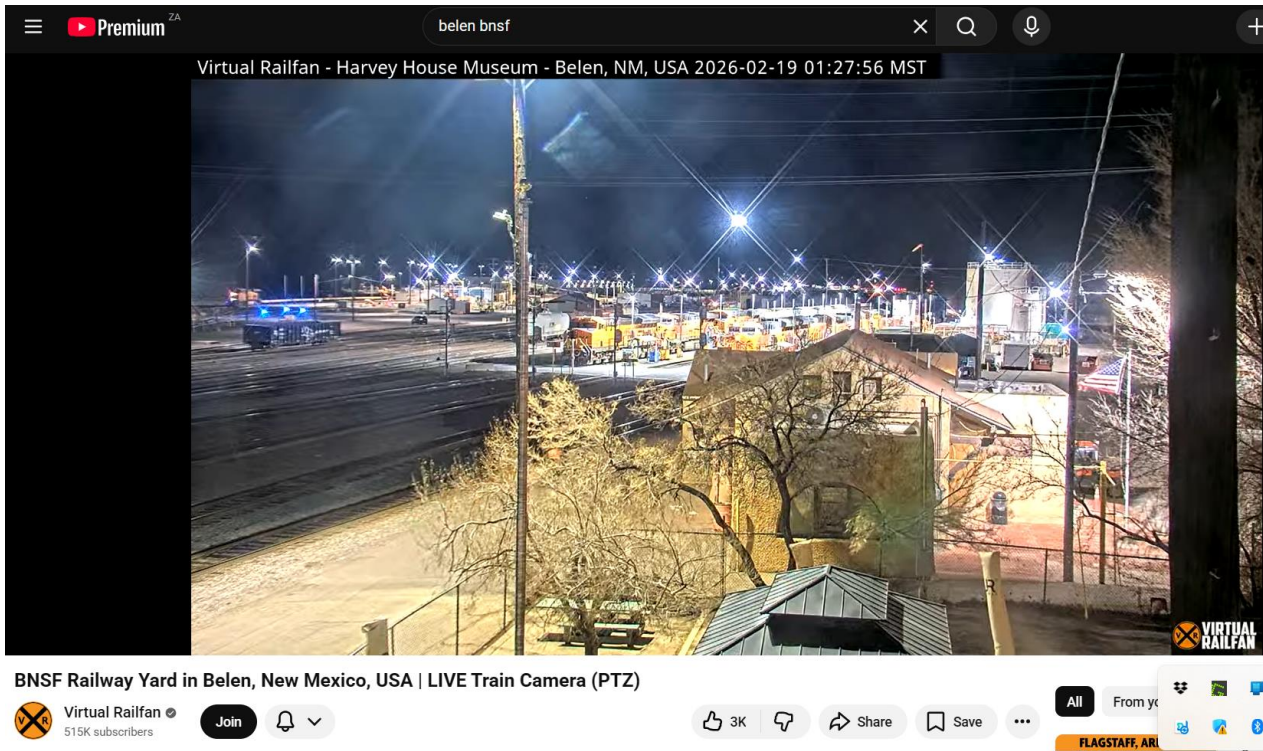
Switching: -

This is an area I have always battled with. Even with my Whitefish yard, I battled to justify switching transcontinental trains in a “midway” town somewhere. Just does not seem right that a train built up in Chicago would get to Whitefish and then have some loads removed and others added. Surely, Belen was no different...

The “Secret” is revealed on the next page!



[Belen, has a live webcam!!!](#)



I warn you now, if you start watching this webcam, you will be hooked.

I have watched many webcams in my time. They are great, but the volume of trains, action, and the like has always been disappointing. Sometimes hours can go by with nothing happening. No trains, nada.

Belen webcam is different. Almost every 5 to 10 minutes, there are trains rolling in or out. Just below and to the left of the camera, crew come and go between the offices and their trains. And now coming to the switching part... Constantly, there are switchers just to the left of the refuelling pads that literally switch wagons during the day on a regular basis. I have seen 5 to 20 intermodal cars being either pulled or pushed by the switcher, multi-type manifest wagons, tank cars, you name it, all being switched between trains.

It is the next best thing to actually being in a yard and watching the actual trains and switching!!!

Honestly, at home or work, I bring up the webcam on the smart TV as background “noise” for a better word, and constantly glance at what happens during the day. I am never disappointed.

So, this article series was only going to be two articles. But I have not even begun to start discussing the modules and layout planning, features that can be added for interest at train shows, and I am now on page 8!!!

So, I am going to close here and keep the module and design ideas for a separate article, which will form Part 3.

In the meantime, you may want to investigate Belen and think about what you would do.

To close, I leave you with this image from a [YouTube video](#). I will discuss this image and more in Part 3. 'Til then...

..... Enjoy!!



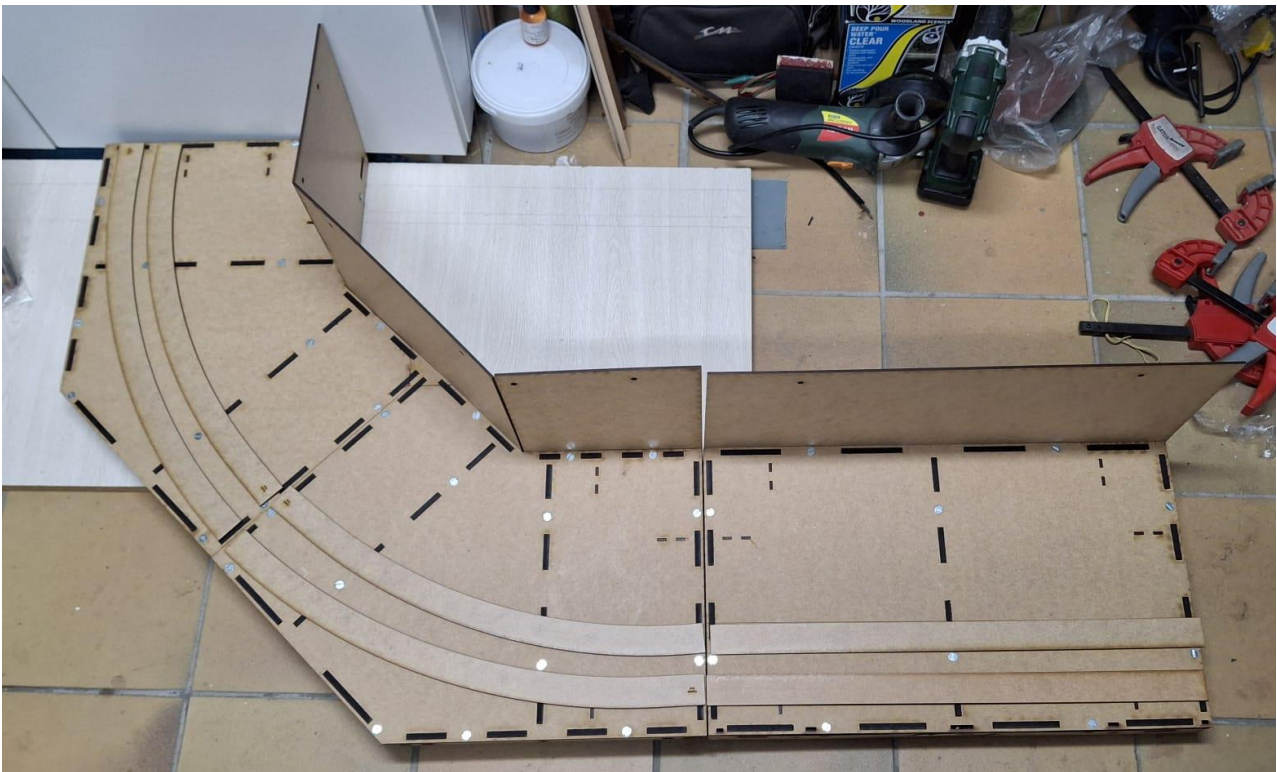
Knysna Model Railroaders

Mini-module Layout Progress to Date

By Brian Messenger

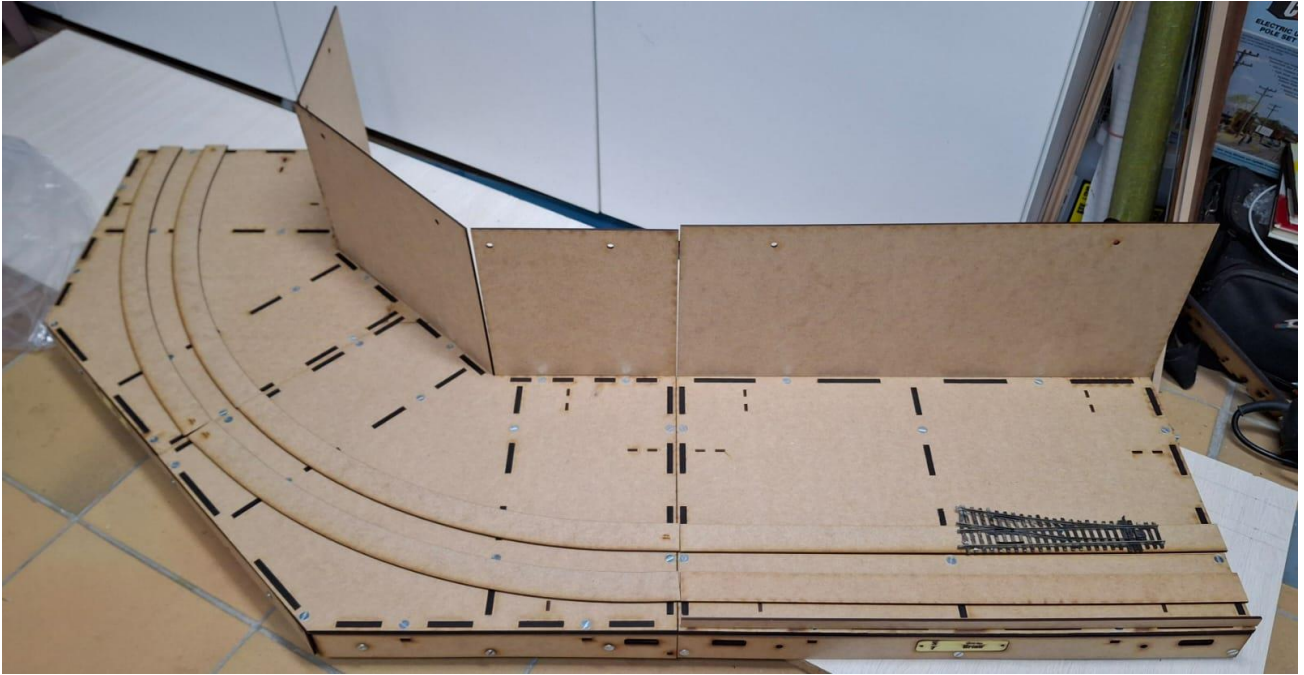
Having sold my HOn3 home layout because of the intended house move, a group of us model railroaders here in Knysna (KMR – Knysna Model Railroaders) got together and decided to form a module group, to enable us to display our modular layout at shows, and hold an exhibition in July of this year (during the annual Oyster Festival).

Cutting a long story short, our group ordered 18 of the mini-modules – 6 corner ones and 12 straight ones. The straight ones measure 500mm by 300mm. Corner ones are 700mm by 700mm. These consist of 2 sections. Shown below is one corner (left) and one straight module.

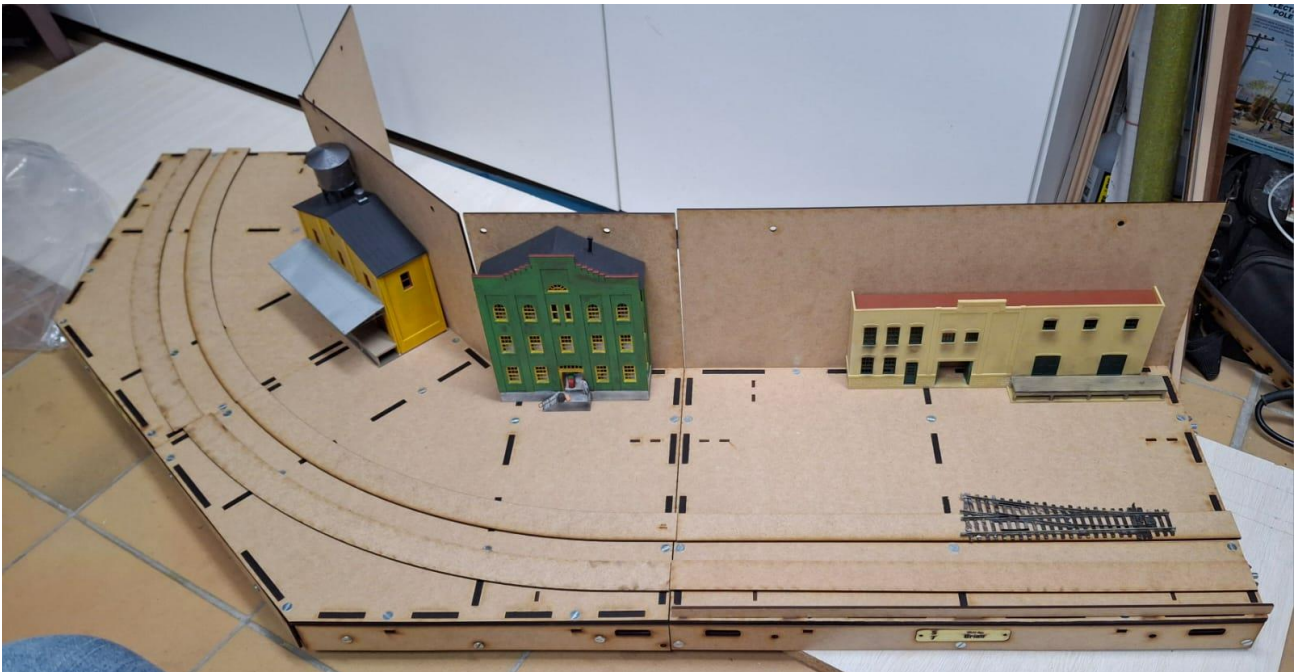


Everything is included in the kits – track bed, backdrops, wiring, connector plugs as well as all the screws, nuts and bolts to put the units together.

Below is a straight module and a corner one connected. The back drops are supplied in the kit.



It is up to each individual owner to scenic and populate their module however they please.



The only criteria that cannot be changed are the track alignment and track spacing. One can add points and sidings if so desired.



Below left is my corner and straight module, about to be connected to another scenicked set.



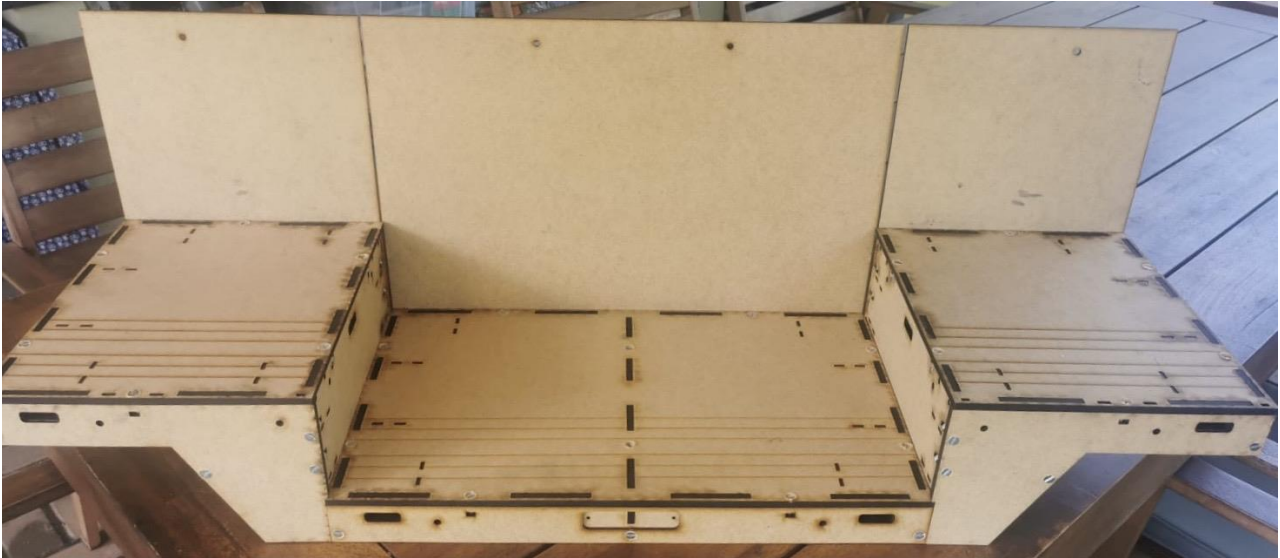
Below, we have one of the members' modules that are almost complete, with track and scenery. The wiring and connectors to the next module can be seen at left.



Another view of the same set-up. The grass area on the right middle will become a game park with a variety of animals.



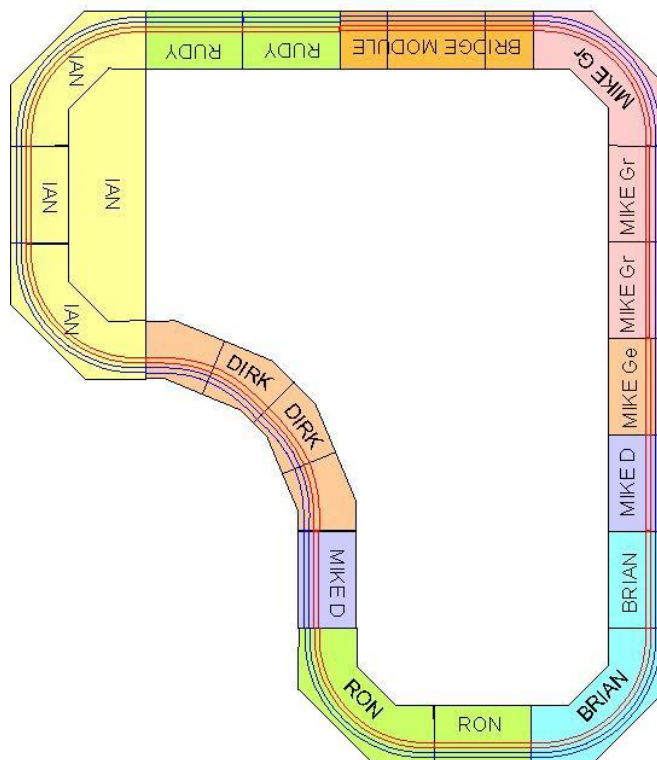
Now this is where it got really interesting! Niel Wilson, designer of the modules, came up with a bridge module that can be used in a group setup. So the KMR group purchased one! *(This pic is from Niel Wilson)*



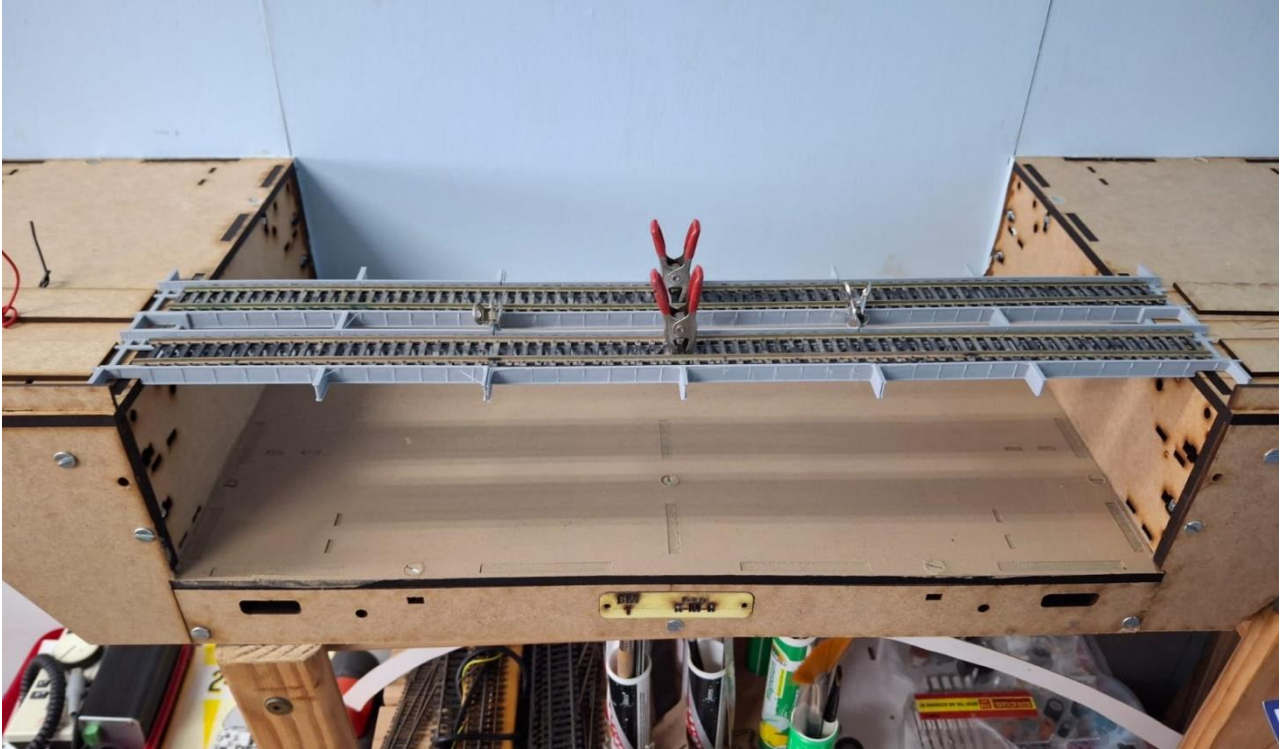
Below is the ideal layout set-up using all of our group members' modules for exhibition purposes. As can be seen below there is what is called a reverse curve unit (Dirk's) to enable us to produce this design.

MODULE LAYOUT

3500 X 4000



Fortunately a few members have 3-D printers, therefore they could print a 3-D bridge for this module. Below is the sub-frame of the bridge. The gap in the middle of the module for a bridge or trestle is 500mm by 300mm by 100mm deep.



Test fitting one side (consisting of 4 pieces).



The opposite side temporarily held in place.



Test fitting the bridge with a heavy high speed train on it.



A view from above, to check alignment and track spacing.



Top bracing glued in place.



Another view showing the bracing. This is where the complete bridge became very sturdy, with no flexing of it at all. It is able to carry heavy HO locomotives without a support in the middle underneath.



This (lower left) is where a 3-D printed boat house and dock will be situated, below the bridge. I have put the boat house and dock together, and here it's ready for painting and weathering.



All modules have the owner's name 3-D printed, and this one is owned by the KMR group.



The almost complete boat house and deck is seen below. I will write up a separate article on the building, painting and weathering of this 3-D printed kit, for a future newsletter.



One of the group members contributed the cost (of about R750.00) of printing this bridge on a filament printer. He owns two corner modules and a straight one.

A few of the members do not have home layouts, therefore this modular concept, with individual member ownership, allows them to have a small-size layout portion at their homes when not at shows or exhibitions.

Once I get more photos of the completed modules by other group members, I will send them to you.

Brian

The HOn3 guy from Knysna

WFG – Building A Layout For TGMTE 2025:

Part 3. Landscaping and Scenery – The Lake and Front Modules

By Brian Dawson

In the past two months (in the January and February 2026 Newsletters) we have described the basic design, sorting out of a track plan, and getting the track laid (Part 1), and then (in Part 2) the landscaping and scenicking of half of the layout built by the **Westrand Freemo Group** for **The Great Model Train Expo**, which took place at the beginning of November 2025. This article is a continuation, describing the scenicking of the rest of the layout (with the exception of the scratch-built sawmill, to be covered next month).

The Lake, Trestle Bridge, and the Log Drop

Wolf had done the initial development of the lake, providing the basic shape, and then adjusting the depth to reduce the amount of water that would be required (described in Part 1). The lake was essentially horseshoe-shaped, with the portion towards the front of the layout to be an area where recreation (boating, swimming, fishing) could take place, while the section towards the back of the module was where the more industrial activity – the “log drop” (that’s **LOG** drop, not **LONG** drop!!), log storage (in the water), and then recovery of the logs to feed the sawmill – would take place.

Wolf coloured the base of the lake and the surrounding banks, and placed a lot of rocks around the waters-edge. Neil meanwhile scratch-built and installed an impressive old-style curved wooden trestle bridge for the logging line, and later incorporated the “log drop” facility onto the structure of the bridge. Herman built the log-recovery facility, where logs would be hauled back up out of the water, and fed into the sawmill.



Trestle bridge in place, here before log drop was installed Log recovery to sawmill, during construction

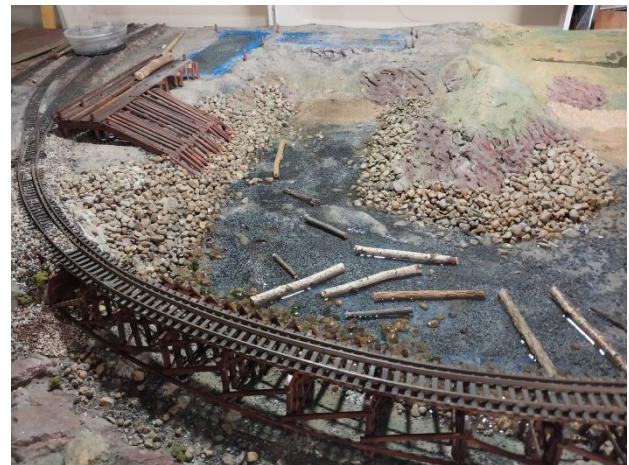
We cut a large variety of logs of a suitable size (about 75 - 80mm long, diameters ranging from around 5 to 12mm), for placement at the logging yard, in the water itself (our log storage area!), and at the sawmill.

So what is a “log drop”? It’s a log-offloading facility, commonly used in water-rich logging environments,
Page **40** of **60**

especially in the old days, where harvested logs could be rolled off the log cars, and dropped directly into the water (as seen in the old pics below), where the logs would float, stored until they were to be hauled back up (on a separate facility near the sawmill), and then processed through the sawmill.



We needed water, and quite a lot of it! Richard went to visit his brother-in-law, who is Chief Chemist at an industrial chemicals company, and bought a lot of rather expensive 2-part resin (to be mixed 50:50) that was considered suitable. Neil, who has had a lot more experience than the rest of us in working with resins, took on responsibility for the multiple successive “water-pours”.



It took about 5 litres of resin, and multiple pours, having to wait between pours for each previous resin layer to be completely dry before applying the next one, but Neil achieved a virtually perfect “real” water appearance. He incorporated a bit of colour tinting in with a couple of the resin pours, to achieve a suitably realistic “murky” appearance to the water on the sawmill side of the lake, while still maintaining a reasonably “clear” water quality on the recreational side.

He added logs at different stages during the sequential pours, to achieve the appearance of logs floating at different levels, a few of them even submerged.



Small station building and Farmers' Co-op

A commuter branchline led from Whitehall, the main station in town on the right-hand front module, across the left-hand front module, to the Lake module, curving around to where it terminated at a small station (the Walthers Iron Ridge station kit). Our plan was to run a Doodlebug between the two stations, transporting sawmill workers, as well as those wishing to enjoy the recreational facilities at the lake, and also a bit of freight. We decided to introduce a Farmers' Co-op structure that we had available, close to the station, so that we would have an additional shunting and freight drop-off point. This meant that we could either run a boxcar behind the Doodlebug, or use the small switcher (shunter) stationed at a special facility near Whitehall Station, to run extra freight to the Farmers' Co-op.

Having the small station and Co-op on the curve meant having to develop a curved wooden loading platform (with the correct curvature) for the Co-op, while at the small station the passengers would alight from the Doodlebug at ground level, onto a concrete slab. Dave did a great job of detailing the two (removable!) structures, adding people and numerous freight items on the loading docks.



The Farm and the Grain Silos

To fill up the empty triangular corner on the front (viewer's) side of the Lake module, we had decided (actually it *was* Wolf's original suggestion!) to develop a farm. To make this removable (for protection during transportation), the whole farm was built on a triangular piece of plywood cut to shape, to follow the curve of the mainline tracks. Dave also took on this project, using buildings that he had (farmhouse, etc.) plus some others supplied by Neil (barn, grain silo, shed, chicken coop), and super-detailed the farm yard.

On the other triangular corner, towards the back of the module, we'd agreed to place a grain storage facility, with large silos and two delivery / collection sidings. Once again, Dave developed this area of the layout, including workers at the silos, a road maintenance scenario taking place on the road behind the silos, and a beautifully detailed derelict farmhouse (including rusted vehicle wrecks in the yard) close by. Neil again did a lot of work in kit-bashing the old silos we had, to add the elevator and top conveyor structure and the delivery chutes that were missing when we found it amongst our stock of structures.



Farm and grain storage, both still at an early stage of development

The other major structure on the Lake module was Herman's scratch-built sawmill, which I believe deserves an article all on its own, and will form Part 4 of this little series.

The Town

Because of surface area constraints, with the town caught up between the mainline and passing loop railway tracks in front, and the logging track on its embankment at the back of the right-hand front module, the town would have to be rather long and narrow. Dave had bought two of the Walthers "Merchants Row" structures, second-hand, which needed some work, quite narrow buildings, which then formed the basis of the commercial part of town.

Photo right: Gustav's double-header manifest passing the town, with Whitehall Station on the left, with the park, mobile food vendor vans and a small band of buskers next door. (Photo credit: Richard Taylor)





The main road through town... (these, and the other town pics below, also taken by Richard Taylor)

Neil created a couple of resin cloned copies of another commercial/residential building that Dave had bought, creating two-storey and three-storey low-relief versions of the building, to provide some variety. We had a couple of other commercial buildings, a hotel and an apartment block, and Dave bought and assembled a fire station. Neil had a very elegant (but also extremely fragile!) municipal water tower on a tall steel-structure. Together, these buildings created quite an attractive town, spread out along a single road running behind Whitehall Station, parallel with the tracks, with a small park adjacent to the station.

We cut two underpass tunnels beneath the logging track embankment, to allow for other roads into town “from behind the backdrop”, and the main road continued on out of town, over a level crossing, and on to the industrial area on the left front module. The roads through town, and out to the industrial area, were all “tarred pavement”, painted grey. Richard and Neil together handled most of the town development.



Industries on the Left Front Module

Initially we had established a single industrial siding, for rail deliveries to the industrial area to be



established on the left front module, with industries intended to be placed in front of and behind the siding. We subsequently realised that we would then have no space for a roadway to service the industrial area, and also had some industries that looked better being serviced from “in

front” and others where delivery should take place “behind”. So we moved the central siding forward, and added a siding along the foot of the logging track embankment, to allow space for a rather narrow and winding road through between the industries, down to the large fuel depot at the end closest to the lake module. Just one more example of changing our track plan as we went along..... (as can be seen in the comparable photos above)!



The industrial area, left = during development, right = at the Expo (Photo credits: Richard Taylor)

The Switcher

We decided that we would need a local yard switcher, to assist with delivery of freight cars to the industries on this module, especially from trains travelling clockwise on the inner mainline. This would avoid the mainline loco having to uncouple and run around his train to effect a head-shunt. The switcher could more easily pull cars off the rear of the train, and deliver them to the industries, as well as run deliveries down to the Farmers' Co-op on the Lake module.



Accordingly, we built a dedicated switcher facility, with a short siding (also visible in the pics above) on which to park the switcher, as well as a small crew facility which Neil kit-bashed out of an old bobber caboose I had lying around, mounting it on a platform.

The UP switcher can be seen parked up next to the yellow caboose crew facility, in the picture above, and is also present in the bottom right hand corner of the photo on the previous page, with a small Maintenance of Way storage yard close by (left foreground). *(Photo credits this page: Richard Taylor)*

Logging Track Embankment

With the logging track running up at a 3% gradient behind the town (supported on a 9mm plywood strip, with periodic wood supports), its embankment would take up a lot of town space if left as a 1:1½ slope angle. The embankment was formed out of polystyrene offcuts, tapered to shape, tucked in under the plywood "formation", and we (Neil again!) then installed a very attractive resin-cast retaining wall, with sections cut to the appropriate height, gradually increasing along the length of the embankment, with the two vehicle underpass tunnels cut through the embankment.

Vegetation establishment on the steep embankment slope above the retaining wall was achieved by turning the module on its side, to flatten the angle, with a lot of shrubbery then applied to hide the gap at the top of the wall/foot of the embankment, and against the permanently-attached backdrop.



In Part 4 next month, we'll describe the scratch-built sawmill, and also reveal some of the operational hitches we encountered at the Expo.

A New Series recently started.....

Gauteng Model Railway History:

3. The Friday Night Group → G.L.O.W.

By various authors, and compiled by Brian Dawson (BLD)

Editor's Note: *I happen to have, fairly recently, come across information about the so called "Friday Night Group" (sometimes called the Friday Evening Group), which then later morphed into "G.L.O.W." ("Great Layouts Out West") – information mostly provided to me (BLD) by Brian Clark. I was actually, at the time, looking to do an article just about the layout of the late Ron Caldecott, a member of FNG/GLOW, and Brian obtained (and also found, on his computer!) information about Ron and his layout, but also a lot more – about FNG and GLOW, and about the layouts of other members of that group, which he sent through to me.*

It was the availability of this material that prompted me to decide to start this new series. And so that is where I am going next, just because I have that information to hand, and also a deadline to meet...

The Friday Night Group → G.L.O.W.

From Brian Clark:

"In the late 1980s there was a regular Friday night gathering in Florida at the home of a well-known man, Jimmy Barnard. He was a gentleman who was well into his retirement days with his model railway layout. His passion for trains was known amongst the model railway fraternity in Gauteng and beyond. His exceptional knowledge of electronics enabled him to do almost anything, even to design and build sound systems to fit into his own locomotives. For the late 1980s this was a phenomenal application of advanced electronics by any individual, for model trains.

"Running sessions at Jimmy's were popular, and often up to ten people visited and helped to operate the layout. Friends, and friends of friends, visited to marvel at the incredible amount of work done on Jimmy's layout. By the mid-1990s, Louis van den Berg and Brian Clark were busy working on their own home layouts, helping each other with planning, designing and building.

"Jimmy moved to the Cape Province for health reasons, and Louis and Brian met at each other's homes on alternate Friday evenings. Ron Caldecott and Tony Attwell then joined them. After a time, the four friends were operating their layouts at their own homes, weekly, on a cyclical arrangement. As the group grew in numbers, the name 'Friday Night Group' came into being, and Louis would draft a schedule indicating who would be hosting the meetings and when, for each year in advance. There were, after a while, eight fixed venues, and the occasional fifth Friday in a month was opened for visits to those who were not on the fixed roster."

BLD: The Friday Night Group / Friday Evening Group was apparently never formally constituted, with the

members just at some stage (no date can be identified) starting to refer to themselves by that name. Ron Caldecott refers to it, in a document he wrote in 2009, as the Friday EVENING Group, while Brian Clark prefers to refer to it (verbal communication) as the Friday NIGHT Group. But it was the same informal group of friends on the West Rand who had a common interest in model railways, and met informally for a period spanning a number of years.

From Ron Caldecott (2009):

(This appears to be a document that was prepared for visitors to Ron's layout during the 2009 SA National Model Railways Convention)

"The Friday Evening Group (F.E.G.) consists of a small informal band of West Rand Railway enthusiasts who like to build, operate, shunt and modify all things pertaining to Model Railways. We meet on a Friday evening, taking it in turns to host the group.

"Each member of F.E.G. has his own designation..."

Louis vd Berg	"Induna"	He gives us all the work
Tony Attwell	"Loco Foreman"	He owns a Live Steamer
Brian Clark	"Operating Clerk"	He is a Real Operating Clerk
Ron Caldecott	"Yard Foreman"	He moans about operating sessions
Rainer Petzold	"Number Taker"	He counts the rivets, makes SAR rolling stock
Sarel van Zyl	"Shedman"	You should see how he hides his 4-train layout under the dining room table
Andries Germishuys	"Inspector"	He is busy building his own layout, and inspects everything
Jade Wilson	"Catering Manager"	Always hungry
Eddie Holland	"Plate Layer"	Always changing his track layout
Andre Dreyer	"Planner"	Busy planning his layout design
Mel Bruce	"Agriculturalist"	His layout has detailed gardens
Selwyn Smith	"Checker"	Check his layout. He is a dab hand at slapping colours on walls
Dave Flockhart	"Permanent Way Inspector"	He has a double layout in a huge shed

James Attwell	“Picanin promoted to Lampman”	The youngest of the group operates his father’s layout
Mike Richardson	No “designation”, Mike?	Operates his digital layout using a good card system

BLD: It seems that Mike was one of the later members to join the group, and had not yet been given a club nickname by Ron, by that stage. 😊



The late Louis van den Berg busy with his layout (photo credit: Brian Clark)

Back to Brian Clark:

“But some members were not able to meet every Friday night because of business or their work related issues. When Louis relinquished the position of co-ordinator in November 2008, Brian (*Clark*) was summarily appointed to take his place. Taking into account the nature of the group membership, the wide range of interest in the field of model railways, and those who have operational and scenicked layouts, it was decided to change the name of the informal association to “**G.L.O.W.**”

BLD: So G.L.O.W. came into being around the end of 2008.

Brian Clark: “**G.L.O.W.** is the acronym for the **Great Layouts Out West**; well, rather let us name them the larger model railroad layouts found in homes in the West Rand area or in the West of Gauteng. Other ‘clubs’ involved in this hobby had membership that was more concentrated in areas which were more central to Johannesburg, and East of Johannesburg. There were other interest groups to the North of Johannesburg with membership in Midrand, Centurion and Pretoria. On the West Rand, the members of

GLOW (alternatively Gauteng Layouts Out West) were a group of hobbyists who have built large home layouts.

“What constituted a “large” layout?

“Definition of a large model railway layout:

- a) a substantial length of main running line with one or more stations
- b) the layout is built around the wall of a single size garage
- c) the layout is larger than in ‘b’ hereof
- d) the layout occupies the space of one room in the house
- e) the layout is larger than in ‘d’ hereof, i.e. the layout is in a purpose-built room

“Members were now no longer required to host meetings on a Friday night, although the first and the third Friday nights of each month were marked as a meeting night at Ron’s and Louis’ layouts respectively. Notice of any intermediate meetings to be hosted was given at the fixed meetings or via e-mail or SMS, after agreement was given by the intending host.”



GLOW members at Ron Caldecott’s layout – July 2011

BLD: G.L.O.W. then existed as an entity until around 2010 or 2011, when interest, according to Brian Clark, seemed to be waning. By then, Mike Richardson was suggesting that the way to go in future was to build **modular** layouts, and to “go Digital”, which then led to the establishment of the **Gauteng Freemo Group** (GFG) under Mike’s leadership, in 2011.

When I (BrianD) first attended a GFG layout visit in 2015, and then subsequently joined GFG in 2017, I discovered that one of the classification / storage Yards routinely used by GFG in their layout was called the GLOW Yard. I only much later came to understand that the GLOW Yard modules had been built by GFG members who had been part of G.L.O.W., for inclusion in the modular GFG layouts that were set up periodically in school halls. (*Much more about GFG is to be provided in a future edition.*)



G.L.O.W. Yard during operations at the GFG layout set up in July 2015, at Panorama School



G.L.O.W. Yard (with turntable added) at Chamdor, in July 2020

G.L.O.W. as a group may no longer exist, but their memory, and a legacy of theirs, continues, at least in the form of the GLOW Yard, which had (after GFG became defunct) been incorporated into the layout of its successor, the WestRand Freemo Group (WFG), when it was located and in use at Chamdor. The Yard is currently (since the Chamdor layout was dismantled in June 2022) stored along with other unused portions of that very extensive layout, in a shed on Dave Flockhart's property in Krugersdorp, but is likely to soon be incorporated into the new "shed" layout that is being assembled there.

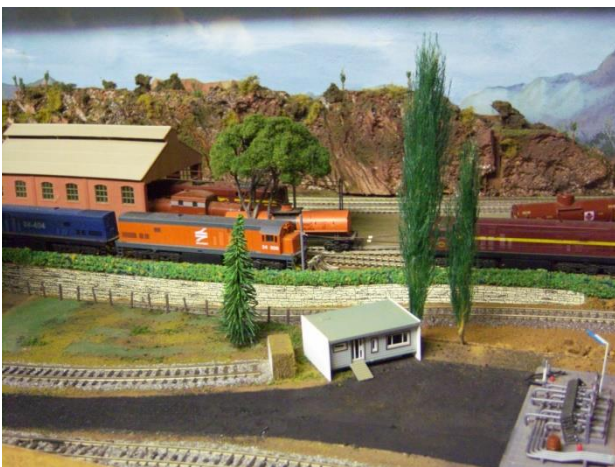
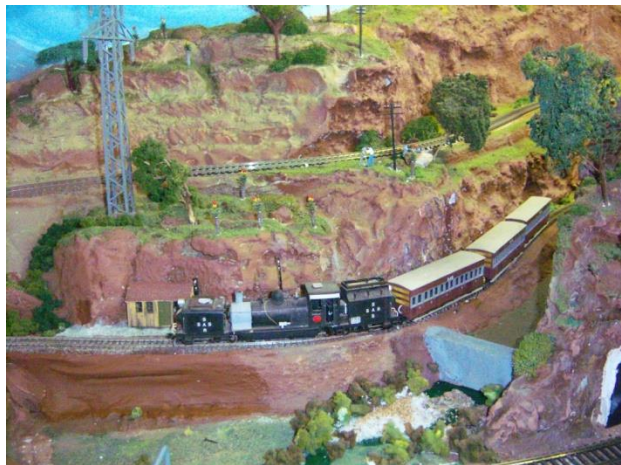
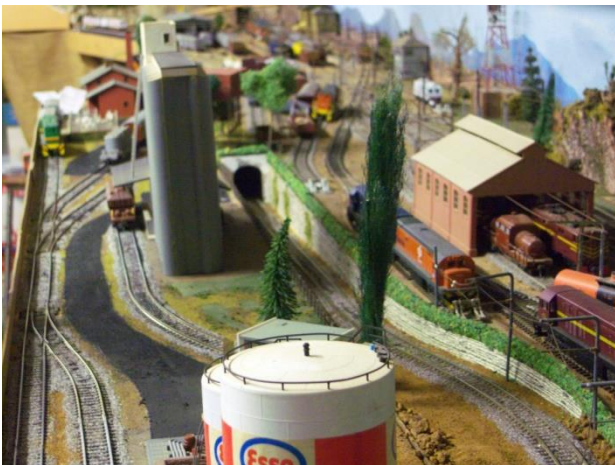
In future editions, I intend to take a closer look at some of the FNG/GLOW members' layouts, from around 2009 when they formed part of the 14th SA National Model Railway Convention 2009's Gauteng layout-visit programme, as well as covering other clubs and their layouts.

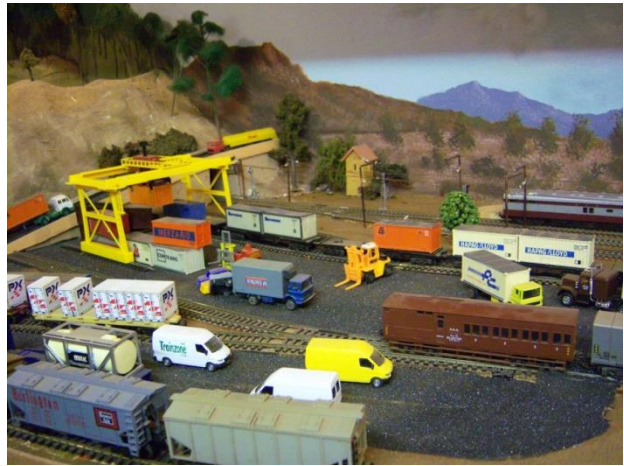
Here, however, are just a few photos from a selection of those old layouts, none of which are still in existence.....

Louis van den Berg's Layout

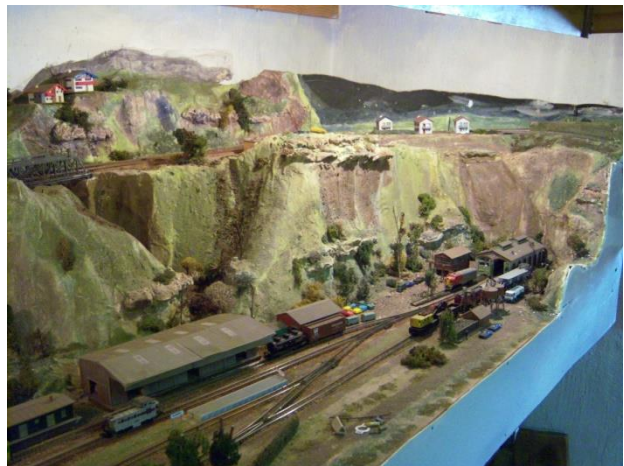
(Louis' SAR layout included both HO and narrow gauge elements)

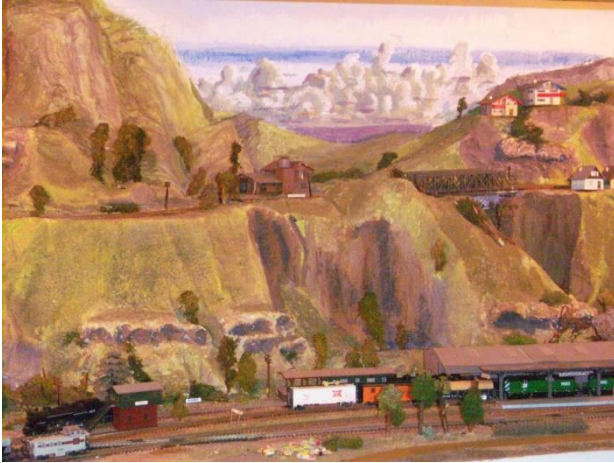
The photos below are courtesy of Brian Clark





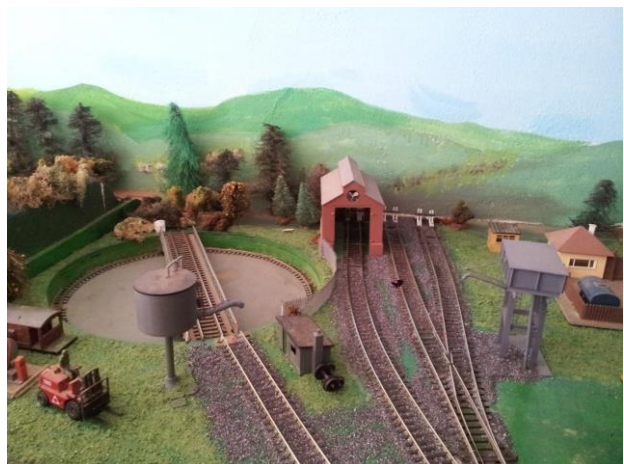
Brian Clark's BCMR layout in Breananda, Roodepoort





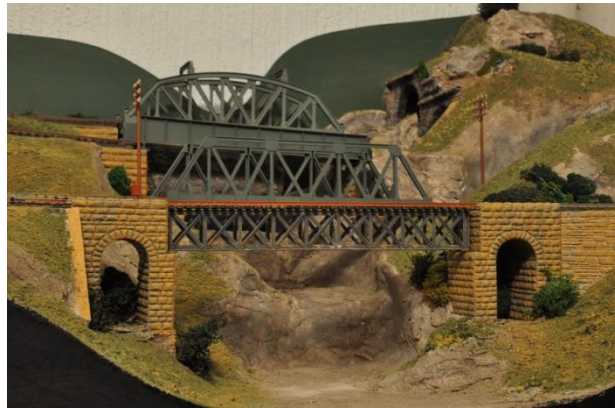
A small selection of photos of Brian Clark's GLOW layout (Photo credits: Brian Clark)

Ron Caldecott's Roodepoort Layout



Ron Caldecott's GLOW layout – East London Parcels siding (left) and Kei River (right), May 2010, photos again courtesy of Brian Clark

Mike Richardson's Randburg layout – 2009



A few pics of Mike's "TUVA" (from the Tugela-Vaal inter-catchment water transfer scheme, where Mike had worked) layout. The layout was still very much a work in progress at the time. Pics taken ahead of the 2009 Convention by Herman Steyn.

More detailed articles covering a few of these GLOW layouts will likely be included at a later stage.

Articles about a number of other clubs and layouts are currently in preparation by various club historians / layout owners / Convention organisers / hobby shop owners....

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).

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 Pelsler (Part 1)
- 2017 June Kobus Pelsler (Part 2)
- 2017 July Kobus Pelsler (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 Pelsler (*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 Pelsler
- 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:-

- Saturday 7th March Richie's Toy Fair, Mosaic Church Hall, Fairland
- Saturday 28th March PMT Swap Meet, John Vorster Tech. High School, Pretoria
- 27th March – 6th April **Club layout set up at Benoni Junior School (*)**
- Saturday 30th May **EMRIG Swap Meet (*)**
- Saturday 27th June PMT Swap Meet, John Vorster Tech. High School, Pretoria



- Saturday 1st August Transportation Fair, Wynand Marais Hall, Birchleigh (*)
- Weekend 29th - 30th August The Hobby Show, Heartfelt Arena, Pretoria (*?) (TBC)
- Weekend 24th - 25th October The Great Model Train Expo, Wynand Marais Hall, Birchleigh (*)

2026 Club Committee Contact details:-

The committee membership for 2026 remained unchanged... same composition and portfolios as for 2025... At the AGM, the 2025 Committee was re-elected *en bloc*, with just James Job offering to assist Kobus with Swap Meet arrangements.

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 Pelsler	swapmeets@emrig.co.za
Swap Meet Manager – Kobus Pelsler	swapmeets@emrig.co.za
(now assisted by James Job)	

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.***

THE CLUB'S BUDGET FOR 2026 WAS DISCUSSED AT THE AGM IN JANUARY. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE SUBSCRIPTION FEE FOR 2026 WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED, AT R240,00 FOR THE YEAR. A FAMILY MEMBERSHIP RATE DOES NO LONGER APPLY.

MEMBERS JOINING DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR WILL PAY ON A PRO-RATA



BASIS.

SO IT IS NOW TIME TO PAY YOUR SUBS (if you have not already done so)! 😊

PLEASE CAN WE ASK THAT EVERYONE PAY BY INTERNET TRANSFER IF AT ALL POSSIBLE? – CASH DEPOSITS END UP COSTING THE CLUB MONEY!!!