

# Wellington British Railway Modellers



## May 2026

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*A Scottish Exhibition Layout*  
*The Railway Clearing House*  
*Inspection Saloons*

*Feel free to copy this PDF to anyone you think might enjoy it. Earlier issues of The Totem can be downloaded from the club's website:*

<https://wbrm.org.nz/>

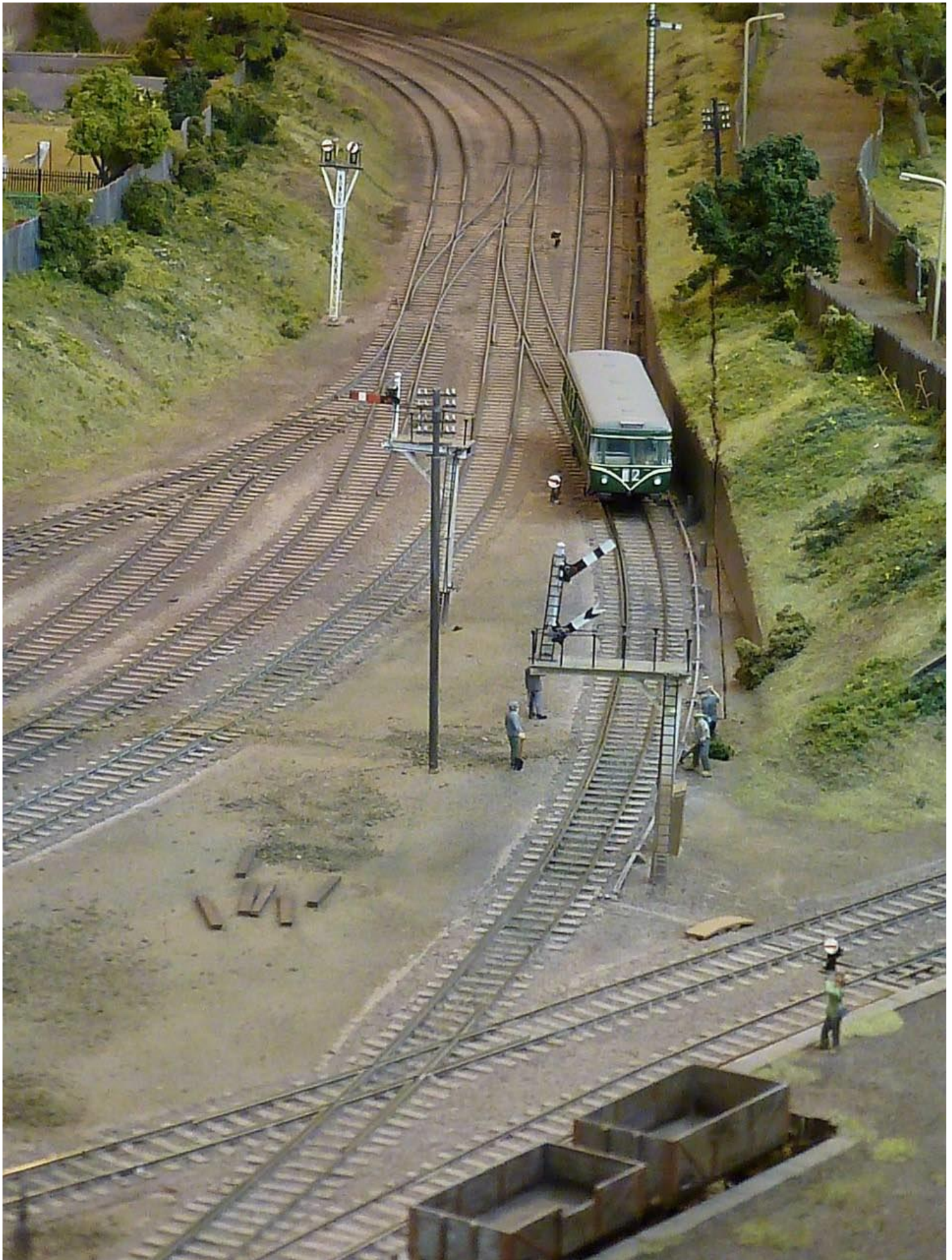
– Editor

Mike went to Glasgow for “Model Rail Scotland” which ran over three days at the end of March. He was lucky enough to be invited to operate the *Alloa* layout, which features on many YouTube videos of the event. It is an exact scale model in "OO" of the Scottish station and junction, which closed in the 1960's. Here are some of Mike's photographs of the layout.

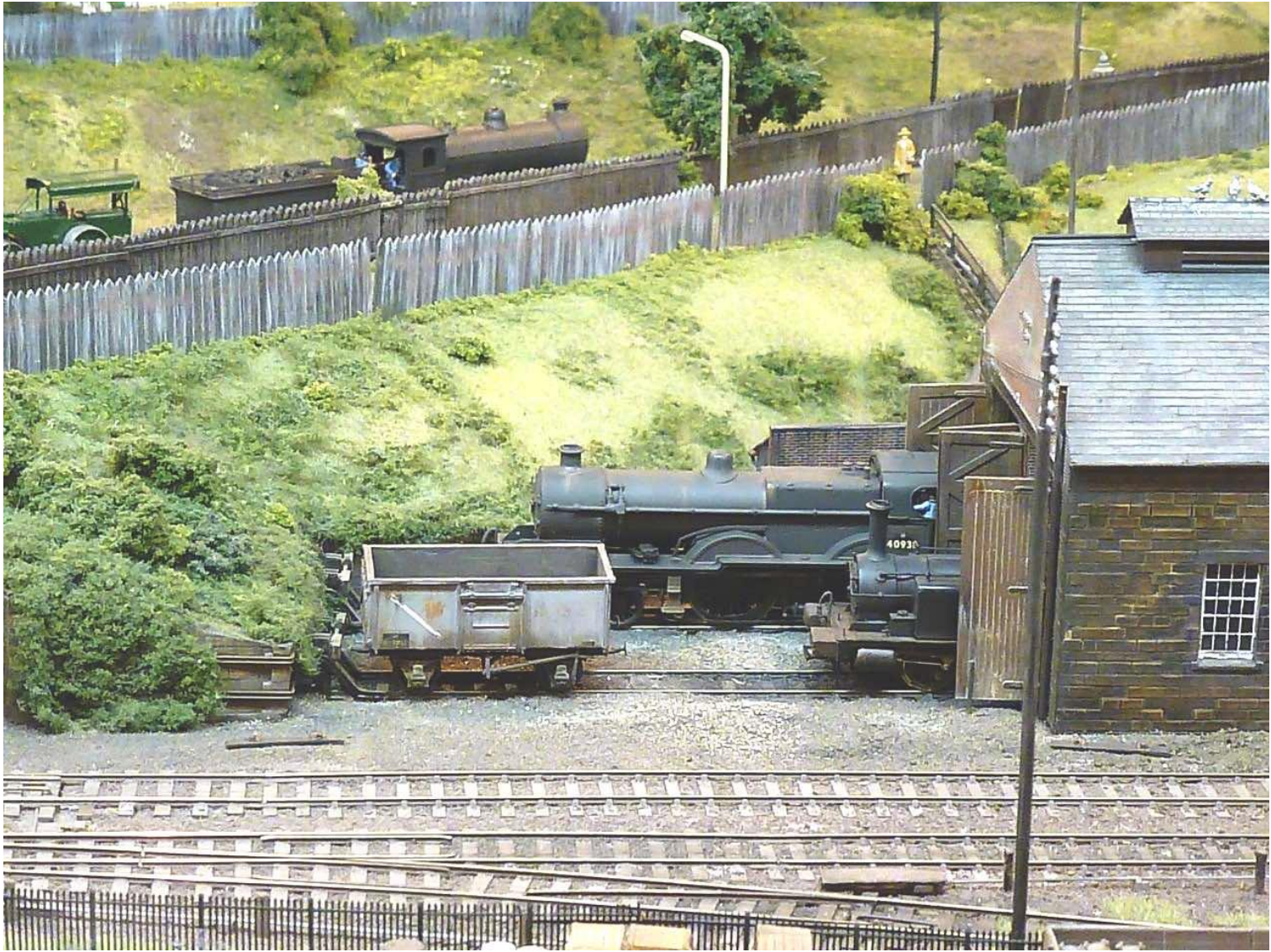












## **Progress Report on Wellington**

**Jacob Borich**

Since we are now just over halfway through the year between RailEx's, I thought it would be a good time to give everyone a quick update on how Wellington has been progressing since RailEx last year.

During RailEx 2025 we experienced a few issues, including some component failures which meant the points could not be operated during the show. We also had an ongoing issue with our Digitrax command station, the DCS200, which was regularly cutting track power throughout the exhibition.

After the show, we went through our spare components and were able to replace the faulty Digitrax equipment, getting the points fully operational again. We also swapped the DCS200 out for a spare DCS240 command station, and since making the change the track power issue has been resolved, and overall reliability has improved significantly. Another small improvement is that we are currently in the process of getting the lights in the coal shed on the siding connected to the DC bus, and they should hopefully be lit soon.

There are still a few smaller issues we are continuing to work through, but the layout remains operational and continues to run well. We are also continuing to make improvements and upgrades where possible to help improve reliability and make the layout easier for all members to operate and enjoy, along with scenic improvements and the overall maintenance of the layout.

Going forward, we aim to have the layout back at RailEx 2026, and you never know, more opportunities may arise to take the layout out and about as well. If members come across any issues while operating, please let myself, David L, or Martin know so we can investigate them.



*At March, in April:*

*In April 1958 this B17/6 61645 The Suffolk Regiment was photographed at its home shed, March, after coaling.*

*Photographer unknown.*

## Cudsfield Club Layout Progress



*John MacDonald has been busy constructing baseboards for Cudsfield, the new club 00, universal code 100 track, DC layout.*

## Modern Freight Trains

Source (for all four pictures): @RegalEagle12 on Twitter, 'X'.



Above: 70009 with loaded pulverised fuel ash hoppers. Train 6M06 Maltby Colliery – Hope Earles Sidings, 8 May 2026.

Left: 86185 works a rake of hoppers through Peterborough on 24 April 2026.



*66729 approaches Sleaford on 24 April 2026.*



*66567 approaches Peterborough, also on 24 April 2026.*

## **The Railway Clearing House**

## **Great Eastern Railway Society**

*[I had been intending to write a short article on Britain's railway accountant, the Railway Clearing House, but a recent social media post by the Great Eastern Railway Society has done the job for me. Almost all of what follows is the Society's work. – Editor]*

The Railway Clearing House (RCH) was one of the most quietly essential institutions in British railway history, a central “bank” that let dozens of competing companies settle their mutual debts without problems. Before the RCH, a passenger or consignment crossing from one company's line to another would often have to re-book (and pay again) at the junction, or companies would haggle individually over every fare or wagon. The RCH elegantly solved those inconveniences for 121 years.

The RCH began operations on 2 January 1842 in tiny rented offices directly opposite Euston Station. The London & Birmingham Railway owned the building and covered the initial costs. At first there were nine participating companies which included the London & Birmingham, the precursors of the Midland and the North Eastern, and the Manchester & Leeds. Its legal status was formalised by the Railway Clearing Act 1850, with later Acts in 1874 and 1897.

This was the core problem it solved: when a passenger bought a through ticket or goods were consigned across multiple railways, who got what share of the money? The RCH acted as a neutral clearing house, apportioning receipts fairly and enabling seamless “through booking” and invoicing.

### *How Charges Were Calculated and Paid*

Companies collected fares or freight charges at the originating station. Every month (or half-yearly for smaller amounts) they sent returns to the RCH. The House then divided the money. Mileage basis was the default: after deducting terminal charges, collection/delivery, and station handling, the balance was split according to the miles each company's line covered on the route. Special cases used fixed tolls, agreed percentages, or "common user" rules.

### *Passenger (Coaching Department) Traffic*

Tickets were physically sorted and checked at the RCH. For two-company journeys, the booking company credited the other's share and settled net. For routes involving three or more companies, the RCH handled the full division. Excursions and season tickets often used bulk "light traffic" funds or agreed formulas to avoid checking millions of individual tickets.

### *Goods, Minerals, Livestock, and Parcels (Merchandise Department)*

For this traffic there was similar mileage apportionment, but with extra layers: wagon movements were tracked at junctions, "journey payments" settled every six months for loaded wagons, while parcels used adhesive stamps, pooled monthly. Coal traffic was often settled directly between originating companies. From 1917 the "common user" scheme let any company use another's wagons, up to 12 tons, and balanced them every three days. Settlements were monthly for large sums, with half-yearly detailed accounts in June and December. Balances were paid directly between companies via the RCH.

The key difference between passenger and goods charges was that passenger work was largely ticket-driven requiring clerical sorting and

verification of returns. Goods traffic involved physical assets, wagon tracking, demurrage, common-user balancing, packaging rules, and more variable terminal charges. Parcels had their own pooled system with the Post Office.

### *Funding The RCH*

The RCH was funded by the participating railway companies themselves. The formula, agreed at the first meeting in April 1842, was simple and fair. There was a fixed charge per station served. This was originally £5, reduced in 1844 to £2 for stations that were not termini. The balance of running costs were apportioned strictly according to each company's share of the work handled by the Railway Clearing House. This meant that bigger companies paid more, but everyone contributed proportionately to the benefit they received.

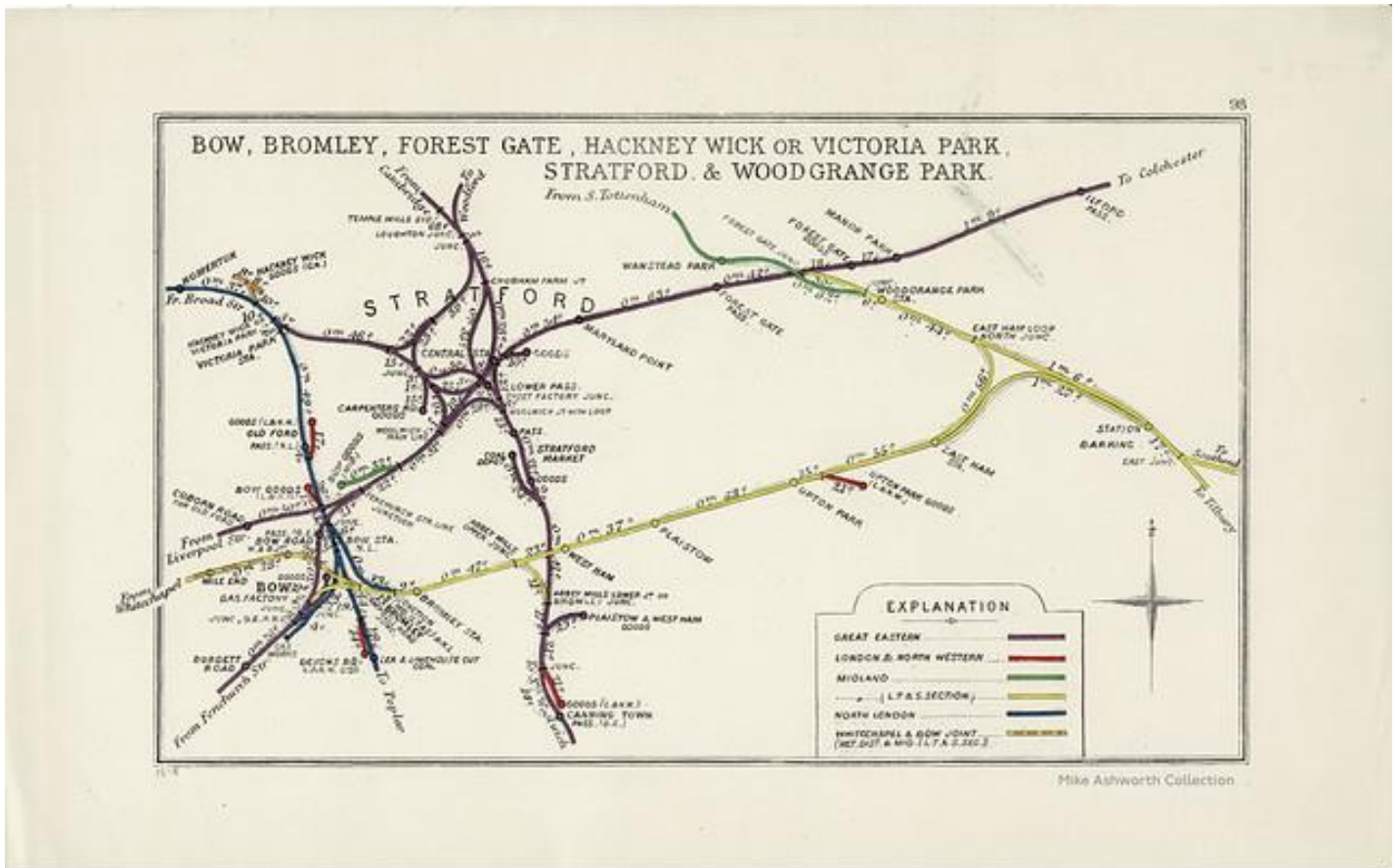
### *Staffing*

In 1842 there were just four clerks under the Secretary, Kenneth Morison. RCH staff reached a peak of 3200 staff in 1921, which was a huge clerical operation sorting tickets, checking wagon returns, and running hundreds of inter-company conferences each month. After the 1923 grouping, as well as after each world war, the numbers of staff fell as the work simplified. By 1959 the number of staff was down to 375, and in 1963 all remaining staff were transferred to British Railway Board departments.

### *The 1923 Grouping*

The Railways Act 1921 merged most railway companies into the "Big Four" and a handful of independents. Membership of the RCH shrank dramatically, making settlements far easier. The core work – revenue apportionment, standard wagon design ("RCH wagons"), packaging rules,

maps, and junction diagrams – remained unchanged. The RCH remained independent and continued to produce its Railway Junction Diagrams and station handbooks.



An example of the Railway Clearing House Junction Diagrams.

## Offices

The RCH headquarters were always in London. From early 1849 onwards the RCH was housed in purpose-built accommodation in Seymour Street (renamed Eversholt Street in 1938), Euston Square, where it remained for the rest of its existence. It even had (from 1863) its own pneumatic tube link to the Post Office for rapid document transfer.

## *Nationalisation*

Under the Transport Act 1947, ownership of the railways passed to British Transport Commission (BTC) on 1 January 1948. During both world wars, receipts had already been pooled and divided on pre-war percentages, so the financial role of the RCH had already shrunk. In 1954 most powers, properties and liabilities of the RCH were transferred to the BTC by the Railway Clearing House Scheme Order 1954. On 8 April 1955 the Railway Clearing House was formally dissolved as a separate corporate body. From 1955 to 1963 the name survived as a BTC/BR department handling maps, station handbooks, rolling stock registration, and packaging certification. Final closure came on 31 March 1963 when surviving duties and all staff transferred to the British Railways Board (mainly to the departments of the Chief Commercial Officer and of the Chief Accountant).

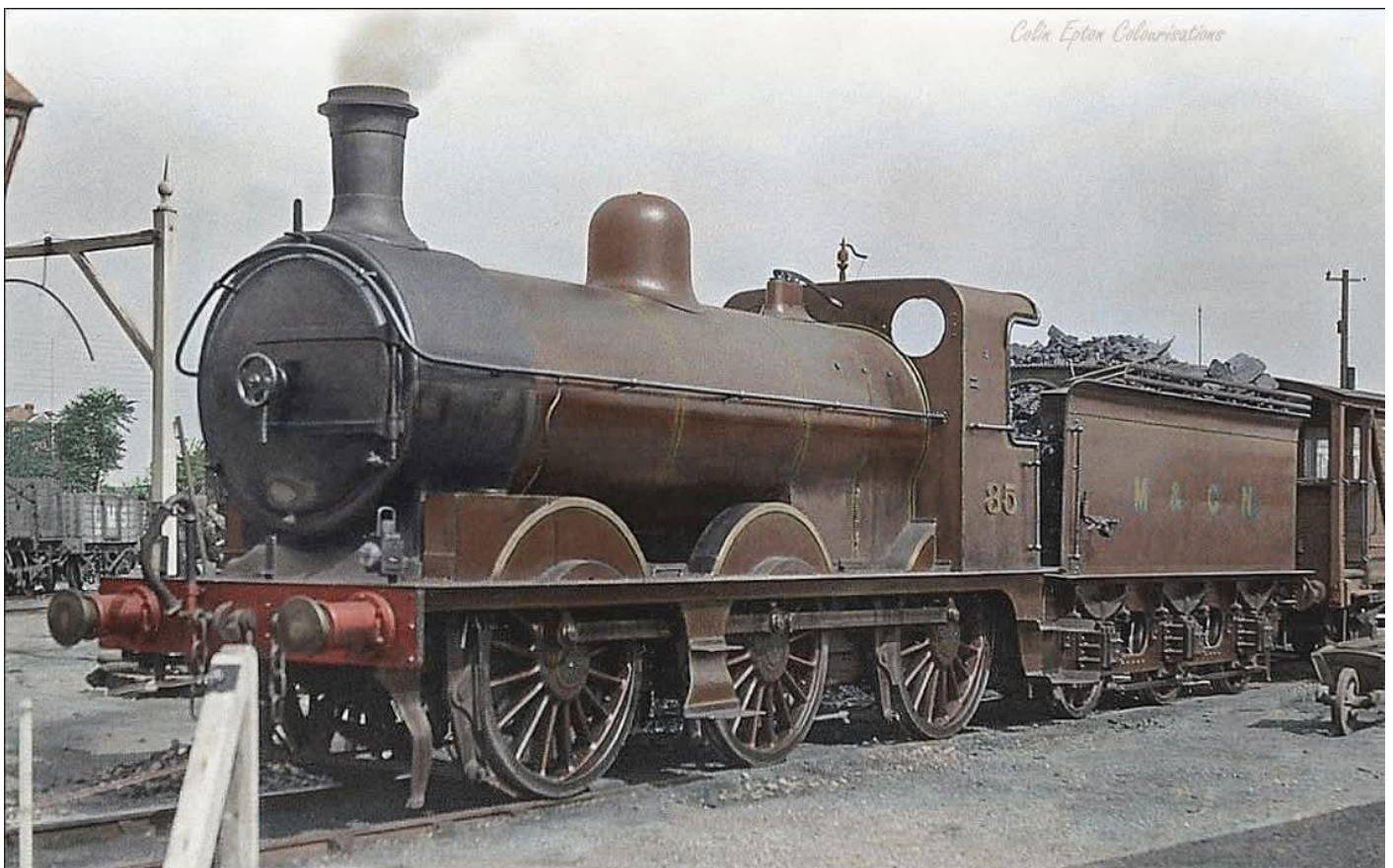


*The Railway Clearing House offices, 1849 – 1963.*

*[The value of the Railway Clearing House to both railway companies and railway users, saving time and trouble for both parties, is demonstrated by the contrast with the canal companies, who never attempted to establish a comparable organisation. This was in spite of the fact that the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1888 explicitly authorised them to do so. The complexities and inconveniences of doing business with the canals hastened their decline.*

*The sophistication of the Railway Clearing House system reminds railway enthusiasts that railways are complex technical and commercial systems which exist in a complex geographical, legal, economic, social, and political environment. To take just one example, railway locomotives need to be reliable, rugged, and easy and economic to operate and maintain – factors often ignored by the hagiographic prattle indulged in by the devotees of Saint George Jackson Churchward and Saint Nigel Gresley.*

*– Editor]*



*Ivatt Midland and Great Northern class DA No. 85 at Sutton Bridge in 1928. The photographer is unknown. Colourised in the dark brown M&GN livery by Colin Epton.*

## Inspection Saloons



*Above: BR Civil Engineers Inspection Saloon DM 395279. Converted in 1958 by BR from LMS Kitchen Car M30088M built 1936 by Gloucester RCW. Withdrawn 1988.*

*The source for both pictures is @SalopianLyne on Twitter 'X'.*

*Below: York Motive Power Dept Inspection Coach DE320765 at Scarborough, May 1965. Originally Corridor Third Coach E12033E, built York 1925. Converted 1959.*



## A Photographic Curiosity

Jonathan Lermit



*Photograph (about 1963) by Jonathan Lermit. Colouriser unknown.*

Well, at least it is a *British-built* locomotive. My brother Jonathan was very pleased with the original black and white photograph, taken with his very first 35mm camera, an Agfa with an f/2.8 45mm lens. The print was subsequently colourised by a fellow member of the NZ Railway & Locomotive Society. In the days before digital photography, this was achieved with special tinted inks and a brush.

## On The Workbench

Julian Lermit

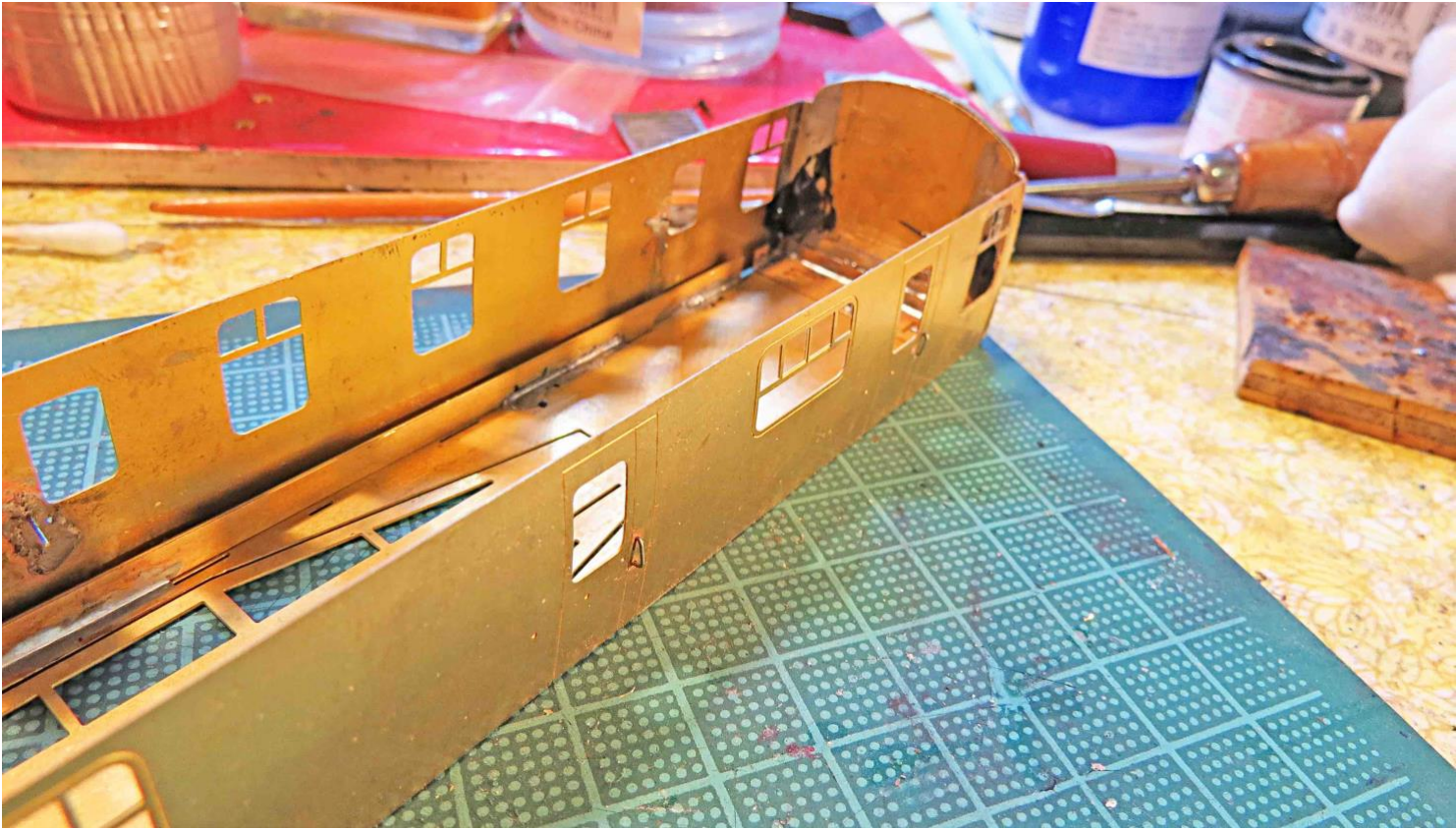
Much exasperation as I resumed construction of the Comet 4mm kit of a BR kitchen car. See this month's "Point to Ponder".

The task at hand was to join the etched brass coach sides to the carriage ends formed, in accordance with Comet's instructions, from a glued sandwich of etched brass and whitemetal casting. I spent a fruitless two hours trying to solder these parts together. Here's the difficulty; the etched brass sides are curved and the cast ends have details such as steps. So neither part is *flat*, and thus cannot be clamped down on a flat surface. I was attempting to hold two parts together at right-angles, the sides outside the ends, with one hand while simultaneously soldering the parts together with the other. More skilled modellers would no doubt find this a doddle, but I gave up and settled for gluing the parts together with epoxy ( – *the shame of it*, as Edward would say). At least by using epoxy it was possible to bring two hands to bear on the task. When the first epoxy had set, it was reinforced with a stronger epoxy which has powdered metal in it – the black stuff in the following photographs. As you can see, there is some surplus glue to be removed.

The next step is fitting the roof, which is aluminium, which implies more gluing, since soldering aluminium is not for amateurs.



*Successful trial fitting of the coach body on to the partially assembled floor.*



*This would make a nice layout cameo.*

*Unknown photographer.*

## **Traders in Secondhand Model Railway Equipment**

These traders in model railways are even more important now that the number of model shops is dwindling. If you are aware of other traders who handle models of British railways, please let the editor know.

### **MARCUS LECKY**

<mailto:marcuslecky47@gmail.com>

### **TRAINMANIA©**

022 605 5415

<mailto:lionel@trainmania.co.nz>

<http://www.trainmania.co.nz/>

### **TONY DRAGICEVIC**

027 872 3630

<mailto:tony.dragicevic@gmail.com>

### **JOHN HESLIN**

**Invercargill**

021 188 9049

<mailto:tootroom@gmail.co>

## Point to Ponder

“Model Railroading is the progression from one exasperation to another.”

– U.S. modeller Bill Schopp

## Next Totem

The June 2026 edition of *The Totem* will be published on 19<sup>th</sup> June. If there is anything you would like to contribute contact the editor, Julian Lermitt, email:

<mailto:kiwiscrooge@xtra.co.nz>

*(If you are sending material which you did not create, such as, for example, a photograph which was taken by someone else, please indicate the source. The Totem is available to the world wide web via the club website and the intellectual property of others must be respected.)*

## Club Meetings

The Wellington British Railway Modellers' Club meets on the third Sunday of each month at the club premises on Platform 2, Waterloo Station, Lower Hutt. Pizzas for lunch at 1pm, with any formal proceedings at 2pm. Many members arrive earlier. There is also a regular meeting on the first Wednesday of the month, beginning mid-morning; bring lunch and a project to work on. Members have access to the clubroom at all times and most of the club activities take place outside of formal meetings.

## Events of Interest

### June 2026

13-14 Hastings Model Railway Club Show, Cheval Rooms, Hastings Racecourse, Hastings. *Note new Venue.*

## July 2026

- 4 – 5 Ashburton Model Train Show, Tinwald War Memorial Hall, 10 Graham Street, Tinwald, Ashburton.
- 4 – 5 RailX 2026 Model Railway and Trade Show, Palmerston North. Barber Hall, Waldegrave Street, Palmerston North.
- 11 – 12 Hobby Expo, Taupo Events Centre, 26 AC Baths Avenue, Taupo.

*The above events are those which in the editor's judgement will go ahead, in the absence of interruptions outside the control of the organisers.*

*Events of Interest is compiled from a number of sources, the principal ones being the What's On page of the New Zealand Model Railway Guild website: <http://nzmrng.org.nz> and the Model Train Shows website <http://trainshows.co.nz/>. Information is published in good faith but no responsibility can be accepted. Always check with organisers before travelling long distances.*

## Club Officers

Chair: Roger Simmons email <mailto:rogersimmonsnz@gmail.com>

Deputy Chair: Jacob Borich email <mailto:jacob.borich@gmail.com>

Treasurer: John MacDonald email <mailto:treasurerwbrm@gmail.com>

Secretary: Martin Curwen email <mailto:secretarywbrm@gmail.com>



MODEL RAILWAY  
CLUB

PRESENTS THE

*miniature* **MODEL  
TRAIN SHOW**

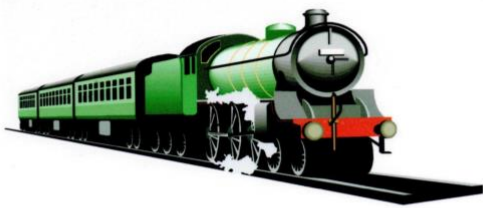
**13-14 JUNE** 10am till 4pm

CHEVAL ROOM | HASTINGS RACECOURSE

**BRING THE FAMILY  
FUN FOR EVERYONE!**

**TICKETS: ADULTS - \$10 | CHILDREN u12 - \$5 | FAMILY 2 adults/2 children - \$25**

# Ashburton MODEL TRAIN SHOW



Tinwald Memorial Hall

10 Graham Street, Tinwald

**ASHBURTON**

**4 & 5 JULY 2026**

Hours 10:00am to 4:00pm

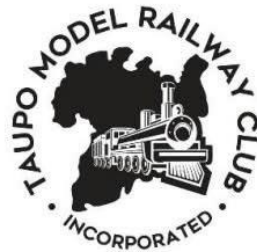
Admission Adults \$10 Children \$3

Family (2Adults 2 Children) \$20

Food Available

EFTPOS Available

[www.ashburtontrainshow.co.nz](http://www.ashburtontrainshow.co.nz)



# HOBBY EXPO

Taupo Events Centre, 26 AC Baths Avenue, Taupo, Lake Taupo

An Exhibition of crafts and models by various clubs, both local and from around the North Island.

Showcasing modelling skills including:  
model railways, model cars/trucks and military vehicles.  
r/c cars, trucks & boats. wood working and arts & crafts.

Vintage cars and The Ulysses Motor cycle club.

Try your skills on the TDC rock wall, slot car racing, drive a train, drive a boat plus a bouncy castle and model-making for the kids.

**When:** Saturday 11 July 2026, 10:00am - 4:00pm

Sunday 12 July 2026, 10:00am – 3:00pm

**Where:** Taupo Events Centre, 26 AC Baths Avenue, Taupo

All Ages

**Ticket Information:**

Family Special \$30 (includes 1 raffle ticket)

Adults \$10 • Kids \$5

Now in our  
31<sup>st</sup> Year!

