

N° 38: January 2016

Wrexham Area Group

Bryn Y Mor Retired

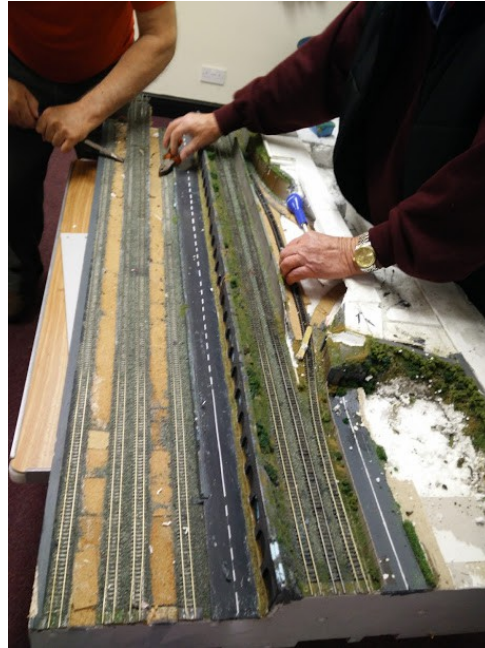
In July 2015 the Club Layout was taken to the N Gauge AGM at Conwy. Kevin had built two new electrical modules to allow all the points in the fiddle yard to be operated with one throw of the switch. However, when we tried it out there was a belch of smoke and we had to revert to hand operating all points.

There were 4 operators, which got reduced to 3 during the AGM, and the day was a hard fought one with many issues with the layout including:

- * The Warped boards prevented track from aligning properly
- * The high level line not fully working with an end to end shuttle the only option
- * Damaged scenery from transportation which meant we needed to do several repairs before the show
- * All points had to be operated manually

The following Monday a discussion was held about the condition of Bryn Y Mor and the large amount of remedial work required to get the layout into a competent operational state. It was reluctantly agreed the work required was too much and Bryn Y Mor should be retired.

Over 5 weeks the layout was dismantled. All the scenery was saved including houses, vehicles and figures. These can be used by any club member on the new layout. The wooden frame was not salvageable and was sent to the council for recycling.



Club Officials

Chairman: Pete Jones

Treasurer: Barry Parker-Twist

Secretary: Ian Coe

Exhibitions

None at present

New Modular Layout

Discussions were held about what we required from a new Club Layout and several criteria were established:

- The layout should be sectional for easy transportation.
- 1 board should be able to fit into the rear of a standard car.
- Members should have their own board so they can be worked upon at the club or at home. Due to storage issues at the club members would store their module at home.
- The wiring should be uniform throughout all baseboards
- It must be easy to assemble and take down quickly for club nights or for exhibitions.
- The modules must be interchangeable so that 2 or 4 members could travel to an exhibition with their own baseboards.

After the completion of this criteria enquiries were made with several companies that could build baseboards so we could get a price comparison and to see if it was financially viable. It soon became apparent this was going to be an expensive option considering we would need 10 to 12 baseboards plus legs. Therefore we would purchase the wood and construct the baseboards ourselves.

We agreed the size of a module would be 4 feet in length with a width of 2' 6" which would allow curves with a minimum of 11" radius.

The next step was to decide if we wanted an end to end layout or a circular layout. As many of the club members helped to exhibit the Chester layout "Crag Mill" which is a circular layout it was decided for variety to build an end to end layout.

The first step was to build accurate baseboard modules that would be identical to each other. Barry built a jig at home so he could build the frame accurately and duplicate them exactly.

At the same time we were discussing options for the legs and trestle table legs were suggested. Ian who is also a member of the North Wales Group said they had recently bought some Decorators Trestle's that fitted the bill.

He brought them to the next meeting and all agreed for the price (about £27 a pair) they would be ideal. We purchased several pairs from club funds.



Barry brought the completed frames in and we were all happy with the construction. Grooves were cut into the frame allowing the frame to sit securely onto the trestle legs.



Whilst the frames were being constructed we agreed to have two lines near the front of the board (an up and a down track). Individuals could have points off the top track on their own board for use at home, however, on exhibitions it would be a straight through track. The first track was 4 inches from the front of the board to allow for scenery in front of the rails.

Malcolm agreed to do all the electrical wiring for the modules before we put the baseboards tops on. He purchased some car automotive connectors to fit onto the wiring with a male plug at one end of the board and a female at the other end. This way it would only be possible to wire the boards together one way and negating the chances of mistakes when connecting boards together.

We also decided to wire the track at each end of each board so that we could guarantee electrical supply and if one connection failed the board

would have a backup power supply at the other end.



Rowland had an aluminium template made at his works so that we could place on the end of the boards and drill the holes for the lugs and bolts to fix the modules together.



It took several weeks to get this all completed but there was a hive of activity every Monday as different groups were completing different tasks on the various boards.

We were determined to get this stage right so as to reduce problems down the line (which is what happened with Bryn Y Mor with the boards warping).