

N-Trak UK

Convention Special 2015

Convention 2015 - Reflections

Yes, I know it's not very long since the last Newsletter, but I wanted to get something out quickly that showed the 'action' from this year's Convention in Bournemouth before I forgot all about it myself! That doesn't mean there wasn't anything going on - on the contrary, there was so much that I might forget something if I don't write this soon. This will mainly be a photographic report (all pictures by myself unless otherwise credited).

The Convention took its usual form with modular layouts from Poole and The Black Diamonds occupying most of the Granville Suite at The Trouville Hotel, while the adjoining Granville Lounge was filled with Neal Carnaby's copiously stocked trade stand, the bring and buy tables, the Convention desk and, most importantly, the tea and coffee stall! Chris White had brought one of his miniature layouts along and that was set up and operational in the Granville Suite as well.

It was good to meet up with so many old and new friends including the sizeable contingent from The Netherlands. We all missed Barry Peacock, of course, and it was noted, with regret, that Allan Dobson had been taken ill shortly before the Convention and he and Sylvia were therefore unable to attend. Everyone

signed a card for Allan and I've since received this note from him by Email :-

"Hi Ralph

In your next N Trak Newsletter please will you thank all the folks at the Convention for the lovely card and all their best wishes. Both Sylvia and I were very disappointed not being able to attend; still you have two paid up members for next year.

I am happy to say that I am now feeling fine and everything has returned to normal. Well as much as usual.

Many Thanks.....Allan"

Competitions

On the day we decided not to run the competitions this year as there were only entries from one person, so they became an informal 'show and tell' display. We'll have to think about the whole subject of competitions before next year. Do you want them or not? Please let me have your views and I'll try and start a debate in the Newsletter!

The Report

Okay – that's enough wittering by me let's get on with the pictures! I'll apologise now for the quality of some of them but without huge arrays of

lights, layout photography in a crowded room isn't the best choice.

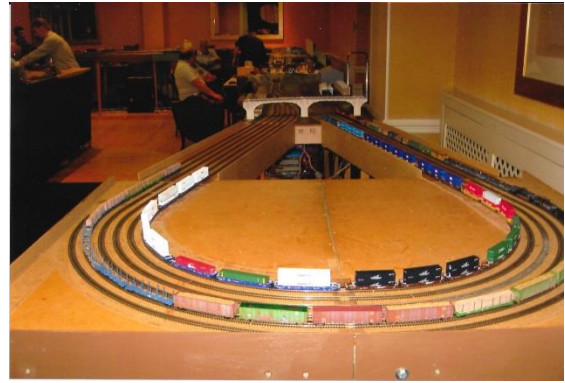
Layouts



The Billstown module on The Black Diamonds modular layout. A hugely detailed module that the pictures don't do justice to.

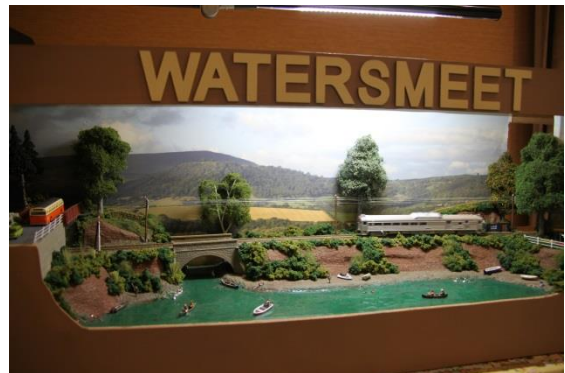


The Black Diamonds may run 104 car ore trains, but they don't ignore the aviation sector. Al's Air and Crop Services features on one of their modules.



(Russ Cook)

One of the end loops of The Black Diamonds layout. It gives you an impression of the length of train that they can run.



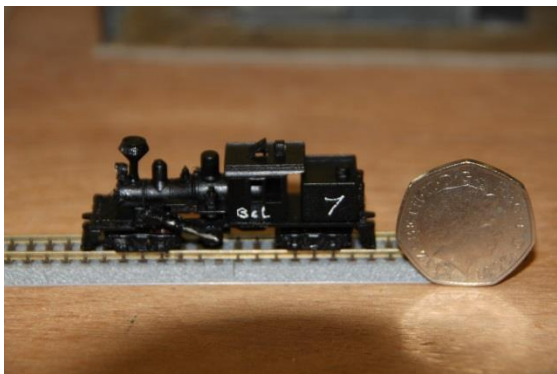
Chris White brought along his diminutive Watersmeet layout. It was built as a British 'N Gauge' layout, but with appropriate road vehicles and a single RDC shuttling to and fro, it could just as easily be a corner of Vermont. It shows how, by keeping it small, one can concentrate on working up the level of detail.



Poole brought along their familiar tail-chaser layout, providing plenty of running space for both DC and DCC operators.

Models

There were a number of individual models on display as shown below.



A neat 3D printed model of a 25ton Climax for Nn3, shown with a 50p piece for comparison. I claimed all weekend that it was digital, after all you could push it along with one finger!



A Canadian National SD50F built from a Kaslo Shops resin kit on an Atlas chassis.



Dakra's Dry Goods was built from a RS Laserkit wood kit and has a fully detailed interior (not part of the kit though some of the walls are included). It was good to see that Neal had stocks of these useful and reasonably priced kits.



This shows the interior. The removable roof is a feature of the kit.



The Majestic Theatre is a Branch Line Trains LaserArt kit with added details.



This charming little forest cabin was built from a New Rail Models wood kit, but it was the trees which caused the most comments. These are from The Model Tree Shop range and have a light, airy appearance typical of mature Pines.



Make it dirty! This was a simple plastic kit by Tomix. It looked really bland until it got attacked by washes intended for use by military modellers – a dark

wash on light parts, a light wash on dark parts – end result a much more interesting looking structure – time: about twenty minutes!



Okay, I confess, I didn't take this picture till I got home from the Convention, but these little gems from Rapido Trains stole the show. For those wondering it's an MLW GMD-1; a super-lightweight loco built for the lightly-laid prairie branch lines of Canada. I think at one time we had nearly as many of these running on the Poole layout as MLW actually built. They appeared in Green, 'Sergeant Stripes', 'Wet Noodle' and Northern Alberta schemes, ran beautifully and the sound equipped versions made a nice noise too.

People

Whilst we talk a lot about the models, it's really the people that make a convention and I don't think it would be wrong of me to start by thanking Neil Lancaster and his helpers from the Poole group for organising and managing the convention. Thanks Neil!

Neil has told me that the Convention next year will be at The Trouville again over the weekend of Friday 4th March to Sunday 6th March 2016. And the price? Would you believe, exactly the same as this year at £109 per person for the weekend. Neil will be sending out booking forms later in the year but

please – save Neil from a stress attack – if you want to come, get your booking form back as quickly as possible so that we can guarantee the booking without any doubts.

Now some pictures of the people at the Convention. I'm indebted to Russ Cook for sending me some excellent material to use here. Thanks Russ.



(Russ Cook)



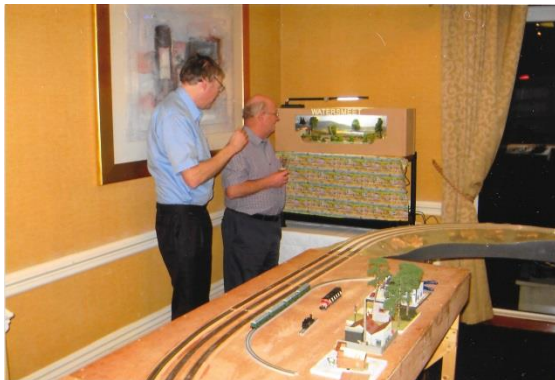
(Russ Cook)

Neil occupying a familiar location (near the coffee). From left: Neal Carnaby, Steve Quick, Steve Bunce, Neil Lancaster, Bill Hamilton-Turner, Rex Nichamin.



(Russ Cook)

Members of the group from The Netherlands take over the Poole N Track layout (nearly!).



(Russ Cook)

Chris White shows Bill Hamilton-Turner his latest creation, Watersmeet.



Neal and Norman have a quiet time on their trade stand.



still need material from you, the members.

Till next time Ralph

Operations in full swing in the Granville Suite.



Russ Cook, Chris White and Graham Jewiss discuss running the DC side of the Poole layout – one driver and two advisors.



A crowded Granville Lounge with Neil and Bernie studying something in the hotel passageway!

That's all for now folks. If you have any more material on the Convention, please send it to me. I plan to try and keep up publishing four newsletters a year with the next one in June. But I