

NORTHAMPTON & DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

Between the Lines



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From the Editors Desk

Summer is here; pity we haven't summer weather to go with the season.

We have some events coming up soon, namely the St Matthews Church Summer Fete in early July and then our own exhibition later the same month.

As well as future events, the club has been active at some past shows such as the model weekend at the Northampton & Lamport Railway. We have a report on this in the newsletter.

There are two contributions in this newsletter from Craig and Andy about their recent respective travels a far—both to differing parts of the southern hemisphere.

Colin

Club Torque

Road Exhibition 2024

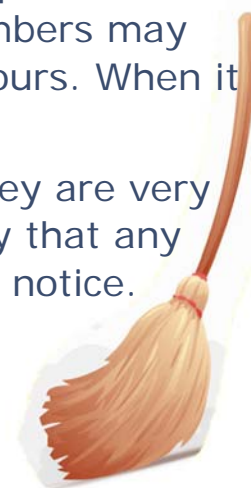
Our Roade exhibition will take place on Saturday 20th July 2024. The club still has a large quantity of advertising flyers for distribution. We would be grateful if members can take a supply with them and place them for the public to take one.

Club Shed / Locker

Our Club shed is in need of a clear out/tidy up and a coat(s) of wood preservative applying to its outside. Unfortunately we didn't get round to giving it any Ronseal last year, so it must get a coat or two this.

In addition to the shed tidy up there is the plastic locker opposite, which also needs looking at. Some of our newer members may not even realise that the plastic locker is also ours. When it comes to hoarding the club is an expert.

Its difficult to set a date to do these jobs as they are very much dependant on the weather. Its very likely that any request to help with these jobs will be at short notice.



Club Night Refreshments

The club would like to thank Lynn for the various items of homemade goodies that she brings in on a regular basis for us to all indulge in. You can't beat home made cooking.

Thank You Lynn



Chairman's Ramblings

Dear All,

As I sit here typing away at the computer it is not certain that summer is definitely on its way. However, let us hope it will soon be the time for sitting out in the sun with great company, a nice drink in hand, and in my case, possibly hoping to get my garden layout to actually run properly.

We are currently preparing for our show in July, which is earlier than last year, and we hope we can even better the good numbers that attended last year, as we now have more layouts and traders.



This is because this year we now have a large gazebo attached to increase the available floor space.

Please can I ask that all members support the show, and also please if you are attending do try to make the visitors as welcome as you can, as in the past at other shows I have seen a sad, us and them mentality, which is not helpful in promoting our hobby.

Our friends at the Daventry Model Railway club have recently moved into a new home and they seem to be getting on well there. We visited them recently at their open day, and we are now keeping in contact to see if they can help us find somewhere where we do not have to put everything away at the end of the evening.

As you know I recently had an offer of a new venue for the club from someone that appeared genuine but he turned out to be a liar and a complete waste of my time, and I still have no idea why he did this.

As you know we have just displayed the exhibition layout at the Northampton and Lamport railway which was a little interesting as the floor was uneven and caused the stock to tend to derail and sometimes even fall off while negotiating the track. It was even likened to the Lickey incline. Similar to when in Daventry the potholes were causing problems, so locals put up signs that twinned it with the Grand Canyon.

Unfortunately, I missed the Saturday as it was my 50th anniversary, but managed to attend on the Sunday, and was treated to a footplate ride on a Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0 locomotive as a birthday treat which made my day. Even though at times the ride was like a bouncy castle, I really enjoyed it.

That's enough about me, the important matter is that we are currently having discussions with our landlord that may affect the future of the club. We will keep you posted on the outcome and hope we are successful in the ongoing discussions. Please watch this space.

The club seems to be busy on a Thursday evening, but we could always do with more members. Plenty of work going on presently on Castle Station layout of course for the show and the new N gauge seems to be coming on nicely as well, thanks to Bill and Rays efforts.

The junior layout seems to have found a temporary new home in the foyer while work goes on with Castle Station, and recently a very nice lady also used us as guinea pigs for some lovely cakes she will be making, that will be available at the show. Thank you Lynn.

Please support us at these shows if you can.

All the best to you all and I hope this Summer will be a good one.

Les Pace

Chairman NDMRC

Club Web Site

The upkeep of the Club's web site has now been passed over to me. Our webmaster was Bridget from Delepre Design & Technology. Sadly Bridget passed away in September 2023, and it was then thought best by Alan (Bridget's husband) that we take it over.

This means that I am in the process of learning WordPress, which is the web site production software that the site was written in. When it comes to writing web sites, I am old school— I write the HTML, CSS and JavaScript code etc in a text editor, then publish it. When I started, the only browser was Netscape and the text editor was Notepad.

Moving on, some amendments have been made to the web site. I've got the contact form up and running again which had stopped being displayed for some reason. I shall now, over time, work through the site and remove old pages that are no longer relevant/out dated.

Alan has now registered our club domain name with the club and also moved the hosting login to us as well. The next step will be to create some contingency in case something happens to me (it will eventually).

If any member feels that our web site should contain any additional content to what it already does, then let me know and we'll see what can be done.

Colin



The Indian Pacific – Part 1

by Craig Dawkins

As part of our recent holiday myself and my wife were lucky enough to travel on the Indian Pacific train from Perth Australia to Sydney. Our interest was started by seeing it on a Michael Portillo travel show. Colin thought you might be interested to see how we got on.

The first thing that hits you about the journey is just the sheer scale of it all. The total trip is 4,352KM or 2,704 miles, that is the equivalent of taking a train from London to the North Pole !! It takes 4 days and 3 nights to complete with a few stops on the way. The first connection between the two cities was not completed until 1917, but due to varying gauges to complete the trip would mean changing trains 5 times. It was not until 1970 that the first continuous train journey on the Indian Pacific was undertaken.



We boarded the train at Perth East station, and it's huge. The train is over half a mile long and consists of up to 39 coaches. And believe it or not apart from the last leg from Adelaide to Sydney it is hauled by just one locomotive, more on that later. We boarded towards the middle of the train and as you can see from the photo we couldn't see the end. Mind you that is nothing compared to the size of the freight trains, which can be 2 or 3 KM long. One passed us and we counted 114 containers on it.

Heading out of Perth we settled into our private carriage which was very nice, giving us views either side of the train. We had our own bathroom, and the sofa would convert into a double bed. We also soon found the lounge, and the free champagne.



The first stop on the first evening was at Kalgoorlie which is a gold mining town. It still operates today and has a super pit measuring 3.5KM across, and which can be seen from space. Unfortunately it was dark when we visited so I don't have any pictures that can really show you the scale of the operation, but it was huge !!

On the second day we crossed the Nullarbor, a barren red desert as far as the eye could see. It contains the longest single straight piece of track in the world. At some 297 miles long it is the same as having a straight track from London to just north of Newcastle. Must be really boring to be the driver on that stretch.

To break up the day we stopped at Cook. Originally there were many settlements along the route to service the trains and their crews. Cook was one of the bigger ones and built in 1917 to support the newly created Trans Australian Railway. At one stage it was home to more than 200 people, with a school, general store and swimming pool. Today there is no need for the same level of support for the trains, so there are only 2 people who live there and a few train crews resting between shifts. Much of the town is therefore an abandoned ghost town. And it doesn't get much more isolated than this, the nearest highway is 100KM away and the nearest major town of Ceduna is a 5 hour drive away. The local doctor is a 12 hour drive away.

But as we were able to leave the train and have a look around the deserted town it also gave me time to walk up to the front and have a look at the locomotive.



The locomotive NR29 is an Australian built diesel electric loco constructed by A Goninan & Co. It would have been built between 1996 and 1998 for the newly formed National Rail, and was one of 120 built. When not working on the Indian Pacific this loco will also work on freight trains, the main workload of this class. It weighs 132 tonnes, has a top speed of 71mph from its v16 diesel engine which has a power output of 4,000hp. It used 58,000 litres of diesel fuel on our trip. You will notice that it only has a cab at one end, so has to be turned as required.



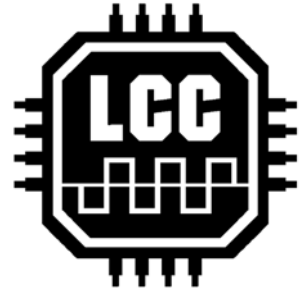
Layout Command Control for DCC

by Dick Bronson

This topic was first brought to my attention by the YouTuber 'The DCC Guy'. Since then I have been in contact with Dick Bronson of Cirkits.com who wrote the notes below and he has given me permission to use his description of LCC for DCC in our club newsletter.

What is LCC?

LCC stands for "**L**ayout **C**ommand **C**ontrol". It is a protocol for controlling all the functions on your layout things like detection, signals, building lighting, as well as the traditional layout control functions.



Will LCC work with my DCC layout?

Yes, DCC and **LCC** compliment, not replace, one another. **LCC** does not make DCC obsolete. The **LCC** bus takes accessory traffic off of the DCC bus. Only locomotive control needs to remain on the rails.

Will LCC work on my DC layout?

Yes, and also with any other train control method.

Is LCC bi-directional?

Yes, **LCC**, unlike most DCC decoders, can both send and receive data over the same **LCC** bus. This allows detectors, turnout feedback, local fascia controls, etc., to each talk to one another. Additional features such as status reporting, intelligent configuration, initialization, and easy upgrades of the products are now possible.

DCC (Digital Command Control), the existing NMRA standard for train control, is essentially a one way bus that allows only a single master command station to control mobile and stationary decoders over the rails.

Is the LCC High Speed?

The currently available **LCC** products operate an order of magnitude faster than DCC by using the automotive CAN bus. There is plenty of room for extra traffic. **LCC** may also be operated over other, even faster networks, such as Ethernet or WiFi.

Do I need a new LCC Master unit?

No! **LCC** is a peer-peer network. This means that any **LCC** devices may communicate directly with one another without going through a central command station, such as DCC or many legacy control systems require. A computer does make things easier to configure, but it is not a requirement for operation.

The NMRA and LCC?

Just like the NMRA set the standards for DCC over 25 years ago, they have now set the standards for **LCC**. A group of independent volunteers, both modelers and experts in electronics, have together developed the concepts, protocols, interface standards, and documents, for **LCC**. This OpenLCB group established the standards which the NMRA has approved as **LCC**.

The NMRA has no vested interest in any particular manufacturer or products. They simply set the standards that all manufactures may use license free.

Why is LCC so special?

Like people, each **LCC** product is unique. No more need for the user to assign and keep track of device addresses to prevent conflicts. New nodes may be added to any existing system with no data collisions... ever! The protocol is also expandable for adding functions that we have not even thought of yet.

Is LCC inter-operable?

Yes, that is why having standards is important. Any manufacturer's **LCC** products will inter operate seamlessly with the **LCC** products from any others.

Is anyone making LCC products?

Several manufacturers are currently shipping **LCC** related products.

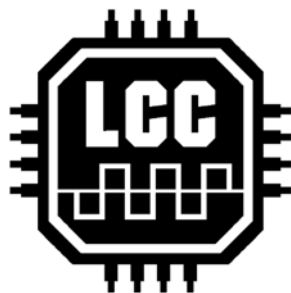
Logic Rail Technologies (Fast Clock, Light Control)
<https://www.logicrailtech.com/>

TCS (Train Control Systems) (Command Stations)
<http://www.tcsdcc.com/>

RR-CirKits (See reverse)
<http://www.rr-cirkits.com>

Deepwoods Software (MRS)
<https://www.deepsoft.com/home/products/modelrailroadsystem/>

Other LCC manufacturers are in development.



Northampton & Lamport Railway Model Weekend

by Colin Tarry

Over the weekend of June 1st & 2nd the Northampton & Lamport Railway held a model weekend. Our club were invited to attend with a layout. We took the Demonstration Layout.

We were situated in a marquee whose floor was a very uneven gravel/ballast surface. This was certainly a challenge in setting up the layout and trying to get it as level as we could. In fact we ended up with our own version of the Lickey Incline. Both O & OO gauge locos struggled in either direction to pull any length train. Despite this challenge we were able to run trains and hopefully give the public a good display.



Setting up are (l to r) Parry, Cliff, Jackie and Tim



This is one example of some of the “jacking up” we had to do to try and level the layout.



British Railways – in the Far South

by Andy Chapman

Well, what has South America got to do with British Railways, you may well ask? At the end of the 19th Century if you wanted to build a railway the people to ask where the British, with engineering and entrepreneurial names of Stephenson, Joseph Locke, Thomas Brassey, Brunel, Lewis Jones and Edward Lumb jumping out as people to call on.

The Patagonia region, covers both Argentina and Chile and as can be seen in



the map to the left, there where many different railway lines and companies running down and across the countries. Its complicated more, in that they all potentially decided what gauge to choose (we found the same in the UK, with Brunel choosing a broad Gauge, George Stephenson going for 4' 8" and lots of narrow gauge lines all of varying sizes).

So, what do I hear people say makes any of these railways British, other than maybe the owners and engineers came from our small island? To quote a famous saying why design something new when you already have a proven set of prototypes.

The beauty in South America is that they designed and built the infrastructure and rolling stock in the 19th and early 20th centuries and much still exists today. So, we have stations and signal boxes that look like they have been taken from a UK railway and dropped into a different country. Carriages exist around the country that all could have been built and designed by any of the early companies and as for early tractive motion why not buy from a British or even well know Scottish companies seemed to hold true.

The strange mystery

Now a recent trip to a small Argentinian town called Villa Pehuena just over the border in southern Chile brought up some strange carriages. Now we know the company Metro-Cammell, but why would there be a coach with that makers plate on, in a town that never had a railway? Something made me put on the detective hat. Now it was not just one coach.....

From reading some history we knew that the Patagonia line to Zapala was only a 62 miles (100km) away, so could there have been a link in the past?



Like so many early railways in the UK, people had grand plans and ideal for links all over the country, the problem was usually twofold. Finding the commercial and investor reasons and then secondly the logistical challenges.

A drive into the wilderness found the end of the line actually outside of the town of Zapala heading towards Villa Pehuenia and Chile in a place called Los Catutos.

The railway here in places looks deserted and in others well maintained, so still no closer to finding why a group of carriages, wagons and even an engine are in a town with no railway, other than some mad person had them taken by truck.

As you can see the station in Zapala looks very GWR, but a bit like many of the old branch lines in Britain a bit neglected. | So back to Villa Pehuenia and to ask some questions and take some more pictures.



Back in the small town there are several carriages dotted about, two used by a small café / restaurant that is very nice.

If you hunt around you find them hidden in the trees as well clearly owned by different people.

The name written on the sides reads Trans Patagonia La Montania, which just brings up the steam train you can ride further south called the 'La Troncita' Old Patagonia express, so no help here.



So more hunting around the town and surrounding area finding a nice narrow gauge train, now used by the ice cream shop. Ideal if you get hot and exhausted.

Well, the local people just say they have all been here many years and one of two stories start to emerge.

They were brought here by the railway company in order to try to convince people that a rail link to the nearby big town would be a good thing for tourism and local people. One can guess that maybe this was a good use of old rolling stock?



The railway company in Zapala had a 'fire sale' and the offer was too good to refuse for some local people and businesses. No one seemed to know how that all arrived or how many years ago.

The final picture – no idea what the make was of this engine as it seemed to have no makers plates on, but it does look a bit 'Germanic'. How it got here, no one knows but I'm suspecting a man in a red suit with some heavy lift Reindeer?



To wrap up, visit South America and see how the UK preservation movement and infrastructure as it was back in the 1960's. Yep lots of old lines, and you wander into a small town and just find engines, coaches and building just left. If you want another article just ask the editor?

Remove the South American cow catcher and you have a North British Locomotive Company Engine (in the Railway Museum in Temuco)



Events 2024

St Matthews Church—Summer Fete

6th July 2024

We have again been invited to take a layout or two plus displays, like we have done in previous years, to St Matthews Summer Fete. We need to decide what we want to take. The event is open to the public from 13:00 until 16:00.



N&DMRC Model Railway Club Exhibition

20th July 2024

Our club exhibition will take place at this earlier date in 2024. The venue is still Roade Village Hall. More details nearer the time.

Soar Valley Model Railway Club Exhibition

17th/18th August 2024

We have booked to attend the above event with the club's Kingsthorpe layout. They have said they do not want the Demonstration layout. The SVMRC exhibition is being held on the weekend of 17th/18th August 2024 at Loughborough Grammar School.

We have indicated to them that we require 8 operators. Nearer the time we will be seeking the names of members who wish to attend. If we get more than 8 on each day then we will need to ration who attends on what day(s).

With passing of the Exhibit Co-Ordinator (Michael Dore) the event is still proceeding as planned.

Rushden Historical Transport Society—Model Weekend

14th/15th September 2024

We shall again take the Demonstration Layout to this event. More details nearer the time.

Rushden Historical Transport Society
Charity No: 285535

MODEL WEEKEND

14th - 15th September
10am - 4pm

Model Railways, Cars, Boats & Lego Displays.
Diesel train rides & refreshments available

Tickets
Adult - £5
Child (over 4) - £3
Family Ticket - £14
Payments by cash or card on entry

Rushden Station and Goods Shed, John Clark Way,
Rushden, Northants, NN10 0AW
www.rhts.co.uk 0300 302 3150 @rushdenrailwaystation

Uniform

If you wish to, order any items of Club Uniform then please get in touch with Colin Tarry.

In order to help you gauge (pun intended) the size of item(s) you require there is information available in the club folder.

The following items are available:

A price list is also in the club folder.

All body clothing has the club logo on and your name.

The cap only has the club logo.



Please note that a £5 deposit will be required for EACH item ordered. As these items are personalised, we are unable to give refunds or do exchanges where incorrect sizes have been ordered.

ITEM	GENDER	PRODUCT No	SIZE	PRICE
Polo shirt	Mens	R539M	S,M,L,XL,2XL	£23.00
Polo shirt	Mens	R539M	3XL, 4XL	£28.00
Polo shirt	Ladies	R539F	8,10,12,14,16,18	£23.00
Polo shirt	Ladies	R539F	20,22	£28.00
Polo shirt	Childs	R539B	S,M,L,XL,2XL	£19.00
Sweat shirt	Unisex	R762M	S,M,L,XL,2XL	£24.00
Sweat shirt	Unisex	R762M	3XL, 4XL	£32.00
Sweat shirt	Childs	R762B	S,M,L,XL,2XL	£23.00
Fleece	Mens	R870M	S,M,L,XL,2XL	£36.00
Fleece	Mens	R870M	3XL, 4XL	£40.00
Fleece	Ladies	R870F	8,10,12,14,16,18	£36.00
Fleece	Ladies	R870F	20,22	£40.00
Fleece	Childs	R870B	S,M,L,XL,2XL	£30.00
Cap	Unisex	BC015	One size fits all	£17.00

These prices are correct as at 1st March 2023. These prices are subject to change. When ordering please bear in mind that the cost may be greater than shown here.

Club Information



Committee Members

Les Pace (Chair Person)	Colin Tarry (Treasurer)
Richard Deacon (Secretary)	Michael Castledine
Craig Dawkins (Exhibition Manager)	Cliff Simpson Stephen Lloyd

Web site: <https://ndmrc.org>

Email: feedback@ndmrc.org

Club Night: Thursday

Meeting Time: 19:00—22:00

Venue: Hardingsstone Village Hall, High Street, Hardingsstone,
Northampton, NN4 6DA



Scan for web site

Secretary: tel: 01604 890275

email: rjd156@btinternet.com

Non Committee Positions

Newsletter Editor	- Colin Tarry	email: wizzo@hymek.net
Sales Officer	- John Walker	email: pamjohn38@btinternet.com
Webmaster	- Colin Tarry	email: wizzo@hymek.net

Club Membership Rates

Club membership runs from September to August or part of the calendar year, and ALL expire on the last calendar day of August, becoming due for renewal on the first of September.

Adult membership £60 per year, Junior membership £10 per year.

For adult members easy payment terms available. Please enquire.

DISCLAIMER

Any views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Northampton and District Model Railway Club, its Officials or Members unless so stated.