

My Covid Adventure

By Bob Best

As most of you are aware I moved house in November last year which meant I had to consider what I could now do to feed my model habit- what else but build a new layout. After moving in and sort of becoming settled and reaching plan#16 for the new layout it was decided by the property manager (Carol) and myself that I could use 2 walls of the garage, thus leaving room for the two cars.

The decided plan left me with a point to point layout with a 9" atlas turntable at each end, this also decided the size of my rolling stock. The side wall of the garage is 5M., the rear wall is 4.3M. The layout is 450mm. deep except for the waterfront, which was partly salvaged from my old layout, and it is 600mm. deep.

I tried a new, for me, construction method on this layout because storage was needed in the garage as well as my trains so I went to Bunnings and purchased some work bench / storage kits the shelving of which is either MDF or a weldmesh type material, I chose the weldmesh and will explain later. The legs come in heights of 900mm, 1200mm, 1500mm, 1800mm. and depths of 450mm and 550mm. I chose the 900mm height and 450mm depth. For the roadbed I had decided to use 50mm high density foam which was glued on the frame top over the mesh shelf. I then drew a full size track plan on the foam, glued down 3mm. cork with a thin layer of Parfix gap filler (much cheaper than No More Gaps). I also incorporated a wooden duct on the front of the frame to hold the wiring which in turn makes it accessible and easy to work with. The wiring from the track droppers and point motors can be strung between the mesh and the foam and if you are using Peco motors it is so easy to recess them in the foam.

Another advantage of this system of construction is the wiring can all be run whilst sitting on an adjustable office chair. The chair can be set so that you can reach over and under the layout at the same time to run your wiring using one hand to feed the wire through a predrilled hole in the top of the board whilst pulling it from beneath and feeding it into the wooden duct all from the comfort of your chair.



Photo #1

This shows the yard area at the left-hand end of the layout which is at the end of the 4M. section. In this you can see the shelving that forms the framework of the layout, the ducting with wiring(still needs the front cover) the toggle switches are to control the point motors. On the wall is a 300mm high panel of Corflute with the sky coloured backdrop painted on it and a series of building fronts.(NB the track is now ballasted).



Photo #2

This is the left hand end of the waterfront scene and joins onto photo#1. You will notice a shelf built above the scene because the frame for this scene has 1800mm legs and is 600mm deep. As you can see the scenery is well under way with the foreground tracks servicing the docks whilst the track in front of the stone wall goes to the other end of the layout. The rising track will go to the mine in the future.



Photo #3

This photo is the other end of the waterfront scene that contains a derelict partly burnt out boat shed and a water powered grain mill which is fed by a flume that runs out of the hills and over the tracks (these buildings are scratch built). To the right of the mill the track takes a right turn onto the 5.3M leg of the layout.



Photo #4

This is where the two legs of the layout meet, the building in the foreground is the slaughterhouse whilst the one in the background is the local brewery. These are also scratch built.



Photo #5

This is where the scenery finishes with only the icing dock in position. In the top right hand corner is a picture suggesting where the mine may be placed once it is built. The black slide switch on the panel is a mechanical point control – another advantage of the foam – you can drill and push a hole through the foam to fit your control rod for the point.

I started this build about February so I can blame Covid for my progress otherwise without something to do I would be stir crazy. Hope you all enjoy my little construction story and hopefully we will soon be FREE!!!!