



***THE NORTH STAR CHRONICLES – a newsletter primarily for the model railway fraternity***

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***Editorial***

This month features some of the challenges of model railroading.

***How to move a model railroad.***

Following our decision to move house, some 12 metres of laid and scenicked dual HO gauge track had to accompany us to the new abode. This is in addition to several other layouts including an HOn3 one, a 3 rail Hornby Dublo one and a LEGO one. The HOn3 one had been transported on several previous occasions. Being largely foam based it travels fairly easily on top of my trailer covered with a sheet of plastic. The portion of the HO layout which semigrated created several lessons which are worth passing on.

The first and probably the most important of these takes us back to the design stage. The lesson is to plan your layout on the basis that it will always be moved. That being so, a modular or sectional design will save lots of heartache down the track – excuse the pun.

So it was with the portion of the HO track. In the first load, 1 ex DMR standard straight module of 1.8m length and two ex DMR corner modules (with embellishments - see photos below) together with two original ex Roving Rails modules (each 1.5m long) constituted the main portion of the trailer's load. On the next trip, the two remaining ex Roving Rails modules will form part of the load.

The loading of the bulk of the portion to be moved is shown below but first the scale of the problem.

Let's look at the two corner modules which had to be moved. Sadly a portion of the first module will have to be trimmed in order that what remains from the HMRC layout will fit in the available space in the new location.



***Corner module 1 featuring Sally's Homestead***



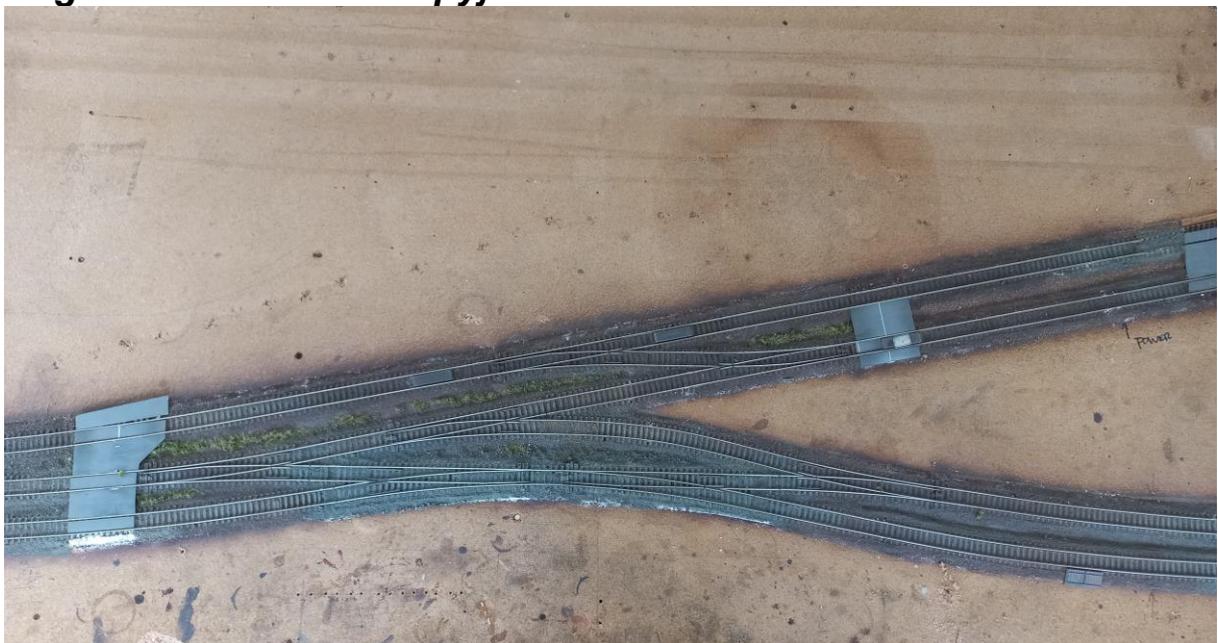
***Corner module 2 before Danie wove his magic***



***Corner module 2 – rescenicked and what I wanted to preserve***



***Virginia Module with its pyjamas on. Photo Trevor Pankhurst.***



***A naked Virginia: essentially a Timesaver module as featured in NSC Volumes 1 no 2 and 4 no 9.***

As will be noted later in this newsletter, as usual I chose the difficult way to transport this module i.e. with its pyjamas on. While the object of the exercise was to move this part of the layout from one permanent (?) location to another (this time I am serious – I am to be carried out of the new location in a cardboard box).

There is another advantage of building only the ‘skeleton’ of a layout like this. One of my hobby horses is the need to market the hobby to the public. The best way for a club to recruit new members is through public displays. It is far easier to dismantle, transport and erect a naked layout i.e. one without its embellishments, at the exhibition venue especially as one gets older and layouts get heavier. Don’t ask me how I know this.....

To give an illustration of how the Virginia scenery was developed by the late Alick Horne so that the module could be more easily transported, photos of the 4 components follow.



***The shopping/residential area positioned at right rear viewed from front of module.***



***Same section but viewed from the side.***

It should perhaps be explained that the problem with transporting fragile pieces in a trailer is that the items concerned get shaken about no matter how carefully one drives. Actually, shaken loose would be a better description. A lot of the buildings were shaken loose from their foundations and the smaller details like vehicles and people suffered a similar fate. Fortunately, in nearly all cases the answer to the problem was simply to glue them together/ back again.



***Full frontal of the business/industrial area which stretches from the left rear of the module to the tracks at front.***



***Another slightly different view of the same section***



***Hughes Engineering front right***



***Finally, Virginia station which runs along the entire front of the module***

So the lesson is don't glue your buildings directly to the baseboard; rather make them freestanding or attach them to a styrene base which can then be screwed to the baseboard. In this way whole industries/scenes can be developed which are (relatively) simple to strip/dismantle. As can be seen in the photo below, two sets of modules involved (Grahamstown and Pietersville) can then be stacked making them (relatively) easy to transport.



***The results of the dismantling covered in NSC Vol 10 no 8.***  
Now we move on to how the modules where the scenery was not dismantled were actually transported.



***Start with an empty, or nearly empty trailer padded to provide some protection to the modules.***



**Basement module sitting on top of protective plastic.**



**Virginia with severely shortened legs and frame above to protect the buildings and support the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.**



**Ground, (Virginia 1.8m x 0.9m), first floor (1.5m x .75m) and annex (ditto) left, now installed in the trailer.**



**Cover (which leaks) and cradle now fitted. Rear space filled by plants in pots (double deck). Fun – a - Galore oh really?**



**Top Floor - Corner module 1 (Sally's Homestead) in its protective framework sitting on top of the trailer cradle. Don't know what Rodney finds so amusing. Management lurking in the background.**  
 The end result, along with a bike and half the garden is below. No prizes will be won for aesthetics. Nor will any award be won for the quality of the loading. However, it got us to our destination with relatively little damage to the modules despite us having to negotiate foul weather from Port Elizabeth (sorry old habits die hard) in the form of pouring rain and near gale force head winds.



### ***The end is nigh***

We have made a decision to move to the Cape in December which means the North Star Railway has to be dismantled. The Giva Dam crossing of the driveway (refer NSC Volume 8 no 6) has already gone breaking the circle round the house. The rest will go at the end of October. But fear not, a new line will emerge in the Cape - the South West Railway. I have a very demanding system manager who will ensure the job is done properly. Watch this space!



***System Manager: Royalty Strawberry Muffin***

The end