



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

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Editorial

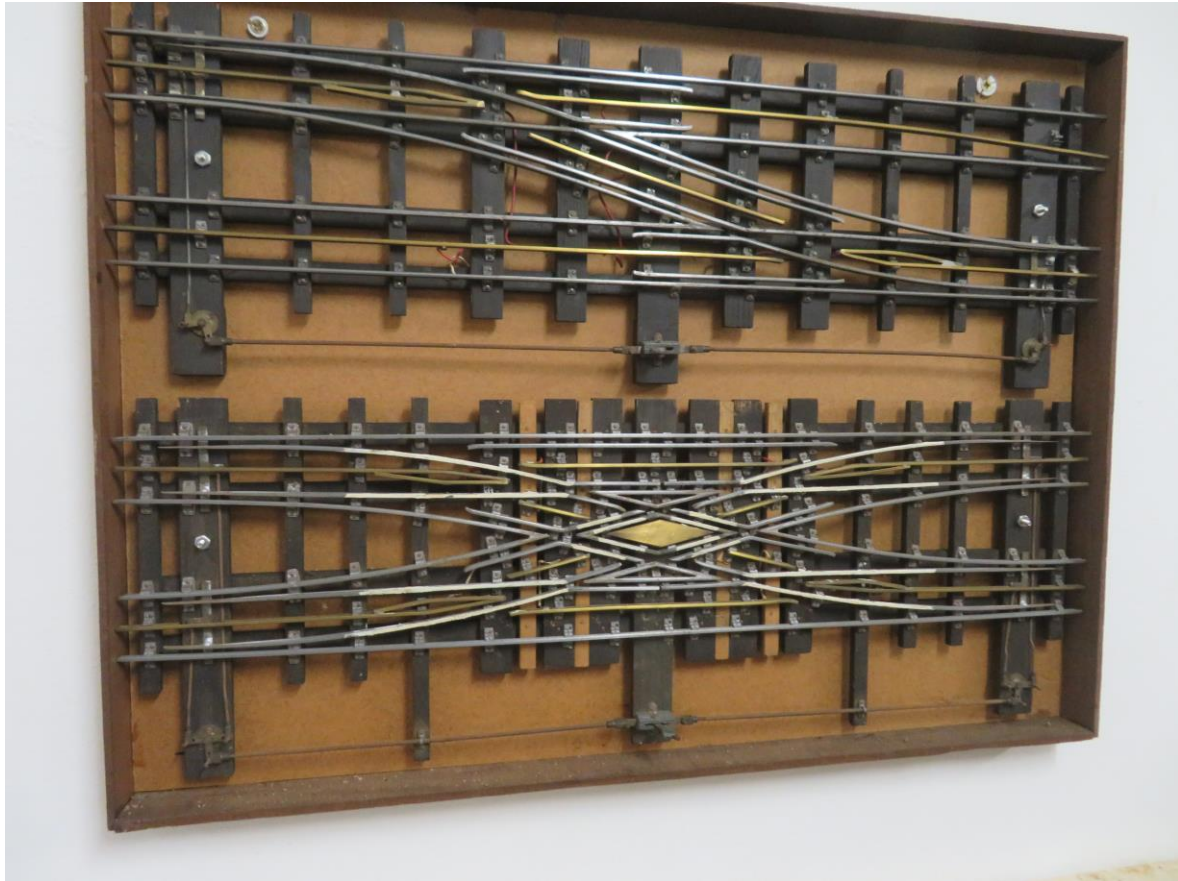
One of the features of our hobby is that there are many people involved who for various reasons e.g. they just want to run rather than operate trains or do not wish to be restricted to just one prototype such as North American or British but are happy to have a mixture thereof on their layout. Such people do not wish to join a club but prefer to 'do their own thing'. There is nothing wrong with that. As has been indicated many times previously, model railroading is a broad church. The point is that as such people pursue their hobby in isolation, it is only at exhibitions or via model railway shops that one becomes aware of them.

Louis Kleyntjens HO/OO empire.

Located in a quiet suburb on the border of Pinetown and New Germany, Louis's extensive layout has been under construction for many years. In fact, the layout can trace its origins back to Louis's childhood in Zambia! The current layout is located in the basement of the house to which access is gained from outside or via an internal spiral staircase. The original basement was added to when the house above was extended.

At one stage the basement accommodated two layouts – the HO one and an O gauge three rail one on a metal frame above built by Louis's father. Access to the high level layout was gained via a walkway which folded down during running sessions.

The O gauge layout has long since been removed but remnants of the frame remain as does a reminder on the wall.



O gauge 3 rail crossovers scratchbuilt by Louis's father. A work of art!

The HO/OO layout



View of layout from basement entrance door. Note passenger terminal on the second level at left.

I think the reaction of most visitors to the layout is wow! It takes some time to absorb and digest the whole thing. One has to follow the lines to decipher the track plan. As far as could be made out, the outer circuits comprise three loops. The two inner lines travel to higher levels - a mpd in one case and a passenger terminus in the other.



The incline to the mpd



The mpd



Another view of mpd



En route to the passenger terminus. Photo taken looking towards the basement extension. Note remnant of frame for former O gauge at top and 30 car coal drag at right.



Another view of passenger terminus. Note lighting in station – a feature of most of the layout – and catenary on lower level, another feature.



Marshalling yard on central 'island'.

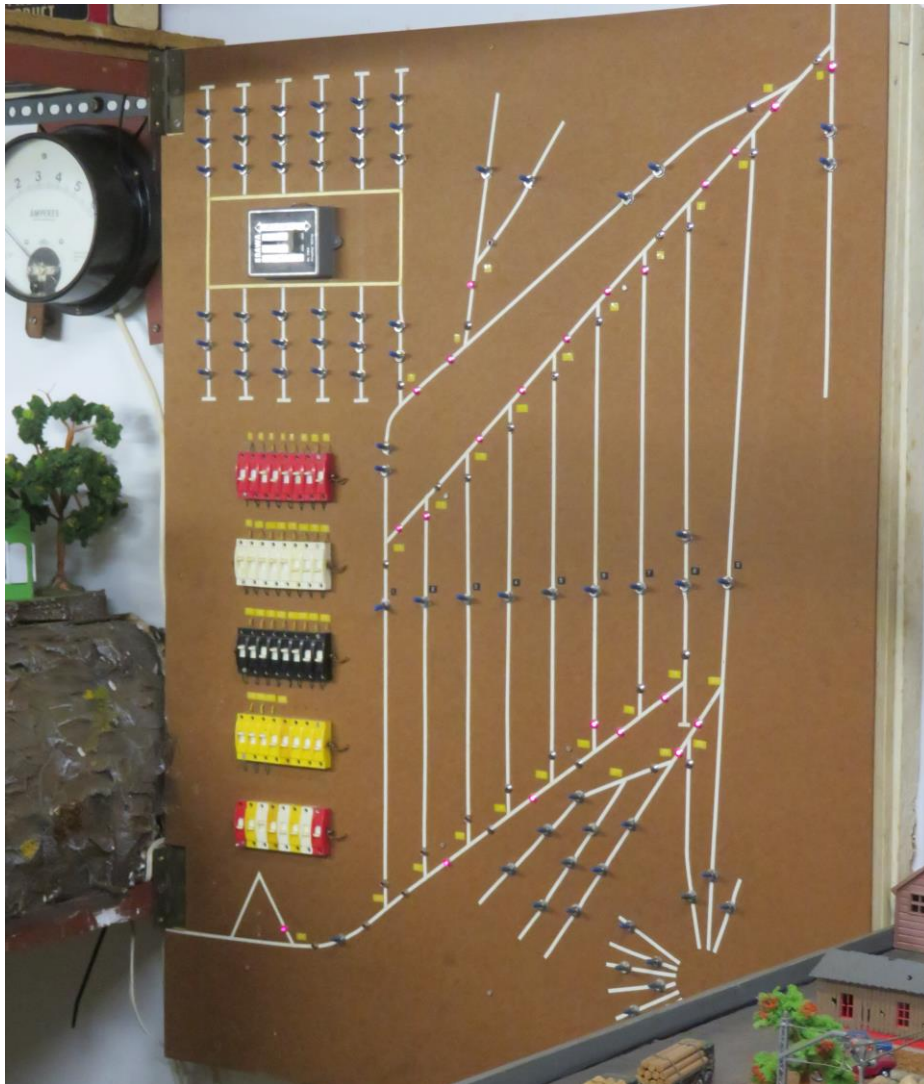


***Another marshalling yard
The Electrics***

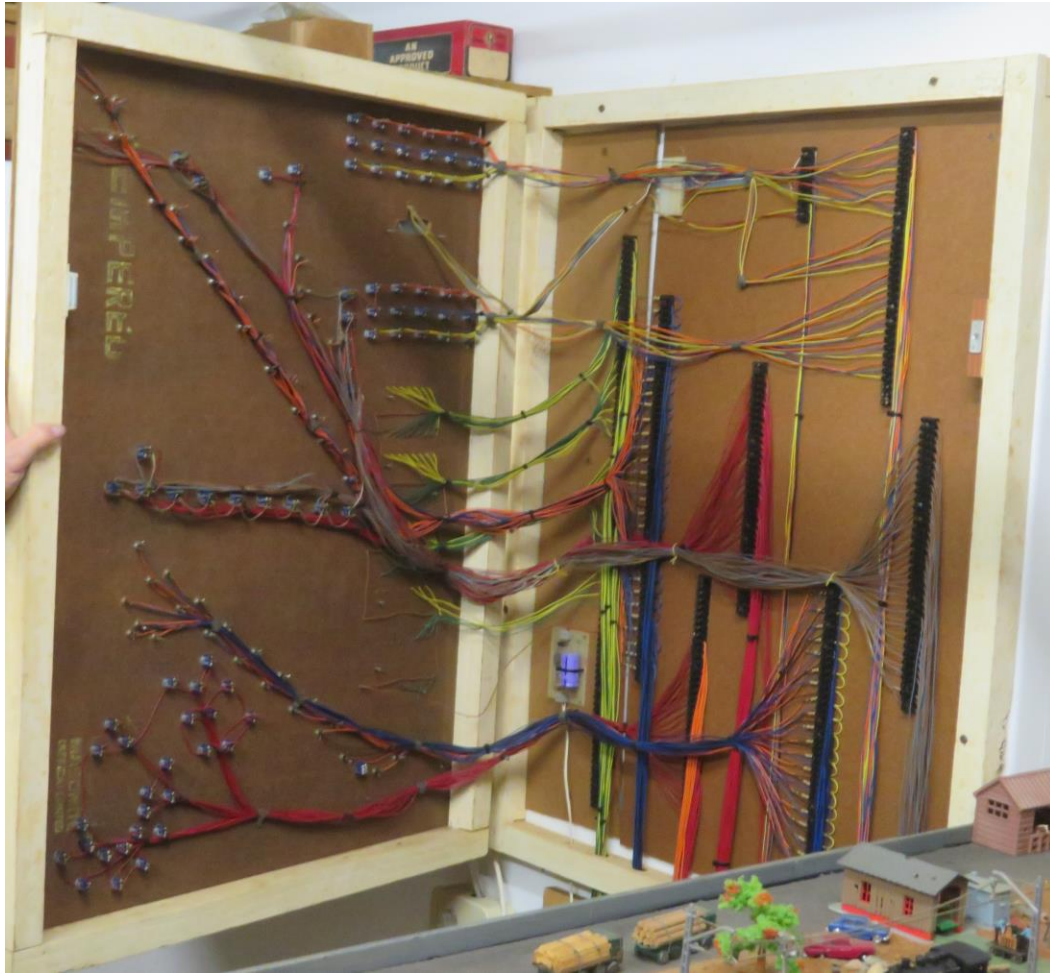
A number of features of this layout have already been described but others deserve attention too. Chief among these are the electrics - truly a work of art. Having been started and indeed built many years ago this is a block wired straight DC layout. To convert the wiring to DCC would be almost impossible and the cost involved in fitting decoders to the locos prohibitive.



The conductor's rostrum.....



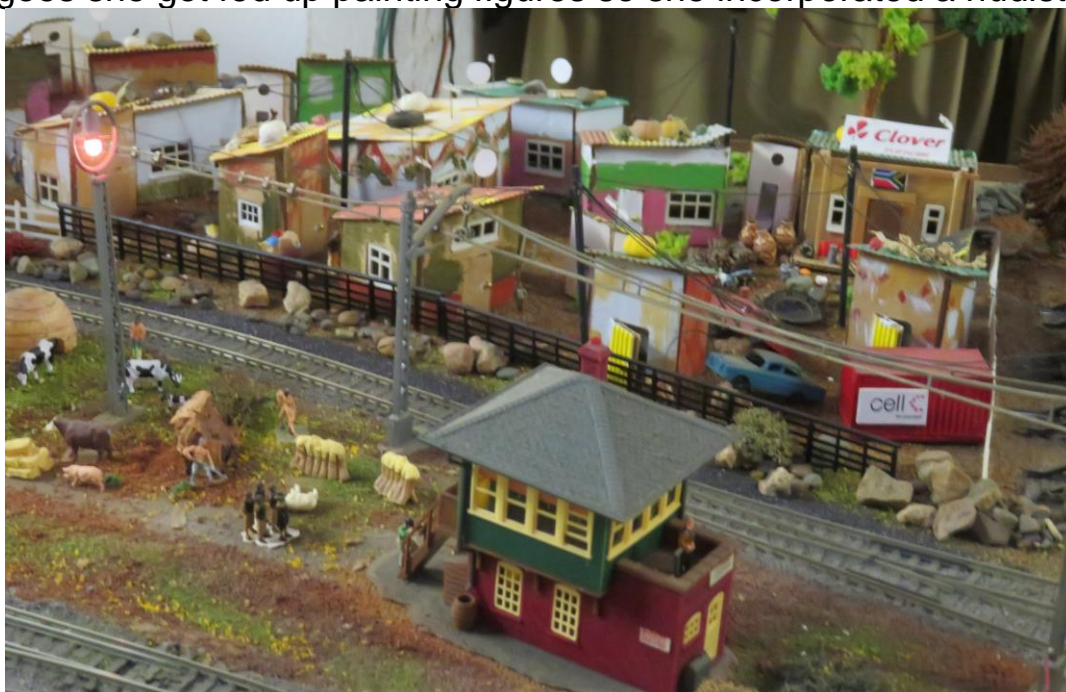
Control panel for central section of layout in closed position.



Now in open position to show how the job should be done.

Scenery

Scenery has been a collaborative effort with Louis's wife Priscilla who is a doll 's house builder in her own right making a contribution. The story goes she got fed up painting figures so she incorporated a nudist colony!



No South African model railway scene would be complete without an informal settlement!



A final photograph features more of Priscilla's handiwork: a park full of active figures in front of the passenger terminus.

Note the tramline circling the station.

Thanks to Louis and Priscilla for giving us the opportunity to view this stunning layout.

The end