



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

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Editorial

The centrepiece of last month's Model Railway and Hobbies Exhibition in Knysna was undoubtedly the Knysna Model Railroaders HO Mini Module Concept display. Originally, the intention was to publish the specifications of the Concept in the North Star Chronicles but that would have required 17 pages and not left any space for photographs of the modules at the exhibition. Accordingly, a decision was made to add the specifications to the NSC website (address above, look under 'Specifications'). Alternatively:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1m5TVgIbk5Di42O3DXA3Tzbv9voPOUx4ag-9-LTgy4/edit?usp=sharing> (copy link and paste in browser).

It is strongly recommended that they first be viewed to place the subject matter in context before continuing to read this edition of the NSC.

It is made clear in the specifications of the Mini Module Concept that there is a vast difference between this latest concept and 'traditional' modules such as those built by Durban Modular Railroaders and Roving Rails for example (specifications also accessible via the North Star Railway website). As it states in the first and last sentences of the Overview:

"The Mini Module Concept aims to provide a small modular layout design that is easy to store, transport, set up and run trains" and further "The concept is focused around building small modules that can be taken to various public venues to showcase the hobby."

Note: "run trains", not operate them and "showcase the hobby".

Note also the photographs herein that have a Galaxy S24 stamp are courtesy Dirk van den Berg without whose help this newsletter would have been considerably the poorer.

So, armed with the background, we can now move on to what the members of Knysna Model Railroaders have built.



The appropriate place to start – a still to be scenicked HO module originally belonging to Michael Georgiou.



Mike Griffiths 2 modules permanently joined. Buildings 3D printed. Photo Dirk van den Berg.

Note also the modules are positioned on cardboard boxes in turn sitting on top of tables (more evident in the next three photos below). The boxes were installed to raise the level at which the layout could be viewed by the public.



Mike Dane's 3 modules, two permanently joined



On safari. Ron Speight's corner plus three straights set.



Corner built by Brian Messenger with 3 extra straights showing 3D printed buildings backdrop.



As will be noted in the Mini Module Concept specifications, there is provision for a bridge module.



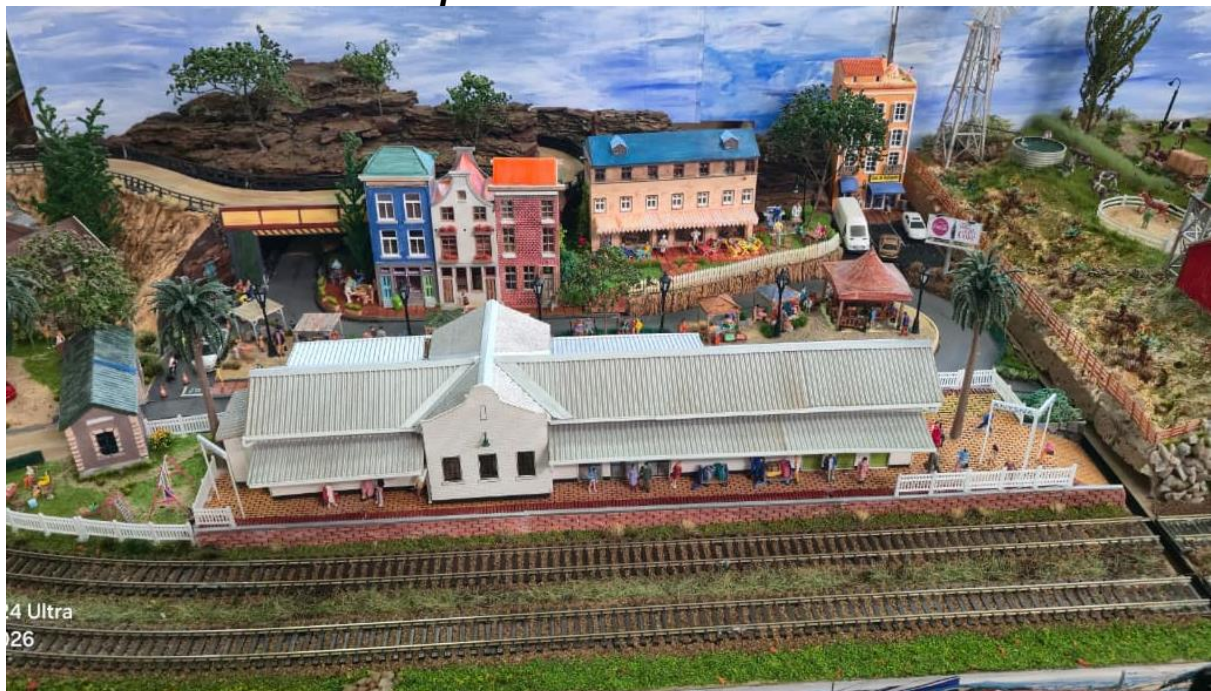
Also provided for in the specifications is an inward turning corner. Right hand side of Dirk van den Berg's above.



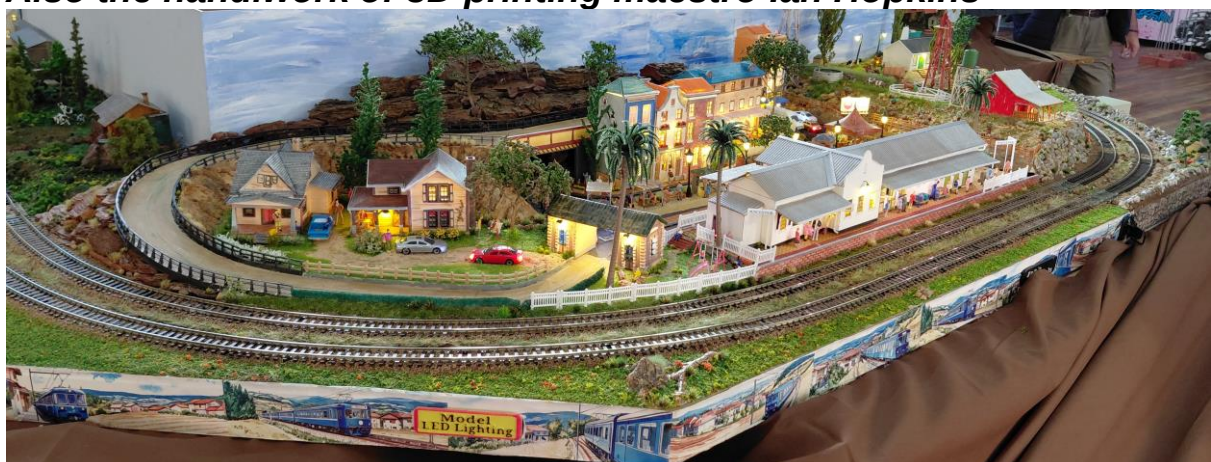
Left hand side of Dirk's inward turning module.



Corner module of Ian Hopkins.



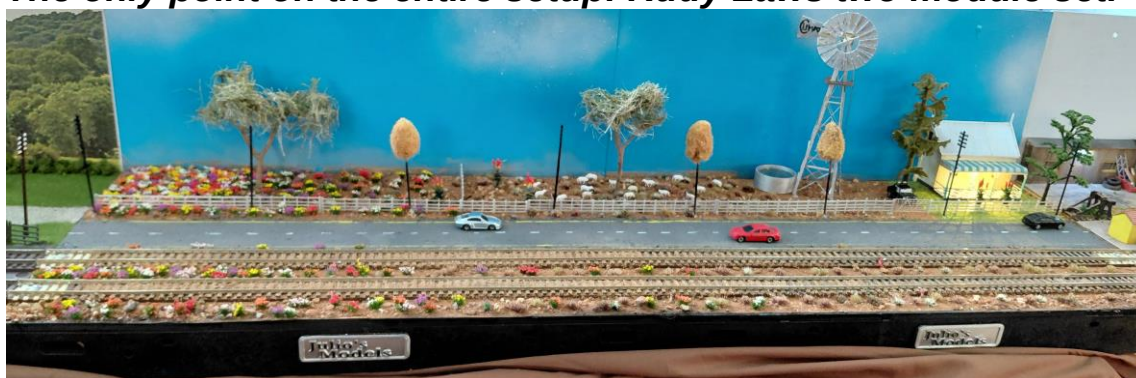
Also the handiwork of 3D printing maestro Ian Hopkins



Corner module integrated to create a complete, unified scene.



The only point on the entire setup! Rudy Laws two module set.



Julio Agrella's 2 module set.



Close up of the flowers in the photo above. Class modelling!



Another close up view of Julio's flowers.

Note also the joints with the adjacent module in the above photo. Aligning track joins is one of the difficult issues with which the modular approach to railway modelling has to cope. In Durban we used Pro track joiners – see NSC Volume 9 no 5.



Mike Griffiths corner, last module before completion of the circuit.

The Mini Module Concept layout, while it was not without its moments, acquitted itself well considering this was its first public display. Lessons will be learned and solutions will be found to the problems encountered which were not major in any case.

So what else was on display?



One half of Paul Zweistra's tinsplate Marklin layout during erection



And the other half



Timesaver module with some 3D printed, Brian Messenger super detailed buildings on the right (along with some non-scale cups and saucers!)



Ed Grosvenor's layout under construction

The exhibition was deliberately expanded this year to include other hobbies, such as Scalextric, 3D printing, radio control (vehicles, aeroplanes and helicopters) and LEGO.



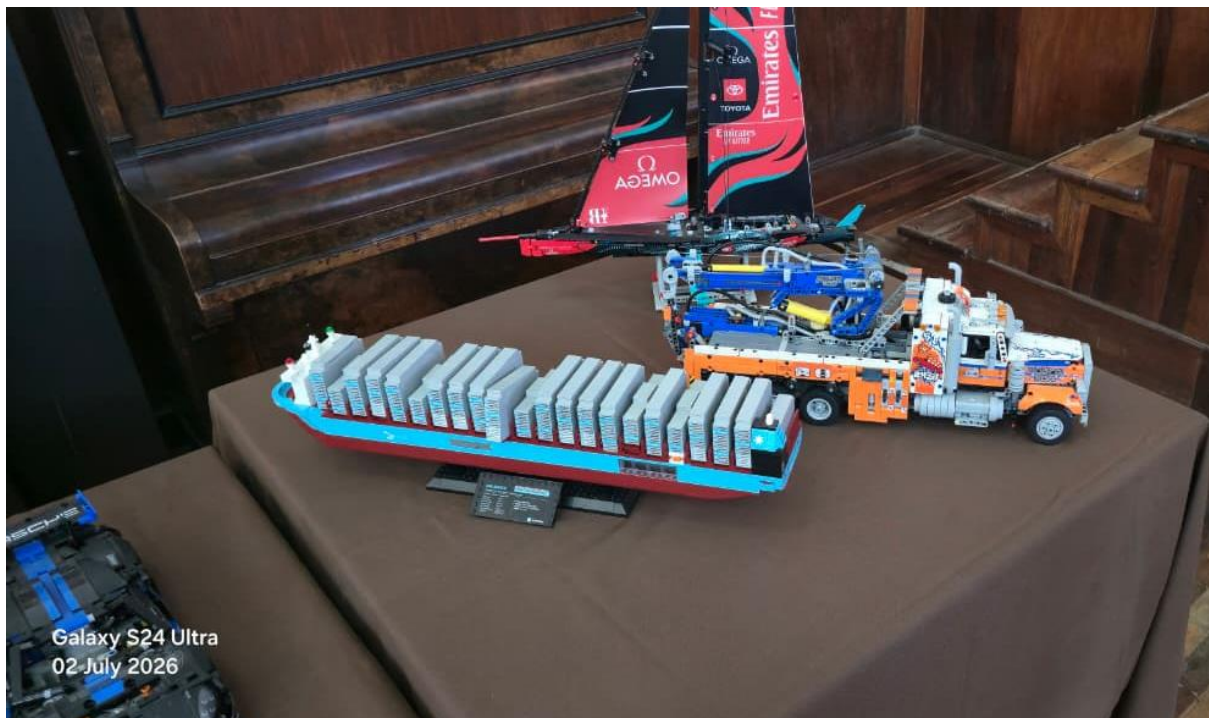
View of St George's Church Hall from the stage. Radio control (Obsession Hobbies) in left hand far corner. 3D printing display - Mike and Leandre of Zee dZines just in front of that to the left.



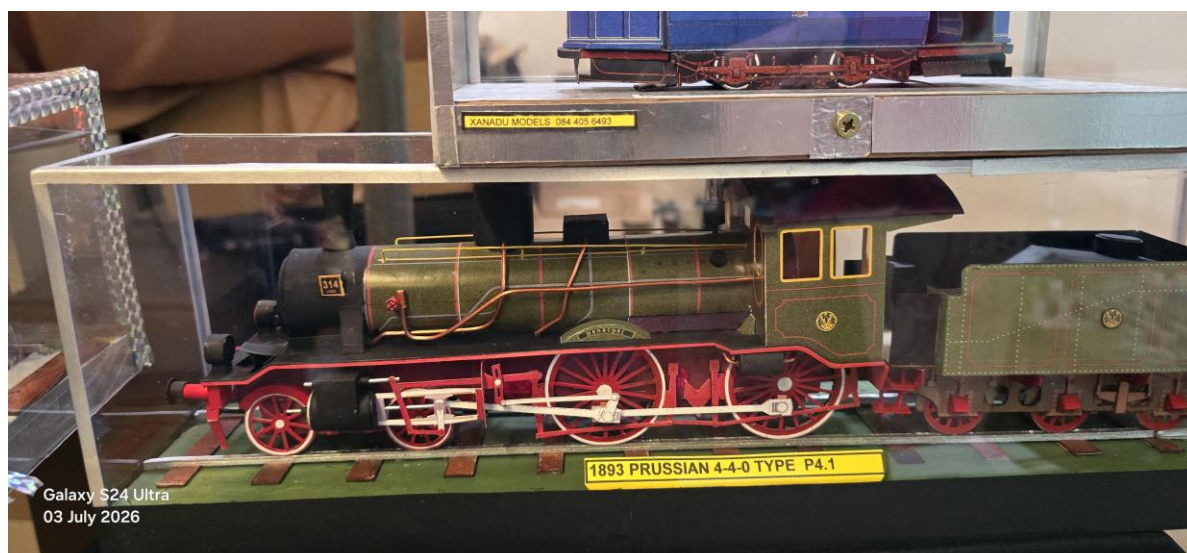
Scalextric display of Wessel Els



LEGO 1 of Keith Frazer



LEGO 2 of Keith Frazer
The piano is not LEGO!



Exquisite model of a locomotive produced from cardstock by Owen Mulrooney.



Another one

Two final points

Because of space considerations the Hornby Dublo layout on display at the exhibition could not be featured earlier in this newsletter. To cater for Hornby Dublo aficionados, there is a short video of the layout on YouTube. Refer <https://youtu.be/dDGINbXPwwA>.

Secondly, should anyone wish more information on the Mini Module Concept, (e.g. costs) please refer your query to the originator, Niel Wilson of Valley Loco Works info@valleylocoworks.co.za. Another source of information is Emrig newsletters: www.emrig.co.za.

The end