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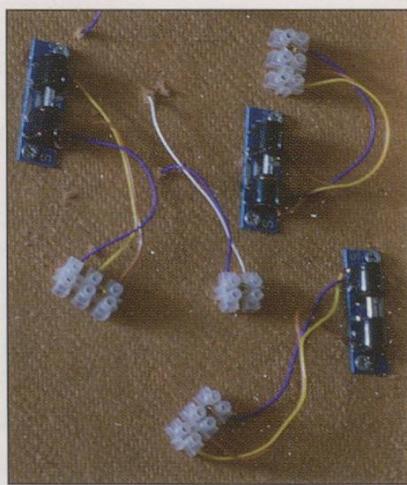
# "I DID IT MY WAY"

## – Part 2

### Roger Ellis continues the saga of setting-out to construct a new layout.

We finished Part I with the question that has troubled modellers over the years "What is the best way to remove solder from one's hair". The answer is simple "Do not get it there" - by being stupid enough to try and solder from the underside of the baseboard in the first place! I did this on the first three layouts I built and suffered as a result, so did the wooden floor, carpet and my hands. Please be careful. Rather than soldering-up complex circuits I have been asked "why don't you go digital?" Well I would, but with the number of locomotives I possess and the varying ages of some of them I believe the expense and time taken may not be worth the effort.

I have placed my "uncovered" transformers in a separate box which sits on the floor beneath the layout but you could put it or them inside the control panel you have constructed. If you decide on this option I would spend a little more money on "covered" transformers especially if children or grandchildren are to be present as 250V and inquisitive fingers do not mix! An essential item is, of course, a CDU for operating the point motors and again the control panel is the ideal location.



I use "SEEP" motors to operate the points which I find to be easy to fix to the underside of the baseboard with two small screws and a dab of wood glue. I have always soldered say 4-5 inches of wire to the point motors and other electrical accessories, the other ends being screwed into a terminal block. This means that

when a layout is dismantled these items can easily be reclaimed for future use. Do not buy terminal blocks or cable clips from your local DIY Superstore as they charge an exorbitant price for them. I use a supplier such as Screwfix.

Wire is a boring subject but I use that made by BRAWA because you can buy reels with two or three strands together (in different colours) thus ideal for wiring points and signals. As for switches for the points and feeds (as well as connectors for the baseboard joints) do not buy cheap! Maplin sell all types but again they are expensive and I would recommend you search the internet or go to your local hobby shop. The one at the East Somerset Railway in Shepton Mallet is very competitive on price, and equal in quality to the aforementioned electrical store.

You now have the baseboard upside down and are surrounded by all the tools you will need for the task. Soldering iron, solder, multi coloured wire, wire cutters, together with the control panel and track plan with the controller and switches inserted. Also have a small number of coins ready to put in your swear box for a favourite charity as even with the best preparation possible you are bound to make a mistake. I wired up the whole "Hohtenn" twelve track storage yard before I realised I had made a basic error.

Do not start without making a drawing of the track plan on a piece of paper, which you are going to keep, and number (or letter) the points and feeds. There may be baseboard joints and if the layout is to be portable there will certainly be a joint between the board and the controller. It is useful for fault finding if the wires at the joints can be labelled with the same notation as on the track plan. I defy anyone to say for certain that all their soldering is perfect, but in fairness I have found the most trouble has lain in the control panel which is easy to remedy once you have identified where the fault is.

Is wiring fun? Well no it isn't, except when you press a button and the point motor operates, or flip a switch and the locomotive moves. Bliss. When it doesn't "Oh \*\*\*\*\*" - and another coin in the box.

*The third article in this series will be on scenery and "how to steal and plagiarise other peoples ideas and pass them on as your own"!*