

Nürnberg toy fair - 2009

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The "Scratch-Built Buildings" volume is aimed at those who want to extend their hobby from the "off the shelf" level, particularly if they are modelling a specific location. The book covers methods mainly using plastic card, and shows how walls, windows, roofs (including thatch), guttering, etc can be made - all profusely illustrated. There are samples of specific buildings to illustrate each technique and the pictures can give the modeller the inspiration to attempt to replicate the methods. There are also many detailed photos of actual real life building details.

As it says in its introduction, "Model Railways the easy way" is aimed at the new modeller or those returning after a long period. It is full of short chapters illustrating small project layouts and sections on a variety of specific topics such as Beginners Tips, Research, Making the Scenery and Value for Money. In particular much stress is placed on building a layout that the modeller can manage to finish in a reasonable time and that will give enjoyment once finished. This is a book full of ideas, but on its own will not get you building a working layout. In the Conclusions, Peter specifically states that he does not cover building the baseboards, wiring the layout, point control, etc and certainly the first two of these are essentials.

In fact as book number 5 in a series this seems out of place. Peter's previously reviewed book (No 2) covered scenery construction in great detail and the other volume reviewed here (No 4) does the same for buildings, so to revert in book 5 of the series to a "beginner's guide" seems out of place. Logically this would have made a great No 1 as an introduction to the book series.

As far as SRS members are concerned,

both these books cover UK prototypes almost exclusively, but that is not to say they are not of interest to those of us modelling Swiss locations. TB

The Lost Railways of l'Hérault by Chris Elliott.

Published by the author, 8 rue du Pont, F-34480 Magalas, France.

Email: christopher.elliott@club-internet.fr
ISBN 2-84677-001-8.

This book, by an SRS Member, describes the railways lines of l'Hérault, both large and small, and offers the visitor who wishes to explore a guide to what remains of the abandoned local lines.

The Canal du Midi arrived in 1681, carrying the district's wine to the coast - as well as passengers. One of France's first railways opened from Montpellier to Sète in 1839 and thirty years later the département formed Les Chemins de Fer d'Intérêt local de l'Hérault to fill in the gaps. Today l'Hérault is well-served by TGVs, TEOZ cross-country expresses and TER autorails. For tourist railways one has to look outside l'Hérault, but not too far; CITEV's line and the Little Yellow Train de Cerdagne are not too far away and brief details of these and other tourist lines are included, with contact information.

The 96-pages of this well-illustrated book (including maps and some pictures in full colour) shows that the railways of this part of France have been as interesting and varied as in the many regions of Switzerland. MF

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The world financial situation has inevitably had an effect on what is, after all, a luxury hobby. Although the new models are there, they are fairly few in number. The saviour for many companies is the plethora of private liveries that can be, and are being, reproduced in model form. The modeller of the modern Swiss scene is being well catered for in both N and HO scales. For the first time, accurate models of the PTT wagons are to be available in both scales, while the selection of intermodal wagons continues to increase. It is also good to see a few older prototype models, such as the original version of the SBB Ae 4/6 from Roco and the BLS Ce 4/4 from Rivarossi. There are many models that may be used on a Swiss model railway. With very few exceptions, these are not covered. However, if a company is Swiss-based, such as AAE, models in their liveries are covered, except for road lorries, which are just too numerous to cover.

As last year, the content of the report, with a much longer introduction, has been posted on the Society website while, for those without access to the internet, the report may be obtained by sending an sae (110mm x 220mm minimum size) to the Editor, requesting a copy.

Malcolm Bulpitt & John Jesson