

# Merthyr Riverside

(CEFN COED Y CWMMER)

## The History

When the Brecon and Merthyr Railway commenced running services into Merthyr in August 1868, it did so by making a junction with the Merthyr Branch of the Vale of Neath Railway at Rhydycar Junction and exercising running rights over half a mile of track into Merthyr High Street station. Once at Merthyr, the Brecon and Merthyr used the existing Vale of Neath passenger and freight facilities.

The justification for this model assumes that the Brecon and Merthyr did not initially share the Vale of Neath's station, but instead built its own to the west of the River Taff. However, the Brecon and Merthyr quickly decided that the connection with the Vale of Neath was desirable. The arrival of the London and North Western Railway line from Abergavenny in 1879 gave an additional incentive for this connection, so the line to Rhydycar Junction was constructed and all passenger services subsequently diverted into Merthyr High Street station. The original Brecon and Merthyr station was, however, retained for freight traffic, by both Brecon and Merthyr and North Western services.

## The Period

The model represents this station during the early 'post grouping' period, allowing the widest range of liveries, locomotives and rolling stock. The buildings and structures are closely based on remaining Brecon and Merthyr examples, but the track plan is fictitious.

## The Model

The model is to 4mm scale – EM Gauge.

Baseboards are constructed from 9mm birch ply with soft wood legs. Plain track uses C&L track bases with EM Gauge Society rail, the points are constructed from EM Gauge Society sleepers and rail with C&L chairs and are operated using home made slow acting rotary motors. The layout is wired up for cab control using two controllers (the present controllers are from Modelex and AGW).

The model is operated as freight only from its junction with the 'main line' which would probably have involved 'one engine in steam' working on the prototype, but to enable a more intensive and hopefully more entertaining operations a more flexible system has been adopted.

The fiddle yard accommodates a variety of appropriate locomotives and items of freight stock, which are marshalled into typical trains for shunting as required. The rolling stock is continuously changing and expanding and consists of mainly kit or scratch built items, supplemented by a handful of heavily modified proprietary items, each piece being a faithful reproduction of its prototype.

Operation is unscripted, shunting is carried out as dictated by the rolling stock present and siding space available.

## Exhibition Information

- Travel** The layout is usually transported in two suitable sized hatchback/estate cars. However, if these are not available it will be necessary to hire a small van (approx £125 hire charges for a 2 day weekend). Fuel costs will depend on the distance to the exhibition.
- Operators** A team of 3 operators is needed.
- Insurance** The value of the layout and stock is £6,000.
- Setting Up** Setting up time is about 1 hour from arrival.
- Electricity** A single 13 Amp socket is required.
- Size** Overall size is 14' x 7' including operator space (see block plan beneath), the layout comes complete with drapes and its own lighting system.
- Barriers** Rigid crowd control barriers are normally required.

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