

POWERLINE UPDATE

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Update on Powerline Products and Production.

This is the third of our regular POWERLINE UPDATES. We trust that the information provided keeps our shops and their customers up to date on our products. There is available extra copies of this UPDATE for any shops who would like copies.

PRODUCTION

P475 V/Line Passenger Corporation Coaches.

Final orders are now in for these coaches and production is in hand.

We had great problems with where to put the coach numbers. But in the end they have been lettered as per the official drawings. We know some coaches have them offset one window but we had to have them uniform. The official plans won in the end.

Colours are as close as we are going to get to the real thing. Remembering the prototype coach comes in a number of shades and paintwork does age and sunlight distorts the colours.

The chassis will be black with black Commonwealth bogies. Numbers are BS214, BS216 & BS217. Delivery: refer delivery update.

P495 & P496 West Coast Railways BS Coach & BRS Snack Bar.

This order is finalised. The chassis will be grey with grey bogies. And before we get into any correspondence on the matter, the coaches did and still do come out with grey bogies and underframe. The only problem is they get dirty very quickly and become darker.

Colours are excellent and are as close as it is humanly possible to the prototype.

The BS will come out in BS206 & BS212. The BRS will be numbered BRS229

P455 V/Line BS Economy Coach – Tangerine.

These popular coaches have been re-run. Of all the coaches we make P455 is our biggest seller. Why? Because you can still see them running in Victoria.

We will be producing them in two numbers BS213 & BS214. This allows the keen model railway fan to

collect coaches with different numbers. Nothing like having a train with all different numbered coaches.

Delivery: refer delivery update.

These coaches will be run after V/Line Passenger Corporation & West Coast Railway coaches. Expect May/June. Some shops still have supplies but they are getting very thin on the ground. Suggest now is the time to get the previous numbers for your collection.

Our wholesale warehouse ran out of P455 before Christmas. But also with a new production run expect a price rise. The last run of these coaches was purchased when the \$A was 77cents US. What is it now? Slight difference.

Cork

Back in production. Now available packed for both HO & N track. Order through you local hobby shop.

P1118G Grey Commonwealth Bogie

With the production of the West Coast Coaches, we had to run grey bogies. We have taken the opportunity to make extra bogies and to include in our range .

Not every modeller will need these bogies but they do allow those who have already painted their own West Coast Coaches to have access to Grey Bogies.

The cost is unknown at the present time, but as we are to rerun of the P1118 bogie at the same time, we expect they will be the same price. But unfortunately this will represent a price rise on the current price of Commonwealth Bogies. Expect a rise of 15 – 20%.

AL Class Diesel Locomotive.

Powerline have arranged for the production of expoy AL Class Diesel Locomotive bodies to be produced. The bodies will be available as a kit.

In the kit will be the body, Powerline mechanism, pilots, sandboxes and decals. There will be instructions on how to build the locomotive.

The bodies are currently in production now and will be available at your local retailer as soon as we have the new mechanisms from Hong Kong.

Wooden Boxes.

For some time Powerline has had available sets in wooden boxes. These boxes have proved popular with

some buyers and considered a waste of money by others.

We will be continuing, at a limited level, to manufacture these boxes. The problem is getting the boxes made. Our source of supply has dried up. The manufacturer we helped set up has found his feet and is doing very well making furniture.

Because of the limited supply, we will use this UPDATE to advertise supplies, limited they will be, of the boxes.

DELIVERY UPDATE.

V/LINE PASSENGER CORPORATION COACHES.

After all the problems with colours and with where to put the numbers on the coaches we have finally got everything in place.

We now have a production slot and this means that the coaches will be available in Hong Kong on March 30th. 1999. Now allow 3 weeks for shipping and a week to get through our docks and you have the coaches in Melbourne ready for distribution. All you need is for something else to go wrong.

But if all goes right the product will be in the shops within a week of coming off the docks say April 30th. Or to be more precise in those shops that have ordered the coaches, will have them within a week of landing and being released.

COMMONWEALTH BOGIES & CORRIDOR CONNECTOR

Both these items have been out for some time in wholesale stock. They have been remade and will be shipped to us with the V/Line Passenger Corporation Coaches. Shipping end of March. Plus P1118G, Commonwealth Bogie moulded in grey plastic. They are perfect for West Coast Railways rolling stock.

WEST COAST RAILWAY BS & BRS COACHES. & V/LINE TANG. BS COACHES.

We now have a production slot and this means that the coaches will be available in Hong Kong on April 30th. 1999. Now allow 3 weeks for shipping and a week to get through our docks and you have the coaches in Melbourne ready for distribution. All you need is for something else to go wrong.

Like the V/Line Passenger Corporation Coaches they will be available in the shops that have ordered them within a week of being released from the docks. Estimate end of May.

What ever happened to Ray Tolley?

Ian Comport got asked this question many times on his recent trip to see customers in New South Wales. Ray used to be a Powerline Sales Representative and he visited NSW, Vic and Qld.

Ray was for a long time the repairman at Bromley Road and when this was closed Ray continued to be the repairman.

At the present time Ray still calls on a number of shops in Sydney as a Powerline Sales Rep..He also does all our Powerline warranties and his wife Jenny keeps track of all our warranties on the computer. Ray & Jenny do production of Powerline spare parts, make up the locally produced gondolas and do repairs of non-Powerline products for a number of shops. Plus Ray has a full time job.

A number of you will have seen Ray & Jenny at Liverpool Exhibition. Ray dressed in his Powerline shirt with the Powerline 'bomber' jacket. Ray & Jenny have also attended Camberwell for the Powerline stand.

New Distribution in New South Wales.

A number of Powerline Dealers in country New South Wales will have been visited by Ian Comport late in February. This was part of the new distribution system where Powerline and some stock come to the actual shop.

Ian left Melbourne early on a Tuesday morning and headed north in the new van purchased expressly for this purpose. He had a very busy time seeing as many dealers as he could. He was to be back in Melbourne late Thursday night but ended up arriving back at mid day on Friday.

For those who have read about the troubles we are having with the van, you will be pleased to know Ian had a perfect trip. Perhaps the Mercedes just need working in a little.

The result of the trip was a better understanding of our customers needs, delivery of stock, and more importantly we found that no matter what we packed in the van, we would never have all the stock a shop wanted. In future we will try and let shops know at least 2 weeks in advance of the van going north so you can put in orders. This way you are assured of getting the goods needed and only top up on the stock we carry in the van.

* Rippon Lea *

Welcome to Rippon Lea, a 4.1 by 2.2-meter Model Railway Layout designed and constructed with the beginner in mind.

Over the past few years I have become quite concerned that layouts attending Model Railway Exhibitions were being built to such a high standard that wasn't (in most cases) achievable by the average person entering the hobby. This I believe was scaring people away from the Hobby instead of encouraging new people to have a go.

These layouts although very good in detail and very realistic in operation etc. are at the top end of the hobby, and the modellers are to be congratulated for their efforts. However there weren't many displays attending exhibitions that the average modeller can look at and be able to say, "I could do that".

We hope that Rippon Lea can fill the gap between the beginner and experienced modeller alike.

What we have tried to create is a layout that will fit in the average shed or garage and hopefully give the budding modeller some ideas on how to get started.

Everything on the display from rolling stock and engines to the buildings and other bits are as you would expect to see them when you open the box and put it on the track, or construct it as per the instruction sheet. There is nothing on the layout that can't be purchased at the local hobby shop or hardware store. None of the models have been modified or assembled in any way that could not be achieved by the new modeller with limited experience.

Wherever possible we have used Australian content from Aussie manufacturers and where this could not be done we have used easily accessible items from Australian importers. Most of the buildings, scenery material and rolling stock have been donated to us so that we can promote the Australian product, which in turn helps the local manufacturers and the hobby as well. **To our knowledge, this is the first time in the Australian model railway industry that several manufacturers have come together in co-operation to produce a model railway layout.**

Not too long ago, I started doing Scenery demonstrations at exhibitions under the banner of 'How To Solutions'. Along with a couple of friends and fellow modellers Murray Johnstone and Laurie Green, I took on the challenge of showing the exhibition public just how easy it is to create simple yet realistic scenery. Rippon Lea is an example of our attempts, and if you have not seen the How To Solutions demo, then I would suggest that you have a look while

An Australian H O Layout

you are at this exhibition, or look for us at one of the other shows you attend.

- The Layout -

Rippon Lea takes its name from the mansion located in the Melbourne suburb of 'Ripponlea' and the model of the mansion is located at the left end of the display.

The layout was designed to be simple to run (no complex wiring or control panels), and easy for anyone wanting to start their first layout.

Although modelled on no particular town or area, the display depicts a local town somewhere in Victoria, with many examples of buildings, vehicles etc. that you would expect to see if you visited such a place.

- A Quick History -

The Rippon Lea mansion was originally constructed as a fifteen-room family home on 23 acres of scrubland at Elsternwick for a leading businessman and politician Mr Fredrick Thomas Saragood. The home was designed by a Mr Joseph Reed a partner in the architectural firm of Reed & Barns. Many examples of their designs including the Melbourne Public Library, Trades Hall and Exhibition Buildings are still standing today.

The house was built and developed between 1868 and 1903, and although many alterations and additions took place by various owners, the original design remained.

The last owner of the Rippon Lea estate a 'Louisa Jones' made several modifications to the interior of the home during the 1930's and added the Ballroom and a swimming pool.

The Australian Broadcasting Commission purchased some of the property to build a new Television Station in 1954. This was one of many subdivisions that reduced the size of the estate.

Louisa Jones donated the entire property to the National Trust in 1963, but still occupied the home until her death in 1972.

Although not modelled exactly tree for tree and detail for detail, we have tried to do justice to this amazing '**BC Models**' kit. The model was very interesting to build, and I would recommend it to anyone wanting to have a large building on his or her layout. The actual mansion is open to the public most days of the week. The Ballroom (not included with the model) is available for weddings and other functions as well. The family can enjoy a picnic in the grounds, and the pool is open during summer.

More information on this layout available from
Powerline Models.

Other buildings were put together from card kits produced by **L J Models 'Ausbuilding Kits'** range, and require only minimum skills and tools to put them together. For anyone just starting out, I would recommend that you have a look at these kits, as they can look great on any H O layout with only a little effort. The road signs also came from L J Models, and are a must on any layout. L J Models also have a range of buildings and signs for the N scale modeller.

The Railway Station and signal box were produced by **G & E Rail Models**, and reflect the typical Victorian flavour. An example of this type of station can be found at the historical Victorian Central Highlands town of 'Maldon' where all the family can enjoy steam train rides!

To enhance the station, G & E Rail Models have produced models of passenger cars from the 1880's era, and these can be seen on the layout being hauled by a '**Broad Gauge Models**' Victorian Y Class.

Broad Gauge Models have also produced several other Victorian locomotive kits, including the E Class that can be seen either hauling a train or parked somewhere on Rippon Lea. Although not targeted at the beginner, these models are fine examples of what can be achieved here in Australia at a reasonable price. BGM are producing new models at various times, and they have several projects in the pipeline for future release.

The signals and level crossing set are from '**C D A**', who assembles these fine examples at Beaudesert in Queensland. This company is at the forefront in bringing the Australian prototype to the modeller at reasonable prices. Our train controllers come from C D A as well. They come in various models to suit all requirements, including the new Digital Command type systems, and are available through your local hobby shop. If you would like to try our C D A unit's out, ask one of the operators to let you run a train!

A lot of the rolling stock and locomotives you see on Rippon Lea are from '**Powerline Models Australia**'. These fine items are straight out of the box and onto the track, although several freight cars have had their couplers changed so that they can be shunted. The Powerline catalogue is always growing, and new examples of motive power can be seen taking a ride on the turntable, or making their way around the layout.

Powerline Models Australia has been very supportive in the Rippon Lea project, and without their help the layout would not have got off the ground. The research and development team has made sure that every model they produce is of the highest quality and as accurate as possible. This principle applies to all their models, and is definitely worth

considering when purchasing locomotives and rolling stock. I would highly recommend their train sets to anyone wanting to get into the hobby or just expanding their motive power and rolling stock fleet.

The detailing bits you see around the display such as the Drover with his flock of sheep, tractors, the Australian Wildlife (including Kangaroos, Emus and Koalas) were selected from the '**Kerrobay Models**' catalogue of NSW. **Sentinel Model Railway Products** of Victoria has also lent a hand with their vast range of detailing parts. Both these manufacturers have supplied fencing and other details placed on the layout.

- Track work -

Unfortunately no one in Australia manufactures model railway track, so we turned to the **Atlas Tool Company** of the USA for our code 100 track. All of the track is flexible so that it could be curved to what ever radius we wanted. Two simple ovals of track were laid, and the points and sidings added as we went. The turntable is also from Atlas, and is an example of an 'above ground' table designed for easy installation. There is no need to cut a round hole in the layout to install it!

All of the track work was painted using colours that reflect how the real rail would look, to help add to the realism.

Chuck's Ballast products were used for the sidings and mainline, as this great Aussie product keeps its colour and shape when glued down. This vast range of Ballast products includes several grades and colours, and is available for most of the popular scales from O scale to N gauge. Chucks also supplied a lot of the earth scenery colours by way of their **Scenery Dust** product. The dust is very fine, but does not turn to mud when you glue it down. If you want to see this product demonstrated, have a look at How To Solutions.

- Scenery -

The scenery consists of a styrene foam base that was carved with a knife and wire brush, then covered with a very thin layer of plaster. This was coloured with various shades of Tile Grout, and then grasses and other materials applied using a mixture of PVA white glue and water to stick it all down.

We chose the **Woodland Scenics** range to use for the scenery, because it is readily available at most hobby shops, easy to use and because of our experience with the products on our How To Solutions display. This is one of the few overseas companies we turned to for the project, and the reason for this was because of the superior quality and the versatility of Woodland Scenics. The tunnel

portal located near the Rippon Lea mansion is also from Woodland Scenics, as is the water in the river.

We have also used a lot of natural materials such as dirt, twigs and other things that Mother Nature created for us to use for ground cover. Most of these came from the Garden!

- Lighting -

Lighting is very important on any layout, as it helps to enhance the colour and detail used on the display. We have used fluorescent tube lighting to brighten things up, however as the project continues, we are looking at various types of lighting systems for the future.

Eventually we would like to be able to depict both day and night, with sunrise and sunset included. Our biggest problem at the moment is working out how to do it electronically, but not too complicated for us to transport, set up and then use.

- Transporting and setting up -

As Rippon Lea is a modular layout, it is transported in a rack, which can be placed in a Mini van or medium sized trailer. The layout consists of four modular sections of 1.1 meters wide by 2.2 meters long. All sections are carried and transported flat to minimise damage to scenery. The sections are bolted together, and sit on a 'playpen' type stand consisting of four sections. These fold up for transporting and storage, and can be set up in just a few moments.

The lighting is also modular and is made up of two sections. Steel frames support the light pelmets when the layout is set up.

Rippon Lea can be set up tested and trains running in a short time after arriving at the exhibition. This was a must when it came to designing the layout, as not all the crew are available at set up time due to work commitments etc.

- Operation -

As mentioned earlier, Rippon Lea is very simple in the electric's department. As such we are able to run the layout with a small crew of just two people at any time. One member runs the mainlines, and the other shunts rolling stock in the sidings and changes engines. He is there to answer your questions as well.

We have tried to make the layout as user friendly as possible, so that the public can be invited to have a drive of one of the trains moving around Rippon Lea. This is not a normal practice on most exhibition layouts, but we encourage you to come and have a go!

You will notice that we don't have a barrier to stop you from getting too close. Once again this is to help you to see just how user friendly this display is.

- Summary -

We are rapped with the response we have had to Rippon Lea so far, as this is the first time that we have been able to get modellers and the companies supplying the various items together. The support from the various clubs and exhibition managers has been great, and it looks like the layout will be around for quite a while.

- Thanks! -

We would like to acknowledge **all** the Aussies who have helped us out, and most of them have included a leaflet or flier in this pack.

Any of the products you can see on Rippon Lea should be available at your local hobby shop or hardware store. If they don't stock them, ask them why not. Some are available direct from the companies by mail order should you have trouble getting what you want. Train World Pty Ltd of 624 Hawthorn Road East Brighton in Victoria carries a vast range of these and other items, and they are happy to do mail orders if you can't get to their shop.

I would also like to thank several modellers who have helped us get to where we are today, including friend and mentor Laurie Green whose creative talents were employed to come up with the design and shape of the layout, and then he helped us to scenic it and finish it off.

Grant McAdam helped put most of the buildings together and did a fine job on all examples. Big Mal Bywaters supplied the styrene foam used as the base and helped out with the scenery and a lot of the engineering stuff. Chris Elliott helped in the scenery department as well, and laid most of the track, and included some of his own ideas on how the layout should look.

Ian Comport who took on the responsibility of advising the various Manufacturers and Importers of the project, and then secured their offers as they came on board.

- The Crew -

Operators who are running the layout include Lindsay Buck, Allan Harnwell, Murray Johnstone and myself. We also have a few other helpers who come along as needed.

If you have any questions about Rippon Lea or the hobby in general, please ask one of us, and don't forget to call in on How To Solutions to see how we demonstrate a lot of the materials used on the layout.

Finally, we would like to thank you for taking the time to stop and look at Rippon Lea. We appreciate your support, and we ask you to also support the Australian Model Railway Hobby and those Aussies who have helped us.

Bruce Ritchie.

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