

# BUILDING WORKSHOP

By Robbo

## “The CANAL PUB and WHARF”



From the very first diorama module it was always intended to have a “Canal-side Pub” somewhere — initially it was going to be alongside the Lock, but after thinking about things I decided to have the “Lock Keeper’s House and Tower” instead.

When this was tried out for positioning alongside the finished Lock, I realised there was not going to be enough space for the Pub to be satisfactorily displayed, along with the other features that were intended to be included with it!

So, instead, we ended up with a continuation after the “open lock gate” with a wharf and dock, forming the next section on the canal. The Canal is starting to bend in the formation of the landscape as well.

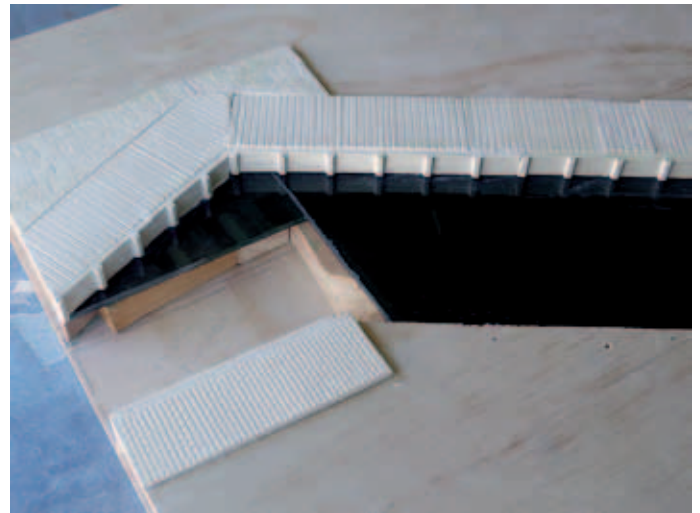
The total length of these three sections is now 4 foot 9 inches; ie. The Canal Bridge, The Lock and the Wharf and Canal Pub sections. The next section that will be built will have the continuation of the bend so that it turns into another “straight” section. This straight section will be approximately 6 foot long — so all combined the “Canal” will be nearly 11 feet as a continuous length, but “L” shaped.

I have a rough idea what most of these individual diorama modules will consist of, but as all great ideas, they seem to change as the building progresses. I do want to include a Water Mill with Wheel; another large stone Warehouse — and dare I say it — a Cathedral by the Canal side!

### **THE BUILDING STARTS!**

The first necessity was building the continuation of the Canal with wharfs. As in past modules I have boxed it all up using 7mm Plywood for the “platforms” holding the Canal and surrounding areas.

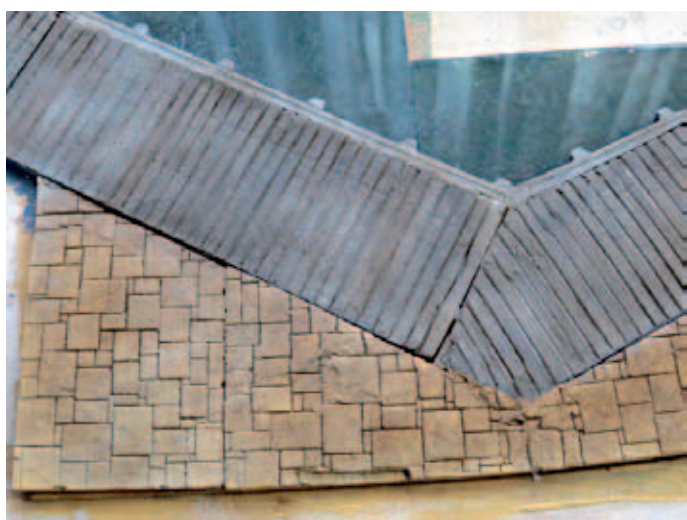
I allowed channels of the canal to be left open for the “water areas” and again, I have used offcuts of 5mm Perspex to simulate the water. Once



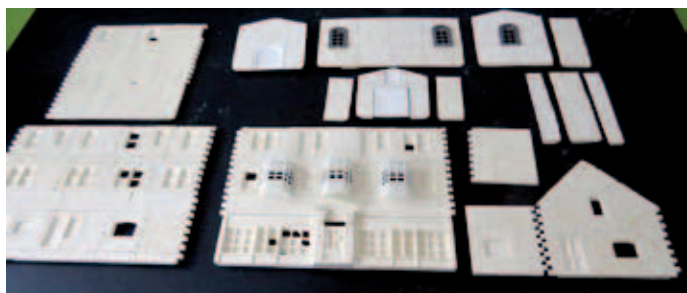
everything is scened, I will use the Woodlands Scenics WATER EFFECTS to simulate the ripples and rough water areas (see original story on the Lock for how this was created)!

For most of the wharves I have used the old original Linka plastic FENCING mould with

RETAINING WALL. Martin has now brought out a new ScaleCast Timber Siding mould, but these were not available when I made my castings, hence the older style being used instead!



Other NEW moulds used throughout for the Wharf and Pub were:— GRANITE STONE SETTS; YORK PAVING; STONE WALL; COTSWOLD STONE WALL; BOXED STEEL; VICTORIAN SHOP FRONT; VICTORIAN ROOFING; DOUBLE SHOP FRONTS; PANTILE ROOF SHEET.



I purposely wanted to use as many different items as possible to highlight some of Tony and Martin's new moulds that are now available.

Also, I have used Tony Turner's 3D printed plastic BAY WINDOWS, TUDOR CHIMNEYS and also his ROOF CAPPINGS. Tony has a number of



different styles available with the Tudor Chimneys as well as for the Roof Cappings.

For the "Ornate Door Canopy" at the front of the Pub, I have used one of Scale Link Ltd's white metal pieces, Part No. SLC0028 — Scenic - Scale 1:76 'OO' KITS — [www.scalelink.co.uk](http://www.scalelink.co.uk).

For the "Barn" at one end, I have used some plastic window castings found from an old KIBRI kit — otherwise, all other parts are from the standard Linka moulds range, mostly just the different Brick Moulds for windows, doors, etc.

### **THE DESIGN OF THE PUB**

As all of my building designs, they originate from my very "fertile imagination" — there are no drawn-up plans, apart from what appears in my "minds eye".

I always research first before starting a building so that I do have an idea formed prior to starting the build. I use Google Image Search to try and find inspiration, but I always intended the Pub to have a "Tudor feeling" to the concept — I wanted old red bricks, dark window framing and, rough timber beams throughout to give it that "feel"!



Again, I started all of this before Martin and Tony brought out the Tudor inspired moulds. If I had waited a bit longer I could have saved myself a lot of time — but in the words of a prominent world statesman — "Life was never intended to be easy"!!!

## ***PAINTING and FINISHING***

I puzzled about what to use for the “timber beams” on the walls, and one early morning out walking my dog, I came across an old fashioned timber wardrobe put out for a “kerbside clean-up”.

The timber veneer was pulling away from the body of the wardrobe, and when I looked at it closely, I saw it had a lovely “grain” to it and I could just pull off strips as needed.



Being a close grained veneer it is very thin, but exceedingly strong. More importantly, when you tear along the grain it gives you a wonderfully crooked “straight edge” without having to use a knife to cut it! It is possible to tear off strips of varying widths.

Needless to say, not only did I manage to get the veneer off all of the wardrobe, but I have since found myself another supply about 4' x 6' — so I now have enough for a life time!

I stain the veneer with a turps diluted black or dark brown oil based paint, but you could also use a wood stain if desired. Another method is to use boot polish diluted with methylated spirits or similar — but do it BEFORE sticking it down — much easier.



This brings me to the next point — painting your structure. I decided ages ago to paint my windows and doors BEFORE gluing the tiles together into walls. It is SO much easier this way. You have so much more control, as well as not having to worry

about fragile and delicate sections. Somehow, it seemed something always got damaged, no matter how careful I was.

Now, all of that is a thing of the past — pre-coloured window and door openings. Of course, you have to know what your paint scheme is going to be prior to starting.

Another tip for you — use an oil based paint for your windows and doors, NOT a water based paint. Only use a water based acrylic for the walls, etc — then if you make a small mistake and get



paint on a window or door, it is simply washed off with a water dampened cotton bud!

Where possible, I will paint my walls as FLAT sections BEFORE gluing the corners together into the completed form — again it is much easier this way rather than trying to “juggle” a whole building — especially if they are large in size!

While the walls were “flat” I cut and fitted the “timber beams” using a quick setting glue. I use either 5 minute ARALDITE or G-S HYPO CEMENT (comes in a fine needle-like applicator bought from **ebay**).

Hint — only do the “beams” in small hits otherwise your glue will dry out if trying to do too many at one time!

With my ROOF; DORMS; ROOF CAPPING and GUTTERING, I had done this as a separate unit. This included the painting and assembly of all pieces.



When it came time to fixing this to the main body of the building, I used a sheet of 1.5mm balsa glued to the tops of the 4 main walls giving me a flat area to glue the roof structure onto. This gave me a much stronger structure, rather than just trying to affix it to the tops of the tiles (only about 3mm gluing area) I had a good gluing “platform” available to me!

## **WEATHERING**

Once all the pre-painted pieces had been assembled, including the roof, walls, chimneys, Dorms, timber beams, etc. it was a matter of doing my WEATHERING.

At first I was going to “weather” while the building was still in FLAT format, but I thought it better if I did it AFTER assembly to achieve a more “even finish” to the weathering effects overall.

I know to achieve the “mortar” in the brickwork, most people do this with washes of paint. I prefer to do it with “weathering powders”. After painting my brickwork in the desired colours, I then apply the desired colour for the mortar lines using powdered chalk pastel. I have far more control on where it goes; how much I apply; and also the amount of area that I want affected!



If you look closely you will see that I have varied the paint colours throughout the brick work. I use shades of RED, ORANGE, YELLOW and BROWNS to achieve the varying colours in the bricks. I do not ever use just a SINGLE colour.

Some people prefer to pick out single bricks — I prefer to paint PATCHES, but blending the paints into one another. Once my “base colour” is applied — AND DRIED — I then “DRY BRUSH” the other colours over the base colour. I also use this technique for my ROOFING.



It is extremely important to do this AFTER the base colour has dried completely, otherwise you will find that your colours are mixing and spoiling the effects. Have a close look at photos on the internet to find colours suitable for your walls and roofing.

This same treatment is also applied when doing any kind of material, be it stone, brickwork, roof tiling, paving, timber, whatever!

So that the fine weathering powders are not damaged or “lost”, I use an artists’ Pastel/Chalk Workable Matte Spray Fixative to “fix” the powders permanently. Because it is a “workable” fixative you can apply other powders OVER the top of existing ones without any loss. It gives a good “natural” finish to your building.

## **SCENICS**

When I look at the Railway Model magazines I often see a beautiful scene spoiled because people do not “PLANT” their buildings into the surrounding landscape properly. By this I mean that a gap is left between the base of the building walls and the surrounding ground areas.

Your buildings have to look as if they have a FOUNDATION with the walls going INTO the ground — not sitting on top of it!





It doesn't take much to "hide" the bases! A little bit of sand applied, some "ground foam" (grass) or even some small stones, etc — as long as it hides the base of your building.

I have discussed previously how I scenic my dioramas, so I will not dwell upon this here. However, I will say it is important to try and "fit"



your building into a scene as realistically as you can. You don't have to be an expert to do it, but do be aware of the "naturalness" of a scene and what would normally appear in it.

Look around you when out walking; take notice how grasses vary in colour; how shrubbery interacts with grass; the colours in foliage; the hues and shades in fences and walls and rocks. Moss and lichens on a wall or roof of a house or out building. All of these we tend to take for granted, but it will surprise you what is there, unnoticed!

All of these things will help you when applying weathering and scenery to your buildings — and I bet you will find it extremely enjoyable to complete a scene this way!

***Until next time — Happy Modelling!***

***Rob***

