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Modelling

The unique nature of each individually-owned cane railway lends itself to modelling in any scale from HO to G. A small selection of steam, diesel and petrol locomotives, cane bin and harvester kits are available commercially as well as typical structures and engineering works. However, most modellers will scratch-build at least some models.

Queensland modellers seem to mostly model in HOn30/009 (3.5 mm) or On30 (7 mm) using track components based on N and HO respectively. While I am beginning to switch to On30, most of my current experience is with HOn30 and these notes reflect this.

Many HO modellers use 9mm gauge track (*Peco*, for example, has track and turnouts with respectable HOn30 sleeper spacing). This adequately represents 2' gauge and allows the modeller to use N gauge mechanisms and other components, including wheelsets and couplers. 1/4" or 7mm modellers likewise can use HO components and track spacing, also roughly 30" to represent 2'.

Layout, trackwork, scenery and wiring will be the same for a cane layout as for any other layout in a similar scale. Obviously more scratch building will be required in some scales, but commercial models of Queensland buildings, etc., can be used where appropriate. Cane fields can be modelled with fine broom straw, coir floor matting, both dyed or painted, and green carpet, with scale 'grasses' for individual plants. Tropical trees are commercially available in several scales.

The availability of small production run models is often problematic because of the part-time nature of the business and the use of low-yield rubber moulds. Thus the following notes are indicative, ask your local hobby shop or visit the CaneSIG web site for more up-to-date availability.

Hanover Castings has plans to again provide. *Bob Dow's* HOn30 cane bins kits. Meanwhile, plans for his freelanced locomotives, whole cane wagons, etc., are available on the web.

Chivers of the UK may resupply the Queensland prototype locomotive kits from *Colonial* and has a number of 009 and On30 kits suitable for cane modelling. *Far North Hobbies* also have craftsman-level kits for Queensland prototype locomotives.

Tom's Model Tractors provides a broad selection of cane bins, locomotives, harvesters and related equipment but this is a one person business and supply is very slow.

Horizon Hobbies (Warner, QLD) is the source for *QOM* (Queensland Outline Models) bulk sugar boxes and other Queensland prototype models.



Inspired by a weed spraying train seen at Bingera Mill, Greg Stephenson fitted tanks from a Hasagawa 1:72 refuelling tanker to 4 wheel underframes (above).



Greg used Hasagawa 1:72 ground equipment on 4 wheel chassis (above) to represent compressors and generators, etc., while a Hasagawa ground equipment kit provided bodies for 6 wheel underframes incorporating N gauge passenger bogies to model brake vans (below).



Obtaining basic scratch building supplies may also be problematic from time to time: Bachmann and other mechanisms, for example, don't seem to be

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available any more and more than one Aussie distributor has simply gone out of business.



Two HOn30 freelanced cane locos built from Bob Dow's plans and notes (<http://www.ozemail.com/~ozbob>). Built from styrene, they use Bachmann N gauge mechanisms, and are sitting in front of Bob's *Dowmont* canefield-style engine shed.



Greg Stephenson freelanced this HOn30 bogie diesel using a OO scale 4 wheel diesel kit narrowed down to fit a LifeLike N gauge bogie diesel chassis.



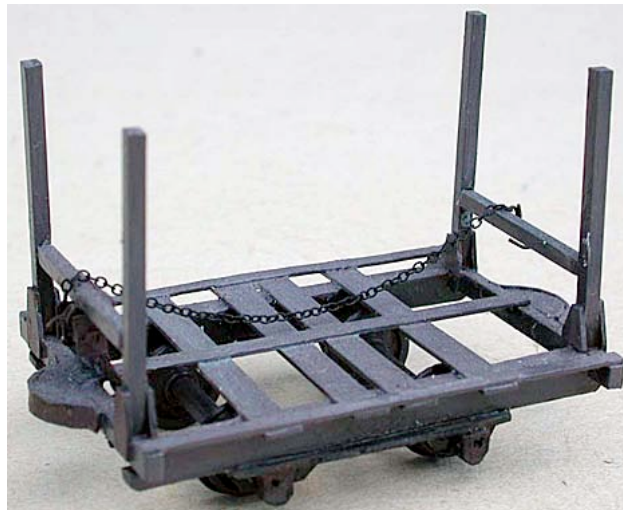
One of Bob Dow's freelanced 0-6-2T steam locomotives, built in styrene from his plans and mounted on a Bachmann 2-6-2 mechanism. While such a model suffers in comparison to the 7mm models here it provides a relatively easy and inexpensive steam loco representative of the cane era.

Three of John Armstrong's 7mm models: an Innisfail Tramway van (above right), wholeshtick cane truck (right) and a Comeng 0-4-0 (next page).

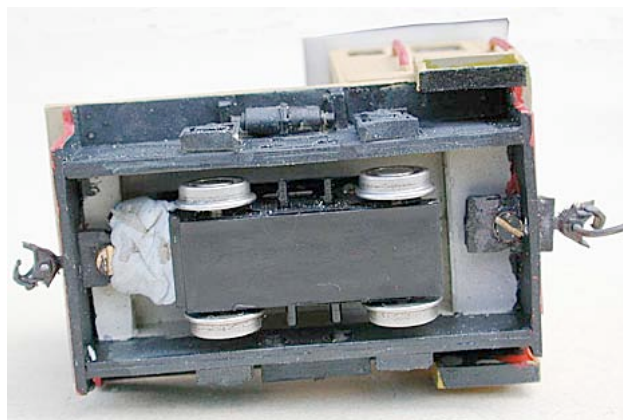
Incidentally, the Comeng, taller than it is long, is the first locomotive built by many Queensland On30 cane modellers because of its simplicity. At least one prototype for this model still exists at Fairymead Mill. In the early 1990s it was still in use shifting bins at the mill but is now out-of-service.



This brass model of Moreton Mill's Sandy by John Burgess (now owned by Bob Dow) shows the detail possible in 7mm.

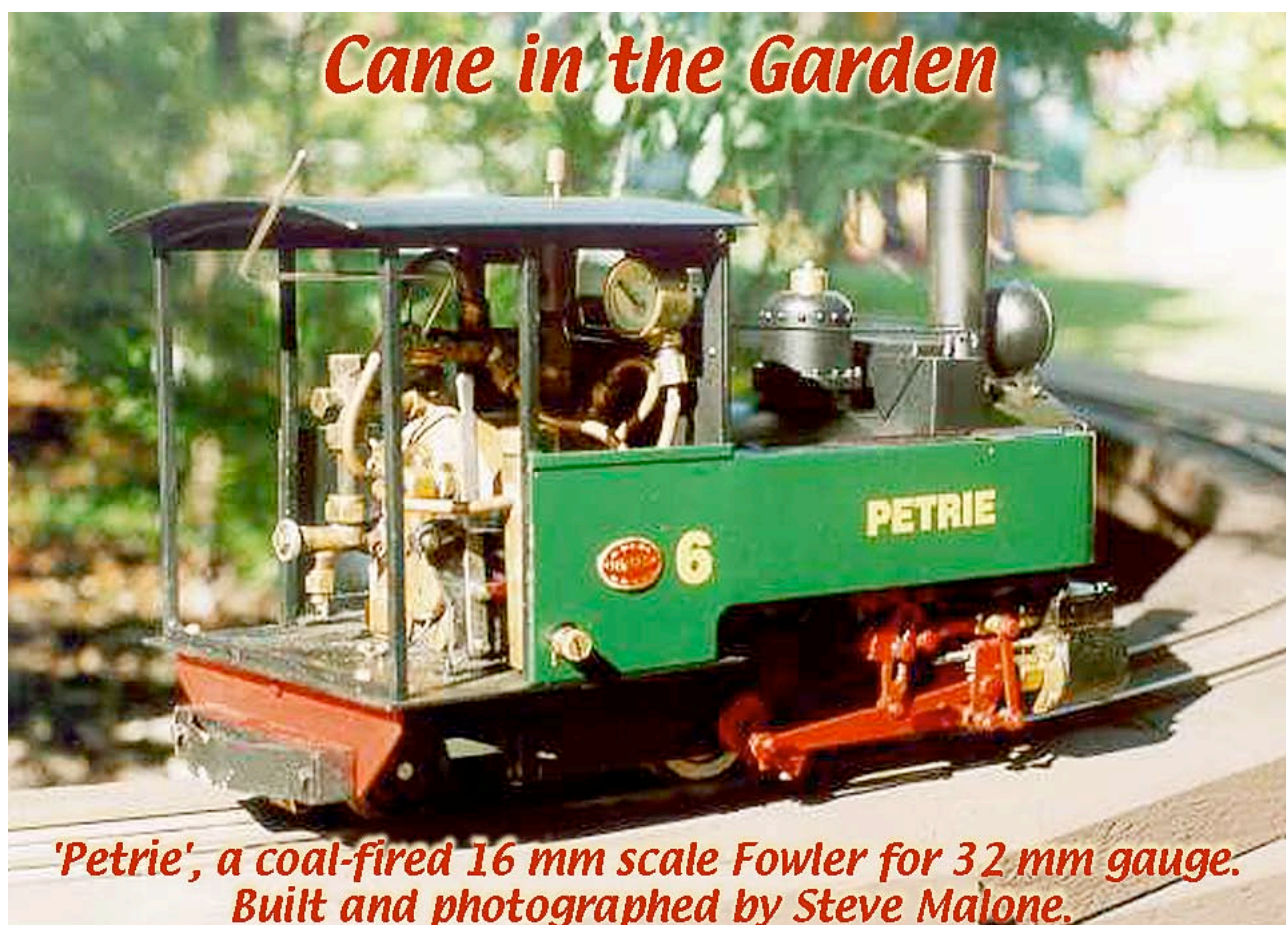


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The HO mechanism typically comes from a Bachmann GE 44 ton diesel (the early version with two bogie-mounted motors).

Plans and photos are available on the CaneSIG web site. Card models of the loco and a 4 ton bin will also soon be available for downloading from the web site and the author is also developing a 3D version of the loco for *Microsoft's Train Simulator* to use in an interactive museum display.



**'Petrie', a coal-fired 16 mm scale Fowler for 32 mm gauge.
Built and photographed by Steve Malone.**

The ultimate in cane modelling? I've not seen it run but Steve Malone's live steam model of a John Fowler 0-4-2 apparently runs as well as it looks.

The model demonstrates several characteristics of typical Queensland cane locomotives: simple design, side tanks, open cab, bright colours.