

Brickish Association “Newbies”

compiled by **Ralph Savelsberg**

Like so many things, the idea for this started on The Brickish Association discussion boards. Wouldn't it be nice if members who have joined Brickish in the recent past write a little something about their experience? Obviously this is aimed at lurkers who read the Brick Issue on-line but for some reason haven't yet joined the Association. And for current members it may be nice to know who some of the newer members are, what they build and what they like best about Brickish.

Chris Hall (joined September 2006)

Just before my 6th birthday, I entered a competition run by the Kellogg's company, to design and draw my vision of a town or city, with a winning prize of a LEGO town worth £10.00. I was lucky enough to win, and eventually a huge box arrived containing various different sets. Well, I was off in another world for a few years as LEGO featured high on my list of playthings as a child. I still have the original winning letter, plus a photo of the completed 'town' taken for the local newspaper.

Although I kept my LEGO (and still retain most of my sets from that age), the play interest fell completely off my radar of activities until more recently when my son was born. My wife noticed my enjoyment playing with a couple of his sets that I appeared to have 'hi-jacked', so she surprised me with a large set (Space Shuttle - Discovery edition) for my birthday about 4 years ago. This was the catalyst for me, but being a great fan of model trains, and preference to build basic buildings I



A very young Chris with his £10 of LEGO sets

thought it would be a great idea to make a LEGO town, so I asked my wife for the receipt, got my money back, and then realized I'd have to fork out nearly £100 for a new LEGO train set. So, and apologies to the purists out there, someone directed me to eBay where I purchased a used 4564 Freight Rail Runner set for a fraction of the price in February 2004.

Shortly after, I won some other train items and made arrangement to collect them as the seller worked less than a mile from my home. The seller mentioned the BA as a good source of information, interaction and buying opportunities, and that a LEGO fest/event was shortly to be held in Southport. I duly took the family along, and

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Also in this issue ...

Red Arrow
by **Ed Diment**

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Crown Copyright

Build your own microscale Red Arrow and join in the formation swooshing fun!

Princess and Frogs
by **Neil Martin**

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In a long forgotten corner of the castle gardens, a Princess is thinking there must be an easier way to find her true love!

Member Profile
Mandy Dee

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LEGO houses and a house full of LEGO.

“The Association Matters”

Club News

Chairman's Report

Simon Bennett (chairman@brickish.org)

I'm writing this from behind Yvonne and Pete's town display at the Great Western LEGO Train Show and what a fantastic weekend it has been. There are 18 different displays including two train layouts, (the main collaborative one in the centre of the room and David Tabner's), Ed's HMS Edinburgh, Ralph's military jets, Darren's big bricks and Chris and Mandy's houses. We have also had a new face on display in Richard Murray of Boleg Bros. who brought along some fantastic mosaics and some truly maddening pentomino puzzles. The museum tells me there have been over 3000 visitors over the weekend.

Many thanks are due to Martin Long for organising the show, including arranging for Barry from the

Bluewater store to turn up. I think he was surprised by just how much LEGO he sold to the visitors, in fact he ran out of the smaller sets on Saturday and had to drive back to Kent to restock. Hopefully we've demonstrated how we as a club can directly drive LEGO retail sales (and not just through our own buying!).

I hope you all received the email announcing the event as it was slightly disappointing how few members who weren't displaying came along. Ever since the Association started we in the Committee have found it hard to work out if the Association is doing what the members want and so, in order to assist us with this, we have created a questionnaire which you'll find with this BI. Please do take the time to fill it

in (it shouldn't take long and we've even given you an SAE to return it in) because that's the only way we'll know what we should try to do in the future. There's also a prize draw, so one random member who gets their form back by the time of the Christmas Party will win a 10144 Sandcrawler™.

Lastly I'd like to give a huge vote of thanks to Tony Priestman who recently decided to stand down as President of the Association. The post will remain vacant until next year's AGM.

Hope to see you at the Christmas Party.

Simon

Editor's Comments

William Howard (newsletter@brickish.org)

As predicted, it's been a busy but fun summer, culminating with me taking far too much LEGO to Swindon for the STEAM weekend - a strange state of affairs as I normally bring far too much back! If you couldn't attend STEAM I hope you managed to get some idea of the scale of the show from the various pictures that have been posted on the website. The show write-up is also on the web-site.

Roll on the Christmas Party, and see you there!

Play On

Membership

The annual subscription is £8. For resident UK members renewing for two years the rate is £14. Subscriptions fall due on the first day of the original joining month.

Make cheques payable to 'The Brickish Association' and send to Jon Reynolds, The Brickish Association, 29 Paulden Road, Lostock Grlam, Northwich, CW9 7PQ

You must be at least sixteen years of age to join.

Administration of all members' address details is now performed centrally by members themselves using the on-line facility within 'My Profile' on the web site. If you have not verified your personal details recently, please check they are still correct as from now on, all copies of the Brick Issue and other mail correspondence will only be posted to the addresses held in the online database.

Events

BA Christmas Party, LLW: 1 December 2007

The usual seasonal festivities. See the article in this issue for full details.

1000steine Community Meeting, Frechen: 4-6 January 2008

One of the biggest AFOL events in Germany with fans from all over Europe attending.

LEGO Trains, Saltcoats: 26-27 January 2008

Another LEGO train show where the children can operate the trains. Everyone welcome to come, bring a train, a building or just watch.

LEGO World, Copenhagen, Denmark: 13-18 February 2008

LEGO Denmark is planning a LEGO World Event and would like to do an AFOL MOC exhibition. Beside the AFOL exhibition there will be building events, model and set exhibitions, other LEGO related things, a big shop and some music.

Modelworld, Brighton: 15-17 February 2008

A huge model show covering almost all model-making/collecting hobbies.

BI-14: 5 March 2008

BI-14 scheduled to be posted to members. Copy deadline is 4th February 2008. Any and all content appreciated.

BA Christmas Party

by James Sutton

Once again, the Brickish Association's Christmas Party will be held in the Mansion House at LEGOLAND Windsor. This year the date for your diary is the 1st of December.

The cost for this year's party is still to be finalised. Please watch the website for an announcement. Children must be accompanied by a Brickish member.

The schedule of events is almost complete - we are just finalising the times. Events will include: talk from Guy Bagley - Chief Modelmaker (there's lots going on in the park for next year); make and take with instructions; used brick rummage - ex-modelshop stock; Miniland tour (weather permitting); Group build; Bring-a-themed-MOC competition (with prize); Speed build competition (with prize); Pass-the-parcel; 6-brick collaborative build; auction; Big Shop shopping; (all events to be confirmed).



Examining the auction items: Photo by Tim David



Members' models on display: Photos by Tim David

Please note that there may be an earlier start than previous years as the Big Shop will be open on the day, and we may need to make our purchases there before it opens to the public.

As we need to confirm numbers with LEGOLAND before the event you cannot turn-up and pay on the day. Payment must be made in advance, and must be received by Friday 16th November. Please send cheques, payable to 'The Brickish Association', to Michael LeCount, 102 Langsett Avenue, Wadsley, Sheffield, S6 4AB

BA Tableware

by Michael LeCount

By popular demand, the Brickish Association have had produced a range of tableware. These were unveiled at last year's Christmas party.

We currently have both sizes of Latte mug available for purchase and samples of all the other items for viewing. We will take orders for all the other items.

To place an order, please send details of your requirements and a cheque (made payable to the Brickish Association) for 25% of the cost to Michael LeCount. Please note that the cheque will not be cashed until we have taken delivery of your order. The items will then be shipped to you once the outstanding balance has been received, including any additional postage costs, unless any prior arrangements have been made.



| | |
|--|--------|
| 340ml Latte Mug, Standard size | £4.80 |
| 440ml Latte Mug, Large size | £5.50 |
| 250ml Cup and Saucer (No logo on saucer) | £6.30 |
| 250ml Cup and Saucer (Logo on Saucer) | £6.80 |
| 340ml Cup and Saucer (No logo on Saucer) | £6.80 |
| 340ml Cup and Saucer (Logo on Saucer) | £7.30 |
| 450ml Medium Teapot | £13.50 |
| 780ml Standard Teapot | £15.50 |
| Milk Jug | £5.50 |
| Sugar Bowl | £3.50 |
| 28cm Dinner Plate | £6.00 |
| 19cm Desert Plate | £3.80 |

(It is possible to get plates and bowls in other sizes. Please contact Michael to discuss any requirements.)

Brickish Association “Newbies”

compiled by Ralph Savelsberg

continued from page 1

was amazed at the standard and imagination that went into the exhibits. We bought a number of items from sellers and my daughter got her photo taken by the local paper building a large LEGO tower.

I knew that if I wanted to progress my interest in LEGO I'd either have to find out more about the BA or be exceedingly wealthy having to pay high-street prices for individual elements required for own build creations. Work and family continued to dominate my life, although I found time to amass a number of LEGO sets (including some 25 different sets from the 9 volt train theme), and picked up some loose elements here and there, whilst occasionally browsing the BA and other related websites.

Our first visit to LLW in August 2006 made up my mind to get in touch with the BA, and the following month I had paid up and made my first visit to Michael's fest in Sheffield where I met a number of you for the first time. Attending the BA Christmas party later that year with my son was great fun, and again I was made to feel welcome by those other members who attended. I certainly didn't appreciate just how closely the BA interacts with TLC and LLW and the benefits that are gained by the efforts that a number of you undertake with them. By now, I had begun to effectively cease buying LEGO on eBay in preference to the 'normal' channels, enjoying some of the benefits gained from BA membership. The AGM in April was a further opportunity to join in the fun and further increase the spend on LEGO; this time with a stronger focus on parts rather than sets. The next day saw the sharing of the LLW tent sale information, and an opportunity for me to really amass a parts inventory for future builds (via a long diversion from a business visit to the Midlands....don't tell the boss!). Twenty three kilos later and my loft soon felt the added load.

Joining several of you for a day at the NSC Star Wars event was probably the biggest eye-opener for me. Not only was the MOS collaboration display something to behold, but it also brought home to me how respected the BA is within wider circles. That is largely down to a number of dedicated members, without whom I would not have enjoyed my first year as a relatively 'quiet' member.

Thank you all

Ralph Savelsberg (joined April 2007)

I've been building with LEGO for as long as I remember. Unlike most AFOLs, although there was a period during which I didn't buy any LEGO, I never stopped building. My hobby was mainly a private thing. Only good friends and relatives knew about it. This changed when I bought a digital camera a few years ago. A new dimension was added to the hobby. All of a sudden, I could show my LEGO creations to other people all over the world, via Brickshelf and MOCpages. I build relatively large scale (1/22) trucks and cars, but my aircraft (scale 1/36) are probably best-known.

In May 2006 I moved to the UK because I had taken a job in Southampton. During my first months here, I



Ralph, looking rather smug with his LEGO Tomcat

spent most of my time working and getting adjusted to life on my own in a new country. Britain might be familiar to most of you lot, but to a Dutchman like me it can be a pretty weird place. It is probably about as weird as The Netherlands are to a Brit – well, considering that most people only visit Amsterdam, perhaps not quite that weird. In any case, after the first year here, I realised that I wasn't really enjoying myself all that much. Sure, the job is interesting, I don't mind there not being any foam on my beer, the weather here is about the same as on the other side of the channel, and I've developed a taste for curry and salt-and-vinegar crisps, but apart from building the occasional LEGO model and having a pint with colleagues now and then, life revolved around work.

I was stuck in a rut. What should I do? Meet new people, of course. I had seen the Brickish website sometime before and decided to visit it again. I read pretty much every copy of the Brick Issue. This seemed to be just the thing I needed, so I joined the Association. I was lucky in that not long after I joined the annual general meeting took place. That was a great weekend. I had a blast. A room full of AFOLs and their models, lots of cheap LEGO to be bought, and a nice meal in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Since then I've taken my models to public events in Petersfield and Twyford. It is great to see the reactions of the public. Some of my models have also been on display in the Brighton LEGO store.

So, did I get what I had hoped for? The answer is obviously a resounding YES! I have met great people and have made new friends. A few Brickish members from the Southampton area get together now and then and I regularly share ideas, as well as nonsense, with Ed Diment. Getting together with people and discussing each other's creations, what to build and how to build it, that's what I enjoy the most about Brickish. I should have joined sooner.

James Shields (joined Summer 2006)

When I was small, the world was a simpler place. The web was a place that spiders lived, computers the stuff of science fiction, a mobile was something suspended over a toddler's playpen, and an "eye pod" was something sticking out of a snail's head before you stamped it

into the ground. In those days, toys were something you cared for, because if you lost or broke them, you wouldn't get any more 'til the next Christmas or birthday. We had to make do with what we had and be creative. And since new toys didn't come often, we had to pick the ones with the most play value, so it was natural that LEGO was high on my Santa list.

Each new year, one of the most exciting events was the arrival of the new LEGO catalogue. I would dream of being able afford all the sets I wanted. I often built my own versions of the sets I liked the most out of the bricks I had. I was very excited when Space and Castle sets arrived. I used to buy some of the smaller sets out of pocket money, so that I would have suitable minifigs for my own castles and ships. Of course they were the wrong colours, and I didn't have the specialised components, but apart from that I built some passable impersonations.

As time went by, however, people told me I was too old for LEGO, and eventually I started to believe them. Gradually, LEGO got pushed to the back burner, and other interests took over. For the best part of a decade, LEGO was a very, very small part of my life. Fortunately, LEGO Star Wars came along and rekindled my interest, and soon it was as strong as ever. Then I discovered eBay! Having my own disposable income allowed me to acquire some of the old '80s sets I'd missed out on in my youth.

My first proper AFOL experience was at a science fiction convention where I and Richard James organised a sci-fi LEGO display. We had a whole room to fill and we produced a stunning Battle of Hoth display for the centre-piece, augmented by other Star Wars sets, The Prisoner, Star Trek, Harry Potter, The A-Team and even Teletubbies!

Thanks to Richard I eventually joined Brickish and it's led to a lot of fun. The forum is a great place to exchange ideas, and I've got some great suggestions to improve the look of my models. But it's one thing to read other people's views, it's another to meet them in the flesh, which I did at a Brickish tour of the LEGO factory in Denmark. I was delighted at how welcome the other members made me feel. Pete actually ran up to greet me, which was only slightly scary. Apart from getting to see the factory, which was amazing, we met some of the designers, stayed in the LEGO Village and spent a day in the Billund LEGOLAND

I've had some other great experiences, such as stomping around the streets of Miniland, pretending to be marauding giants, at the Brickish Christmas party; hanging out in LEGOLAND with other members the day before the park officially opened; and driving around Ireland with Pete and Yvonne looking for LEGO shops.

Joining Brickish has been an overwhelmingly positive experience for me, and I've found them one of the friendliest groups I've ever been part of. I can hardly wait to meet more of you at future Brickish events.

Andrew Summersgill (joined August 2007)

To begin with, I must explain my true identity ... for I am not really Andrew Summersgill, Insurance Claims



Andrew (or should that be Dr S) with Tabletown

Handler and family man - no, I am really Doctor Augustus Julius Sinister IV, would-be Emperor of the planet Earth and ruler of the Universe! No, hang on, maybe I really am Andrew ... it's so confusing, having an alter-ego. Especially when there's a third person ... my alter-LEGO. When I'm not being Doctor Sinister, evil genius and super-villain, I'm playing with LEGO in my garage. Actually, even that's not entirely true, unfortunately (for my wallet!) I'm one of those people who have far too many hobbies than can possibly be good for me. In addition to my interest in LEGO I'm addicted to computer games, I have an interest in military history and I'm an avid science-fiction fan - Doctor Who especially. My list of hobbies is nearly endless - but LEGO is taking up more and more of my time.

My interests with LEGO go back to my childhood, when I had a large Moonbase full of early Classic Space sets - now sadly lost to me. After that, I was restricted to three storage boxes with a scattering of basic bricks which I used to make spaceships and bases on far-flung planets and wrote stories about them. I even wrote a technical manual about the universe in which these spaceships would fight - including schematics of the ships, painstakingly measured from the original models. I still have both ships and diagrams.

During my childhood, my best friend was my cousin, Matthew - we used to play a lot with LEGO and he was always amazed when one of our dogfights would see me realistically destroying one of my LEGO spaceships - I knew exactly how to rebuild them of course as I had small fleets of identical designs!

My "Dark Ages" truly finished when the first Star Wars LEGO sets came out and since then, my collection has expanded massively. I'll buy anything that catches my eye - I just can't get enough LEGO. I really get a kick out of the whole "system" aspect of LEGO toys - these days it's possible to have LEGO Darth Vader meet LEGO Spider-Man down the local LEGO pub. There's even a LEGO version of Doctor Sinister!

My main LEGO interest right now is the town in my garage. Tabletown is about four feet wide by about twelve feet long. Matthew would have loved it, but sadly he passed away a few years ago - and so I've dedicated the Tabletown website (www.tabletown.co.uk) to him.

I was a member of the BA briefly some years ago after I attended a RLD event at LLW but then two small children came along and Real Life got in the way for a while.

Tabletown was also utterly destroyed at one point, but since it's been rebuilt my enthusiasm has really taken off again and I'm back with the BA. It's great to know that there are other grown adults like me enjoying little plastic bricks.

Louise Dade (joined July 2007)

When I was ten years old I passed my driving test. Okay, so it was in Denmark, in a small plastic car and wasn't valid anywhere outside of LEGOLAND ... but I still had to learn the highway code, how to give-way, signal, tailgate and stick two fingers up at van drivers. I might have mis-remembered part of it!

That was the height of my LEGO enthusiasm, a love that went back to my very first set, the Classic Space Starfire I, quickly followed by more sets and by the time I got the Futuron Monorail Transport System I was hooked. I liked Technic sets too and gradually Technic overtook Space in my affections. It was the motors that did it; I put motors on everything whether it needed them or not.

In my mid-teens LEGO took a back-seat. I would hesitate to call it a Dark Age because I never thought it was "just for kids" and I still occasionally got the sets out. There was one glorious summer when I had the monorail set-up on my sister's patio. But eventually A-levels and then University pushed LEGO to the back of my mind as something to do when I had more time. My Technic digger sat there on my shelf like Banquo's ghost, a constant reminder to me of the abandoned LEGO in my wardrobe.

Then, one day in autumn 2006, I was shopping in Milton Keynes and noticed the LEGO store. My heart skipped a beat, it was like I imagine people feel when they see a childhood sweetheart after many years and he looks just the same as he did back then. I went inside the store and the first thing I saw was an advertisement for the Mindstorms NXT. At that moment I fell in love with LEGO all over again. It was like not only meeting your child-

hood sweetheart, but also discovering he is still unmarried and is the rich owner of a hi-tech company.

That Christmas I was the proud owner of an NXT and immediately started a dalliance in the AFOL world (I knew I wasn't alone, but I had no idea how many AFOLs there are). By the time I bought my second NXT I knew this wasn't just love, it was commitment.

It was while buying at BrickLink that I first saw mention of The Brickish Association, and during another trip to LSMK I noticed a little display case with a model by a Brickish member - at that moment I decided to join.

Since joining the BA, I've brought out my old space sets and even added to them. Can you believe that before I joined the BA I was going to sell them to concentrate on Technic? Now, I have plans to display my space sets at home as the luna spaceport "Tranquility Base". I also hope to meet some of you at events and fests very soon.

Thank you BA, you saved my LEGO!



Louise's Technic collection

Vignette: The Princess and the Frogs

by Neil Martin

When I started opening my haul of parts bags from the LEGOLAND Windsor sale tent, I soon found myself with lots and lots of green frogs (Bricklink reference x223). I recalled the child's story in which a princess kisses a frog and he turns back into a prince. And an idea for a vignette was formed in my mind.

In an abandoned corner of the castle gardens our Princess doesn't seem too happy with the idea of having to kiss up to seven frogs in order to find her Prince Charming! Or maybe she suffers from batrachophobia?



LEGO 75th Anniversary Celebration by William Howard and Martin Long

On Friday 10th August, eight members of the Brickish Association attended the 75th Birthday Celebration at the LEGO offices in Slough. The day started at 10am with us arriving from various parts of the UK and being greeted by Vanessa Wilcock - our host for the day. We were shown to the meeting room where we were to give our presentation and the restaurant where there was space for us to display our models. At 10:30am we were greeted by Richard Stollery, dressed very casually in polo shirt and shorts - but more about that later!

Richard gave us a tour of the building. First, we were taken to the European Consumer Service Centre. It's truly amazing; very friendly and informal. It comes across as a great place to work and they have many current sets made up and available to help answer any questions. We learned that you need to be able to speak two, preferably three, languages to work there full-time as they handle calls from all over Europe. As we continued the tour, we were made to feel very welcome and the rest of the operation seemed to be equally friendly.



Vanessa Wilcock and Richard Stollery in fancy dress.
Photos: Stewart Turkington

At 11:30am the meeting room filled up with LEGO employees. After a brief introduction by Conny Kalcher it was our turn. Martin Long introduced the Brickish Association members and William Howard then continued with the first half of the presentation, handing back to Martin for the latter half. The presentation explained AFOL culture, language and terminology in the UK and across the globe, then focused on the models and displays that Brickish Association members are involved in around the country. Ed Diment's HMS Edinburgh got the biggest WOW; BOLOCS got the biggest laugh; and the Great Western LEGO Train Show video came pretty close to a standing ovation - so all-in-all we made a great impression.

After lunch, we gathered in the foyer for the team mosaic race. The mosaics were pre-printed on sixteen 48x48 baseplates - one of the LEGO logo and the other of the famous red duck - the tesserae being 2x2 plates. Team Duck were the winners, but it was a close run thing, going to the last few plates on the final baseplate.

Afterwards people changed into their fancy dress costumes for the afternoon party. Around 2:30pm various characters started appearing - Lara Croft, Chewbacca (Richard Stollery - which explained the very casual dress earlier), several Pink Ladies, an 80s roller-skater (Vanessa), Austin Powers, a mutant turtle, Superman, Indiana Jones, a punk, several hippies, Sergeant Pepper, Captain Jack Sparrow, Trinity, Scooby Doo - you name it!

The afternoon/evening party was held at Stoke Park. The afternoon events included a bouncy castle; a surf riding machine; a coconut shy; a hoop-la; garden Jenga; amazing displays by a speed painter and a very non-politically correct comedian.

The party then continued with a superb BBQ, entertainment provided by Chappers and Dave and a disco until Midnight. All in all, it was a superb day and we as the Brickish Association felt privileged to be a part of it.

So you knew that LEGO Customer Service was good ... by William Howard

... but the Call Centre based in Slough is now officially the Best Centre for Customer Service in Europe after LEGO won the CCF European Call Centre 2007 award.

And the thing that sets LEGO apart from the other eight top-ranking contact centres? Their Call Handling. As one of the judges told Sophie Jenkins (European Consumer Services Director), "anyone can make a nice Powerpoint presentation about the things they do, but when we visited LEGO and listened to Nadine Hoffman and Sari Rasenen, what we heard put LEGO in a different class to the competition." "This is the best news and the best reason for winning we could possibly have had", said Sophie.

The awards evening was topped off by Richard Stollery (Senior Director, Consumer Experiences) winning the Best Business Strategist award for his work to take the consumer to the heart of LEGO.



Sophie Jenkins and Richard Stollery with their awards.
Photo from S Jenkins

Member Profile: Mandy Dee

* What is your earliest LEGO memory?

My older sister had LEGO from an early age, so it was always there, in the cupboard in the dining room. We had loads compared to my friends – and it was sorted even then, not just jumbled in a box. We had a large biscuit tin just of 2 x 4's ... It makes me laugh now when I remember how proud I was! I remember receiving the homemaker maxi fig sets for Christmases and birthdays, which was very exciting.

* What was the earliest MOC you built?

I used to build mazes on a large baseplate and push marbles round them, as there were no minifigs. Marbles inhabited most of my LEGO creations. The first MOCs I remember being proud of were a fleet of five ships, all different. There was a tanker, a fishing ship, a research ship, and a paddle steamer. The identity of the fifth escapes me, but I am very keen to recreate the paddle steamer ... watch this space!

* What brought you out of the dark ages?

When the kids were young, we helped them build a nine foot tall tapering LEGO tower, with each floor built on a separate baseplate. I remember enjoying the challenge of planning the pillars on the bottom layer so that they would be in the correct place to support the much smaller top tiers. Each floor was then fully fitted with shops, restaurants, hotel rooms, a gym, and hairdressers. That was when I discovered the pleasure in creating detailed interiors, and when the tower was finished, I couldn't wait to build something else.

* Are you a collector or a builder?

I am most definitely a builder, although as a family we do have a huge collection. My favourite theme is the underwater sets, as I was brought up on a diet of Man from Atlantis and Jacques Cousteau.

* What LEGO-related activity do you spend most time doing?

What with Petersfield and the recent two-day STEAM show, I have probably spent more time lately exhibiting than building. I do find it very rewarding though, if a little tiring by the end of the day. The faces of the little kids make it all worthwhile, as does the odd adult who is teetering on the brink of AFOLdom and just needs a gentle shove in the right direction.

* What is your favourite LEGO Element?

It has got to be cheesers – they are changing the shape of LEGO, literally! All those neatly sloped corners ...

mmmm! I am also rather fond of arches, but then anyone who has seen my MOCs already knew that!

* What would be your dream LEGO element?

Thatched roof slopes would be cool – it is something that I find impossible to successfully model using the current elements.

* What models are you working on now?

I am aware that most of my MOCs are fairly rectilinear, so have been trying to learn some of the more advanced building techniques. To practice building 3D curves, I am doing some fungi models. They are small and fairly simple, and don't take up too much time or space – both precious resources at the moment.

* What's it like living in a family of AFOLs?

My husband Chris is a keen builder, and also a parts hoarder, which is really useful when it comes to starting a new MOC. We usually have enough of most bricks, and Chris will happily send off Bricklink orders for me when I run out. Our son Justin builds mainly mecha, and will sometimes help me with any fiddly bits or detailing. Our daughter Rachel has, at 15, already entered her dark age, but can often be cajoled into doing some cooking or washing when I am engrossed in a big building session. The main benefits, I suppose, are not having to hide how much we spend on LEGO from each other (although Chris has been known to 'forget' to mention that he 'popped' into Windsor on the way home), and having company on long journeys to AFOL events.

* Is there a down side?

It is very hard for both of us to be building at once, for several reasons. I am a messy builder, and tend to surround myself with a broad swathe of bags and drawers of all the parts I am using, along with many loose bricks. Unless Chris is using a completely different spectrum of colours, that makes it hard for him to find things. And someone has to mow the lawn...

* What do your non-AFOL friends make of your hobby?

Most seem to admire the MOCs, but I get the impression that they think a grown-up woman with a full-time job and a family should be making better use of her time. What, like watching Big Brother? I think not!

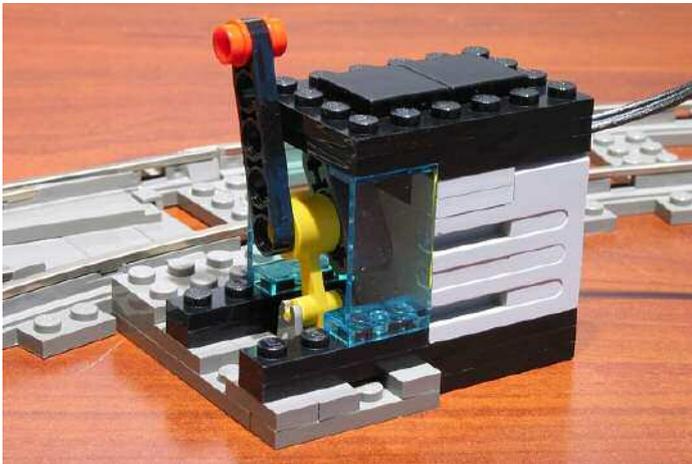


More of Mandy's houses can be found at <http://www.brickshelf.com/cgi-bin/gallery.cgi?m=mdee>

Point Controllers

by Richard James

Several methods for remote controlling 9v points have been displayed by BA members and by others on Brickshelf. The neatest and simplest method of motorising a set of points that I could find was on Brickshelf courtesy of Mark Riley.



The three things that I like about this design are:-

1. It works on unmodified points
2. It is compact and sits within the foot print of the points
3. In addition to the motor, it uses a relatively small number of parts all of which are easily obtainable – no rare specialist bits

Initially I modified Marks design by using a 1x4 thin Technic lift arm with stud connector in place of the two 1x3 thin Technic lift arms.



This was simply because I had a good supply of the former. But, I also wanted to include a signal with the points to run off the same motor and thought the longer lift arm would be useful for this. At first my idea had been to try using lengths of string and/or additional lift arms but designs which did work just looked too ungainly. Then I hit upon the idea to use the lift arm attached to the motor shaft to push a slider and after some trial and error got the system to work.

This now uses quite a lot more parts and I believe the 1x4 red Technic plates with the crown ends are no longer available through LEGO, though plenty are available through Bricklink.

Of course for each point that is converted, a means of turning the motor on and off, forward and reverse and for just the right duration is required. Despite their expense and rarity I decided the Technic pole reverse switch was an essential element. Combined with 2x8 electric connector plates several switches can be attached to the same power supply. I also happen to think that they just look right for the job.

As for the power supply itself, I wanted to use an RCX brick because it can be programmed to turn on motors for a fixed duration. If a point motor in the Riley design is just left running it will either burn out or detach itself from its moorings. The system I came up with attaches a bank of four switches to one motor output and a touch sensor to an input. When the sensor is pressed the RCX turns on the motor for 0.1 seconds. To operate the points set the pole reverse switch to the required position, press the sensor then set the switch back to the 'off' position. I combined the switches and touch sensor into a little control box.

The touch sensor is pressed indirectly by pushing down on the 2x2 tile. Under the 2x2 tile is an arrangement of inverse slope bricks and a short Technic spring arm. This makes for a stiffer button press and so less chance of an accidental knock set things off at the wrong moment and just looks better.



With this system up to twelve points can be run off one RCX. The duration control provided by the RCX should prevent unfortunate motor mishaps. I am thinking about modifying the program to include a reset step so that only the first button push operates the motors. Two other advantages of this design are several points can be switched at the same time and that the next point change can be set in advance.

As a practical/aesthetic refinement each control unit is colour coded and the switches are numbered 1-4 using the yellow 1x1 numbered tiles. A corresponding coloured tile is then placed on the point motor unit to identify which controller it is attached to. The little levers on the control box are set to indicate the last position of the switch, since this is always returned to the 'off' position.

I have not yet had the time and space to set up a layout using these points and I have since thought of one or two refinements to try before I do. If anyone wants to try using them for a display layout I have twelve left and twelve right hand points made up and available.

Red Arrow

by Ed Diment and Ralph Savelsberg

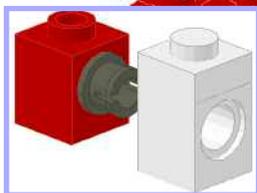
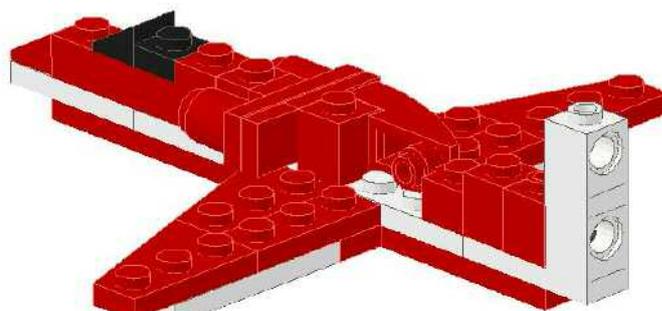
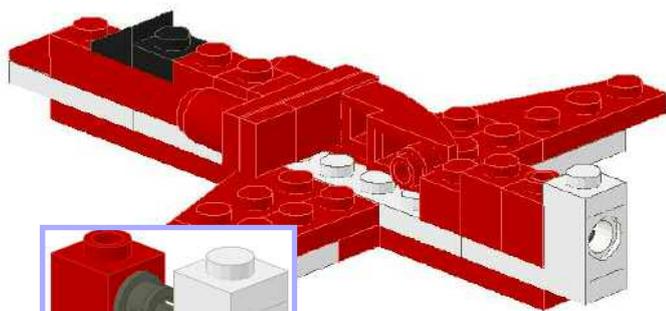
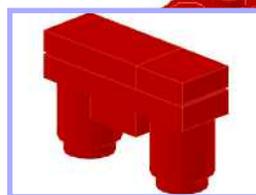
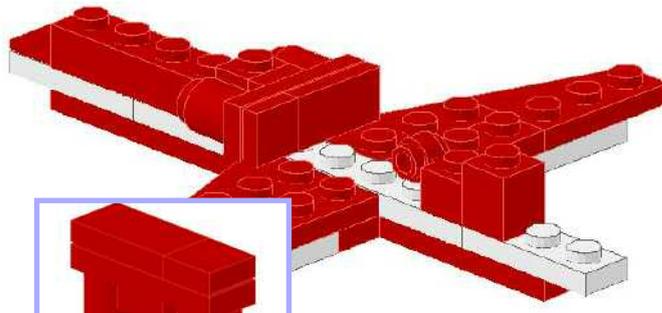
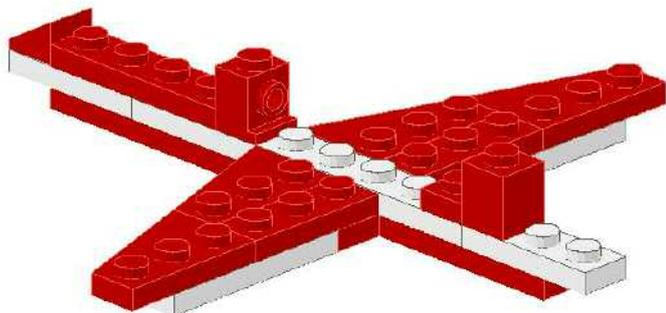
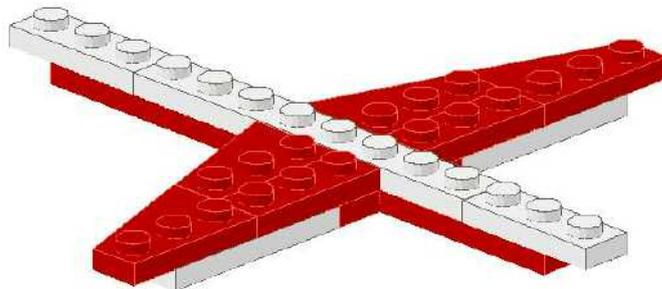
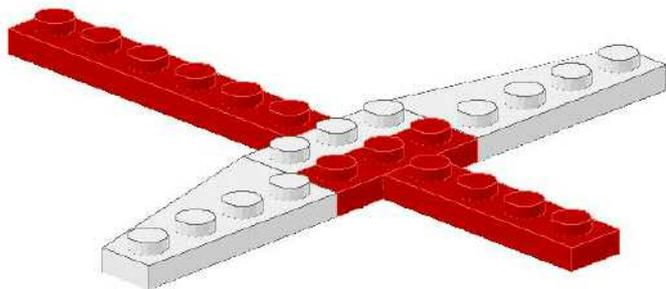
I am sure most Brickish members are aware by now that Ralph's main LEGO building interest is in creating 1/36 scale models of aircraft from around the world. Since joining Brickish Ralph's planes have reignited my interest in aviation and we have had many interesting discussions on building aircraft out of LEGO. During a recent bout of building activity some micro-scale aircraft emerged at around 1/100 scale, including a micro version of Ralph's 'Vandy 1' F-14 Tomcat. It is from this idea of micro scale aircraft that the Red Arrow's Hawk emerged.

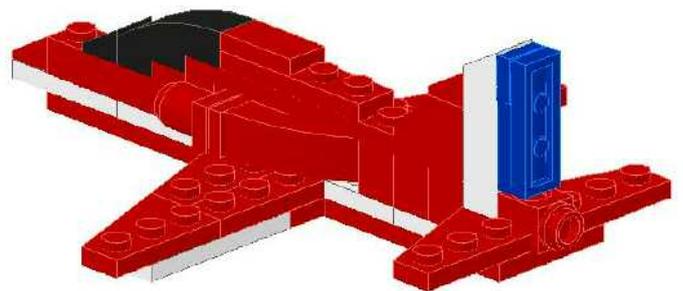
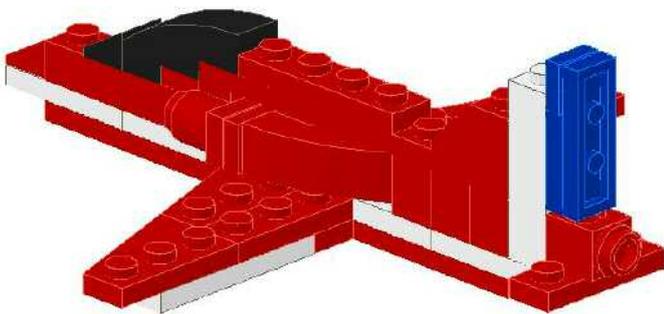
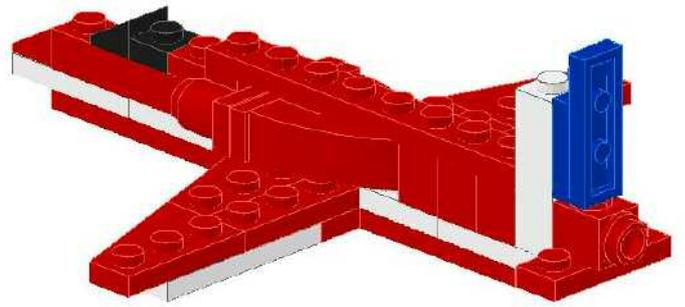
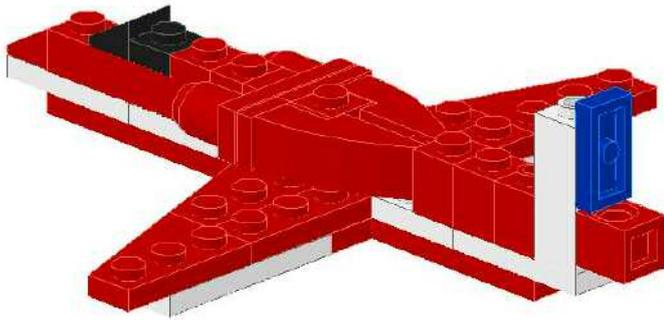
We had discussions originally about a 1/36 scale Red Arrow to go into the Window Into The Community project at the LEGO brand stores. This may still happen once one or other of us has found the time and ironed out the technical issues. During a recent meeting, however, I brought along a mini Red Arrow (about 1/72 scale) which looked OK, but somehow didn't quite work. About three

hours later after a few beers and some frenzied building, the Red Arrow had distilled down to the micro scale model presented in this issue.

An idea immediately sprang to mind when building this model, that if we could get eight other people at least to build one and bring it to the Christmas party we would have a complete set of nine Red Arrows. Being small and easily handled, formation 'swooshing' will be entirely achievable, so we're looking forward to a few 'Diamond Nine' formation swooshes at the Christmas Party. There are some great pictures of the Red Arrows on the RAF's website (just 'Google' Red Arrows), so if you're looking for some inspiration ...

It just remains to say, get building and we'll see the results for all of you who are coming to the Christmas Party [*or even the AGM - Ed*].





Bill of Materials

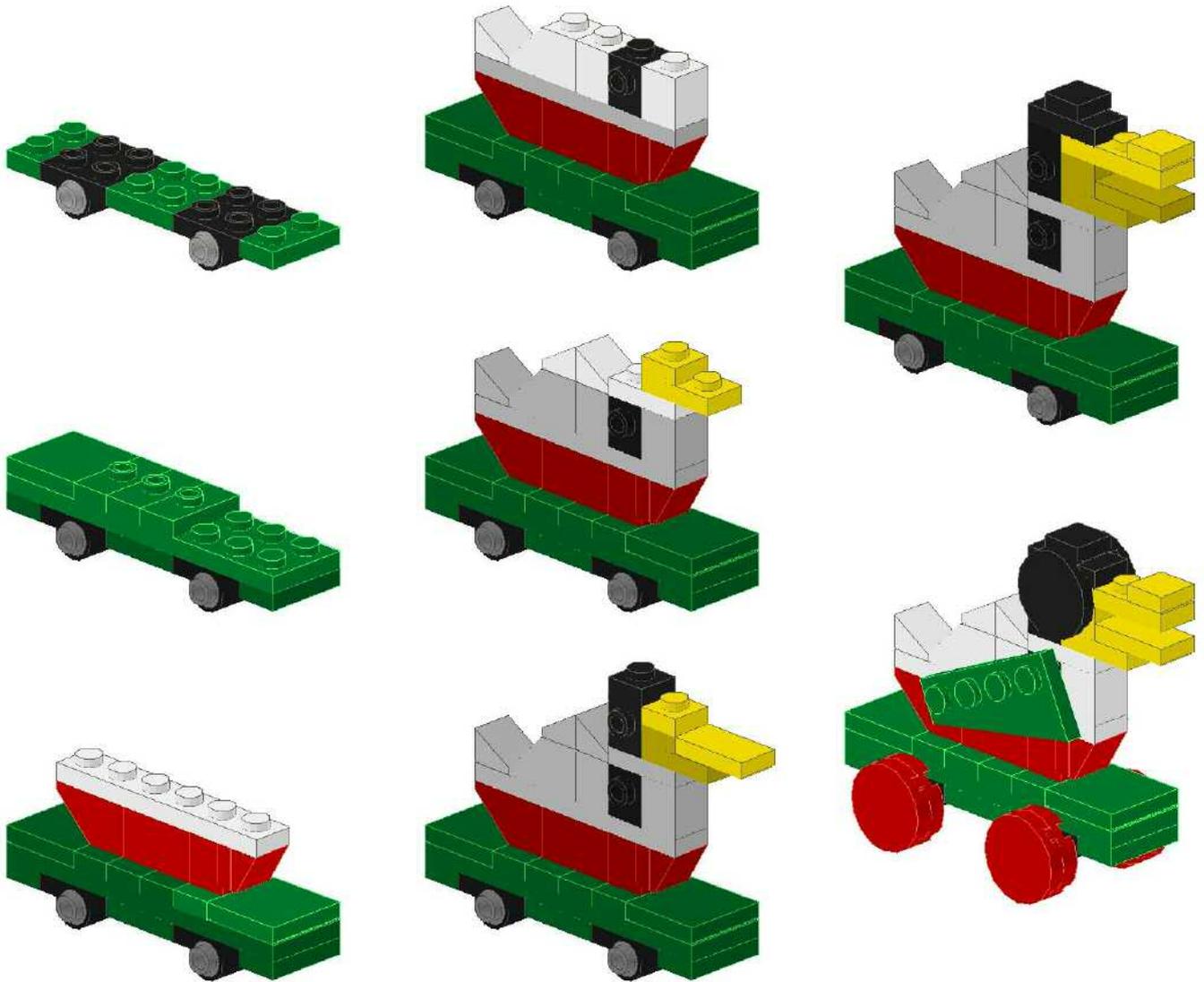
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| | 1x | 1x | | 2x | |
| 1x | | 1x | | 1x | |
| | 1x | 1x | | 3x | |
| 2x | | 5x | | 3x | |
| | 1x | 3x | | 1x | |
| 1x | | 4x | | 4x | |
| 2x | | 1x | | 4x | |
| | 1x | 1x | | 1x | |
| 2x | | | | 2x | |



Red Arrows Diamond 9
Photo: BBC Archive

13. Classic LEGO Duck

by Richard James



One Brick Short of a Basic Set?

by Mandy Dee

You know you are addicted to LEGO when:

- 1 You have LEGO models on display in every room of the house.
- 2 You own more than five items of clothing with LEGO on.
- 3 The most important item in your business travel bag is a roll of Ziploc bags for parting out all those LEGO sets from foreign toyshops
- 4 You start describing the colour of things you see around you as Maersk Blue and Sand Red
- 5 The red roses you buy your wife for Valentine's Day are made of LEGO
- 6 The postman brings you a packet or parcel that rattles at least once a week
- 7 You have redesigned your house around your LEGO collection
- 8 Your yearly spend on LEGO equals the GDP of a small African country

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