



*Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year  
from Phil & Len 2010*

### *Another Year, Another Story*

January snowfall was the first major topic of the year; proper snow that lasted for some days. Snowmen appeared on Oak Avenue, and icicles hung thickly from the gutters.



February was a railway-busy month: starting with the G-Scale Solent Group's annual lunch which coincided with the *weather-delayed* 'Freight Event' at the frosty Watercress line, with plenty of atmospheric steam to be seen, and taking-in the Alton Model Railway show on our way back.

The next railway event was Brighton Modelworld, including a large remote-controlled excavator, and a highly scenic model based around the L&B. Also some new G-Scale layouts, plenty of Lego, and some large-scale fighting tanks driven by 'Action men' figures, and featuring Bass-rich-



sound, and smoke effects which put OO and even LGB Sound Locos to shame!



February concluded with both Bruksbanen *and* the Scandi-Demo layout, appearing at the Kenavon show in Reading with the first outing of the year for our new Maxus Camper, which later took our 'modular' to the Surrey G-Scale event at East Horseley, at the beginning of March.



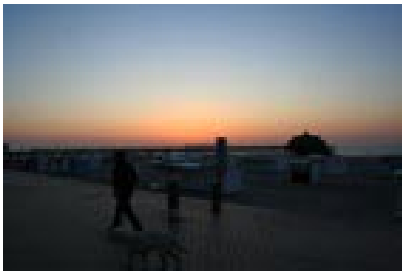
April saw us crossing (under) the channel in the Camper, heading for Dortmund. via Hamburg... Overnighting in misty Holland, before Miniatur Wunderland (where the working Airport is still



under construction [www.miwula.de](http://www.miwula.de)) then on to the Intermodellbau. Though the camper was not yet fully functional, it proved a warm and snug retreat, for the chilly evenings. We also visited an extensive Railway museum close to our camp site (Bochum-Dalhausen). We ended our trip with an evening visit to Blankenburg in Belgium, a place Phil has memories of from a 1963 Nalگو Hotel-based holiday. The crazy golf course he remembers is still there -though looking slightly updated!



We were blissfully unaware of the issues being caused by the volcanic ash cloud at the time, even when not being able to board an *earlier than we had booked* Shuttle: the first we knew of the incident were the signs 'Gatwick



Airport Closed' as we approached the M25, followed by 'Heathrow Airport Closed' as we passed the M23. Then a quick trip to Devon, and with Martin's assistance, the gremlins were fixed. In June the Maxus officially became a 'Motor Caravan' with the DVLA, after submitting documentation of all the changes. We then upgraded the Hot Water Tubing to High-Pressure Rubber Fuel/Food Grade hose, in place of the original transparent PVC tubing.

Back home, we again didn't head north to GRail, however, Bruksbanen appeared at Farnham as the 'Solar Powered Railway', surprising one young visitor who had been sorry not to see it at the Ilfracombe Show again this year.

Early summer saw the usual collection of garden railway open days, we didn't hold one ourselves this year as much of our time was spent completing the van, and on the three portable layouts.



There were also many visits to Hollycombe; alternating the Skandi and Bruksbanan layouts. All were well attended and the layouts well received. The Swiss Railway Soc. held interesting meetings in Southampton throughout the year, and Lin also made a quick trip to Malta for work, experiencing the 'Easyjet Flight Experience' ( for the first and only time).



**NORD KAPP or bust!?**

July saw us setting off on the year's big trip, the one for which the camper had been prepared. Taking the ferry from Harwich to Esbjerg, in ' Commodore Class' once again, we arrived in a very



hot and sunny Scandinavia, and headed for the central Danish Island of Fynn where we found a good place to stop on the coast, and enjoyed a refreshing dip in the sea. Next morning, we visited the recently refurbished National Railway Museum at Odense. Parking for the high-roofed' Camper was provided in the Museum grounds - very handy! ( Google Maps and then Email)

We visited the Nässjö Railway Museum, which had a good variety of coaching stock, referbished station interiors, signalling equipment, and a vast collection of Railway plaques. enroute, to meeting Ulf and Gunilla at 'The High Chaparral' (honest!)



The High Chaparral is a western theme park, with buildings shows and entertainment. It Includes a steam train that gets held up! Really great fun for all! Also a transport museum we didn't visit.

We then continued northwards, calling in at a very interesting museum alongside the Göta Kanal, with its collection of pleasure boats, toy cars and trains. While eating our ice cream outside, we

watched a pontoon motor past, complete with sun canopy and people sitting around a table.



Arriving in Gavle in the early evening we took advantage of the quickstop camping available to vans.

The following morning was spent at the railway museum, before we continued the journey north along the main East Coast route with its impressive river bridges. Overnighting at a small

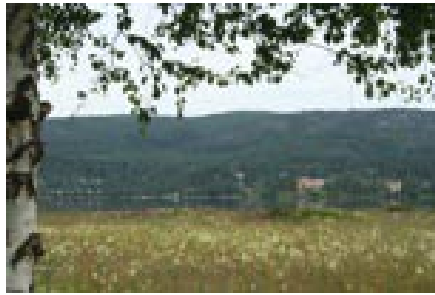


Lakeside campsite, with views over the flower filled meadows, Moving on we saw the completed building works of the new 'Botniabanan' mainline rail route in northeast Sweden. Impressive works for a single track mainline, and later opened by King Carl XVI Gustav.

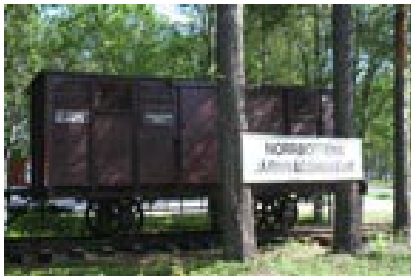
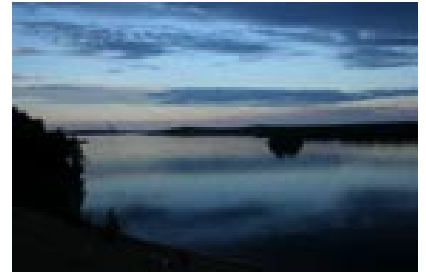


Continuing northwards, temperatures were still in the high 30's. At Lulea we stayed at the same campsite as in '96, though it was barely recognisable as it has become a substantial holiday resort.

Having failed to find the model shop we were looking for we did pay a visit to the local railway



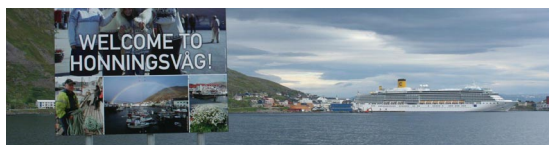
museum, which focuses on the Malmbanan, the Iron ore line between Lulea and Narvik. There were many varieties of Ore Wagon to walk past, including some UK-built 30T wagons, a number of old ore locos, as well as a good collection of other rolling stock. We also had time to take a trip on the train. Carrying on north, we crossed the Arctic Circle and started to see



reindeer alongside the road. We also came upon our first 'Elk-Incident' involving a collision between an Elk and a motorist travelling the other way. As habitation and trees became more sparse, rocks and lakes became more common. Our next 'night' was at a Norwegian camp site with many mosquitoes; its saving grace being an unobstructed view of the midnight sun!-before Nord Kapp!

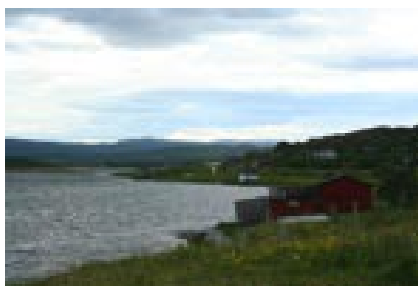
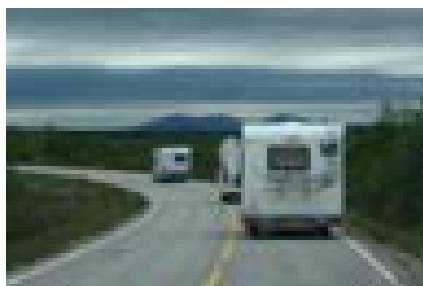


The following 'day' saw us all the way to Nord Kapp:.. now via Toll-tunnel rather than by ferry, Being in the van we parked up with the dozens of other campers to wait for midnight. By 23hrs the coaches started arriving and the place filled up with people. We needed imagination to say we saw

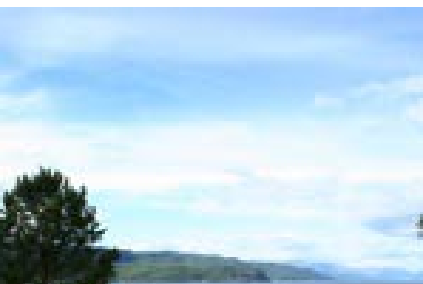


the midnight sun at Nord-Kapp, as it was overcast- again! and with a strong wind across plateau The following morning in wind and rain we began the journey south, back to Honingsvag, A large

liner that had been in port the previous day had moved on. We headed south along the Norwegian



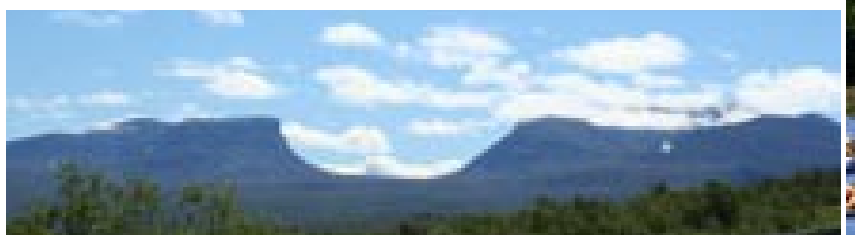
coastal road, stopping at Alta to view the extensive rock carvings, in a wonderful coastal setting. Snow patches, Reindeer, winding roads, waterfalls and rock characterised the journey south to



Narvik, where we revisited the station and docks; with passenger and freight traffic, as well as the long Iron-ore trains. With an intelligent battery charger from Clas Ohlson to help recharge the batteries (after several days without sun or electric hook-up), we headed back east to Sweden, (and better weather) by following the 'King's Road' and ore railway toward Kiruna. We found a good campsite at Bjorklinden where we could park up with a view



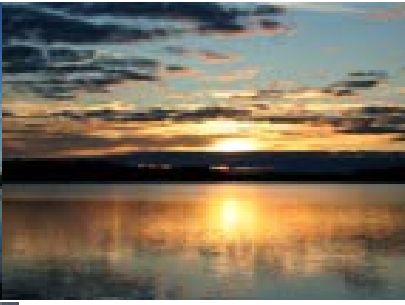
down to the station, meaning we could sit beside the van and watch the trains coming past, whilst also plugged-in.



There were also spectacular views of the gateway to the fells, and freshly-smoked fish.

From Kiruna we continued south following the Inlandsbanan, finding a campsite with a lakeside view of the railway shortly before Östersund.





We were in time to see the evening southbound train, and up early to take the morning departure. Enroute we visited the Polar Caravan Museum and a G-Scale layout at a Lusthuset (Garden Centre)



Progressing south to Upsala we visited the Lennakatten railway, for the first time, and well worth



visiting again. We managed a round trip to include steam train, railbus and diesel shunter.



Then on to our second G-Scale layout in another garden centre, this time with HO layout as well.



Further South we stopped at a small industrial museum alongside the Gota Kanal at Forsvik, where they are building a reconstruction of the first Gota Canal Steamship, as well as rebuilding the work's narrow gauge line down to the canal.



We couldn't leave Sweden without revisiting the Anten Gräfsnäs and Centennial Ohsabanan

We also called in on Eva and Allan in Alingsås. Returning to Denmark, by ferry this time, we took a ride on the vintage train at Faaborg; a diesel hauled train past golden cornfields, Time to watch a couple of modern trains at Ribe station before taking the ferry home from Esjberg.



Shortly after our return, we took a short trip to Devon to visit Barnstaple Model railway show, which this year was in a new location in Bear Street, and then to another nearby on the same day. We also picked up the van awning that Martin had found for us at a local auction which, after some deliberation, proved a perfect fit. We are now fully equipped for future expeditions.



Late Summer saw more G Scale garden visits, (some wet!) and an HO Scandinavian garden visit. We also took the opportunity to ride behind Tornado on an unscheduled visit to the Watercress line

Bruksbanen appeared alongside the Scandinavian Railway Society stand at Burleston Brickworks, and a very enjoyable two day visit to Hollycombe for the newly-enhanced Skandi Demo layout, which included an evening fairground opening, and solar-powered overnight stay in the Maxus.



On returning home, we then swapped vehicles, and drove to Devon for the end of the weekend's Lynton & Barnstaple Gala celebrating a new Manning Wardle Loco and ex L&B coach.



The Solent group winter meet at



Wickham was again a success, and has set us planning the railway enhancements for 2011. Phil&Lin