



Stuart and Naomi's House Fest

by James Shields

I have known Stuart and Naomi for a couple of years, and they are two of the loveliest people in LEGO fandom. (This is really saying something, as there are a lot of very lovely people in LEGO fandom.) So when they said that they had bought a new house and they wanted to show it off by having a house fest, I really wanted to do my very best to get there, especially as one of the objectives was furthering Pete's very excellent and worthwhile Classic Space project. But more about that later.

Perhaps a thousand kilometer round trip is a long way to travel for a house fest, but, with the way that air fares are falling, it's cheaper to fly from Ireland than to get the train from many parts of the UK.

A few weeks later, I step off the plane, and about twenty steps later I've gone through the terminal building to meet Richard James in Arrivals - there's a lot to be said for smaller airports. We enjoy a pleasant trip down the motorway chatting about the benefits of his new job in LEGOLAND and the price of houses in Windsor.

We arrive at Stuart and Naomi's, only David Tabner has got there ahead of us. His hinging castle, a washing machine sized structure, now dominates a corner of their sitting room. We are given a grand tour of the new house - an exercise repeated many times during the day as more people arrive. (I'd feel sorry for them, except they seem to be enjoying it too much!) The sitting room could easily be mistaken for a LEGO room, but when we get up stairs we realise this is not the case when we're shown their real LEGO room. An impressive array of



LEGO on display, just about everywhere!

models adorns every flat surface, while his and hers matching storage boxes are piled high on either side of the room. Naomi explains that they'd have no problem merging their LEGO collections, except that she'd never be able to find any black or yellow; Stuart builds a *lot* of Blacktron!

Back downstairs, the dining room could also be mistaken for a LEGO room, dominated by their spectacular Christmas tree. Although the structure is wooden (apparently from Habitat), it seems perfect for displaying

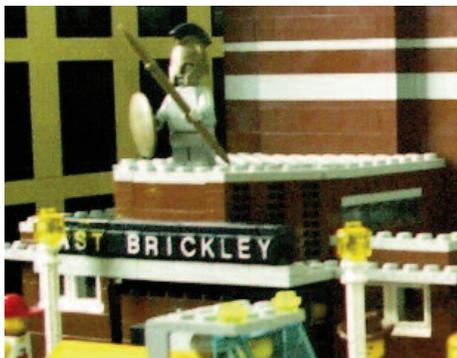
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The main station on David's London Underground style layout inspired by East Finchley on the Northern Line.

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6th Brickish AGM

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Details of the new location for this year's AGM and the accompanying events.

“The Association Matters”

Club News

Chairman's Report

Simon Bennett (chairman@brickish.org)

Media madness

Some of you may have seen the various TV, radio and newspaper coverage LEGO got recently to celebrate 50 years of the brick. Elsewhere in this BI I've explained a little of how the BA was involved and my experience at the 'Beeb'.

Web-watchers will have seen the thank you email the BA received from LEGO's CEO himself, Jorgen Vig Knudsdorp. This little escapade has raised the profile of the BA among LEGO and I'm very proud of that.

Freebies

You lucky people – this BI comes with not one, but two little presents. The first, a polybag racers set, is the first little free gift we hope to bring you with the BI thanks to William's efforts with Jan in Billund.

The second is a thank you to the Association for our help. These gold-chrome key-rings are very, very limited edition and I'm very appreciative that LEGO accepted my request for a

'little something' for all of the members, not just those who were contacted by the media.

Annual renewals

As of this April, the Association will be moving to a single annual renewal system for memberships. The membership year will run April to April and for anyone joining, if they join before the end of December their subscription will cover them to the next April, if in the New Year they will run to the one after that. We think this is as fair as we can make it without making it administratively challenging. It will also enable those who come to the AGM to renew and pick up new membership cards in person which will also ease the administrative process. Those who don't come to the AGM can of course renew by cheque as before.

AGM serious business

You'll see with this BI there is another, just slightly less fun, enclosure - the agenda for the AGM. This year it is quite compact, just 3 officer elec-

tions plus the election of auditors to deal with, so that should leave lots of time for the real business of the AGM, enjoying LEGO.

Questionnaire

That last point is in response to one of the clear messages from the questionnaires we received – that there is too much politics in the BA – I was slightly surprised because compared to a lot of clubs I'm involved in there is very little! We are still reviewing the results and may report them in the next issue. What I am pleased to have heard though is that the majority think the Association is running well and doing the right things – but don't let that stop you suggesting others, or getting out and organising them yourselves!

The final word is congratulations to Kitty Elsmore, whose questionnaire was first out of the LSMK bag, netting her the Sandcrawler set.

See you at the AGM, or in BI-15.

Simon

Editor's Comments

William Howard (newsletter@brickish.org)

This issue sees the introduction of two new features which I'm hoping will become regular items. Firstly, we have the "free gift", the small poly-bag Racers set (we already have the next set for BI-15) and secondly the comic strips.

Continuing the comedy theme of the comic strips there is also a spoof advert, but if anyone wants to place a real advert please contact me for our very reasonable half and quarter page rates.

Finally, thanks to James Sutton for producing the renders in this issue.

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 Gralam, Northwich, CW9 7PQ

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

Events

LEGO Show, Petersfield: 12 April

The 5th annual Petersfield LEGO show. There will be displays from various themes both big and small, individual and collaborative; and a number of sellers with everything from individual brick to MISB sets. Open to the public for part of the event; entry is free.

LEGO Club Weekend, LLW: 3-5 May

Coinciding with the LEGO Tower record attempt at the park, the BA has been invited to put on a display as part of the LEGO Club activities.

Scotfest, Aberdour: 7 June

Format similar to previous years, this year's theme is "999" (police, ambulance, fire, coast-guard, et al). There will be the ever popular "Show & Tell" and the usual fun and games, and trading can be expected.

LEGO Trains, Perth: 28-29 June

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

BI-15: 2 July

BI-15 scheduled to be posted to members. Copy deadline is 2nd June 2008. Any and all content appreciated.

6th Brickish Annual General Meeting by Michael LeCount

The 2008 AGM moves to a new location in the heart of Sunny South Yorkshire just off Junction 33 of the M1; or Sheffield to use its actual name. The new location offers a main hall and a smaller meeting room, as well as considerably improved catering facilities. It is also easily accessible by both road and public transport, being just a tram ride from Sheffield Station. The address is: Wadsley Parish Hall, Worrall Road, Sheffield, S6 4BB

Overnight accommodation can be more than catered for using the host of hotels in the centre itself, e.g. Ibis, Travelodge etc or smaller hotels nearer the hall. If you would like more details look on the events page on the web site or email me and I will try to help.

As well as being in a new location this year, the event will take place over two days (with access to the hall on the Friday evening being limited to setting up / dropping off only between 8pm and 10pm.)

For anyone arriving on Friday evening it may be possible to arrange a place to meet and have a meal afterwards, or, subject to numbers, you are more than welcome to come round to my house for a bite to eat and immerse yourself in the brick.

There will be planned events for both Saturday and Sunday; the following details are subject to confirmation. A timetable of events will be published on the web-site nearer to the date.

Saturday 5th April

The hall will be open from 8.30am for the purpose of setting up and sorting out. The official start time is 10am. Saturday will be used for the purpose of displaying and showing your MOCs etc. We will also hold the actual AGM and auction as well as smaller building events. The entries into the building competitions will also be judged during the day. Winners will be announced after the AGM. There will also hopefully be a limited opportunity to purchase LEGO!!!

The official days events will finish as before at 6pm but as we do not need to leave the hall until 10pm you are more than welcome to stay until this time to chat or get ready for the Sunday. We will also once again be offering the chance to sit down and enjoy an evening meal to finish off the formal days events. Although you will be able to pay for the meal on the day, as usual it does help if you can let us know if you want the meal in advance.



LEGO for sale! Photo: Tim David



6-Bricks (and bigger) on display. Photo: Tim David

Sunday 6th April

Once again you will be able to gain access to the hall from 8.30am onwards with the official start being 10am. We will use the day for the purpose of buying, selling and swapping LEGO and related material, please book table space in advance. We will be charging a token fee of £4 per table for anyone wishing to reserve a table for their sole use. There will be tables available for members with only a few items to sell/trade at no charge.

We will also be running some bigger individual and team speed build events during the day - details will be posted on the web-site nearer the date.

The day's events will officially finish at 5.30pm but once again we do not need to be out of the hall until 9pm so don't feel that there is any rush to leave.

Refreshments

Free tea and coffee will be available throughout both days. Hot and cold snacks (bacon rolls, sandwiches, soft drinks etc) will be available for purchase on Saturday. Light refreshments will also be available on Sunday for you to make yourself. There will also be a small charge for some items.

Competitions

Following the success of the "6-Brick" building competition at last year's AGM, this year we will be having two themed competitions; each with a 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize.

As this year is the 50th anniversary of the LEGO brick, the first category is to build a 1950s LEGO set which you feel would not have looked out of place in the shops in the 1950s. You do not need to limit yourself to just elements and colours that would have been available in the 50s, but can use any element or colour. There is also no limit to size or number of elements used or the number of sets you can enter. So have fun and we look forward to seeing what you come up with on the day.

The second category, in keeping with one of LEGO's new releases, is to build an Indiana Jones themed scene or set. The only rule is that there are no rules

Have fun building and we look forward to seeing the ideas on the 5th

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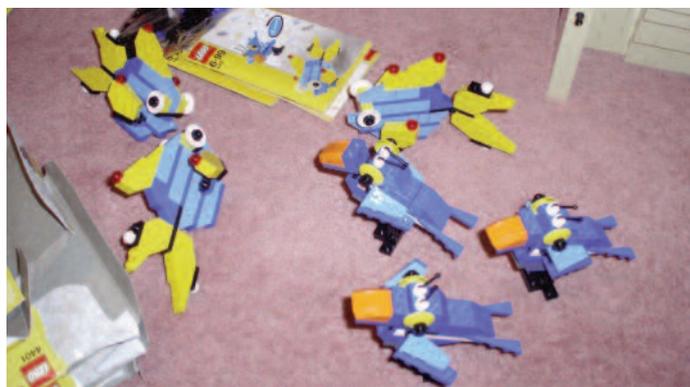
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the huge array of tiny LEGO models that adorn it, including a train layer for the Holiday Train, and a monorail layer with Stuart's special "Santa Monorail".

Another wall is dominated by Stuart's Blacktron Battleship. That's ship as in sea ship, not space ship! Although not yet complete, it is already breathtaking - huge, with a clever arrangement of launchable landing craft, ground vehicles and a VTOL aircraft hidden in a special hanger. When finished it will be really something.

We take some time out to look at the new Indiana Jones sets which Richard has brought (along with the new Town Plan set), just for fun making a quad bike out of the Motorcycle Chase set.

By now other people are arriving, and the house tour is repeated. I sit some of them out, preferring to chat with other people, but I must have followed around at least three times, each time spotting interesting things I hadn't seen on the previous tours.



Results of the "back-to-back" building competition

The atmosphere was very relaxed. There was no agenda, no one hurrying us up or demanding we do things at pre-ordained times. Huw brought some of his old grey and those of us who were interested went to grab some, but even that was done at a fairly leisurely pace. It would have been easy to spend the whole day sitting and chatting, but Pete had brought his runway, and it wasn't going to assemble itself.

So the spacers trekked upstairs to get working in old grey, while everyone else played a game where they paired off and sat back to back and one person had to



Tabletown invades Classic Space

describe the instructions and the other built the models. It sounded like they were having fun.

Upstairs, Stuart was busy applying the newly acquired grey bricks to his very impressive landing pad, while the rest of us were working on the runway. First we needed a support structure to hold up the back wall. Stuart found us a stack of the grey sides from the bridge transporter (they were blue, but it didn't matter as they were hidden) and soon we had a sturdy wall support. Next we had to extend the wall to run the full length of the runway. By the time we had finished the runway it was looking very impressive, and we arranged Pete's ships (with the few bits and pieces the rest of us had managed to cobble together) and our jaws dropped. Lots of photos were taken.

Later there were skirmishes as Daleks, Blacktron, and the Tabletown army all invaded (obviously the runway is hot property), but our heroes were well prepared and all assaults were successfully repelled.

Stuart and Naomi were perfect hosts, and soon we were summoned for dinner. Covering all angles, they had prepared two main dishes - pasta and bolognaise, and rice and chicken curry - which we were invited to combine in any combination we saw fit (an assemble-your-own modular dinner seems most appropriate), which many people did.



As the evening wore on, we continued to chat merrily, with the odd bit of part trading on the side. Gradually it came to the times that people had to leave, and so we steadily became fewer. At last we were just four, sitting around the dining room table, drinking beer and eating ice cream.

We went upstairs and got online so I could do the on-line check-in thingy, while Stuart apologised that their broadband hadn't been installed yet. Of course we then ended up on the Brickish forums, reading peoples' posts about the day, and looking at peoples' photographs (albeit a little slowly). Isn't the Internet wonderful?

I awoke to the sound of voices in the kitchen and the smell of bacon grilling, and struggled out to join them. After a leisurely breakfast we wandered out on a shopping expedition. The first stop was Woolworths, where we arrived at about 10:15 and were entertained by announcements every five minutes telling us that, due to Sunday trading laws, the shop staff were unable to assist us in any way until 10:30. I couldn't help wondering if their security staff would "assist" us if we tried to leave the store with a stack of LEGO sets we hadn't paid for? I resisted the temptation to find out!

At 10:30 we were in the checkout queue, having selected our purchases. I was pleased to find the new Exo Force sets, one of which contains orange curved slopes I've been wanting for ages. I also couldn't resist the Indy motorbike set we had played with the day before, and a half price mosaic set.

Stuart was after the new Stormtrooper and Rebel Scout battle packs, but both Woolworths and Argos had already

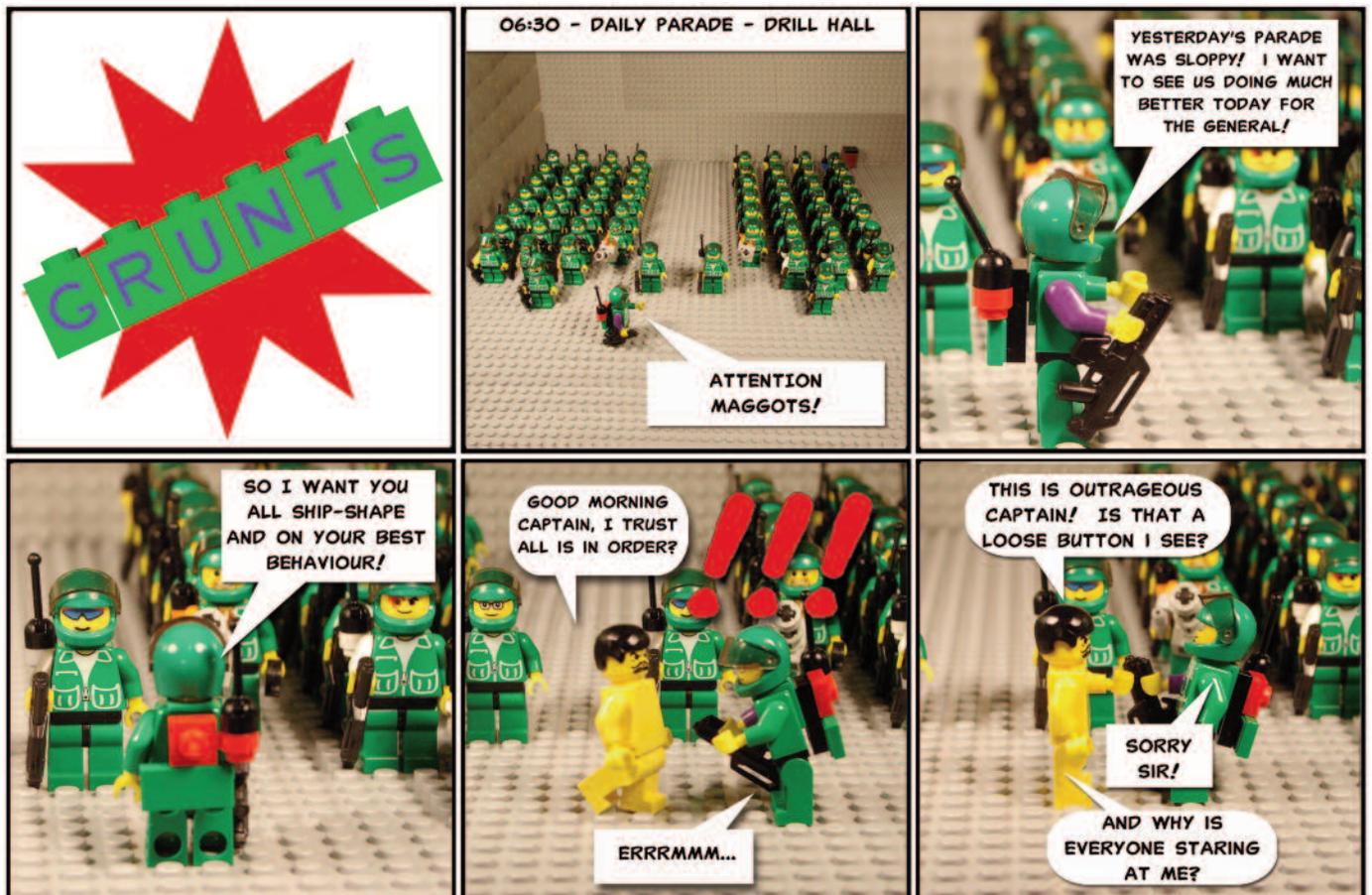


I need something in grey and this big. It's behind you! sold out. We ended up in a rather disappointing Toys'R'Us, which had nothing of particular interest.

After dropping Stuart and Naomi home, David and I headed for the airport. Hopefully he wasn't lying when he said it wasn't far off his route home. I got there with plenty of time to drop off my bags, browse the bookshop and grab some lunch before boarding my flight home.

I've been at a number of Brickish events now, but this was my first ever house fest. I'm glad I made the effort, because it was a really fun day. I found it a fantastic break from the stresses of every day life, and I will definitely be doing my best to get over for more of them.

And hopefully I will be able to persuade some Brickish members to make the trip over to Ireland when I host one.



Everyday stories of Army Folk by Doctor Sinister

Member Profile: Robert Clarkson

* What is your earliest LEGO memory?

I remember making buildings with a very early LEGO set, probably from 1965. The plug in wheels and miniature electric system seemed state of art.

* What was the earliest MOC you built?

I have no specific recollection of my early attempts at a MOC, but I certainly remember making a chunky aeroplane with monstrously huge propellers. This is possibly set 303 (*Lugnet 303_2 Ed.*) and at 12/9 (64p then, or approximately £5.99 with inflation) a bargain!

* What brought you out of the dark ages?

When my daughter Laura was two my wife bought me the Rescue Helicopter (6482). Now here was a brilliant model, with its light and sound, movable doors and (my first) minifigs.

* What was your greatest LEGO moment?

When my son and daughter and I made a combined castle, harbour and pirate ship I felt the 'togetherness' of family and a hobby we could all enjoy.

* What is the best MOC you've ever built?

I'm proud of a few MOCs but, after attending some Brickish events, I now see how simple and undeveloped they are. Nevertheless, my best MOC was a multi-compartment space station that grew out of an idea for using the Technic seat. This exercise impressed me with the versatility and imagination that LEGO initiates.

* What's your favourite set and why?

I'm not really into 'Technic' but when I recently bought the Monster Dino (4958) I found this an awesome model to build and great fun to play with; even better the cats hate it!

* Are you a collector or a builder?

A builder; on my meagre wages I find LEGO a little too expensive to collect. I like to build the model first and then use the parts to make something else.

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

To be truthful I spend most of my 'LEGO-time' pulling apart MOCs that I have half made and found that they don't quite work, I've changed my mind about, or, most likely, I've just made badly. Unnervingly, I enjoy this and get pleasure from learning how diverse LEGO construction can be.

* What models are you working on now?

I have contemplated for the last year recreating the cable car scene from 'Where Eagles Dare'. I have made the cable car and planned out the castle and valley but constructing an electric pulley system that is strong enough to support the cable car independently is a challenge. I hope to have it completed for Petersfield 2008.

* How do you sort your LEGO?

After placing pieces in the "parts-to-sort-and-put-away-when-I-get-round-to-it" box, I sort by colour, size and uniqueness (e.g. 'wheels', 'windows', 'castle walls').

* What is your favourite LEGO Element?

I really admire the headlight / washing machine for its versatility. It allows LEGO construction to go where other pretenders can only dream about.

* What would be your dream LEGO element?

I don't stay awake at night wishing that 1x3 tiles or 1x5 tiles or 2x3 tiles in a variety of colours existed but they would be useful all the same.

* What was the last set you paid full price for?

I bought 'Jabba's Sail Barge' (6210) for its full price before I joined. One of the added bonuses of being a Brickish Association member is the sharing of news of special / discounted offers in stores across the country.

* Apart from LEGO, what else are you in to?

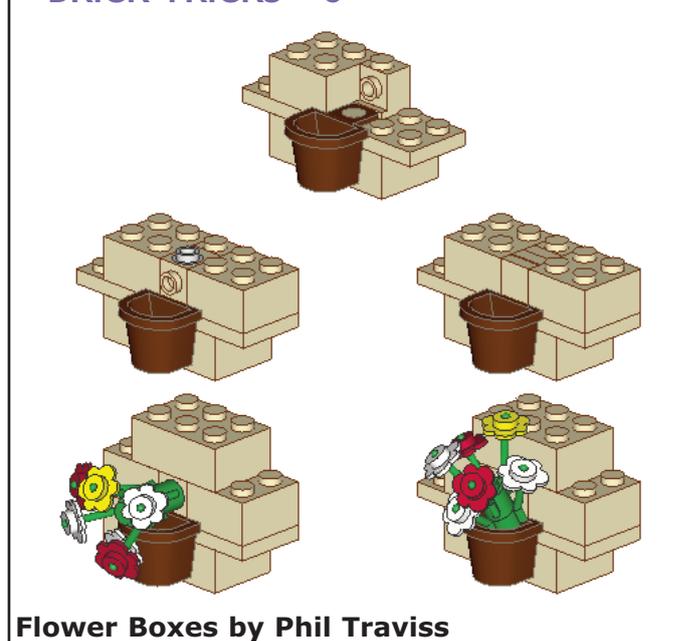
Where does this list end? I enjoy music ranging from The Beatles to Richard Wagner and can play the guitar; I like sci-fi films, TV and books; I read and watch 'Lord of The Rings' about once a year; I am a James Bond hanger-on; I am a Bolton Wanderers Football Club fan; I have been a fan of the New England Patriots (American Football) since 1986; I am a Serving Brother in St John Ambulance and undertake a steady voluntary commitment with them; I am learning to speak Japanese; and I enjoy Jack Daniels and Coke especially when watching "Have I Got News For You". Dare I add that I enjoy my job (nurse) and have done so for the last 34 years?

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

Being a mental health professional prohibits me from using the adjectives that they use (or are at least thinking). Needless to say, I get quite a few smirks and unconvincing "huhs huhs!"



BRICK TRICKS - 6



LEGOLAND Discovery Centre - Berlin

by Chris Hall

Whilst in Berlin last October, I had the opportunity to pay a flying visit to the new LEGO Berlin attraction between meetings. Located within the ultra-modern glass & steel architecture of the Sony Centre in Potsdamer Platz, not far from the Brandenburg Gate, the LEGOLAND Discovery Centre was opened in Spring 2007. My visit mid-week in early October happened to coincide with a public holiday in Germany, and I joined a queue of young families waiting to enter the attraction. The payment desk was staffed by good English-speakers, (essential for me as my German is non-existent beyond "ein bier"), who managed to understand my request to check if my LEGOLAND Windsor Annual Pass could be used. After a short call for approval to a manager, I was given my ticket and two tokens for a ride and 'cinema' show, and wound my way down a spiral staircase to the underground world of LEGOLAND Discovery.

The whole attraction is housed on two floors under the Sony Centre, and the first point of call is the "Fabrik / Factory". This is a five minute interactive presentation, in a brightly coloured 'factory' filled with over-sized 'machines', by an enthusiastic lady, mainly for the sake of the



Brandenburg Gate

the first time since their youth, several of whom carried off their masterpieces for weighing and subsequent purchase.

A small café and children's wacky-warehouse-type play area completed the lower floor of the attraction. Upstairs houses the Berlin Miniland. This exhibition of Berlin buildings and street scenery is cleverly lit using a program to reflect the changing light over the course of 24 hours, with synchronized street and building lighting. It's very impressive, as are the buildings, especially the train stations. The trains and tram run on the new all plastic track.

Past Miniland are two rides/themes, Jungle Expedition (plenty of large LEGO animals) and Dragonburg (a Medieval castle with lurking dragons), neither of which I had time to check out in full, but they appeared to be aimed at the younger children; the rides being very 'tame'.

The final attraction is a 3-D cinema, beyond which is the shop and exit. The shop is quite modest in size but included a reasonable range of pick-a-brick options (cost as above, €7 per 100 grams). Entry prices were €14.95 for adults & €9.95 for children.

Apart from Miniland (which is good) and the life-size 'stars', the centre is mainly equipped for the younger child age range. It is also quite small, and therefore I wouldn't consider it worthy of a special visit similar to the way one might plan a visit to a LEGOLAND location, but certainly on the 'must do' list if visiting Berlin or the nearby area, especially if you have young children in tow!



Berlin City Hall

children in the audience, demonstrating in very basic terms how small pellets of plastic (ABS) are processed into basic bricks. The narrative is in German, so I didn't really understand, but the children really seemed to enjoy it with plenty of cheering and clapping.

After the 'factory' came an area called the "Gallery of Stars" which includes life size statues of celebrities (eg Marilyn Monroe, G.W. Bush) and a large R2-D2. There is also a large area devoted to child-friendly building tables with plenty of loose LEGO elements and a sloping track for racing cars that were being constructed by busy hands. There is also an 'earthquake' table where the kid's models were being tested for stability against 'tectonic' activity!

A couple of staff were in attendance with a range of drawers containing other elements, offering the opportunity to build your own creation to take away in return for payment by weight (€7 per 100 grams). There is also a separate play and build area containing Duplo elements for the younger visitors. It was great to see many parents enjoying the pleasure of free-building, probably for



Berlin Central Station and Street Scene

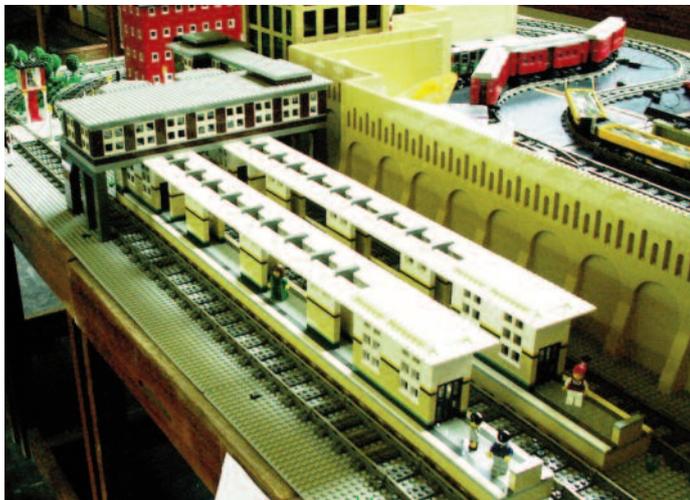
East Brickley Station

by David Tabner

East Brickley is based on the architectural style of East Finchley (London Underground) station on the Northern Line (High Barnet branch).

East Finchley was designed by Charles Holden in association with L H Bucknell as part of an extension of the Northern Line, replacing a Victorian station on the same site in the 1930s. The first services ran in 1939 jointly with LNER, who used the middle two roads. LNER services terminated two years later.

Charles Holden is very famous for his art-deco and streamline-moderne designs - particularly of Underground stations, none of which were the same. I've looked at his works often while travelling on the Tube, and considered building them, but I was actually playing on the Boso View Express (BVE) train simulator program when I first saw East Finchley. My first visit came later when I needed to record more details by photography to complete the model.



The physical layout of the station was not to my liking so I decided not to make a close copy but instead to apply the architectural features to a station arrangement I had already been planning to build. East Finchley has two entrances, a big and a little, which are connected by subway with each other and the platforms. Replicating this would require raising the tracks on my layout so I decided instead to use the block-section and spiral staircases (the former is LU offices and the latter purely accesses them) to provide passenger access to the platforms. This changes the block into a sort of over-bridge, to which was added a long corridor section to connect the station entrance (modelled on real "little" entrance) by lift and emergency stairs. The model has a similar two island setup for the platforms as the real station, but serving only a single middle road.

The colour details of the station are almost identical. I used tan for the platform base (because I have it in quantity), then a plate base of light grey upon which sits the tiles of the platform surface and the superstructure. The platform surface is a pattern of white, dark grey and light grey tiles. The superstructure is dark green, sand green, tan, yellow and white, with black doors and dark grey bracing between the canopies. The dark green sections are in real life black, like the doors, but in BVE it



has been rendered in dark green, which I think looks better, so I used that instead.

The top of the platform superstructure includes a kind of trench-feature running along it, which supports the canopies at the top but also has windows in its sides to naturally illuminate the covered platforms. This I have reconstructed in LEGO as authentically as possible as it is one of the station's best, though least noticed features. The canopies at the rear end are supposed to project in a circular fashion over each island but the only LEGO part capable of achieving this is not available in the necessary white, so I have left it cropped and squared.

A main feature of the station is the 'ships bridge' windows that enclose the spiral staircases. The trans-black 4x4x6 quarter cylinder came to mind immediately to replicate this and the spiral stairs inside are built using 1x4 plates and jumpers, rotating 180 degrees overall. The only problems with the quarter cylinders is that they are too high and wide and imposed design restrictions, thus I have terminated the platform behind them as they reach down to ground-level. (Raising the whole superstructure the necessary amount wasn't aesthetically pleasing.) In the real station the platform continues forward from the stairs, but as the width of these pieces is the same as the 8-stud distance between tracks it means that the platform can't pass around the sides anyway.

One last point is the statue. At East Finchley it was actually an art-deco statue of an archer (historic connection with the area) by the celebrated sculptor Eric Aumonier. His archer points to central London, set as having just released an arrow down the southbound line. I have used a Hogwart's ghost in custom Greek armour from Brickforge (see cover page picture)



50th Anniversary Media Frenzy

by Simon Bennett

As some of you will know it's been a very hectic few weeks for the Association recently. It all started late last year when LEGO asked me to meet their PR consultants. The company, Norton and Co, were brought in to publicise the 50th anniversary of "the LEGO brick". (It's actually quite a technically arcane anniversary, because it wasn't the start of the company, that was 1932, or even the first plastic brick to be produced by LEGO, which was in 1949, but the invention of the tubes on the underside of the bricks which give them their 'clutch' and make them the useful building medium we know and love – this led to quite a lot of misunderstandings in the various interviews that BA members took part in!

The first step was to canvas a few trusty individuals that we in the Committee knew had good photogenic collections and could be articulate and confident on camera. Armed with that list the PR company sent a film crew to a few members' houses (including mine, where I was in the middle of a house move so had only a small part of my collection available, and no chair in my Lego room so I was interviewed sitting on a D8!) This was edited into a video news release (VNR) which was sent out to all the various media.

Michele from Norton also asked me for a list of other members who live in different parts of the country who might be available for radio and local TV interviews. I put together a list, but of course I needed to get their consent before I could pass their contact details on to Michele. This was somewhat fraught given that she only asked me 48 hours before the calls would start! Nearly everyone responded to my emails though and I hope the volunteers had fun, their help was much appreciated.

In the end, eight members were interviewed for television (some more than once - Pete and Yvonne - for that you can blame the human interest newsworthiness of having met through LEGO!)

My own experience was very interesting – Michele rang me on the Thursday when the VNR had just been issued to ask if I could be interviewed on BBC Breakfast News the following morning (she tells me it is because she thought I would make a good subject – I suspect it's partly because I lived only a relatively short BBC car drive from Television Centre!). The BBC researcher asked if I would be able to build a model over the course of the 3 hour show and, remembering Duncan Titmarsh's radio experience of a few years ago, I suggested modelling the studio as it would be able to be compared easily with the real thing. I asked her to send me some pictures, because I've never seen the programme, and I was dismayed to see the studio basically consisted of a curved red sofa and a big circular table, all in front of walls that are big screens which, when not showing huge pictures, are predominantly orange! It certainly wasn't designed with a LEGO model in mind. I spent the evening before sorting through the bit of my collection that was still in the correct house to see what I needed to bring and of course, in order to have a stock of parts to choose from, it was a lot. I had told the researcher I would need to bring quite a lot of LEGO but that message clearly didn't make it to the transport department who



sent a Rover 75 saloon – the boxes made it in, but only just!

The car called for me at 05.30 but I had been awake since 03.45 because I woke up with inspiration of how to build the sofa, with plate hinges and 2x3 bricks, and realising I hadn't put any 2x3s among the stuff to take!

At the studio, which was just a small room deep in the corridors of Television Centre, the only place we could find for me to build was the producer's office. I was interviewed for a short time at 6.50, then got started on building, did another short slot with a progress shot of the model at 7.50 and then a longer interview with the (ahem, almost) finished model at 8.50ish. The time I had to build was over very quickly. I would estimate, with all the various faffing and waiting to be escorted through the building, I only got two periods of just over half an hour each, which were interrupted by my getting text messages from tons of my friends.

The actual interviews were very easy, Michele had told me for the VNR not to prepare, because a rehearsed answer doesn't look natural, and the apparently genuine interest of the hosts Susannah Reid and Bill Turnbull made it quite relaxing. Those of you who know me know that when I get started on a subject I can talk for ages so I was conscious of not wanting to get too carried away.

I hope the other interviewees had as much fun with it as I did. Those of you who have been watching the website will have seen the various interviews; hopefully the links will stay live for a while. For those who didn't see them James Sutton is compiling them for viewing at the AGM and we hope to have them online more permanently if we can.

During the rest of the week I fielded, along with Martin and Jon, a hugely increased amount of emails to the Association, several telephone interviews for newspaper and periodical articles, four live radio interviews by phone and one pre-recorded interview for the World Service which I was staggered to find, thanks to an email from some friends in Oakland, was on NPR (National Public Radio) in the US.

All in all an unusual Lego week, but a great deal of fun.

Brick Built Roads

by Peter Reid

Early last year, I decided that Yvonne's rows of shops and houses were crying out for some nice roads to complement them, so I borrowed an idea or two off Brickshelf. The roads were first seen at the 2006 AGM, part of our display, 'The Street'. I got quite excited by the potential of the system, even though at that stage I hadn't actually built anything original.

My first creative breakthrough was the pelican crossing. By using a combination of established techniques (5:2 ratio, tiles between slopes), I was able to make zigzag lines. Conveniently, there is a crossing visible from my living room window, and I spent hours staring at the road markings, muttering. There was one slight problem - 75 degree inverted slopes appear in no sets in dark grey. But did they exist as non-production parts? Those slopes were essential to the project, and amazingly another Brickish member heroically saved the day by sending me just enough.

I needed three sets of zigzags, so I had to think about widening my road. The pelican crossing could never fit in with the street as it was - it was far too wide. It gave me ideas though. What about a main street?

Although the first road sections were quite small, making them had decimated my dark grey supplies. I had to get more. But from where? Old grey was gone, discontinued. I'd need to find serious quantities of brick and plate if I was to do more. I asked around and found a Brickish member who happened to have a large supply of basic brick in lovely old dark grey, and he was willing to sell me some. Realising it was for the best, I bought a large amount of 2-wide brick and plate. It was a lot of LEGO, but it felt good to take possession of that massive great box full. With my newly acquired supplies it could be done!

Carrying on from the pelican crossing, I established a Main Street standard. It was glorious to build from the



newly acquired bulk brick. In a single session I churned out something like three metres of road.

Whilst staring out of the window, it occurred to me that the bus lane was pretty close to dark red, and I might as well make that, too.

It took a collaborative kick-start to get the ball rolling once more. Phil Traviss announced a house fest, and Yvonne and I decided we should go. Phil mentioned that he might be doing a Cafe Corner collaborative build, and, at the last minute, I remembered the Main Street. I quickly knocked up a new, more detailed junction I'd been thinking about. After all, you can't have Cafe Corner without a corner!

The display at Phil's was an unexpected triumph. Pretty much everyone who attended brought something and it all looked really cool once it was set up. We had a few



teething troubles with things like pavements, but it all got sorted in the end. The finishing touches were provided by Huw, who kindly brought along his excellent trucks.

The main lesson I learned from the display at Phil's was how easy it was to integrate the roads into the Cafe Corner standard. I still thought of Yvonne's Street and Phil's Cafe Corner Street as separate scenes. It wasn't 'til the night before the Swindon show that I realised I could combine the two.

After a couple of frantic phone calls to Martin, I decided to go for it. Yvonne and I messed around with layout ideas, taking up all available space in our living room. For many hours I toiled on newly arranged junctions. I drank a great deal of beer and considered the 5:2 ratio 'til I could consider no more. By midnight we were getting there, but we still needed pavements. Fortunately a lazy man's solution presented itself - stacking 1x4 grey bricks and laying them flat.

The next morning we arrived at the venue, and amazingly everything came together. We were all sorted for the public, and our display looked lovely. With a few additions from Will, Ed and Darren, things were looking good. It was the largest the brick built road system had been so far. Dean also helped immensely by rebuilding a section to fit the table.

The most recent appearance of the roads was at the



Christmas Party. With the help of new BA member Doug Idle, we managed to provide roadway for most of the buildings that people brought along on the day. Doug and I have several plans up our sleeve for future displays.

People always seem to enjoy Town and the system can be integrated with the Cafe Corner standard with relative ease. I know it costs a more than baseplates, but I believe it has great potential. With enough development it could become a complete road modelling system, capable of representing almost all real life features you might encounter.

the **Brick Shed** company

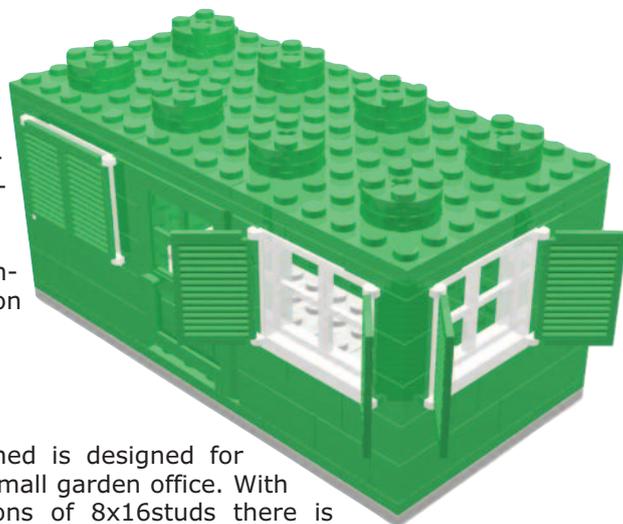
by Mark Palmer

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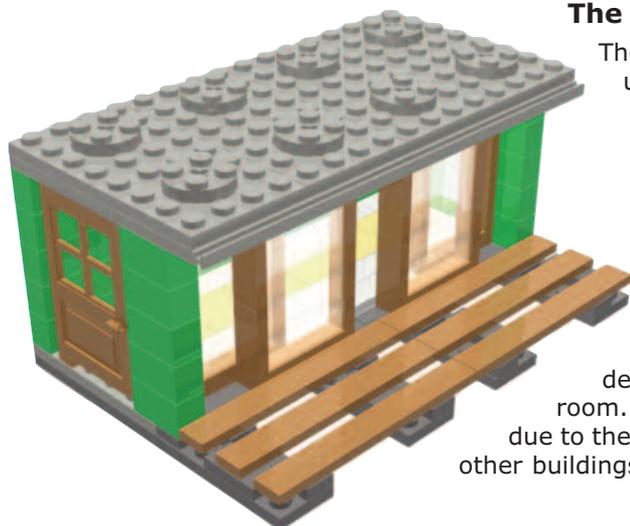
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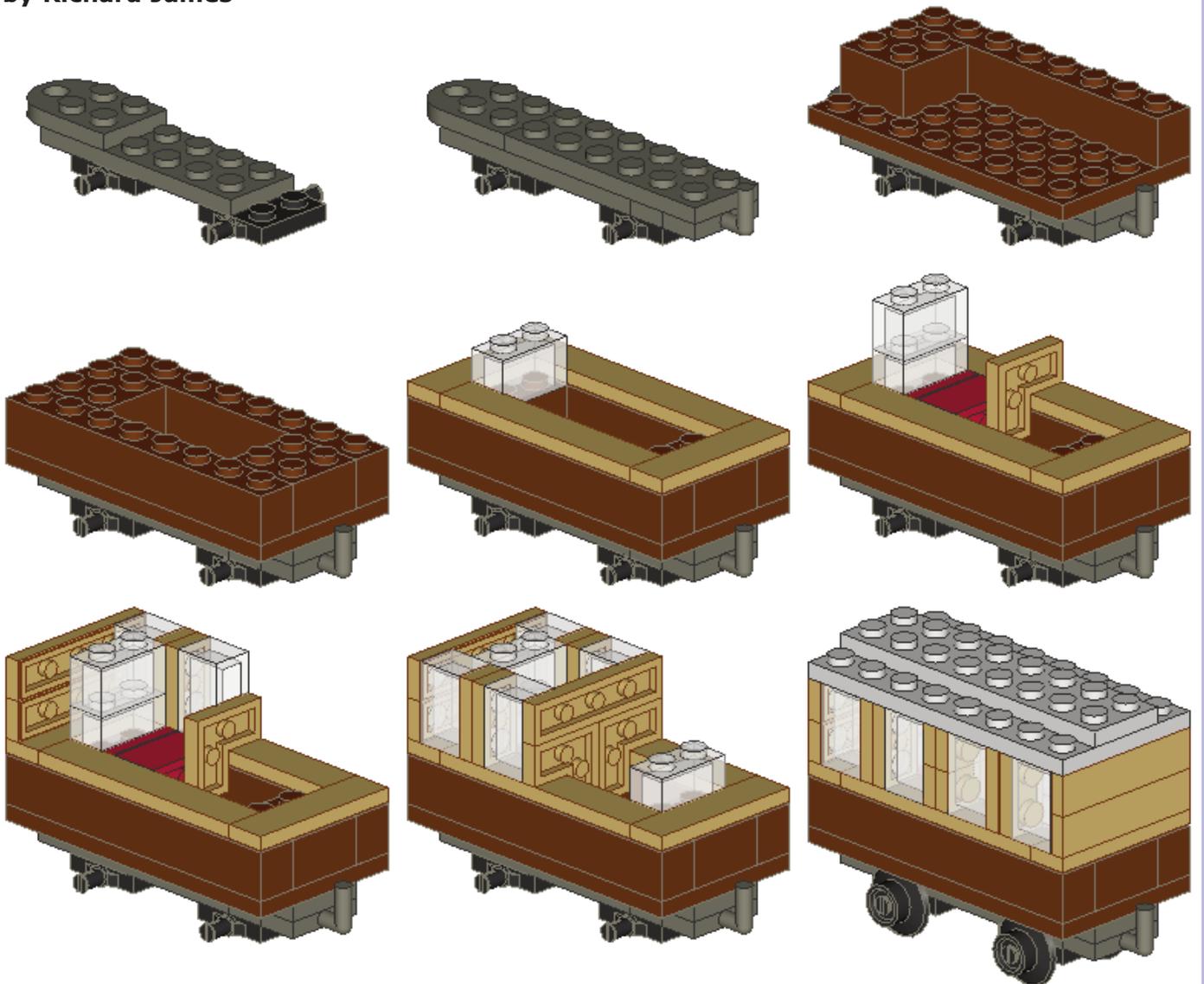
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14. 4-wide Coach

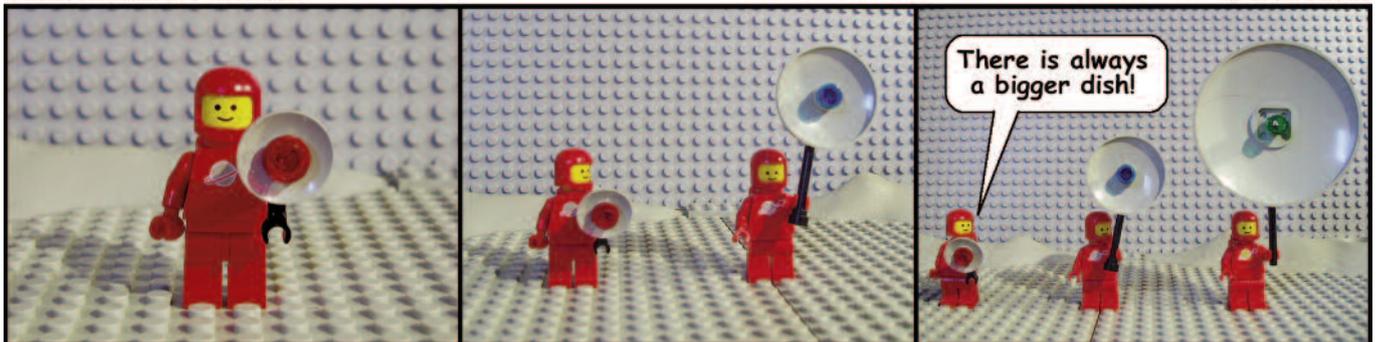
by Richard James



Compatible with the new Mini Trains set (4837). Instructions for a 4-wide engine can be found on the web site

TRANQUILITY BASE

BY LOUISE DADE



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