

# Big boys' toys on show at new Hornby museum

BY CHRIS MURPHY

MANY boys had a Hornby trainset when they were little, and some adults still have one hidden away in the loft.

But how did the company start, and just how many ancient models do you remember?

Now finding the answers is easy because at the weekend the company opened its own museum, packed full of sets and running stock.

Being able to wander through a massive Aladdin's Cave of old models is a dream come true for any fan.

Visitors can take a trip through time and see how Hornby developed its range of not only trains but also Airfix, Corgi and Scalextric, dating back to the Roaring Twenties.

The visitor centre is at its base in Westwood, Margate, and opened for the first time on Saturday.

The company said it was expecting visitors from all over the world to eventually make their way through the hallowed doors and help boost tourism in the area.

Hornby operations director Nick Cole said the earliest clockwork metal shells were there, right up to the powerful and sophisticated modern electronic models.

There are trains, cars and aeroplanes.

He said parents would be able to see models long forgotten over the decades.

"The oldest is a clockwork 'O-gauge' Hornby train made in Liverpool in 1921," said Mr Cole.



MODEL DAY OUT: Visitors from all over the world are expected to enjoy a day at the Hornby museum at Westwood

"It's a bit battered because it was played with a lot."

That one came from the family who once owned the famous company Tri-ang, which eventually became part of the Hornby empire. Other classic models have been loaned by collectors.

Hornby says the exhibits will be changed often so there should be something new to see for regular visitors, and it will also have toys made from Meccano.

It also includes the archives of the model-car and plane manufacturers it has bought over the decades, including the very first Airfix model – a Ferguson tractor.

And, as if that's not enough, it will use the venue to show off new prototype lines, some of which are not even in full production yet.

The number of visitors is limited during rush times to ensure everyone can take everything in.

The exhibition will be available to viewing on Fridays from this week.

Mr Cole said: "We are trying to promote Thanet as a visitor destination, to encourage people to maybe stay overnight and visit other places of interest, such as the Turner Centre, Quex Park, and the Spitfire And Hurricane Memorial Museum at Manston."

## States fans give £3,000 to repair Scenic Railway

ROLLER-COASTER enthusiasts from across the pond have donated more than £3,000 towards the regeneration of Dreamland.

The American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE) group has given more than £3,000 for the restoration of the Scenic Railway, which was hit by fire in 2008.

The wooden roller-coaster is the oldest in the country and will be the centre-piece of the plans to make the site into a heritage theme park.

The Dreamland Trust announced plans for the attraction in 2007. Work on the project, which will cost £12.5 million, is expected to start later this year.

Nick Laister, chairman of the Dreamland Trust, said: "I would like to thank all of the members of the American Coaster Enthusiasts for this very generous donation. This demonstrates the level of international interest in the future of the Scenic Railway."

"We will ensure that this donation is used 100 per cent on the restoration of this roller-coaster. I look forward to welcoming the members of ACE to Dreamland."

ACE donated \$5,000, which works out at about £3,299 at the current rate of exchange. The group was founded in 1978 as a not-for-profit, all-volunteer club to foster and promote the conservation, appreciation, knowledge and enjoyment of the art of the classic wooden roller-coaster and the contemporary steel coaster.

President Mark Cole said: "The Scenic Railway is one of very few coasters of this type in the world."

"Preservation is a major part of the formation and continued work of ACE. We look forward to returning to ride the Scenic Railway."

## Driver admits fatal accident

A DRIVER has been sentenced to eight months in a young offenders' institution after the death of a 17-year-old boy in a road accident in Ramsgate last year.

Christopher Huntlea, 20, of Hollicondane Road in Ramsgate, appeared at Canterbury Crown Court for sentencing last Tuesday, having admitted causing death while uninsured, failing to stop at the scene of a collision and four charges of having no insurance.

Huntlea also received a two-year driving ban.

Christopher Allum was hit by the black Vauxhall Corsa being driven by Huntlea in Holly Road, near St Lawrence College, on Saturday, September 19, 2009.

Christopher was running with a friend inside the school grounds and continued out of the school gates and into the path of the car.

The view into the school gates was restricted by a high wall and parked cars.

Christopher died from his injuries at the QEQM Hospital in Margate.

Huntlea did not stop and drove home, approximately 300 metres further along the road. Minutes later, he returned to the scene with his father.

Investigating officers found Huntlea was not insured to drive the vehicle.

## Design on bus puts pupils in the picture

THE 'back end of a bus' is a term usually used to describe something less than attractive, but that notion has been laid to rest by Hartsdown pupils.

Mini portraits of hundreds of students from the Margate school will be seen around the isle's roads in the coming months as part of a new artwork project.

The Face Badge project has seen a huge image of the school crest created from smaller images of pupils' faces.

It now occupies the whole rear panel of a Stagecoach bus, on which it has been printed.

### Moving

The Principal of the technology college, Andy Somers, said: "Face Badge was a ground-breaking project for the college and we are so pleased with the image it creates of all of our team together that we decided to take it a step further with the Face Bus project."

"Face Bus gives us an eye-catching moving message that will be seen by thousands of people every day on the Thanet Loop transport system."

"We're proud of what our students and staff achieve here – Hartsdown

is the second most improved school in Kent and we wanted to celebrate what makes us strong."

As well as the students, among those who appear in the badge after being snapped during a civic visit to the college are Margate mayor and mayoress Mick and Shirley Tomlinson.

### Impact

Mr Somers said: "The creative success of Face Badge certainly got people talking and I know Face Bus will have a similar impact."

"We are all about cutting-edge technology, so we decided to use our skills to create a snapshot of everyone at Hartsdown in 2010 and put them into Face Badge, which is displayed around the school and is used as part of our branding on advertising and promotion."

"Special thanks go to the creative graphic artists at Fusional near Sevenoaks, who took our idea and made it work, and to Stagecoach for embracing our project as part of their bus advertising."

It is the first time in the college's 53-year history that a record has been made of almost all those who study and work at Hartsdown.

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