

Leszek Lewinski of the PMM HO group introduces his latest narrow gauge exhibition layout.

Kwidzyn

Above the roofs of a small Polish village



At the end of the 19th century, on the initiative of the mayor of Kwidzyn, Dr. Brückner, preparations began for the construction of a 750mm gauge railway in the Kwidzyn lowlands. For this purpose, the Kleinbahn-Aktiengesellschaft Marienwerder Westpreußen company was founded, which entrusted the construction work to the experienced light railway firm of Lenz & Co. who had an office in Szczecin (Stettin).

The opening of the railway with its station building took place on 28th September 1901. The network consisted of approximately 60km.

The main station and locomotive shed were located in Marezka (Mareese). The station building was erected in the form of a multi-section framed structure with brick in-fill (*Fachwerk*) on an irregular plan. In the 1920s it was expanded by adding the southern wing. The station included, among

other things, ticket offices, service rooms, a stationmaster's apartment, a buffet with facilities, and a luggage room, as well as a goods warehouse.

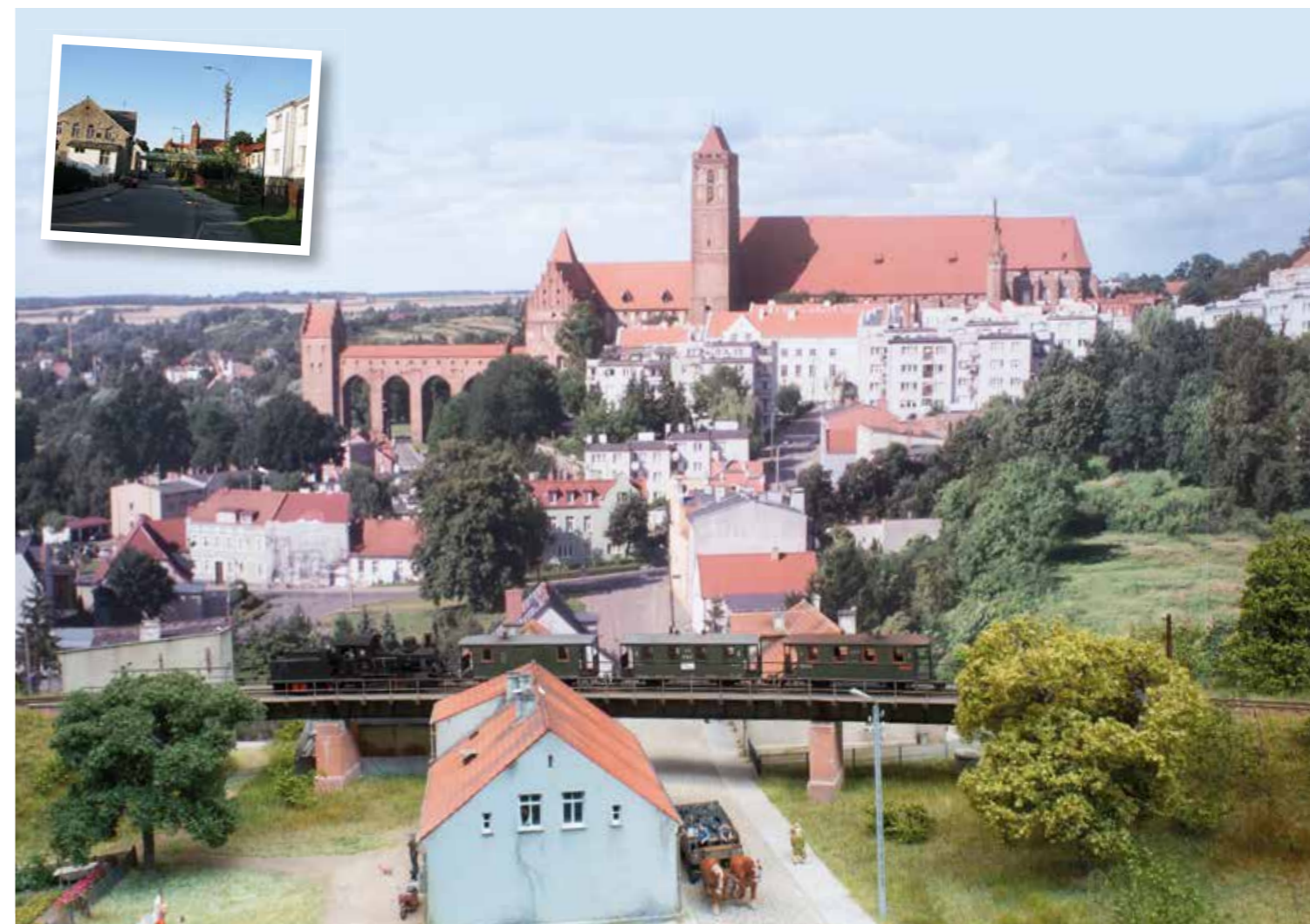
The railway transported agricultural produce, mainly sugar beet, and passengers to Kwidzyn (2.7km), Rusinowo (20.4km), and Wielkie Walichnowy (33km), the latter by means of the Vistula steam ferry crossing between Janów and Gniw. After the popular vote in 1920, the section to Wielkie Walichnowy, as a result of changing the borders, found itself in Polish territory, which made it necessary to build a new section to Gurcz.

In 1945, the railway was taken over by the Polish State Railways and continued to operate until 31st December 1985, when it was closed. The physical liquidation of the track and the removal of the rolling stock was completed in March 1989.

Inset
An old postcard showing the train 'above the roofs'.
Photo: author's collection.

Inset above right
A similar view of the village street as it is today.
Photo: author.

Above
Lxd2 B-B diesel and a train of modern bogie coaches.
Layout photos by the editor.



The model

My colleague Sebastian Marszal had already modelled another station on this line, Rusinowo. (See CM August 2019.) I have been working on this layout for about ten years. It is called *Nad dachami Kwidzyna* or 'Above the roofs of Kwidzyn'. Where did this name come from? On its course between Kwidzyn and Marezka the line experienced a significant difference in heights. Where the track crossed the valley of the river Liwa, a truss bridge was built over the river and Drzymaly street, with a wharf by the riverside. The narrow gauge was on a high embankment and the trains were visible above the roofs of the buildings.

The starting point of my work on the layout was research and preparing the documentation. I obtained and examined closely as many old documents and photographs as possible. I was lucky to find plans of the area in the archives, so it could be carefully inventoried and detailed. With Sebastian I visited the site and we took over a hundred photos.

Based on the documents, maps, and photos, I drew the plan of the layout. When the shape of the layout and the number of buildings and other objects were known, I was able to start the construction.

First, I made all the buildings, and of course I also made complete interiors:

I wanted the river bridge and the railway viaduct to have spans made of metal, so I asked the best Polish specialist, Piotr Ciechocinski (of the Inari company) who specialises in this type of construction, to make them.

I made the bridge abutments and pillars out of cardboard; some elements were cut and engraved by Tomek Stangel on his plotter.

I had to modify the standard Roco HOe track to represent the bridge track built on special wooden sleepers.

I could then put the track and its base onto the bridge structure. Some parts of the bridge still required detailing and decorating:

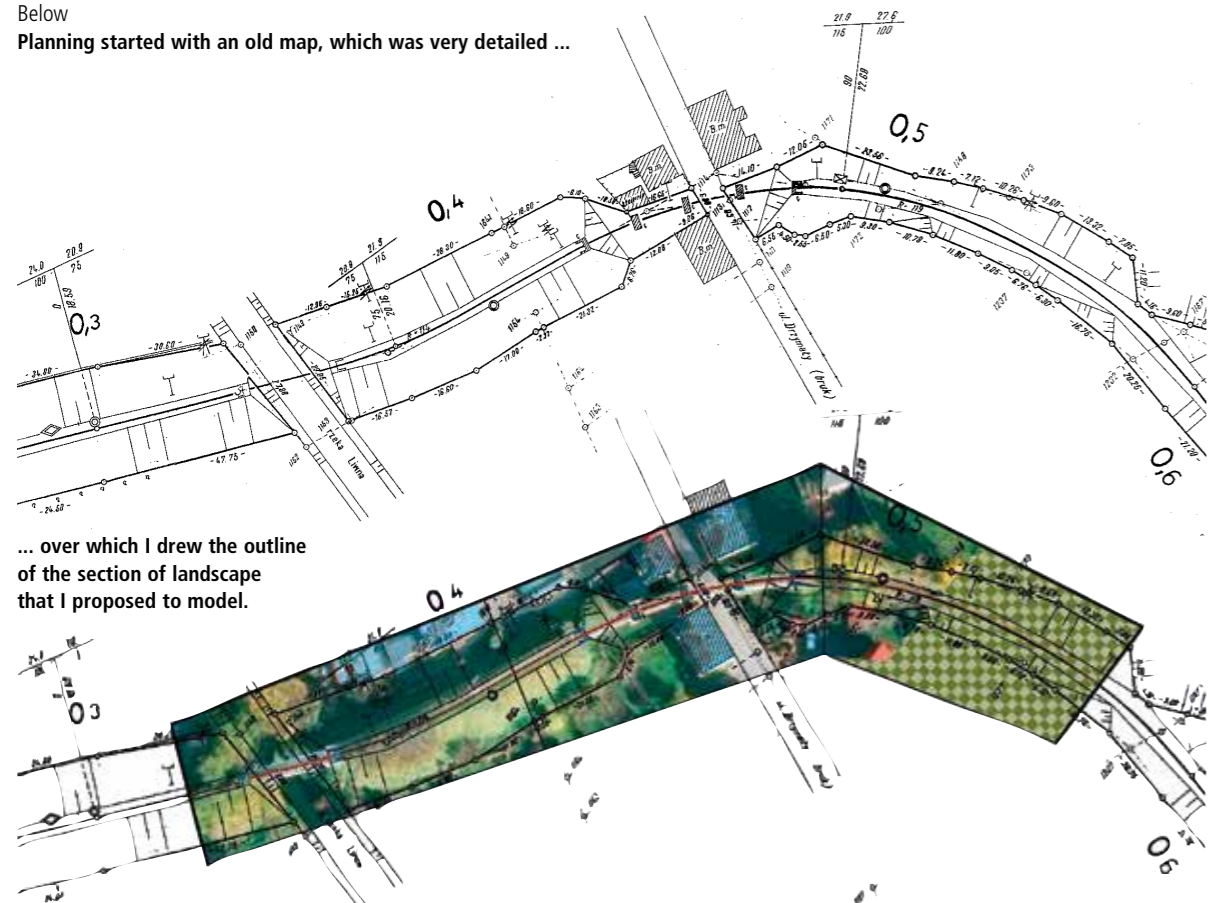
To test the overall visual appearance, I put all the buildings and details onto the layout

Above
HF110C 0-6-0T+T with four-wheel passenger stock passing above the roofs.

Below
The embankment between the road and river bridges as it is today.
Photo: author.

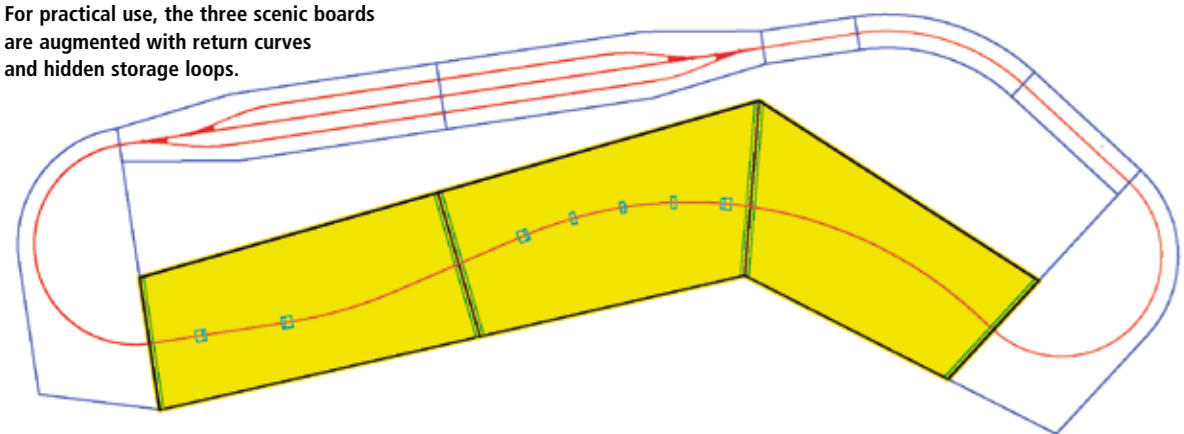


Below
Planning started with an old map, which was very detailed ...



... over which I drew the outline of the section of landscape that I proposed to model.

For practical use, the three scenic boards are augmented with return curves and hidden storage loops.



The last phase of construction was to build the base, with the surrounding land form.

Then the track could be installed, and finally the green scenery was done. The trees were made by my wife Malgorzata, and other details were added.

The last task was to make the fascia which carries the lighting and the background.

Marcin Turko used a drone to take photos of the landscape for me to use as a background, and Klaudiusz Dawid helped with the electronic control of the lighting – all the structures have internal lighting, and various times of day can be simulated with the overall lighting.

The layout made its exhibition debut at the OntraXS! event in the Dutch national railway museum in Utrecht in March 2023, and seems to have been appreciated by many visitors.



Below
Px9 0-8-0 No.1646
(a modified Veit GR type)
drifts over the river bridge.



Above
The scenic section as displayed at exhibitions.
Photo: author.

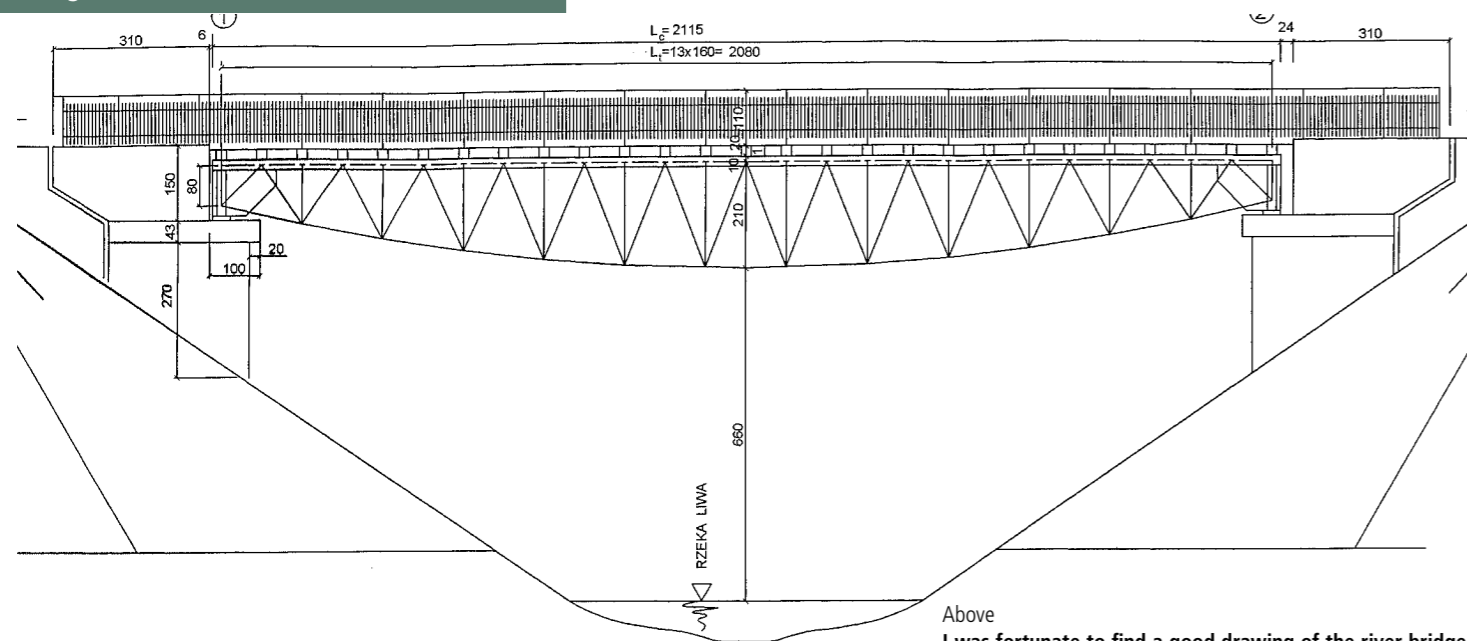
Left
Among the research material collected were old timetables.

Below
A PKP Lxd2 B-B diesel with a short train of sugar beets.

TK 577 TK 579		TK 578 TK 580	
Mareza - Kwidzyn W.		Kwidzyn W. - Mareza	
Relacja pociągu: 26		Relacja pociągu: 26	
Nimowany % ciężaru hamującego: 26		Nimowany % ciężaru hamującego: 26	
Seria i obciążenie lokomotywy: Lyd 1 - 80 ton		Seria i obciążenie lokomotywy: Lyd 1 - 180 ton	
1 2 3	4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3	4 5 6 7 8 9
0,000 15 Mareza	6.00 8.00	0,000 15 Mareza	6.56 16 8.56 16
5 2,41-2,61 4		5 2,91-2,91 4	
3,450 16 Kwidzyn W.	6.16 16 8.16 16	0,000 15 Mareza	6.56 16 8.56 16
5 2,91-2,91 4		5 2,61-2,61 4	
TK 581 TK 583		TK 582 TK 584	
Mareza - Kwidzyn W.		Kwidzyn W. - Mareza	
Relacja pociągu: 26		Relacja pociągu: 26	
Nimowany % ciężaru hamującego: 26		Nimowany % ciężaru hamującego: 26	
Seria i obciążenie lokomotywy: Lyd 1 - 80 ton		Seria i obciążenie lokomotywy: Lyd 1 - 180 ton	
1 2 3	4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3	4 5 6 7 8 9
0,000 15 Mareza	11.50 15.30	0,000 15 Mareza	12.56 16 16.36 16
5 2,41-2,61 4		5 2,61-2,61 4	
3,450 16 Kwidzyn W.	12.08 16 15.46 16	0,000 15 Mareza	12.56 16 16.36 16
5 2,91-2,91 4		5 2,61-2,61 4	
TK 585		TK 586	
Kwidzyn W. - Mareza		Mareza - Kwidzyn W.	
Relacja pociągu: 26		Relacja pociągu: 26	
Nimowany % ciężaru hamującego: 26		Nimowany % ciężaru hamującego: 26	
Seria i obciążenie lokomotywy: Lyd 1 - 80 ton		Seria i obciążenie lokomotywy: Lyd 1 - 180 ton	
1 2 3	4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 3	4 5 6 7 8 9
0,000 15 Mareza	17.00	0,000 15 Mareza	17.50
5 2,41-2,61 4		5 2,61-2,61 4	
3,450 16 Kwidzyn W.	17.16 16	0,000 15 Mareza	18.06 16
5 2,91-2,91 4		5 2,61-2,61 4	



Bridge construction



Above
I was fortunate to find a good drawing of the river bridge.



Left
This enable me to have the parts etched in metal by a specialist supplier. The delicate walkways complete with handrails were made separately.



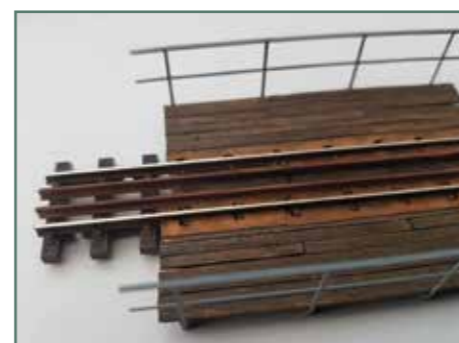
Left
The rail viaduct girders were also assembled from metal etches, then painted basic grey and carefully weathered.



Above
The viaduct pillars and bridge abutments were made from cardboard.



Above
Special long sleepers had to be made for the bridge deck to replace the Roco originals.



Above
The end of the completed bridge deck, with guard rails, walkways, and handrails.

Buildings and interiors



Left
The interior of the farmhouse kitchen.



Below left
The interior of the factory boiler room.



Below
All the buildings have interior lighting which is switched on and off controlled by a circuit mounted under the board.





Above
The kitchen garden seems to be thriving, and there are beehives in the orchard.
The washing line has been sited a sensible distance from the railway line ...

Below
Px5 0-8-0 No.1650 struggles up the gradient with sugar beet.
This is another adapted Modellbau Veit metal model.



Above
As with the building interiors, which can only be glimpsed, even areas that are mostly hidden from normal view have been fully detailed with authentic local scenes.

Right
Four-wheel railcar MBd1-118 is a modified Tillig item.

Below and inset
At the house on the other side of the road and the railway, the garden seems to be more for pleasure than produce.

