

Aster UK News & Views

June 2009

A Special Announcement from Aster Hobbies (UK) LLP with some Good News and Bad News...

First of all the Good News ... Following a visit to Yokohama for a meeting with the Worldwide Aster Distributors and the Aster Hobby Co Inc, I am pleased to say that Aster have taken the bold decision to reduce the wholesale price of the British outline models to Aster Hobbies (UK) LLP. They have done this in view of the great difficulties caused by the Worldwide financial meltdown which has hit us particularly hard here in the UK, in fact more severely than almost anywhere else. I am now able to offer the excellent Great Western Castle class locomotive in kits and Factory built-up at December 2008 prices once again!

GWR Castle class 5015 Kingswear Castle	Kit £4250.00	Factory Built RTR £5150.00
Castle class in BR Livery (kit only)	Kit £4250.00	

It also means that anticipated price increases to the Bulleid Pacifics and Titfield Thunderbolt have been cancelled. See abbreviated Price List overleaf.

But all this good news comes at a price. So now the bad news ... To get the UK market back on track, Aster Hobby Co Inc has taken bold but painful measures to reduce their profit margin. I have had to take a similar action. Reduced margins means that sales through the UK Aster Dealers network cannot continue. So sadly I have to say goodbye to my dealers with very much regret. They have provided a valuable service to their customers and I shall miss their valued support. You can if you wish continue to place your orders via one of my former UK Aster dealer but the actual sale will be with Aster Hobbies (UK) LLP. You may also wish to know the Aster Hobbies (UK) LLP guarantee on products sold via dealers over the last 12 months will be taken directly by Aster Hobbies (UK) LLP.

Aster 'Castle' Notes

The GWR Castle is probably the best UK Aster to date. It is very true to prototype with an amazing track performance. With 6 month's experience from kit building customers and my own experience with a kit, I am able to say that kit construction has few problems. The valve gear assembly is a bit 'fiddly' but as long as care is taken and a little Loctite thread lock applied during final assembly then all should be well. A useful review of kit construction by David Stick was published in the January 2009 G1MRA Newsletter and Journal. This review is also available at: <http://www.southernsteamtrains.com/misc/Castle-review-stick.htm>

If you do not want to build a kit yourself then a number of excellent well qualified builders are available in the UK. I particularly recommend:

Mr Peter Alliot (Northampton) 01604 858467.

alliot49@waitrose.com

Mr David Baker (Walsall) 01922 416932.

Mr Geoff Calver (Suffolk) 01638 566498

geoff.calver@btinternet.com

Mr John Lawrence (Isle of Wight) 01983 875543

Mr David Stick (Cornwall) 01726 816291

davidstick@btinternet.com

NB. The above are experienced and recommended Aster kit builders who offer a service to UK customers. They can also provide repairs and adjustments to Aster models. Aster Hobbies (UK) LLP publishes these details in good faith but can take no responsibility for loss or damage however caused.



Aster GWR Lamps are available again. These are suitable for the Aster Castle, Aster BR 9F / Evening Star and of course for the Pannier Tank and King George V of former times. Price £20.00 for 3 inc P&P.

Also please don't forget that a signed copy of Chris Ludlow's limited edition print "Castles in Gold" accompanies every Aster 'Castle' kit and factory built model sold in the UK. If for any reason you have not received your copy with a purchase then please get in touch with Aster Hobbies (UK) LLP





St Mawes Castle kit built and photo by David Stick.

New South Wales Government Railway AD60 4-8-4+4-8-4 Garratt

In the last edition of this occasional newsletter we mentioned the short re-run of the Aster AD60 Garratt. A number of intrepid customers parted with a deposit and 18 months later the kits duly arrived. In fact I have been sending them out in the last two weeks. Just four more kits are available in Japan and I have reserved them for the UK. Lined No. 6020 and unlined/un-numbered are expected to be here at the end of June and will be sold on a first come basis. Please get in touch if you want one.



Whichever may you look at the Aster Garratt it is a most impressive locomotive. No less that 41 inches long but can take a 6 1/2 foot radius curve! Convertible from coal to alcohol in about 20 minutes and will pull everything you own. Full specification and special price on request. A fully built example will be available to view shortly. We have been invited to display at the Garratt Centenary exhibition at the Manchester Museum of Science & Industry 14th - 16th August when 100 Garratts both large and small are expected to be present. Kit building service available.

Abbreviated Price List

Liverpool & Manchester Railway 'Titfield Thunderbolt'	Kit £760.00	RTR £875.00
BR or SR West Country / Battle of Britain class	Kit £2935.00	RTR £3675.00
GWR Castle class 5015 Kingswear Castle	Kit £4250.00	RTR £5150.00
Castle class in BR Livery (kit only)	Kit £4250.00	
Great Northern S2 in Glacier Green	Kit £5250.00.	RTR £6400.00

Suction Fan £70.00. Trackside Pump £80.00. Steam Oil in dispenser bottle £2.50. Treadmill Rollers (4) £100.00. Aster Catalogue £6.00 (+ £2.00 p&p) includes 40 page live steam guide.

All the above available from stock for immediate delivery

(Full Price List on request)

For more information please contact the sole UK importer & distributor:

Aster Hobbies (UK) LLP
PO Box 61. Abbots Langley WD5 0ZJ
Tel 01923 269662

www.asterhobbies.co.uk Email: asteruk@gmail.com

Visitors welcome by appointment.

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