

The Whistleblower

January 2012

2012 SIGNAL IS "OFF"

First of all let me wish all members a prosperous New Year and happy modelling in 2012. I especially want to welcome all the new members to the club who have recently joined - I trust you will all get fully engaged in club activities and find them enjoyable.

1 year birthday celebration: The Whistleblower has become 1 year old with this issue (and they said it wouldn't last). I hope all members find the newsletter useful communication vehicle and look forward to receiving it 8 times a year. To increase its usefulness, it would be good to get more input from across the membership - 2012 has started well with 2 articles from Julian Evison and Richard Puddephatt.

COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- The AGM was held on the 7th December and was attended by 31 members + exec committee. As everyone is aware by now, the club had a very successful year with a much improved income from increased membership, strong exhibition surpluses and the first year additional fund raising.
- David Taylor was appointed Treasurer and is currently in the process of changing over with Les Inwood. I would like to thank Les for all his excellent work over the preceding 3 years.
- Layout group leaders were appointed as follows:
 - N gauge - Chris Webster
 - OO gauge - Alan Riches
 - P4 gauge - Greg Coady
 - O gauge - Robin Baker
- Ron Patterson - Chairman, Richard Puddephatt - Secretary and Noel Leaver - Exhibition Manager were re-elected to their current posts.
- Good news: as a result the improved income situation, the committee has agreed to suspend the afternoon quarterly surcharge of £10 for the remainder of this financial year. So please come along from 3.00pm - it will cost you zilch.

PROGRAMME FOR 1Q12

Date	Event	Subject
January		
Wed 4	O gauge running night	O gauge running track
Wed 11	N gauge running night	Committee meeting
Wed 18	Presentation	Birmingham Trams by Paul Kirkup
Wed 25	00 gauge running night	
February		
Wed 1	O gauge running night	Weydon Road??
Wed 8	N gauge running night	
Wed 15	Social evening	Pancake night lead by Robin Baker
Wed 22	Presentation	Chris Webster photo show
Wed 29	00 gauge running night	
March		
Wed 7	O gauge running night	Weydon Road – test BR schedule
Wed 14	N gauge running night	
Wed 21	Presentation	TBA
Wed 28	00 gauge running night	
Friday 30	Club Annual Dinner	To be held at Anderson's Restaurant, Farnham (for details see newsletter)

NB: there is now an official N gauge running night each month. For details of activities, please see the layout group leader.

ANNUAL CLUB DINNER

The Club Dinner will be held this year on Friday 30th March at Andersons Restaurant in Farnham. This event is a great opportunity to bring along your partners to discover what we all do on Wednesdays and socially meet the other members of the club.

Please find the formal notice attached to the newsletter and on the club notice boards. As usual it's on a first come first served basis so please book early as there are only 34 seats - full payment upon booking I am afraid. The booking forms with your menu choice are attached and can be found on the notice board.

GREENFIELD SIDINGS GOES "OVERSEAS" By Alan Riches

Greenfield Sidings had its "overseas" trip to the Isle of Wight on the weekend of 5/6th November. The voyage over and return was smooth and the dinner on Saturday evening was first class. The running of the layout had a few blips but fortunately these were behind scenes. The scenery out front received many favourable comments and lots of photographs were taken.

An excellent weekend all round.

EXHIBITON DIARY

Club layouts

- 28th Jan - Greenfield Sidings at Egham
- 4/5th Feb - Basingstoke at Stafford

Exhibitions of interest

- 7 Jan - Marlow & Maidenhead MRC
- 7/8th Jan - Orpington & District MRC
- 14/15th Jan - Bognor Regis MRC
- 14/15th Jan - CMRA, St Albans
- 20 - 22nd Jan - London Model Engineering Exhibition, Alexandra Palace
- 21st Jan - Astolat, Guildford
- 22nd Jan - Bristol O Gauge
- 28/29 Jan - Southampton MRC
- 4/5th Feb - Alton MRC

ANNUAL EVENTS

Diary dates for all members, here are the club events to be held throughout the year.

- The club annual dinner. Planned for the evening of Friday 30th March (see page 1).
- The O Gauge open day. To be held on Bank Holiday Monday 7th May (see page 1).
- Summer club outing?? This has been put forward as something we may want to consider - suggestions are to visit the McAlpine or NRM museums. Please let the Secretary know if you are interested asap. We will then organise accordingly.
- Wellington Centre publicity. Planned for the weekend of 8th/9th September. We are also considering a second venue following suggestions at the AGM.
- The modelling competition. Planned for the evening of Wednesday 19th Sept.
- The Club Exhibition. To be held on the weekend of 13th/14th October at The Connaught Centre, Aldershot
- The club open day. To be held on Sunday 4th November. The club layouts being erected will be Weydon Road (0), Brixcombe(P4) plus a small private N/OO layout.
- The photographic competition. This will be organised by Astolat MRC in Mid - November.

LAYOUT ACTIVITY

N gauge group - Now that work has been completed on our N gauge test track, the intention is that we will be erecting it on a regular basis (see the events schedule for details) for people to try out their latest purchases, and also to act as a test bed for the ideas we have for Wickwar.

Having sorted out the majority of Basingstoke's electrical alterations, attention has now turned to the first of the replacement canopies. In between Xmas activities, Chris Webster will be assembling bits of Perspex into a new canopy structure, a solution that should be a bit more robust than the previous version. Hopefully this will be complete by the layouts next outing, to Stafford at the beginning of February.

Wickwar: A track layout and planning meeting has been arranged for the 4th Jan, after which we will know exactly how it all fits and will be able to finalise the baseboard sizes and orientation. Once this has been done we can work out how the baseboard construction will proceed. It seems likely we will need to use a combination of open frame and "flat earth" areas, it's just a case of working out what is needed where! So Chris's other task this Xmas will be to assemble a 39 piece jigsaw of A3 sheets into a 2mm/ft scale plot of the prototype track plan as our starting point.

OO gauge group - The past month has seen some scenic work on Greenfield Sidings, repairs to fences, erecting of telegraph poles and making cart tracks on the farm corner. The test track has been erected twice and on mince pie night we saw a "stranger" in the form of a Union Pacific challenger hauling 20 boxcars and gondolas. It make a change from supersonic Virgin trains.

OO group members should not forget our appearance at Egham in late January - we are loading on Friday evening and will need 8 volunteers to operate as usual.

P4 gauge group: Good progress has been made against the work plan drawn up after the club exhibition. Only 3 major items remain to be completed:- signalling, the back scene and a screen for the fiddle yard and work is progressing on at least 67% of these. All are hoped to be complete by end 1Q2012.

We have acquired a new member for the group. Richard Harris, having joined the club in October, quickly determined that P4 is where the action is and has thrown his lot in with Brixcombe. He is most welcome.

Following its performance at the clubs exhibition, Brixcombe has received an invitation to appear at the Loddon Vale Club's annual show in May, which has been accepted. More surprisingly (given its few public outings to date) we have also been invited to exhibit the layout at the mecca for all P4 modellers, Scaleforum, at Leatherhead in September. This, for those of you not familiar with the hierarchy in the 'premier' 4mm scale, is a bit like beatification in the Catholic church. Only in their case you have to have been dead for 50 years or so. The invite has been accepted of course and over the next 9 months we will all be hard at work polishing our track, locos, shoes and protocols.

O gauge group: I have volunteered to act as the group representative on the Club Committee for the coming year. Who is going to have a go next year? Mick Raybould will continue giving information to the Guild Gazette and Ian George continues in role as layout exhibition contact. Wednesday 4th January the Test track be set up for final fettle and testing. Wednesday 1st February - are there any items requiring work on the layout? Perhaps this is the opportunity to sort.

FOR SALE

We have been advised by Mark Pretious of the Alton Club that his Dad wants to sell his "Thomas the Tank Engine" layout. The OO gauge layout is covered with all the cartoon characters from every series and has been shown at exhibitions for many years. He is selling it with all the stock (and characters!) and is hoping to get £1500 ono. If anyone is interested they should contact Mark or his Dad on 01420 88005 or 07919 355678

AN INTRODUCTION TO NARROW GAUGE MODELLING By Julian Evison

Part 1 – Introduction

The club's layouts are all standard gauge, and rightly so, as that appears to be the interest of the great majority of members. However, have you considered narrow gauge modelling? What are the attractions? What are the problems? I hope to be able to answer these questions, de-mystify some of the jargon and point you to some of the best layouts in the more common scales.

Narrow gauge modelling appeals for a number of reasons. Let's start with a practical one: the amount of space required. Many (but by no means all) narrow gauge prototypes ran short trains around sharp curves, so the depiction of this does not look out of place. For a given scale it is easier to fit what you want in to a limited space and still have room for scenic development. Some find this a solution as age attacks eyesight to allow them to go 'up a scale' while occupying roughly the same area.

The next attraction is that it is a little different and not just another transition era terminus or modern diesel depot. It must be admitted that there are narrow gauge clichés - Welsh slate lines and American logging railroads must be done exceptionally well if they are to stand out!

The final attraction, I think, is the most important. In narrow gauge modelling it is quite common to model an entirely fictitious railway, running in a fictitious place with its own unique collection of locomotives and rolling stock following no known prototype. To be convincing they must be 'railway-like' and take design cues from real life, but fundamentally the builder can be the sole creator of his or her own world. This 'freedom of action' results in some truly inspiring and unique modelling. Why this is very rarely done with standard gauge layouts is a mystery to me. Of course, you don't need to do this and the rest of the range of concepts from 'inspired by' to 'accurate reproduction of' is covered by the models you will find in exhibitions and people's homes.

Now a couple of problems: for somebody coming from standard gauge modelling an immediate difference is the limited amount of ready to run equipment. More on this in subsequent parts, but unless you wish to model Western American in On30, or contemporary Austrian in HOe, or Swiss HOm, you will need to build kits or simply build your own. The final problem is that in some quarters, narrow gauge modelling is not perceived as serious modelling. I regard this as other people's problem, not mine, but I hope to lead you to some very fine narrow gauge modelling which will help you to make up your own mind.

Part 2 – Scale and Gauge Combinations

One of the most confusing aspects of narrow gauge modelling is the different conventions for naming the scale gauge combinations. What are HOe, Gn15, O-16.5? There are three basic systems: Continental, British and American. In all of them the first part refers to the parent scale, i.e. N, HO, OO, S, O, G, etc. Thereafter it gets difficult.

The Continental system uses a letter after the scale, such as HOm: m stands for metre gauge; e (=etroite, French for narrow) stands for roughly 750mm gauge; f (=feldbahn, German for industrial railway) stands for roughly 600 mm gauge. Thus Oe is 1:45 scale running on 16.5mm gauge track and HOf is 1:87 scale running on 6.5mm gauge track.

The US system places the nominal full size gauge in feet or inches after the letter n. Thus HOn3 is 1:87 scale running on 10.5mm gauge track to represent 3 foot gauge and On30 is 1:48 scale running on 16.5 mm track to represent 30 inch gauge.

Finally the British system is the scale followed by a number representing the modelled gauge in millimetres. OO9 is 1:76 scale running on 9mm track and O16.5 is 1:43.5 scale running on 16.5 mm gauge track.

Thus O scale running on 16.5mm gauge track is variously described as Oe, On30 and O16.5, while OO/HO running on 9mm gauge track is described as HOe, HOn30 and OO9. Other reasonably common scales are O9 (1:43.5 running on 9mm track) representing 15 inch gauge and Gn15 (1:20.3 running on 16.5mm track) also representing 15 inch gauge.

To be continued next month:

Part 3 – OO9

Part 4 – O-16.5 and On30

TAVARES, EUSTIS & GULF RAILROAD, CENTRAL FLORIDA
(ALSO KNOWN AS THE ORANGE BLOSSOM CANNONBALL)

By Richard Puddephatt



On our last trip to Orlando in October, Bron and I came across this newly restored and opened tourist railway beside Lake Dora, some 45 minutes west of Orlando and starting from the town of Tavares. This is a very pretty spot which showcases the old Florida before the coming of the theme parks.

I met the guy who runs it and from what I could gather, the actual railroad is owned by the Central Florida Railroad Company who “allow” the preservationists to run their steam train at weekends only – and at no more than 10 mph!! It is slow unfortunately but, given that the stretch currently open from Tavares to Lake Jem is 10 miles, you get a good afternoon out.

The Loco is a Baldwin of 1907 which just after we were there, was converted back from oil burning to wood burning. The three carriages are of 1912/14 vintage and have been well restored – UK Elf and Safety would not be impressed as they are wood construction and I doubt would stand up to much of a crash!!

I was told that a Mikado is due to join the fleet early in 2012 so we will investigate further on our next trip out in March. They also intend to open up two more “branches” of the railroad radiating from Tavares.

They have a website www.orangeblossomcannonball.com which has a fascinating 12 minute video of a ride on the train.



It's great claim to fame is that the whole ensemble – not the track - has featured in a number of major movies including “True Grit”, “3.10 to Yuma”, “Appaloosa”, “Rosewood”, and “There Will Be Blood”.

Well worth a visit if you ever go out that way and need a break from Disney.