

# WHISTLEBLOWER

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FARNHAM & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

July 2017 Edition

### EDITORIAL

In this edition we look back on some enjoyable and varied days out such as to Peco and Wrecclesham Fete. We are also looking at a possible new scale group to add to the club, the first in a long time.

This newsletter will only ever be as good as the items sent in for publication, so please feel free to send me any model railway or railway related items that you would like to have featured.

### CLUB DIARY TO END OCTOBER

2017	Running Night	Event	Notes
Wed 19 Jul	00/P4 gauges		
Wed 26 Jul	00 gauge		
Wed 2 Aug	0 gauge		
Wed 9 Aug	N Gauge		
Wed 16 Aug	00/P4 gauges		
Wed 23 Aug	00 gauge		
Wed 30 Aug			
Sat 2 Sep		Club Layout at Guidex, Telford	Weydon Road (0)
Sun 3 Sep		Club Layout at Guidex, Telford	Weydon Road (0)
Wed 6 Sep	0 gauge		
Sat 9 Sep		Visit to TINGS, Leamington Spa	
Wed 13 Sep	N Gauge	Club Modelling Competition	
Wed 20 Sep	00/P4 gauges		
Wed 27 Sep	00 gauge		
Wed 4 Oct	0 gauge		
Sat 7 Oct		Club Layout at Fareham show	Wickwar (N)
Sat 7 Oct		Croydon Club show – club member's layout present	St. Mary's (Julian Evison)
Sun 8 Oct		Club Layout at Fareham show	Wickwar (N)
Sun 8 Oct		Croydon Club show – club member's layout present	St. Mary's (Julian Evison)
Wed 11 Oct	N Gauge	All members requested to attend club in preparation for Annual Exhibition	
Fri 13 Oct		Set up Annual Exhibition	Late afternoon and evening at Alderwood School (formerly Connaught School)
Sat 14 Oct		Club Annual Exhibition	Alderwood School (formerly Connaught School)
Sun 15 Oct		Club Annual Exhibition	Alderwood School (formerly Connaught School)
Wed 18 Oct	00/P4 gauges		
Wed 25 Oct	00 gauge		
Sat 28 Oct		Club Layout at Beckenham Club Show	Haydon Sq E.1. (0)

Would club sections please keep me (Julian) informed of exhibition invitations. Likewise for club members who are attending exhibitions with their own layouts.

## LOOKING FURTHER AHEAD....

- On **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November** the Club will hold its annual Open Day. This is being planned by Julian Evison. At the moment we expect to have layouts from each of the scale groups plus layouts belonging to members. All this, plus bacon rolls, too. What more could you want? Please put this in your diary as we will need help from all members to make this a success.
- Our AGM is to be held on **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December**. This is your chance to vote for a new Committee (the old one has run its 3-year course)
- The Club Christmas Dinner is being organised by Mike Le Marie. It will be held at the Hen & Chicken pub located between Farnham & Alton on **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December**. This pub can offer us an exclusive room with a maximum seating capacity of 38 and a cost of about £20 per head, though note that it is a carvery type buffet service for the main course.

## POSSIBLE NEW 009 GROUP – Julian Evison and David Harrington

We think there is growing interest amongst our existing club members in narrow gauge modelling, particularly 009, probably as a result of increased trade support and hence exposure in main stream magazines. We are considering starting an 009 section for the club, but this is really only viable if we can attract new members to add to those already in the club. If we can provide a home for enough narrow-gauge modellers to form an effective group the club is prepared to fund the construction of a new 009 layout.

If, as an existing club member, you are interested in being part of this, please contact David or Julian. If you know somebody outside the club who might want to join, please encourage them.

## VISIT TO PECO – Noel Leaver

Our club had a very enjoyable trip to Pecorama yesterday, including a factory tour given by Michael Pritchard and a talk about their history and some future plans. Amazingly this is the first time Peco have hosted a tour by a model railway club.





A lot of the work in the factory is done on fairly basic hydraulically operated presses with a mass of different tooling available to mount on them. Peco very rarely delete anything from their catalogue (the Collett Goods is an exception) and some of their tools are 60 years old. To make a point blade involves setting up and using at least 4 different tools. The rails joining at the V need one machine to cut to length (a specialised rail cutter) and another to cut the angle on the end. Then you still have to assemble it and spot weld wires on the back. All in all a lot of operations, it is surprising the points are not more expensive.

Making yard lengths of track uses a machine with 3 operators, one loading pre-cut lengths of rail and 2 operating the machine and loading pre-moulded track bases into the jig and inspecting the result. There are 3 pieces of sleepers for each yard length to avoid having to mould very long items, one plain and 2 others that interlock with the first. By now they will have a new robotic

machine that will do all this (including visual inspection) plus cutting the rail to length, and just need one operator to keep it fed.

The other machine I found interesting was a computer controlled printer that prints colours directly onto plastic wagon bodies. Previously they used Tampo printing which requires an etched plate being made for each colour within each design. They have used computer printing for all their work for the last 3 years. It can do a very short run economically - they did some vans for us with Farnham MRC logo on the side.

The track is the mainstay of their business, at present they are expanding with a lot more O gauge and bullhead OO. They are also putting a lot of effort into 009.

You probably know that the original company was Prichard Patent Product Limited, but did you know the product in the title was the OO automatic hook coupler that was used by Hornby and others for many years? Peco got 1/4d [*about 0.1p for those younger than me – Ed.*] for every coupling.

## 00 OPEN DAY

The 00 Group held its Open Day on the late May Bank Holiday (29<sup>th</sup> May) with, amongst others Greenfield Sidings and the 00 test track on show. Here are a couple of photos to illustrate the occasion.



## THREE GO TO THE FAIR – David Harrington

(And then there were Four)

On the last Sunday in June, when the heat wave was done and clouds gathered, the good Burghers of Wreclesham assembled at the Recreation Ground (which is not where Google Maps says it is) to celebrate their Fete.

We were there.

Stockers (whose fault it was that we were there at all), Richard P and I loaded up the club stand and Charles's kiddies' layout at mid-day and, after several false attempts, managed to find the hidden entrance to the Rec, known only to those born and brought up locally. There we were allocated a marquee all to ourselves, set up our tables and chairs and attempted to persuade Michael Faraday's original generator to give us some AC volts. It did, but only 6 of them. After failed attempts to find the missing 234 a chap from the neighbouring stall who knew a man who knew a man who had a generator came up trumps and soon we were off and running.

Lots of children, between the ages of 2 and 72 came up and admired Thomas, who was happily doing his rounds. Richard and I engaged the older ones in persuasive chat while Stockers relaxed

in his canvas armchair and bemoaned the fact that he could be washing the car or mowing the lawn. Richard and I pretended to sympathise. Keith turned up and helped with the engagement and handed out leaflets.



We reckon well over a dozen families were sufficiently enthralled to promise to attend our Exhibition and buy raffle tickets. One lady tried to press a pound coin into my unwilling hand. An ex-member of the club was almost persuaded to re-join. A small boy with a strong resemblance to Joe90 kept returning and demanding we crash the trains. A slightly older boy brought a beetle which he deposited in the tunnel, amid great excitement from his friends.

We patronised the beer stall and bought hamburgers. Stockers drank water from a bottle hidden in his car. I won some chopsticks at the Tombola.

A good day out and we were home by 6pm. Many thanks, Stockers.

## **AMERICAN NIGHT – David Harrington**

The Club's American Night wasn't quite as busy as it has been in previous years, largely due to the lack of sound-equipped diesels in 7mm. However, the slack was taken up by the OO test track and, thanks to Noel putting a notice on the website, we had a smattering of visitors. It was also good to see some members whom we don't see often enough – such as Dave Bradley and friend all the way from the IoW. We also had two "new faces" from the local community, one of whom – an HO man - intends to join us.

The other visitor, with young son, was an N-Gauge enthusiast and used our test track to run an impressive fleet of U.S. outline trains.

The evening was ably supported by Richard Puddephat's efforts in the kitchen, from where, supervised by his wife, Bron, he produced a steady flow of hot dogs and Wimbledon pancakes. Many thanks to both!

## **WICKWAR PHOTOSHOOT**

On 14<sup>th</sup> June Chris Nevard, who works for Model Rail magazine came along to do a photo shoot for the club's N scale layout, Wickwar. You will have to wait to see most of the results in the magazine (currently no date set), but here is a taster of what we can expect.



## **MODELLING INSPIRATION – KUROBE GORGE RAILWAY – Julian Evison**

When people think of the 2ft 6ins gauge railways they might think of the Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway or the railways of E.R. Calthrop such as the Barsi Light Railway or the Leek and Manifold Valley Light Railway. They are unlikely to think of an electrified railway with an intensive passenger and goods service which is still in operation today – but such is the Kurobe Gorge Railway in the north of Central Japan.

The railway was built to serve the building and subsequent maintenance of a series of dams in the Kurobe gorge. The first 12 km were opened in 1926 and extended by 8 km in 1937 and it is electrified at 600V DC overhead. Passenger services have been run since 1953 and now, between April and November, there are 17 return workings per day, plus freight trips – all of this on a single line running through spectacular scenery. The line passes through quite a few tunnels and over major bridges, enjoyed from open-sided coaches. Curves are tight, down to 25 metres radius, equivalent to 12 inch radius in 4mm scale.



The railway also serves the dams for maintenance and goes right in to the machine rooms, in this case styled (bizarrely) on a European castle:



Passing a freight train in one of the loops:



You could be forgiven for thinking that this is a heavyweight railway until something reminds you of the scale:



**Julian Evison (Editor)**