

WHISTLEBLOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FARNHAM & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

3 May 2020 – Special Edition No 4

EDITORIAL

Week 6 of the COVID-19 Lock Down is drawing to a close and, whilst the Prime Minister has announced that we are beyond the peak of the pandemic, we await his road map to when we start returning to some semblance of normality. Thankfully, throughout this period of isolation, we have enjoyed a wonderful weather which enticed me into the garden and, importantly, allowed me to extend my walks to the newsagent for some useful exercise. That said, I was grateful for this week's rain; not only was the ground drying out, but it meant I had a legitimate excuse to self-isolate inside my shed and get on with wiring my layout.

Sadly, I have to pass on the news that 2 of our members have recently left us. Jack Scambler a well-known character in the Club passed away on Tuesday 28 April and David Griffiths, a former Member, died on Wednesday 29 April.

Jon Faulconer

JOHN SCAMBLER – David Harrington

Group Captain John Scambler, RAF (retd), the son of a banker, had a distinguished military career. He gained his pilot's wings on Sabre jets in Canada just as the Korean war was ending and subsequently served in a wide variety of positions in the Royal Air Force, frequently in Germany. At various times he was the Station Commander at RAF College Cranwell and a group director at the Bracknell Staff College. I first met him as our tours of duty overlapped at NATO HQ in The Netherlands, in the mid-80s. Then followed a gap of some 30 years until he walked into the clubroom one day and began reminiscing about his service life. As he talked it slowly dawned on me who he was. There followed a joyful family reunion and we rekindled our friendship with him and his Dutch wife, Edit. During the last couple of years John's health deteriorated and he was unable to play a full part in Club life, such as holding Greg to account; however, he joined us for the occasional Gentleman's Luncheon at the Bat and Ball, where his forthright views on our life and times usually brooked no compromise, but were always entertaining. His lasting legacy to the club is a collection of scratch-built houses on "Wickwar", which he constructed during a cruise to the fjords, much to the amusement of his fellow passengers. John and Edit had only recently sold their house in Elvetham Heath, Fleet, and moved into an apartment in Camberley. John leaves two sons and several grandchildren.



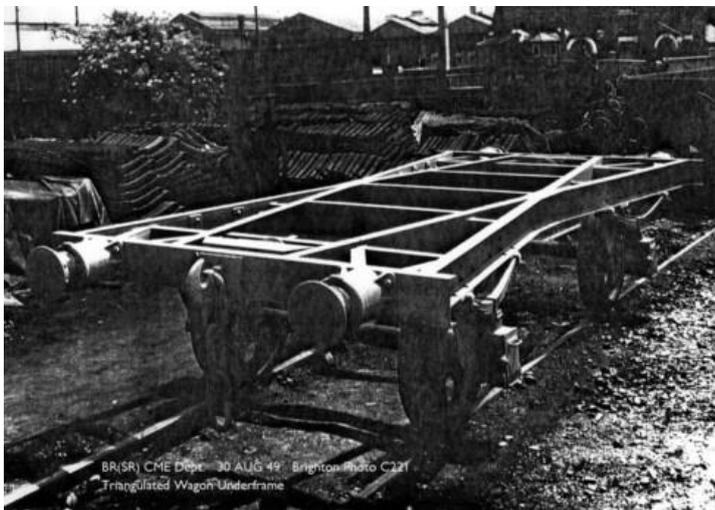
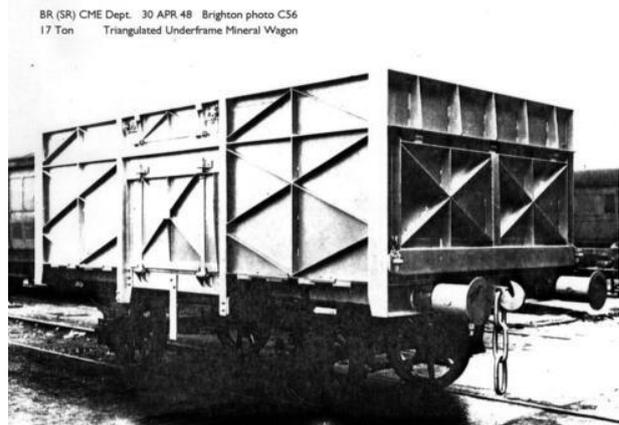
DAVID GRIFFITHS – Paula Martin

David Griffiths was a OO member of the club until about 10 years ago. He was a real gentleman (apart from being a Brentford supporter!) who was happy to talk railways anytime. David has been suffering from alzheimers for the last few years and so Kay has been caring for him, but when he fell and she could not get him up, he ended up in hospital where he unfortunately caught COVID-19.

BULLIED TRIANGULAR FRAMED MINERAL WAGON – Noel Leaver

Bulleid is known to have been responsible for some unusual designs: this is one you may not have come across. The information comes from some recent postings on the Southern Email Group.

In 1946 he produced a new all-steel mineral wagon with an unusual underframe that saved over a ton in weight, allowing it to carry 17 tons rather than 16 as it was the total weight that was the limit. The solebars were a shallow V instead of being straight. The redesigned brake gear saved about 4 cwt.



The bodies were 'flat pack', to be welded or riveted together when put on the underframe (before the war wagon builders Butterly had produced a similar design of body with panels that bolted together, a number were built for private owners).

The design was not taken up, only 2 prototypes with slightly different bodies were built and they spent their lives in internal use at Lancing. However, Bulleid did build some wagons to a similar design later when CME of the CIE in Ireland.

SUPER-ELEVATION – Noel Leaver

You may remember a video of Laurie Adam's shunting tractor. This is another one he has made about adding prototypical super-elevation (cant) to his layout.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lff1MxMsEPA>

MEMORIES OF AN OLD MAN (Part 2) – Ron Burnham

Previously, we heard about Ron's early life on the railways. Having left school at 15, he started out as a cleaner on the steam locos which included being the third man on the yard shunter making up trains for the different destinations. Having passed the practical test, he progressed to a Passed Cleaner.

Ron's memoires continue:

Having become a Passed Cleaner and only allowed to work shunting and Preparation & Disposal, you were required to have a company medical, not required before as you were only working at the loco sheds and yard. You would now attend the company medical centre located at Waterloo. This was to be very thorough and included an eye test. Having passed A1 you would be allowed to work on the main line, but there would be times when you would still be called to do cleaners duties; at such times you would then receive cleaners' wages.

Now some seven or eight months later I was to get my appointment that meant I was a fully-fledged fireman and was rostered with a permanent driver named Bert Richards. He was also a local councillor. I was only with him for a few months as he was due to retire.

I was then to team up with a new mate name of Sammy Moore. He was ok and did like a pint. One of our duties was to shunt at Windsor station. Whilst there we would have a meal break which meant a couple of pints in the local pub named the Donkey House. There were other occasions when we could get a beer, but rest assured no one was in danger. Most of the time mine was only a shandy. Sam was one of those people who could fart at will and after a pint they turned into rotten eggs. When you're firing up, your movements took you close to his backside and I am sure he had a silencer fitted as you never heard it coming, but you could certainly smell them.

Having had Sam as my driver for about two years, I was to move up into number 2 link.

My new driver was to be Harry Redler, quite a large man and very smart in appearance - uniform always clean and tidy considering the environment we worked in. Having said that I took a pride in my appearance with smart polished boots. I also used to fold the bottoms of my trousers under into a strong elastic band over my boots. It looked like you were wearing gaiters. I never wore a hat as the leather band use to give me a rash on my forehead. Instead I would use a handkerchief, tie four knots in the corners and then tuck them under.

Now I was with a more senior driver my rostered duties became more varied with different destinations.

Once again it was time for me to move on, this time it was to be the top link number 1. That meant a new driver name being Percy Poland. He was quite a character. He was a jolly sort of man that had a rather large veined nose but it would fair to say my time with him was one of the best. Again, the duties were more of the same, the exception being any special duty would mainly be carried out by crews from the top link.

The fact is Feltham was an intermediate station with limited destinations. Trains to Brent, would be taken onto there; trains to Willesden would do the same. They would then go from there to destinations up north. Trains to Basingstoke would then go onto the west counties. Temple Mills was another destination. Also, there was Hither Green.

Now moving on and being in the top link, one of our rostered duties was the 5.39 passenger train from Waterloo to Basingstoke where we were relieved by a different crew. There were specials when we would run empty stock from Walton and Weybridge into Waterloo. There was the odd occasion when we had a troop train special from Waterloo to Southampton.



Q1s were Ron's favourite engines & this one was apparently on a freight to Hither Green

Now with time moving on, changes started to occur. The west end shunter and both hump shunters were being replaced by diesels. The speculation started as to how long it would be before steam engines would be replaced altogether. As my next promotion would be to driver, is that what I really wanted.

As time went by and the phasing out of steam was becoming a reality, I decided to call it a day. Was it the right thing to do? At the time I thought it was, but nearly 60 years later I wonder if it WAS.....?.

April 2020

BUILDING A "LOWFIT" WAGON – Ian George

I've been working my way steadily through my stock of wagon kits to build and the latest to be tackled is a Slater's kit for a BR "LOWFIT". As the name implies these were low sided fitted wagons whose main use was to carry a variety of vehicles such as farm tractors and wheeled farm machinery, light-weight military vehicles such as Land Rovers and scout cars, or "invalid cars" (built at Guildford). The metal sides and ends hinged down to facilitate easy loading of vehicles and there were lashing rings set around the periphery of the floor to which the load could be secured. Several thousand such wagons were built in the 1950's.

At first sight the kit looked to be a fairly simple job. It's a standard Slater's kit i.e. a plastic body and chassis with various etched brass and lost wax brass detailing parts. As with all Slater's kits, there are virtually no written instructions, just a set of drawings of how it should look at each stage of construction. If you've already built a few more simple kits such as by Peco or Parkside then this would be a step up in terms of detail but nothing of which to be scared. I thought "soon knock that off"!



Well the body and chassis went together quite easily using MET-PAK adhesive, W irons and wheel sets fixed in position, then the whole assembly placed on my plate glass to test for rocking; it was steady as a rock. Happy boy!



I then studied the brass sheet containing all the etches for the BR “lifting link “brake gear which I was familiar with but hadn’t built before. I’d built plenty of wagons with different types of 8 shoe brakes before. What could go wrong?

I soon realised that to assemble it I would need to pin the various linkages together and then carefully solder in the way you would assemble loco valve gear. I decided it would be easier to assemble the whole thing away from the chassis then simply drop the complete unit into place. After

several hours pinning and soldering lots of tiny fiddly components (much bad language) I finally got the whole assembly looking acceptable and ready for slipping in between the axles and the chassis. After much more bad language I realised that it was never going to fit in that way and an alternative plan was needed.

Option 1 was to dismantle the brake assembly and rebuild it “in situ” (I really didn’t fancy that).

Option 2 was to try to get the wheel sets out of the very- well glued in W irons without doing serious damage. I opted for option 2 and after some extreme bending of plastic (not recommended) I got the wheel sets out. The brake assembly dropped neatly into place, the wheels went back in and miraculously the wagon still sat like a rock on the glass plate. Much relief.

In fairness to Slaters, their sparse instructions do say to put the wheels in place after the brake-gear unit but hey! Who reads instructions anyway?

My original intention had been to build 2 of these kits as another “wagon bashing” exercise to produce something different. In the early 1960’s BR found it was short of modern, vacuum brake fitted, bolster wagons for carrying long lengths of steel and so they converted pairs of LOWFITs (and CONFLATs) by removing the innermost sets of buffers and usual couplings from the pair and substituting a permanent coupling, then adding swivel bolsters to each wagon. The pairs were then re-labelled as “TWIN BOLSTER” and “Load 26 tons per Pair”. I thought this would be an easy alteration to copy. However, having gone through the burnt fingers and bad language building one set of lifting link brake gear I decided life’s too short to tackle another set and I settled for just the single LOWFIT, carrying a farm tractor as a typical load.



LOWFIT wagons were labelled “not to be loaded with containers”, ostensibly because of a lack of suitable means of securing the container to the wagon, which also had a wider floor than other wagon types thereby increasing the risk of the container sliding about in transit.

In contrast, "HIGHFIT" wagons, which also lacked securing points but had a narrower floor, were often used for carrying containers. In fact, shippers of high value or high security goods such as the whisky producers, or the MOD specified the use of HIGHFITs to carry their containers, the wagon sides making it more difficult for the light-fingered fraternity to gain access to the containers by opening the doors.

Finally, the Mid Hants railway has 2 LOWFITs in its demonstration goods train, both of which are loaded with containers; another example of why modelers should be wary of copying without question what they see on preserved railways.

QUIZ – Mike Le Marie

The 1950's have proved a popular era with many modellers as this was the time when many new types of diesel locomotives were introduced (many not very successfully) and they were to be seen all over the country running alongside steam locomotives. Listed below are many of the types introduced in this period. I have used their later TOPS classification to avoid giving away too many clues. For each locomotive class can you name the manufacturer, the year they were first introduced and on which BR region they ran first.

1. Class 15
2. Class 16
3. Class 20
4. Class 21
5. Class 22
6. Class 23
7. Class 24
8. Class 26
9. Class 28
10. Class 30
11. Class 40
12. Class 41
13. Class 42
14. Class 44

And now the answers to the previous quiz to name the Chief Mechanical Engineers responsible for the design of the classes of locomotives / multiple unit:

1. LMS Garratt 2-6-0 – 0-6-2 - Sir Henry Fowler
2. GWR 1600 Class Pannier Tank - Frederick Hawksworth
3. Austerity 0-6-0 Saddle Tank (LNER J94) - Robert Riddles
4. NE T2 0-8-0 (LNER Q6) - Sir Vincent Raven
5. L&SWR M7 0-4-4T - Dugald Drummond
6. LNER K1 2-6-0 - Arthur Peppercorn
7. LMS Diesel Electrics 10000 – 10001 - Henry Ivatt
8. SR 4DD EMUs - Oliver Bulleid
9. SR V Class 4-4-0 - Richard Maunsell
10. LB&SCR L Class (Rememberance 4-6-4T) - Lawson Butzkopfski Billinton

UNUSUAL LOCATIONS – Mike Le Marie

One of the advantages of the lockdown is that I actually have time to re-read many of my large collection of railway books. Most of them reflect my upbringing and current interests hence they all about aspects of the railways in the north of England and Scotland.

I came across the picture reproduced below which shows just how far some locomotives and units can wander off their normal routes. The Western Pullmans operated from Paddington to Bristol, South Wales and Birmingham Snow Hill. However, on the 13th of March 1965 a unit ran from Cardiff to Hartlepool on the Durham coast. This was in connection with a major rugby union match and could have arrived by a variety of routes but it almost certainly passed through York and ran up the East Coast mainline to Northallerton and then to Hartlepool via Eaglescliffe and Stockton.

Just one excuse to run something different on your layout!



RADIO CONTROLLED VEHICLES – Andrew Wrobel

Having seen Noel's great progress on Radio Control for 'N' vehicles, Andrew received this e-mail for 'HO/OO' modellers from newsletter@mail.modellbahnshop-lippe.com

Dear customers, dear model railroaders, discover the new Unimog and T1 models from Carson! Even in their tiny size, they don't need to hide their functions: in addition to the remote-controlled driving functions, some of the models also have light and sound functions. The vehicles can not only be used on the H0 layout, they can also be driven on the desk! But let yourself be impressed by the test drive in the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wiy1N536P3Y&feature=youtu.be>

TABLE OF COMPARISON OF MODEL RAILWAY SCALES

Tim Casserley contacted me about some scales that were not included in the Table of a Comparison of Model Railway Scales; the table was sent out as an attachment to the previous edition of Whistleblower. The additional information that Tim provided covers both 3 mm and Gauge 3.

The 3mm Scale Society promotes 3 gauges, not just the 2 listed in the Table. They are: 12, 13.5 and 14.2 mm; it was the 14.2 mm gauge that had been omitted. Looking at the 3 mm website, there is a great deal of information on these gauges and it does offer an interesting array of stock and kits.

Additionally, the Table had also left Gauge 3, the largest scenic standard gauge modelling scale. Gauge 3 uses a 13.5mm/ft scale and 63.5 mm track gauge. Along with Gauge 1 and 16mm Narrow Gauge, Gauge 3 is regarded by many as being particularly attractive to both modellers and model engineers.

AND FINALLY, THE DIGITAL JIGSAWS

The Pendon Museum digital jigsaws were originally reported in the 5 April Special Edition of Whistleblower. Recently, David Harrison has been advised by the Museum that last month there have been over 1500 visits to their collection of jigsaws on the website. Whilst they did not say whether all these visits had been from F&DMRC, they did state that they have added some new jigsaws, including a more challenging selection.

For those interested, this link [Digital jigsaws](#) provides better accessibility to the jigsaw site.