

# WHISTLEBLOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FARNHAM & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

31 May 2020 – Special Edition No 6

## EDITORIAL

As Week 10 of the Lockdown concludes and the infection rate of COVID-19 is declining, we are seeing some welcome relaxations to the restrictions imposed to combat the pandemic.

You have already had a message from Richard Puddephat advising that the Club will hold our first Virtual Meeting, curtesy of Zoom and Julian Evison's organisation. Details of the meeting next Sunday 7 June at 1500 hours are below and, hopefully, there will a good representation of the Membership – see you on line.

You will have noticed that this Edition of Whistleblower is somewhat larger than normal and at no extra fee. I confirm that this is not from the attraction of lots of adverts, rather the wealth of articles being submitted. Of particular note is the OO9 contribution under David Harrington's guidance describing their innovative project(s) for Medley Junctions. Likewise, some of us have seen Noel Leaver's prototype N Gauge radio-controlled truck; he has further developed the model to provide effective control and provides an interesting article to describe his achievement.

The next Edition of Whistleblower will be Sunday 14 June. Grateful for your contributions.

Jon Faulconer

## VIRTUAL CLUB MEETING – SUNDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> JUNE AT 1500

We are going to try a virtual Club meeting on the afternoon of Sunday 7th June at 3.00 pm, kindly organised by Julian Evison. To do this you will need to use a PC/laptop/tablet/phone which has a video camera and you will need to ensure that you have your camera, speakers and microphone on. Please ensure you know how to do this before the meeting!

The idea is that anybody who wishes can show their layout or a piece of modelling and talk about it for a few minutes and then take questions. Please don't be shy as the more contributions there are the better and it is a chance to show stuff that doesn't normally leave home.

We will be using **Zoom** and you should be able to access it using the first link below. Please note you will need to enter a password, which is 'Farnham'. In principle, free Zoom meetings are limited to 40 minutes, so there is also a link to a second meeting to start a bit later. However, experience has shown that Zoom often waive the time limit, so we may be able to continue straight through.

Julian has produced the following instructions for you to join in.

**First part of meeting:**

Julian Evison is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: F&DMRC Virtual Meeting Part 1

Time: Jun 7, 2020 15:00 London

Link to Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7862331543?pwd=VUcrY3I5TURWTHVkem1KVVA4Tml3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 786 233 1543

Password: Farnham

**Second part of meeting (if needed):**

Julian Evison is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: F&DMRC Virtual Meeting Part 2

Time: Jun 7, 2020 15:50 London

Link to Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7862331543?pwd=VUcrY3I5TURWTHVkem1KVVA4Tml3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 786 233 1543

Password: Farnham

We look forward to seeing you online!

## **MEDLEY JUNCTIONS – AN ADVENTURE IN NARROW GAUGE MODELLING**

The newest group in the Club focuses on 4mm scenery with 4mm vehicles running on N-Gauge (9mm gauge) track. It's called "OO9", for pretty obvious reasons.

The initial concept was that each 4ft x 18-inch board and its associated rolling stock would be the property of individual members. This was a significant departure from normal club activities, but it does have the advantage that OO9 boards are stored at home, not in the crowded club basement. It also gives full rein to each board owner to design and build whatever he wants on his board, so long as his board can join with any other to create a through-running layout, and scenic breaks between boards are not jarringly intrusive. So far, the concept of "Medley Junctions" is working well and group members seem to relish the artistic and inventive freedoms that it allows.

Last year we were able to fill a last-minute gap in our annual show caused by withdrawal of a booked entry – we linked up 6 semi-completed boards in a linear fashion and ran trains back and forth for two days. We are now working with Guildford's Astolat Club in planning a one-day OO9 show in June 2021 – a challenge that's focusing minds as that distant date becomes less distant and the adrenaline starts to flow.

We're not yet at the stage where we can link up all 14 boards that are being worked on. Given the size and shape of each, a fully linked layout might look like 4 boards on two sides of a rectangle and 3 boards across the top and bottom, making the rectangle 18ft by 14ft (including the four corner pieces). We might just get it to fit in the Hall on a Wednesday. In fact, we had a partial trial run in January when we assembled 8 boards with 2 corner boards in a U-configuration for the first time.



Two years ago, when we began work on the concept, there wasn't much RTR stock on the market. But Peco has changed that dramatically, and the main suppliers now have a growing range of very attractive offerings: locos, wagons, coaches, and scenic items. So, what next? Our twin longer-term objectives are "completion" (whatever that means) of all 14 boards and managing the club's first-ever OO9 show in June 2021. Wish us luck!

Some of the boards being worked on are described below.

### **Richard Puddephat – Blackmoor Gate**

I'm the new boy on the block having been an OO gauge man all my life. I was fascinated with the way the various boards went together and what could be achieved in a small area. But, above all, I realised that I could actually have a piece of the process without my part taking up too much space at home. Storage could be accommodated under an ottoman-style bed.

I settled on a vague "take" on the Lynton & Barnstaple line, now sadly a long-gone phenomenon. In just 4 feet I have tried to loosely model on Blackmoor Gate station with a deal of poetic licence. The track layout is more or less representative of the real thing but the environs do differ to take account of the board configuration.



The station is the Bachman version which, sadly, is not really to scale. The other buildings are either scratch built or Scalescenes models.



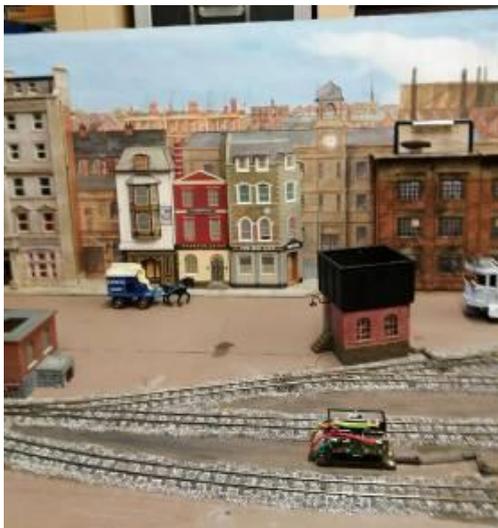
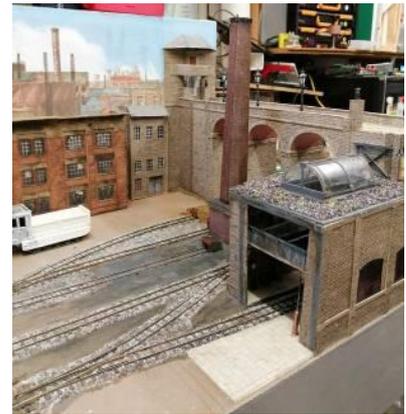
Models to date include the Bachman Baldwin tank, a couple of L&B coaches in SR livery and a few wagons. The whole thing now needs pinning down and the accompanying photos give an impression of what I hope it might look like in due course.

## John Yarham – “Big Kipper” a small town somewhere in the UK.

After the last Great War, Humanity had stopped using the Nuclear Deterrent and conventional weapons and resorted to creating powerful Electromagnetic Pulses (EMPs) to destroy infrastructure and communications around the planet resulting in most electronic equipment being destroyed and new equipment not working. A return to simpler forms of transport which don't rely on oil to work. Steam Engineers have come to the fore once again, converting normal vehicles to steam power and the Steam Punk Era begins.

My Layout board is a 'what if' combining an interest in Steam Punk and Model Railways. My layout is a through station with passing loop and small goods yard with a link to the Airship Transfer Station at the front of the layout. The rear of the layout is a high street with industrial buildings the right and sidings to the boiler house.

I have used a Metcalfe Viaduct at one end which has been heavily modified into the Transfer Station and the high street / industrial area incorporates Scale Model Scenery, Smart Models downloadable kits plus Metcalfe and Superquick. I will let you work out which ones are which. I have used Noch Flowers plus my own home-made flowers and static grass matt around the base of the Viaduct. The back scenes are Townscenes and everything else is blue sky. I have been putting lights in a few things some I couldn't do without wrecking the buildings.



I have finished the track control wiring now ready for testing with other modules. I have my built my track mimic panel, haven't finished the direction lighting panel yet but all the point switches and isolating sections appear to work and I have switches on all point motors for position lighting. I have a proximity switch in the Station building which should mean we don't drive the loco through the back of the viaduct. I have an issue with uncoupling in that I don't have any un-couplers inside so if you drive the loco into the station you can't uncouple it and I only realised this after I had glued everything down. I did put the isolating section in though. If anyone has any suggestions around uncoupling, they would be gratefully accepted.

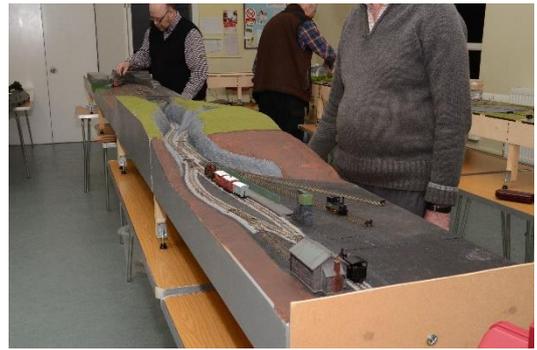
My son John is building the Airship and we have two 32-inch number ones which are about 12 inches across to provide lift and various motors from broken helicopters and RC servos to create a flying kipper airship.

I have a varied selection of Dundas Kits to build and a couple of locos one a Roco Diesel and one a 3D printed Steamer with a Kato 103 chassis. I have several kits to make of wagons, coaches and some A1 models brass kits. I also have some mini-trains wagons.



## Mike Le Marie – “Yr Elen”

I have long had a love of North Wales both for its fine mountain walking and its fascinating narrow-gauge railway systems. Hence, when I agreed to take part in the club’s fledgling 009 project my thoughts immediately turned to North Wales hence the name Yr Elen. My two boards represent a small country halt somewhere on a narrow-gauge line. There is a single wooden platform, a passing loop and a junction with a short spur leading up to a quarry. Access to a small goods yard is from the spur and there is also a single road engine shed where the quarry loco is kept when not in use.



In order to be different, the main line and the spur junction are located in a deep cutting. The spur line climbs away from the junction to a tunnel which gives access to a small traverser which holds 3 trains plus a run round line.



Locos and rolling stock are a mixture Bachmann and PECO with a small 3D printed diesel body mounted on a KATO 4-wheel motorised chassis. In due course I will get round to making up some kits and other bits and pieces.



I have also built a small fiddle yard which allows me to operate my boards as an independent layout at home or elsewhere if required.

## John Chase – Village Scene

The emphasis of my model is a village scene, with a pub, shops, war memorial and houses grouped around a narrow street, and the railway a single track following the line of the road before emerging into fields at the end of the board. It is not based on any prototype, and I’m sure there would be serious health and safety issues arising as residents fled to avoid being run down by the trains.

With respect to modelling methods: the buildings are designed and drawn on the computer, then each component printed onto card using a flatbed pen plotter, ready to be cut out and assembled, and finished with emulsion paint. Windows, shopfronts, signs etc are also designed on the computer, and then colour printed. Individual roof tiles are created by scoring paper in one direction, then applying double sided tape to the rear and cutting into strips in the other direction, to be stuck to the roofs in courses. Among the landscape elements, hedges are made with lichen stuck to both sides of strips of card, then trimmed to shape and finished with flock. Trees were made using seafoam and flock, but proved much too fragile for regular transport, so an alternative is sought.



My normal modelling scale is TT, so I don't have a store of OO9 rolling stock. The sole purchase has been a Heljan model of L&B Yeo, which is attractive, good at slow running, but temperamental and unable to negotiate tight bends (such as those at the corners of the group boards!).

As for future plans, a single track works well when incorporated with the other boards, but somewhat limited for use at home. As a result I am in the process of constructing two further boards, one of which has a station layout, and the other a right angle bend of a radius which Yeo *will* negotiate, but limited progress has been made so far, as much time taken home tutoring grandchildren.

### **Julian Evison - The Tisted & Selborne Light Railway**

Selborne is a village of about 1,200 people on the Hampshire Downs. The station at East Tisted on the new L&SWR Meon Valley line was about 3 miles away and was due to open in 1903. This could be reached along a fairly level route, but with a very steep climb up from Selborne. So, the station was built 80 feet above the village. The line opened on 1st June 1903, to meet the first L&SWR trains calling at 'Tisted for Selborne'.

The 'Selborne Light Railway' was surprisingly prosperous, and it was soon linked with the main line at Liss on the Portsmouth Direct.

During the First World War the line was important for transporting fodder and other crops to the main line railways. After the War, both people and goods moved to the road. The line closed on 20th January 1936.



The layout is spread over two boards and can either be operated as part of the 'collective' or by itself with its own fiddle yard. While the photo above is the last one showing the layout in running order, since then some scenic work has been done and the curious sight of slate grey hills in Hampshire has been replaced by rolling chalk downland. However, there is still much to do to finish the 'ground work'.



Rolling stock for the line is from a variety of sources, mostly being Dundas or Nine Lines kits suitably modified. Some will be re-purposed from my previous OO9 layout, Khan. Locomotives will be kit or scratch built on commercial chassis.

### **David Harrington - Blodwyn's Pond (Pwll y Blodwyn)**

Representing a Welsh narrow-gauge railway in slate-mining country. A through line connects adjacent layouts while cottages provide atmosphere. Sidings serve an off-scene slate quarry. A small station on the through line is complemented by a workman's Halt on the loop. An engine shed provides shelter for off-duty locos.



I wanted somewhere to show locos and rolling stock as well as offering simple, manual turntable facilities for a complete train. (Narrow Gauge railways in general do not run long trains). So, my second board combines both functions, as well as providing a straight-through running line connecting to layouts at either end. The board is strictly functional and has very basic scenery.



### **Alex Holt – WW1 Trench Railway**

We have recently restarted our board, I felt as though it wasn't really working as a standard gauge interchange made from spare parts left over from the OO layout so we've taken that all up and started over. This time I've decided to do it properly and plan it out and build it to a much higher standard that I think is representative of my best work. Our board is now a World War One Trench Railway. With quite a large amount of stock available ready to run that is based on the World War One period it was one of the easiest themes to get stock for as both Minitrains and Bachmann produce suitable locomotives and rolling stock. It was also very easy to source vehicles and scenery for as military miniatures is another big modelling industry, so plenty to choose from there.

The layout depicts a staging trench behind the front lines where supplies would have been unloaded from the trains. It is very much still a work in progress however the basic scenery and track has gone down. Wiring of the layout has also been completed and it will operate a through board.



The raised no man's land section was made from a cardboard frame with a paper mache top and has been painted in earth base colour, it has then had woodland scenic soil scattered over the top. The trench retaining walls have then been added around the cardboard frame, these have been made out of coffee stirrers and sticks from the garden which have been snapped to the rough length required, these were painted in Burnt Umber acrylic paint to give the effect of wood that has been there a long time. Jarvis Barbed Wire has then gone down across the top section of the layout to make it look more like no man's land and. The dug-out section of the layout where the track is has been created using a mix of Woodland Scenics Fine Brown Ballast and Soil. Small patches of grass growing through have been made using Gaugemaster's static grass applicator with Gaugemaster Spring Grass. Currently we are building a few plastic vehicle kits such as tanks, artillery, and other military vehicles which we will include on various places on the layout.

As of yet we don't have any rolling stock suitable for the layout but in the future we plan to get a Bachmann 10-12-D Baldwin and some Bachmann WDLR Open Wagons and Ambulance Wagons, the Minitrains Brigadelok and WD wagons are also another possibility for stock. This is quite a way off and finishing the scenic side of the layout is taking priority over sourcing stock for it. But for now I'm working on making a World War One freelance armoured diesel/petrol locomotive to go on a Kato 104 chassis.

## RADIO-CONTROLLED LORRY IN N – Noel Leaver

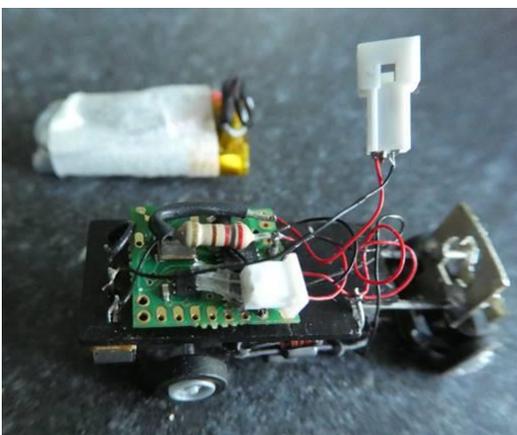
At a model railway show in early 2020 Nigel Cliffe demonstrated a radio controlled N gauge double-decker bus - I had not realised you could get receivers small enough to fit in an N gauge vehicle, nor that they were so cheap. I wanted to build one myself.

While the Faller and Tomytec car systems let you run vehicles along a route and can even manage junctions, they can't reverse and only run on routes you have built into the roads. But a radio-controlled vehicle can go along any road on any layout and can steer in reverse. There is a downside – while you can set a train or a Faller vehicle moving and do something else for a while, driving the lorry needs 100% concentration: it is worse than shunting as not only can it go too far, it can travel in any direction.

I wanted a lorry not a bus as you can find an excuse for a lorry to go almost anywhere on a layout – reversing into a factory, backing up to a loading bay, doing a 3-point turn in a small yard, delivering to a shop on the main road. After checking the sizes of components, I decided they would just fit in a Base Toys Albion CX boxvan. The receiver is 11.8 x 12.9 x 2.2 mm, batteries come in various sizes and a 100 mAh one just fits in the top of the van body and will run the vehicle for around an hour. It recharges in about an hour.

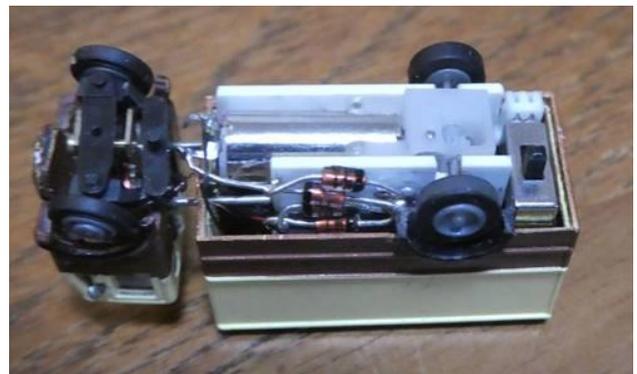


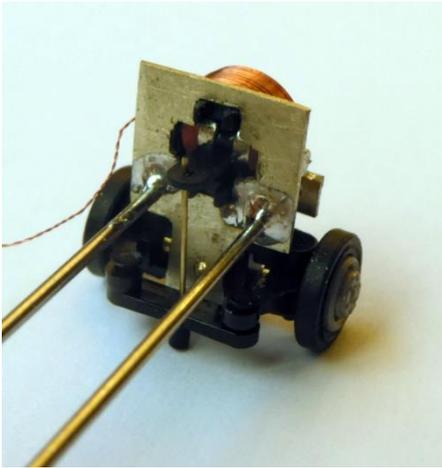
*Photo 1 - Lorry fitted with battery, receiver, motor, and steering. The transmitter I bought is behind.*



*Photo 2 - The chassis with the battery and actuator removed, the battery is behind. The battery and actuator plug into the sockets. You can see how small the receiver board is.*

*Photo 3 - Underneath showing the motor and gearbox, on/off switch, and socket (far side back corner) for charging the battery without removing it from lorry. I've since painted the chassis and diodes black. The diodes are to slow the motor down; I was experimenting with different combinations of resistors and diodes so they are on the outside for ease of access. I could now fit them inside, certainly using SMD diodes.*





The electronic components all came from Micron Radio Control who have been very helpful in advising on what I needed. The motor and 80:1 gearbox is from Micro Antriebe in Poland, though they are out of stock at present. The wheels and steering mechanism are Faller. The rear chassis is plasticard, the front part is soldered metal. The steering is operated by an actuator, a coil inside which is a pivoted arm with a magnet on it that moves to one side or the other when current goes through the coil.

*Photo 4 - Front part of chassis with Faller steering mechanism, Plantraco actuator, and wire fixed in hole drilled in steering arm going up through hole in actuator arm.*

Getting the steering to have enough movement and precision was a challenge, my first linkage shown on the right had too much slop and steering was very imprecise. The final linkage I came up with was a sleeve over the actuator arm made out of squashed 1.5mm inside diameter brass tube, with a wire soldered to one end and the end of the wire looped over and soldered so it has a hole similar to the eye of a needle.



*Photo 5 (Left) - Brass sleeve over end of arm, with wire going down to steering and Photo 6 (Right) - 'Eye' in end of wire fits over a short wire inserted into the steering arm.*

The electronics went together easily and worked first time. I had an issue with the transmitter that when the steering knob clicked into its central 'off' position a fair bit of power was being sent to the steering coil; on advice from Micron I changed the value of a resistor so that the power was off when it was central, they would have fixed it FOC if I had returned it.

The motor ran too fast connected directly to the receiver; it only needed a twitch on the knob to set it racing off. After experimenting I found 2 pairs of back to back diodes in series gave good control.

The steering would ideally be operated by a servo, but the smallest are much too big, so you have to use an actuator which is less precise. The actuator is held in the central 'off' position by a small magnet glued to the side of the coil. As supplied, it was too sensitive. I put a resistor in series with the coil, but it was too weak to move the steering firmly and driving was hit and miss – hard left or right was easy but straight was very tricky. I realised that rather than reducing the power to the coil, a better solution was to increase the size of the magnet so there was more force holding the arm in position, so more force to overcome the friction of the steering. Increasing the magnet is very easy – you just place a second one on top on the one fitted. A 3 mm diameter 1 mm thick super-magnet (available from several suppliers) worked best, any bigger and the actuator could not manage the full range of movement.



Photo 7 - 3mm magnet on top of original 1.5 mm magnet. It is pushed forwards, this adjusts the resting position of the arm which was over to one side and makes it straight. On the other side is a simple clip of a length of plastic tube with a slit to hold the actuator against the metal plate.

It is now fairly easy to drive as you can see in this short video:  
<https://youtu.be/HxK8zbRS0lg>

The video was with a 2mm magnet added. With the 3mm one it is even better and steering in a straight line is easy. It has a 4.5" turning circle right and 7" left, ideally the turning circle to the left would be tighter but the mechanism is delicate and most of my attempts at adjustment have made it worse not better, so having got it usable I've stopped fiddling (for a bit!). Range of transmitter is more than 10 yards - difficult to see if it is moving any further away!

The cost of all the parts for the lorry was just under £100 including postage. The transmitter and charger cost £66 but they can be used with other vehicles/projects.

Supplier	Component	Price
Faller <a href="https://www.faller.de/gb/en/Products/Car-System/Spare-parts.html">https://www.faller.de/gb/en/Products/Car-System/Spare-parts.html</a>	Steering assembly	€17.49
	Rear wheels (4)	€7.49
Micro Antriebe <a href="http://kkpmpo.istore.pl/">http://kkpmpo.istore.pl/</a>	6mm motor with 80:1 gearbox (96:1 might be better)	91 zloty (about £18)
Micron Radio Control <a href="http://www.micronradiocontrol.co.uk/">http://www.micronradiocontrol.co.uk/</a>	Deltang Rx-43d-2-v5 Receiver	£29.00
	Plantraco Mini Actuator	£8.40
	100 mAh LiPo battery with BMS and wires	£3.95
	0.5A Resettable Fuse	£1.10
	Switch	£0.65
	Picoblade crimp plugs and sockets (5 of each)	£3.60
	Dx20V DSM2 Land vehicle	£58.00

	transmitter	
	USB LiPo charger 100 mA, Picoblade socket	£8.95
Base Toys (various retailers)	Albion CX Boxvan	£4.99

If you want more of a challenge the receiver has 2 channels linked to 3-position switches on the transmitter, and 2 more linked to push buttons - so lights, indicators, windscreen wipers, and rear doors could be controlled!

## MIDLAND & GREAT NORTHERN 50ft CARRIAGES IN OO – Alex Holt

The Midland and Great Northern (M&GN) Railway was originally a joint railway between the Midland Railway and the Great Northern Railway. In the 1923 grouping, the Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway retained its identity but became a joint railway between the LNER and the LMS. The types of carriages that I have modelled were first built by the London and North Western Railway between 1891 and 1903.

In 1923 the carriages became LMS stock and, in 1933-34, 30 of these carriages were transferred to M&GN services. In 1936 the LMS agreed to hand over the operational side of the line to the LNER and all stock was transferred to LNER ownership. Very little historical information was recorded about these carriages once they became M&GN Stock. However, I have managed to find out that carriages transferred from the Midland Railway, Great Northern and later the LMS and LNER were often painted in faux teak livery to match other stock used in the area and on the line. Whilst these particular coaches were confirmed to have been in LMS Crimson with M&GN branding applied I could not find any information proving that they were painted in teak livery like other coaches that were on the M&GN. However, this is the livery I have decided to paint my models in. The carriages survived in to BR but were scrapped between 1948 and 1954.



The models have been built from Ratio LNWR 50ft Carriage Kits. I have built a Brake Composite, Composite, Third and Brake Third to make a set of 4 carriages. The models have been painted in M&GN Teak Effect Livery, a livery which was used on their carriages but is unconfirmed to have been carried by this exact type. I've used 'modellers licence'



when making these coaches to have them in a teak effect livery as I feel this looks like more of an interesting livery, it could possibly even have been carried by the carriages after they became LNER Stock in 1936. This also gives me the flexibility to say that they are either M&GN, LNER or BR carriages, as BR didn't repaint a lot of the pre grouping carriages such as these before they were scrapped.

The kits are mostly built as the instructions intended; however, I have added metal wheels

and brass pinpoint bearings to the bogies. I have also added brake pipes and a coupling on the rear end of the Brake Third to act as the end carriage for the set.

The models have been painted in teak effect using Cherry Paints Teak base coat and Cherry Paints Golden Teak top coat. The effect is created by using as little paint as possible for the top coat and dragging it around with the brush to create the wood graining effect. The wheels have been painted in Teak Base Coat and then have had the wheel rims lined out in Humbrol Gloss White. The roof was also painted in white.

The models have then had LNER coaching stock transfers added to them, I have left the LNER branding off them and only used the door class numbers and the carriage numbers so that they can pass as either M&GN, LNER or early BR stock. Once transfers and varnishing was completed the windows were glued in and the roof was glued on. The full set of 4 carriages is now complete. However, I do have a Parkside LNER CCT that I plan to add to the set as a luggage van in the near future.



## **A Life of Railway Connections - Peter Lawrence**

I recently joined the club with the prospect of more time on my hands (yes, retirement). With that revitalised interest in railways, and seeing previous “reminiscence articles”, I was prompted to record a selection of railway connections which may be of interest.

In my youngest days we backed onto the Tattenham Corner line in Surrey and my earliest railway memory is of a BR Standard Class 4 sitting at the advance starter signal at the end of our garden, having delivered to the local coal yard. (Admittedly I didn't know all those details at the time!) It was very early on a summer morning and the five-year old me looked through the curtains. The driver saw me and waved, and thereafter I wanted to be an engine driver!

A few years later and I started school near Clapham Junction, joining the crowd of small boys looking over the school fence during the last couple of years of steam on the Bournemouth line. School holidays saw me and friends traipsing round the London termini collecting numbers and seeing if drivers would let us “cab” their engines. Occasionally they did, and I can tell you that the engine room of a “Peak” (Class 44?) is very noisy even at idle!

We also visited engine depots - Nine Elms and Stratford come to mind - and just wandered around. It's amazing we were allowed to, looking back. On one occasion at Stratford we found an isolated engine shed which was locked. So, we climbed up and looked through a broken window. Right next to the window was a number on a cab side - 70000. Britannia had recently been withdrawn from service (1966?) and was being stored there.

School is where my modelling interest started and I went to every model railway exhibition I could find. I particularly remember the large show each Easter near Victoria. Like many of my generation the Great Western was my main interest and my own efforts resulted in an OO terminus which saw the light of day at a Parents' Day exhibition.

We had family in Somerset, and in the summer holidays I stayed with a great aunt in

Radstock, and spent my time poking around the two railways which went through the town. Much trackwork was still in place and I remember laboriously walking around and recording the entire track plan. Both the Somerset and Dorset line and the Great Western line were closed to regular traffic, but there was still a wagon repair works, and the last coal mine at Kilmersdon was still open. It had a Peckett tank engine (now at the West Somerset Railway) for use at the mine, and the loaded coal wagons went down a steep incline on a cable to be assembled into a train. Quite a sight! (Search YouTube for “Radstock Hill Climb”.)

I have just acquired the Somerset & Dorset line add-on to Train Simulator 2020, and it’s great fun to drive a 2-8-0 from Bath to Radstock (although driving an HST on the hilly route is easier, if rather less prototypical!).

At university, the Railway Club organised “brake van trips”. They arranged for a brake van to be added to the end of a goods working which we then occupied for the duration. The two I remember were the Culm Valley line and Westbury Quarry. For the former we joined the daily milk train leaving the main line at Tiverton Junction. As the only remaining service on the line we had to keep stopping to open crossing gates which were normally left in favour of road traffic. And for the latter, having arrived at our destination we were given a tour of the quarry, the scale of which was an eye-opener.

My railway connections continued with the purchase of my first house in Swindon. It was built for railway workers and was well within earshot of the works’ hooter (actually a steam whistle as you might expect), which started its daily programme well before 7am to rouse the local workers. They still formed a large proportion of the local population at the time (1979), and you certainly didn’t want to be going past when the mass of cycles came out at 4:30pm.

After that, family, work and other interests rather overtook railways other than the occasional model railway exhibition - but at least that included the Aldershot show so here I am, glad to be rejuvenating an old interest, and learning plenty new with like-minded people. Thanks to all for your welcome.

## **QUIZ – Mike Le Marie**

### **Quiz 5**

The 10 questions set out below all refer to the national network as it is today and includes the heritage rail network unless otherwise indicated. COVID-19 related closures have not been taken into account.

1. Where on the national network is the steepest gradient?
2. Where is the longest platform on the national network?
3. What is the lowest point in relation to sea level on the national network?
4. Which is the longest bridge on the national network?
5. In the latest published statistics, which is the least used station on the national network?
6. Which is the busiest railway station outside of London?
7. Where is Britain’s most southerly railway halt?
8. Which is the largest town in Britain not to be served by a railway station?
9. What is the highest point in relation to sea level on the national network?
10. Where is Britain’s smallest railway station? (This question could cause some debate!)

## Answers to Quiz 4

If I have learnt one thing from attempting to provide interesting quizzes is the need to be very precise in one's definitions. London Terminals is a case in point where one member took a much wider definition of London than the one intended! Perhaps I should have said stations where the trains terminated against a set of buffer stops!

Terminals open in 1960 and still open:

Euston – Midland region.

Marylebone – Midland region.

St Pancras – Midland region.

Kings Cross – Eastern region.

Liverpool Street – Eastern region.

Fenchurch Street – Eastern region.

Cannon Street – Southern region.

London Bridge – Southern region.

Waterloo – Southern region.

Charing Cross – Southern region.

Victoria – Southern region.

Paddington – Western region.

Terminals open in 1960, but have since closed:

Broad Street – Midland region.

Holborn Viaduct – Southern region.

Blackfriars – Southern region. A new station of the same name has been built on an adjacent site as part of the Thameslink project.

Moorgate – in 1960 was served by the widened lines from the Midland main line and the East Coast mainline. The widened lines were closed to passengers in 2009 as the tracks were cut off to make room for a platform extension at Farringdon as part of the Thameslink project. However, in 1975 British Rail took possession of the Northern City line from London Transport and after rebuilding diverted trains off the East Coast mainline that had previously used the widened lines. So truly only the widened lines section of Moorgate station can be considered a closure.

Other stations where British Rail trains terminated within the wider London area included Stratford, Richmond, and Clapham Junction.

## AND FINALLY – Mike Le Marie

Members will be interested to know that model railway shops are included in those shops permitted to reopen on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June. I don't know about the others, but Kernow will reopen in Guildford but will be subject to distancing rules with no more than 2 customers allowed in the shop at a time. Also picking up and examining items will have to be discouraged which means there are going to have to be changes to the way we shop.

Ed's Note: Additionally, the Alton Model Shop webpage is advising that it will also reopen on 15 June and operate in compliance with Government guide lines.