

# WHISTLEBLOWER

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

23 August 2020 – Special Edition No 12

### EDITORIAL

Great news below from our Chairman announcing the reopening of the Club in the Wrecclesham Community Centre. I expect that you have received already Richard's e-mail providing more detail of the measures we need to follow in order for us to meet up in the Club house. Additionally, our Secretary has provided notes from the General Purpose Committee, who gathered at the Bat & Ball earlier this week where they enjoyed excellent rib-eye steak with 50% off – I'm assured that was 50% off the price, not the steak.....

Also very good to see the O Group's Haydon Square being featured as the Railway of the Month in the September issue of Railway Modeller. An extended article that does both the layout and the Club proud; it was also good to see a team photo of the O Group members included in the article.

It would be an understatement to say that 2020 has been a strange year, and it's not over yet. Back in March when the frequency of WB was increased to fortnightly, I did wonder how long the flow of sufficient material could be sustained. Here we are 5 months later with the 12<sup>th</sup> Special Edition and it is reassuring to see that my concern was completely unfounded. Members have provided a steady stream of articles, pictures and other snippets that I have found interesting and, hopefully, done the same for you. Many thanks, but don't forget the next publication is Sunday 6 September and so please keep the material coming.

Jon Faulconer

### CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

As you will see from the paragraph below, we are going to be able to reopen the Club from the beginning of next month. It won't be the same as before – at least not for the time being but at least we can all meet over the course of a 3 week period. I am writing separately to all members in a bit more detail which should be with you as you receive this edition of Whistleblower or shortly after. I shall look forward to meeting as many of you as possible each Wednesday as I shall be "inviting" myself to join you on each of the initial weeks at least.

The other important announcement concerns the Modelling Competition. Due to the wretched Covid restrictions, this will be held this year but as a virtual competition i.e. it will be by photo and with on-line voting by all members. It will also be later than usual as our annual exhibition has had to be cancelled which takes the pressure off the modelling competition somewhat. Again, full details will shortly be sent to all of you so watch out for yet another missive from me!!!

Richard Puddephatt

## NOTES FROM THE GPC MEETING – Andrew Wrobel

Farnham Town Council has declared that its leisure facilities can re-open on 1 September. This applies to our clubroom in Wrecclesham Community Centre. We will start using the Centre as follows:

**Week-1 (2 September) - 'OO'**

**Week-2 (9 September) - 'O' & '009'**

**Week-3 (16 September) - 'N' & 'P4'**

Your Club's Committee has considered the risks and responsibilities associated with re-opening the Club and has devised a scheme for allowing maximum participation consistent with ensuring the safety of members.

The rules are attached at the end of Whistleblower and are mandatory for all Club members.

Essentially, the Club's Groups will be paired off to use the main hall and clubroom. **If it is not 'your' Wednesday, do not visit the Club.** But you may visit the clubroom (not the hall) on any other day so long as you obey the rules in the attached document.

It is anticipated that only 6 people will be allowed in the Clubroom at any one time and movement/changes must be minimal.

Additional items from the GPC Meeting:

**MISSING** - The multi-outlet Mini-Drill Power Supply that was on the desk that Robin uses. This has been borrowed without making an entry in the Book. Just please own-up that you have it."

**Next Zoom Call** – The Club's (all members) next Zoom WILL take place on 05-Sep, more details to follow from Julian."

**The Club's Diary** – This will be updated in the next few days and published on our website. The next Annual/Christmas Dinner will take-place in 2021.

**Next 'N' Gauge Group Meet** – This Group have an opportunity to meet again on Wed-26-Aug from 11:00hrs with, if the members decide, another BBQ at 12:30 - an update will follow. The 'Test/Running Track' and 2 boards of 'Wickwar' will be available for use and improvements in the garage - numbers around it will be limited; it will be collected from and returned to the Club on the day.

**Club's AGM** – The AGM will still take place on Wed-09-Dec-2020. Unless there is a change in national Covid-19 circumstances, it will be held using Zoom; a link to join-in will be issued nearer the time.

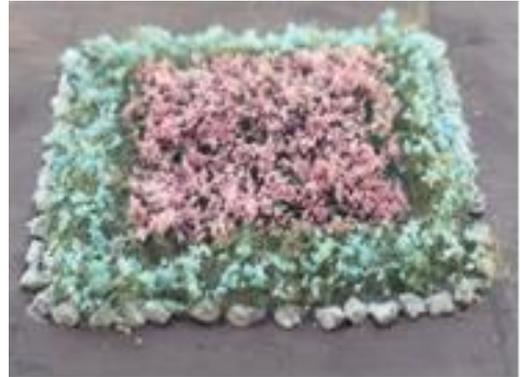
## MORE ON SCENICS – David Mulvey

You may recall that shortly before the lockdown started, Team Leader Harris issued us with a challenge to develop our 4mm scenic skills by producing little cameos including some scenic feature or other. Having had a go at a couple of weeds (see earlier issues), was idly leafing through some 1950s shots of the stations between Reading and Didcot when a

picture of Cholsey & Moultsford sprang off the page. Not only did it have flowerbeds, it had *topiarised* flowerbeds.

So, if we are going to build flowerbeds to go on a station platform, better have them flat. Out with the Tufnol block usually used for checking wagon chassis alignment. Nip into the kitchen at about 2 am and exfiltrate a length of greaseproof paper to the modelling area. Back in daylight, spread a thin layer of silicone grease on the Tufnol and use it to temporarily glue down the paper.

Now we can build up the flowerbeds. Those in the pictures had rather nice white stone edging – how to represent this? Tipped out the box of scenic materials and found a bag of something alleged to be coal, originating from an address in a derelict metal-bashing area just off the Birmingham inner ring road. Didn't look anything like coal but after three coats of Tamiya XF1 was starting to look reasonably like whitewashed stone. Glue down the edging on the paper and add earth scatter.



Not being a gardener, next step was to Google images of public parks. Began to look as though petunias surrounded by lobelias might be the display of choice. So, for the petunias, out with the trusty green scouring pad, cut it roughly to size and shape then add pink Green Scenes (GS) scatter to represent the flowers. Close observation of a prototype suspected of being a lobelia revealed that this has a much finer structure, so in this case found a bit of polyfibre (can use Woodland Scenics but I used white pillow stuffing and coloured it to give a nice light green). Tear into small pieces, glue down around the petunias and add light blue GS scatter.

Now for the topiary. For the trunk I used Ethernet cable (if you want to transmit into the tree at more than 10Mbits/sec best to use Cat 6 cable, otherwise Cat 5 is fine) artistically arranged in a hand shape and painted brown. For the foliage we can use foam from a kitchen sponge, but soon learn that by cutting we can only achieve a roughly polygonal shape. Also, would like the foam to be a nice brown colour so that when we add the foliage any slightly bare patches will still look realistic.



So, find some emulsion paint, re-colour it with children's powder paint and then soak the foam thoroughly in the paint. Leave 24 hours then machine it with a cheese grater to the desired shape. Add the trunk, cover the foam with dark green static grass (make sure the applicator is NOT switched on) and you should have a rather nice tree ready for planting in the flower bed. Surround it by green foliage material and we're in good shape for the Best Kept 4mm Model Stations competition.

## 00 GAUGE 3 LINK COUPLINGS – Denis Locke

Having tried various coupling styles over my 00 gauge career and my ever increasing layout, I felt that the rolling stock was being “spoilt” by oversize coupling designs. Nothing wrong in the concept of being able to hook up and unhook trains of rolling stock by a reliable system that did not derail vehicles. They just look too big for 00 gauge and they do detract from the modelling image.



I tried several designs of having a loop of wire above the 3 links so they could be unhooked using an extended hook to lift the third link. This looks ok but the rolling stock could easily be lifted from the track and derailed.



Some photographs show the design.

I then choose to use an electric magnet with an easy on/off micro switch and local LED flood light to lift the third link. This is sized so that the magnetism is enough to lift the link but not strong enough to lift the wagons or coaches off the track. The coil of a 12 volt 670 ohm relay does just that. If it releases the 3 links prematurely then the lift can be repeated.



All the links are made from non-magnetic material such as half hard brass wire (24 swg) with the third link having a magnetic mild steel nail head soldered inside the loop. Extra solder has been added to the fixing of the nail head to the third link to increase the weight of the coupling and ensure that the coupling does not jump off its hook at speed !!!



The jig I use a for soldering is made from 8 mm square mild steel bar. Mild steel goes rusty and cannot be readily soldered by design or accidentally.



I have not seen this method shown at exhibitions etc, nor in any magazines, but I am sure that I am not unique. A few pictures are shown to illustrate the system.

I hope you find this article of interest and I would be glad to expand if you felt that more detail could be added and/or make a short film of it in operation rather than "stills".

## AND FINALLY, THE QUIZ – Mike Le Marie

Afraid Mike has been away in the West Country for a week and hasn't been able to prepare a Quiz for this edition. I don't know how many managed to work out all the anagrams for Quiz 10, but the correct answers in **Bold** are:

1. *tokens bag is*                      **Basingstoke**
2. *triumphant photo oars*            **Southampton Airport**
3. *flinch wide*                            **Winchfield**
4. *bucker thorns*                        **Brockenhurst**
5. *women lint*                            **New Milton**
6. *stretched hour so*                   **Dorchester South**
7. *yum we hot*                            **Weymouth**
8. *hear maw*                              **Wareham**
9. *helm vice red*                        **Micheldever**
10. *washy glint*                         **Swaythling**

How many did you get?

## Re-Opening the 'Farnham & District Model Railway Club'

The Club will re-open on a 3-weekly cycle starting Wednesday 2 September, initially as follows:  
**Week-1 'OO'; Week-2 'O' & '009'; Week-3 'N' & 'P4'.**

Members attending on 'their' Wednesday will also have **exclusive** use of the clubroom and the basement. **In other words, if it is not 'your' Wednesday, do not attend the Club.**

All attendees **MUST** enter their details on the 'Track & Trace Form' held by the Group Leader (or deputy). This Form confirms compliance with Farnham Town Council's Risk Assessment for Wrecclesham Community Centre AND the Club's Covid-19 Rules [these will both be posted on the Hall and the Clubroom doors].

### **Club's Covid-19 Rules (applicable to all who use the main hall, clubroom and basement):**

- a) Do **NOT** attend if you or your household has symptoms;
- b) Report to your Group Leader (or Deputy) if you later feel unwell;
- c) If you wish to use the main hall, come to the Club only on your Group's Wednesday;
- d) So far as possible, bring your own tools and materials. Use of the Club's tools must be followed by sanitising where handled;
- e) Other than the Toilets, do **NOT** use the Centre's small rooms, they are out-of-bounds;
- f) Bring your own cup, food, cutlery and drinks – there is to be no communal use or sharing of coffee, tea, biscuits, cake, etc.;
- g) Observe the 2m distance rule;
- h) Wear a mask or face-covering at your discretion – however, a face-covering is **mandatory** when in the Basement or using the Basement staircase. Avoid passing on the staircase;
- i) Wash hands regularly or use hand sanitizer – both will be provided by the Club;
- j) Help clean and sanitise tables, chairs, handles, surfaces **both at the beginning and at the end** of a session. When first entering and finally leaving the Centre, the handles on main door, alarm cupboard and Hall must be anti-virus sprayed. Similar spraying must take place immediately after use of a toilet (seat and door handles). The Club will provide materials;
- k) Desks in the clubroom have been re-positioned and marked-off. No more than 6 people should be in the Clubroom at any one time – ideally there should be minimal changing of persons using the room. This applies during Wednesday sessions AND at any other time.
- l) In 2 sessions of the 3-week cycle there is the possibility of two groups wanting to access the Basement. In such cases only one Group at a time should occupy the basement and its access areas.

### **Using the Clubroom for days other than Wednesdays**

It is a long-term safety rule of the Club that use of the Clubroom requires 2 or more persons to be present. One of them **must** be a recognised (WCC advised) key-holder (and alarm user). The general rules above **must** be observed.

**Clubroom Booking** To ensure fair use, the Secretary should be spoken to 24hrs beforehand of a desire to use the Clubroom or basement. If there is a conflict, the more regular user will give-way.

### **If another organisation is using the Hall**

I.e. Wednesday before 14:00 or if not Wednesday & you are using the Clubroom:

- they **must** be notified of Club presence and advised that toilets may be used and will be immediately anti-virus sprayed;
- access **must** be via the rear-doors;
- shared communication will be vital to ensure proper setting of the Centre's alarm system.

### **Notes:**

1. No-one should feel pressured to come back until they feel comfortable: it's a personal decision. The Club will at present continue to provide support, advice and engagement via extra 'Whistleblower', Zoom meetings, group virtual meetings, garden meetings, etc.
2. Members of the Executive Committee will act as 'Safety Officer' and conduct random checks. They have the right to report & close-down a session.