

WHISTLEBLOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FARNHAM & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

7 February 2021 – Edition No 3/21

FROM TO CHAIRMAN – Mike Le Marie

At long last the COVID news is looking a little brighter but it is still far too early to say if and when we can start any form of activities at the Club. Also, on the brighter side is that many Club members have now received their first shot of the COVID vaccine and have therefore developed some immunity against the worst effects.

I have been very pleased to see that a large majority of the membership have paid their membership fees for 2021 as it is encouraging news for the future.

Despite the lockdown there has been much activity amongst the manufacturers and a huge range of new models, re-releases and new versions have been announced by all the major companies and quite a few of the smaller ones and by all accounts the model railway trade is booming. This has also been reflected in Hornby's return to profitability with a huge increase in turnover, although in some ways I am sorry to see that Hornby seem to be taking the likes of Hattons on head-to-head by releasing huge variants of the Class 66 and to have deliberately beaten them to the market with a large range of pre-grouping 4 and 6 wheel coaches.

There was a report in the Times about the increase in Hornby's profits and the increase in the number of people turning to or back to railway modelling. Below is an excerpt from the editorial:

'Who is behind this upsurge in what many might consider an antiquated hobby? Well, it may be that a lot of youngsters received a set for Christmas. Or it may be, we suspect, that a somewhat older demographic is using lockdown as the perfect excuse to renew old rolling stock. In garages, attics and spare bedrooms across the nation, generations of men to whom the word 'Beeching' is an expletive have been upgrading their kit, adjusting their battered old drivers caps and tooting imaginary whistles to their hearts content. While the actual network has been running a reduced service, miniature tracks have proliferated.

Even better, most of these new-old enthusiasms are inexpensive. You can set up a pretty fancy model railway for much less than the price of a season ticket on Southern Rail. The gin and tonics are cheaper too. And if your services don't run on time, you only have yourself to blame.'

An excerpt from the Times editorial Thursday 21st January

I will leave YOU to your thoughts on that one!

Stay safe.

EDITORIAL – Jon Faulconer

Not surprisingly, the Snowman featured in the last edition did not last long, although a small pile of snow was still in place on Monday but had disappeared by lunchtime. Here we are 2 weeks later and snow is forecast for our area. This begs the question whether the COVID malaise is a distraction you from the projects sitting in your “MAKE ME” pile but suffering from a stiff ignoring. Go on, dig them out and tell us about how you get on.

Julian Evison has organised another Club Zoom Call this Sunday 14 February, at 1500 hours. All the details are below, so make yourselves a hot cup of tea, or even pour generous glass of wine and join in.

The next edition of Whistleblower will be Sunday 21 February. Please let me have your articles and pictures by Saturday 20 February.

CLUB ZOOM MEETING – SUNDAY 14th FEBRUARY – Julian Evison

We plan to hold the next Club Zoom meeting on Sunday 14th February starting at 3pm. As usual all are welcome and details are as follows:

Topic: Farnham Club Zoom Meeting

Time: Feb 14, 2021 15:00 London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7862331543?pwd=VUcrY3l5TURWTHVkem1KVVA4Tml3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 786 233 1543

Passcode: Farnham

If you wish to phone in instead, please call: 0203 481 5237

You will need to enter

Meeting ID: 786 233 1543

Passcode: 5837533

OO9 ROLLING STOCK KITS – Alex Holt

Over the last month or so, I've been building up a few OO9 rolling stock kits. The kits I've been working are a Dundas Snailbeach Coal Wagon, a Dundas GVT/VoR style Open Coach and a OO9 Society Open Wagon. All the kits are plastic kits which have been fairly easy to assemble, none of them come with couplings as is common with OO9 so I've fitted Woodworm2014 couplings to each of the kits I have built.

The Snailbeach Railway Coal Wagon. This wagon is a Dundas kit which I've painted using Vallejo Light Olive. The transfers are from a set of Fox Transfers SECR Coach Set Numbers. The wagon was painted in this shade of green to match the OO9 NCB Centre Cab Diesel Locomotive I built earlier in the year.



The Dundas Models GVT/VoR style Open Coach. This has been painted to match the Third Class Single Compartment Coach from the same manufacturer which I built several months ago. It's been painted using Vallejo Carmine, Pale Sand, Gloss Black and Dark Sea Grey, with the door handles picked out with some Rose Gold paint. The interior was



done with Phoenix Golden Teak Top Coat. I'm yet to add passengers to this particular coach. The only transfers present on this are on the ends for the coach numbering, which has made use of some Fox Transfers LNER Coach Numbers.



The Colin Ashby/OO9 Society Open Wagon Kit pictured here with the matching SR Brake Van which has featured in a separate article. This one is currently being worked on and just needs a few minor bits of work before final varnishing. The wagon has been painted in Vallejo Dark Sea Grey for the sides, Gloss Black for the frames and Phoenix Golden Teak Top Coat for the inside of the wagon. Transfers used on this one are SR Goods Railtec Transfers.

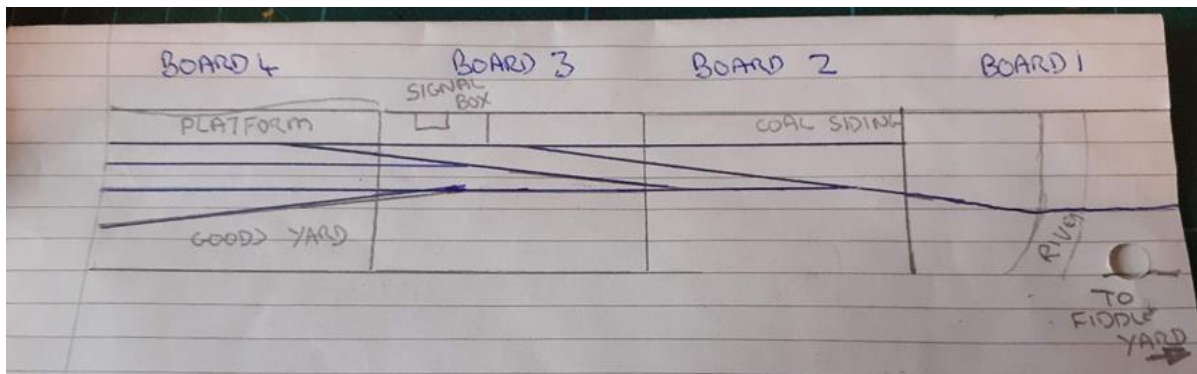
I've also been working on a OO9 Crane. This is a model I picked up second hand in December of last year which I believe is a modified Liliput wagon of some sort. So far, I have added a crane hook, cables and a load to it. The load is a mix of rails, Peco sleepers and some matchsticks. I've also added some stabilisation points for it which were left over from a Dapol Kitmaster OO Crane, these are yet to be painted but this wagon has been coming along quite nicely.



Going forwards I'm looking at getting one or two box wagons to go with the freight set, I'd like to do some of the OO9 Society RNAD Vans but more likely I'll go with some Dundas alternatives as the OO9 society shop is currently closed during lockdown. In terms of passenger stock I've now got enough to make two coaching sets so I don't see the need to get any more coaches for the time being.

LAYOUT UPDATE Part 5 – Jim Edwards

Jim has moved on apace with his new layout and has provided his latest update:



Wiring has been completed and tested. I am trying a new type of point motor for me, the Cobalt iP digital and working from my DCC NCE power cab.



Ballast was next to be done with Woodland Scenics medium and fine grades and using different colours. I fixed it down with Deluxe Ballast Bond, another new product for me.

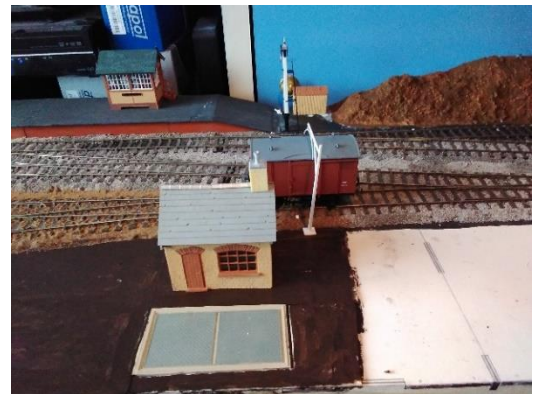
The platform tops were made from thin plywood and the edges from K S Laser Design Ltd.



Between Platform and coal yard I made a small hill using foam board edging. Cardboard formers filled with screwed up newspaper were covered with plaster cloth and sculpture mould, then painted with scenic texture paint Devon soil colour.



The coal yard was next fitted into place, along with the lamp hut and signal at the end of the platform.



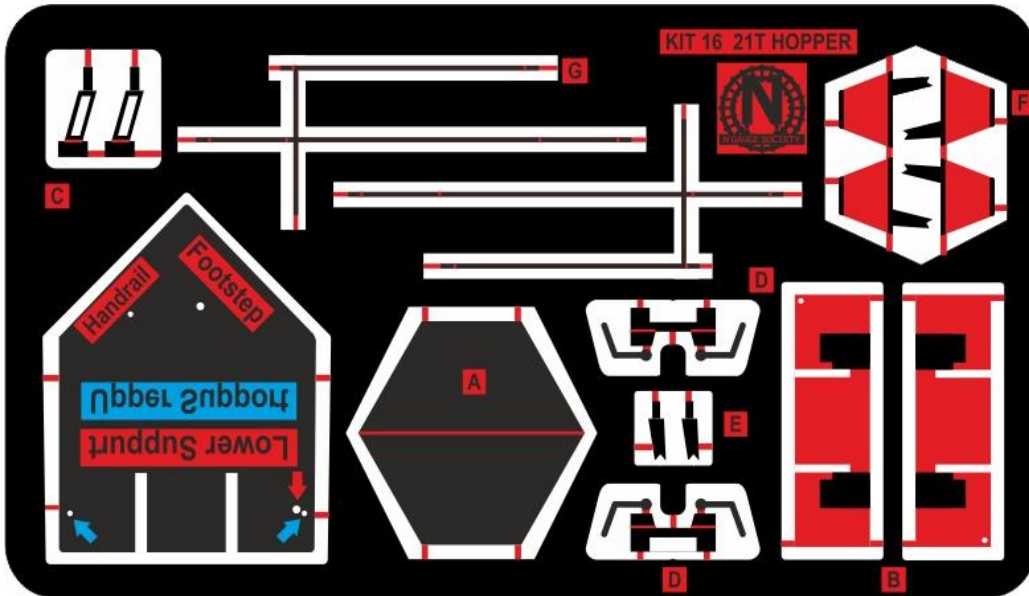
Finally, the goods shed has been started, as have the weighbridge, yard crane and loading gauge.



ARTWORK FOR ETCHES – Noel Leaver

I've been doing artwork for detailing etches for a number of N Gauge Society kits recently. When I mentioned this on the last Club Zoom meeting some people were interested, so here is a bit more detail.

The finished artwork looks something like this:



The black areas will not be etched, the white areas will be removed completely. The red areas will have the top half etched away, and the blue areas the underside half etched away. White in effect is red+blue, etch both sides away.

The etch shown is for details to go on a BR 21T coal hopper. Part A is the interior divider between the two hoppers, it is folded on the red half etched line to about 90 degrees before gluing in. Fold lines should always be half etched on the inside of the fold. B is a platform, mainly half etch thickness but with a couple of locating lugs left full depth. Item G is the handrails, if you look carefully you can see thin red lines for where they are folded at the corners.

I create the artwork using CorelDRAW Student Edition, but any vector drawing package could be used. If you don't have any software, try Inkscape. It is a free, open-source package with an interface similar to Adobe Illustrator. Whatever software you choose you will need to spend time learning how to use it, but there are plenty of online tutorials.

There are minimum sizes for lines and gaps, each etching company has a guide to what their limits are. Roughly speaking the thinnest strip or gap you can have is slightly more than the thickness of the metal being etched (0.25 mm is the commonest thickness, so often the minimum line is 0.3 mm). Anything less will probably not etch through, though half etch lines can be thinner. These limits are the smallest the etching company will guarantee, thinner items like the tip of a spike may etch well, but it is your problem if it doesn't!

You must add small tags to attach the etched items to the main body of the etch - if you don't the part will drop out of the etch into the acid when being etched. It is best to have at least 3 tabs on all but very small items, otherwise parts can get bent and damaged when handling

the etch. I usually make the tags 0.4 mm wide. Etching companies prefer you not to have large white areas, as it uses up more acid.

The large item bottom left is a jig for drilling the holes. Note the writing to be etched underneath has to be mirror writing so it comes out correctly. Red and blue items must not touch, else the metal will etch through completely which you don't want.

For each different part I create the shape inside a white box, and then add red tabs to connect it to the edge of the box. Parts can then be moved around on a black rectangle to get an arrangement with the minimum of waste metal.

There are several companies that will do etching from your artwork:

- * PEC (Photo Etch Consultants) <http://www.photo-etch.co.uk/index.html>. This is the company who has done my etching, though I don't deal with them directly.
- * PPD <https://ppdltd.com/> They are also used by many modellers.
- * 4D Model Shop <https://modelshop.co.uk/Static/WorkShop/Photo-Etching>. They recently turned round some NGS work in a week, other etchers are taking a couple of months at present.

Trying to do etching at home is not recommended!

There are two main costs:

- * A charge for preparing the photo tool for the sheet, which can contain many copies one set of artwork, or combine different artwork. This typically costs from about £40 for A5 to nearer £100 for A3. Repeat orders have either a smaller charge or no charge.
- * A charge for the metal used. Brass is cheapest at perhaps £20 for an A5 0.25mm sheet, nickel silver is a little more expensive but significantly stronger (and in my experience easier to work with). For very fine detail, you can use stainless steel which can be as thin as 0.05mm. If you want a lot of copies it is more economic to use the largest sheet size.

On top you have VAT and P&P.

Your first etch will not be right; at least, none of mine have been. You can reasonably hope the second will be OK. Modellers doing small volumes for their own use try and pack a lot of different items on one sheet to spread the cost: test etches, hoped for final etches, and repeats of earlier etches. Doing this means you need a new photo tool each time. Someone like the N Gauge Society, who expects to sell many copies of each etch, has just one item of artwork per sheet so repeat orders don't need a new photo tool.

Different companies vary in exactly what format of artwork they prefer. PEC for example like a PDF with all text 'converted to curves' so they don't need copies of the fonts you have used.

F&DMRC DIARY

Recent changes in **yellow**. Running starts at **14:00** in WCC (Wreccelesham Community Centre) Hall. Heading 'Run'g' = Priority use of Hall from 2pm; ALSO Tidy/vacuum Club Room AND Lock up

Due to Gov't Lockdown, the Club's Programme is again SUSPENDED

DIARY 2021 – ALL are subject to change / cancellation		
Date	Run'g	Event / Layout at Exhibition/Show
Wednesdays: Clubroom available from ~09:00 [use rear entrance]; Hall from 14:00.		
Mon 01 Feb	--	For Info'n – Alton Model Railway Group virtual Show for ~6 months, see www.FebEx.co.uk . Will feature Brixcombe and Wickwar.
Sun 14 Feb	--	Club Zoom @ 15:00 ; hereafter it is planned to move to a Wednesday
Wed 03 Mar	O	Probably too soon after Tier-4 vaccinations + 3-weeks after Dose-2
Wed 10 Mar	N	Probably too soon after Tier-4 vaccinations + 3-weeks after Dose-2
Wed 17 Mar	OO	Probably too soon after Tier-4 vaccinations + 3-weeks after Dose-2 Club Zoom at 15:00
Wed 24 Mar	009	POSSIBLY 1st Club Day of 2021
Wed 31 Mar	O	POSSIBLY 1st Club Day of 2021
Sun 04 Apr	--	Easter Sunday – Go/No-Go decision on OO9 Show
More to add	--	<i>The following are known about events / Shows – all subject to change</i>
Mon 03 May	--	Early May Bank Holiday – usually a Group Open Day - TBA
Mon 31 May	--	Spring Bank Holiday – usually a Group Open Day - TBA
Jun		Model Railway Show: Burton
Sat 12 Jun	--	Evening preparation for OO9 Show
Sun 13 Jun	--	Farnham OO9 Show (other Clubs invited): WCC Hall
Sat 26 & Sun 27 Jun	--	Wickwar (N): Perth Show CANCELLED
Jul		Model Railway Show: Beaconsfield
Sat 11 & Sun 12 Sep	--	REC (Railway Enthusuasts Club), Woking CANCELLED
Wed 06 Oct	??	Briefing for Show 18:30 in Clubroom/Hall
Fri 08 Oct	ALL	Set-up Show – from late afternoon
Sat 09 & Sun 10 Oct	ALL	F&DMRC Annual Club Show , Aldershot [Most of the layouts that were invited for 2020 will be attending.]
Nov		Model Railway Show: Warley
Wed 08 Dec		19:15 for 19:30 start - AGM (details to follow) [within 2 months of Club's year-end; voting only for paid-up 'Full' members].
Wed 15 Dec		Dinner (optional) 18:30 for 19:00 @ The Mill House, Odiham
Wed 22 Dec		Last Club Day of the year
DIARY 2022 – ALL are subject to change / cancellation		
Date	Run'g	Event / Layout at Exhibition/Show
Sat 05 & Sun 06 Feb	--	Wickwar (N): Alton
??		Brixcombe at a Show
Sat 25 & Sun 26 Jun	--	Wickwar (N): Perth Show
Sat 10 & Sun 11 Sep	--	REC (Railway Enthusuasts Club), Woking Leisure Centre