
West Midlands "N" Gauge Club

Newsletter

Volume 14 Issue 4

December 2011

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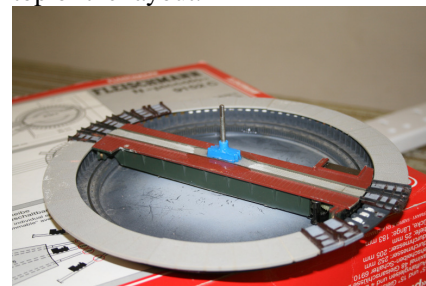
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THE CLUB LAYOUTS

Waterstock . . .

Work has been proceeding on the turntable in the engine shed area. An unprototypical Fleischmann turntable is being fixed to the underside of the layout, and physical connection made vertically to the Peco turntable on the top of the layout.



By turning the lower turntable the turntable on the layout will move, at least, that's the theory, but this sounds simpler than it is in practice.

Water Orton...

Following on from the last newsletter, the club has made good the track and electrical connections on this layout before dismantling it in November. It's been a layout that has often progressed at a snail's pace and more recently at no pace. So it is now indefinitely mothballed and we won't be reporting on it in future newsletters unless we restart it. Some of the base boards have gone back to Mike Turner's home. Currently the layout is stored at the club.

Cont'd...

HEADCODE

Welcome to the December issue of 2011

I'd like to start with an apology for this rather 'slimline' edition, this is due to the rather 'bursty' nature of my work commitments and other domestic concerns which have kept me from the clubroom for the last few meetings. I'd like to re-assure you all that I'm still very much alive and kicking and preparing for a full scale return to such matters for the next newsletter.

So, this issue, alongside the usual suspects, we have a brief feature on the international show at Leamington. We have also been fortunate enough to secure a wife's thoughts on Railway Modelling.

There is also some layout news and the regular 'Tail Lamp' column. *TB*

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

December sees our club's AGM and whilst these meetings are always important, this year we have to decide how we fund the club going forward. From the start we've been a non subscription club, with people paying only when they attend. Attendance at meetings has fallen in 2011 so that paying for attendance only at the current rate means our income is less than our expenditure.

Like all groups, organisations and the government, balancing the books is a key to the survival of the club. I hope to see many of you in 2012. Have a great Christmas vacation.

Best wishes

Ken Jones, Chairman

Volume 15 Issue 1 should appear in early March 2012.

Copy deadlines for the next four issues are:

Mar '12 Issue:	11 th February
June '12 Issue:	5 th May
Sept '12 Issue:	11 th August
Dec '12 Issue:	12 th November

Chairman: Ken Jones

0121 777 7062

Email: westernsultan@hotmail.co.uk

Treasurer: Edgar Mason

THE CLUB LAYOUTS *Cont'd*

Tipton Hills...

There's still scenery and track work to do on this layout. It will be erected in place of "Water Orton" in the clubroom instead of us having to build it every time it is needed to be worked on. We hope this layout will be invited to exhibitions in the near future. *KJ*

CLUB MEMBERS

Derek Gibbin is stepping down as layout coordinator at our AGM. Despite his own personal commitments Derek has coordinated our appearance with "Waterstock" at 2 x N Gauge Shows, at the Sutton Coldfield show, at the N Gauge Society anniversary event in Kettering and at numerous smaller exhibitions. The club hopes he continues to visit us, and our best wishes and thanks go to him and his wife Alison.

Mike Turner has visited the club to help to dismantle his layout "Water Orton". His campaign against HS2 continues, but he has found time to update our website at www.ngaugewmg.co.uk

Ken Jones has done his last model railway exhibition for 2011, ending with 2 of his N gauge layouts at the Solihull show in November. He's booked for the Sileby and Lutterworth shows in 2012 both of which have asked for his T gauge layout. He promises to update his website www.kenjonestrains.co.uk in the near future. *KJ*

BRANCHLINES AND BYWAYS *Ramblings off the cinder path*

Taking safety-consciousness to the extreme, the following is quoted from the instruction sheet of an imported kit: 'Please study the drawing carefully, and if all else fails, read the instructions. This kit is intended for adult hobbyists and is not a toy. The castings contain lead which may be harmful if ingested or melted down into bullets and propelled into the body by guns, slingshots, or gravity.'

TRIP WORKINGS

The international N Gauge Show 2011



The crowds flock to see Waterstock at the International N Gauge show in Leamington as Lin, Tony and Les put the layout through it's paces. But what is it the flocking masses are all eager to see? Surely not our handsome operators? No, of course not...



...It was Derek Rutherford's LNER 10000 'Hush-Hush' on a rake of Gresley teaks.

The 'Hush-Hush' was the winning model in this years Chairman's Shield competition at the N-gauge 2011 AMMC. It also won the Andy Calvert Trophy at the AGM and was featured in the journal July/Aug 4/11. Derek dropped in on the club whilst at the Leamington show looking for somewhere to let 10000 stretch its legs. We naturally obliged and the loco was absolutely breathtaking hauling the Gresley teaks. In fact some of the passengers on platform 2 at Waterstock were so overcome with surprise in seeing such a thing that they fell over. A real crowd pleaser, well done Graham. Please feel free to drop by anytime.

Never Marry a Modeller

Attributed to Val Crossley BRMNA

FIRST, never marry a railway modeller if it can possibly be avoided. Those of us 'in the know', so to speak, issue dire warnings of the atrocities and years of neglect in your future if you succumb to the innumerable charms of a true 'RM'. He may initially appear quite normal, capable of executing all the expected social niceties, in some instances even managing to hold down a steady job. His friends and family, well most of them at least, will provide no clues as to the deep dark secrets in the soul of your betrothed. But, if you are alert and wary, the telltale signs will reveal themselves.

For example, does he sometimes disappear into his garage for hours on end without explanation, and emerge smelling of solder? Is there a door that is never unlocked, which according to the house plan leads to a room the size of a warehouse? Has he ever told his doctor that his blood type is N or OO? Have you ever discovered a miniature newsagent in his pocket? Does he carry on a suspiciously frequent correspondence with mysterious British or Global contacts, perhaps receiving intriguing anonymous brown paper packages from overseas? Is he on a first name basis with customs officials or delivery drivers?

If your prospective mate exhibits any of these symptoms, it is quite possible that this steadily progressive disease - and it IS a disease - may already be irreversible. Alas, you must decide before it is too late for you, whether you can find fulfilment as the wife of a man stricken by RMD (Railway Modeller Disease). You must resign yourself to the prospect of years of Saturday nights with your nose tucked in a book, listening to the steady hum of locomotives in your garage, and also to the prospect of all manner of strange men coming and going from your basement or attic until the wee hours, expecting tea and biscuits or beer and sandwiches at regular intervals. You will acquire a whole new vocabulary consisting of words such as points, couplings, drag beams and loading gauge, with which you will be unable to converse in your former social circle. The money earmarked for the house redecoration will go instead on rolling stock. You may spend your honeymoon in Blaenau Ffestiniog.

Does it seem a harsh life? There are bright spots! My husband is fond of reminding me - usually in the middle of an icy silence following eight successive missed dinners - that it keeps him out of the pub, which, I suppose, is a bit like keeping an alcoholic out of an opium den by installing a bar in your front room. He also reminds me that only rarely has he leapt out of bed at 3am in order to commit to paper a brilliant idea for a new layout or a revolutionary (groan!) turntable mechanism. Then there is the pleasure of commiserating with other railway modeller wives, easily recognisable by their inability to identify their own husbands in a crowd. (In fact, this difficulty may be overcome by having all the husbands shout "Leave the tea just outside the door" in suitably muffled tones. Most wives will then pick out their own

man with little difficulty).

Is it too late for you, as it is for me? We must be realistic and gauge (groan again!) our small successes accordingly. Forget the fancy romantic dinners – make full use of your microwaves and slow cookers. Do charity work, or better yet, open a lucrative railway modelling supplies shop. If you can manage to get his attention long enough, have children (but please try to keep them out of the layout room). Although railway modeller husbands may show evidence of sporadic bursts of domesticity, accept with dignity the fact that the duties of running the household may fall to you. Learn to cope with roof repairs and putting a new engine in the car. Be eternally grateful for the fact that if there is little room in the RM's life for a wife, there is considerably less room for a string of mistresses. Try to remain unruffled when the toddler your husband sends home to the blue house on the corner is your own.

Above all, never denigrate the joys of train operation by making disparaging remarks about 'boys playing trains'. This is the most unforgivable of sins and might irreparably damage your relationship. Enjoy the moments out of each day when you DO have his attention, and remind yourself that it is quality, that counts, not quantity. Remember also that there is undeniably 'something about trains' that is keeping your husband as happy and enthusiastic and as full of life as the day you met.

That, believe it or not, is what makes it all worthwhile.

MAIL TRAIN

I noticed in Journal 5/11 a letter entitled 'Signalling Matters' From Philip Rees. Philip takes us to task on the standard of our Waterstock signal painting as shown on the cover of journal 4/11. Well full Marks to your observation Mr Rees, you are spot on with that one. Rest assured that Waterstock is currently undergoing some re-signalling and we will pick this up at our earliest convenience. *TB*

2011 PROGRAMME

All meetings are held at Tipton Green Methodist Church Hall, Park Lane West, Tipton, West Midlands, DY4 8LD, on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays in each month, from 2pm to 5pm.

There will be no meeting on December 17th.2011

Meeting dates for next year:

January	7th	21st
February	4th	18th
March	3rd	17th
April	7th	21st
May	5th	19th
June	2nd	16th
July	7th	21st
August	4th	18th
September	1st	15th
October	6th	20th
November	3rd	17th
December	1st (AGM)	15th?

Any changes to these dates will be notified on our website or in our quarterly newsletter.

For more information, contact

Ken Jones: tel: 0121 777 7062

Email: westernsultan@hotmail.co.uk

Website: www.ngaugewmg.co.uk

Please use the **rear entrance** to gain access to the church hall. If you are in doubt, please ring first, especially if you are travelling any distance.

TAIL LAMP *by TB*

2011 and all that.

At the time that this is being written, it is perhaps natural that one's thoughts turn to events over the receding year. Many of these thoughts concern personalities in the hobby, and revolve around some of the pleasant times enjoyed at various functions around the country. It is an unquestionable fact that there is a great spirit of friendliness and goodwill among enthusiasts – be they amateur or professional. Some of the good natured rivalry between the followers of the four pre-nationalisation railway companies, or the pre-grouping companies for that, the transition fans and the current scene buffs makes for a great spirit of competition. A similar spirit is usually evident between neighbouring model railway clubs, which, partly thanks to the formation of area groups, online virtual groups and suchlike is now being spread farther afield. There have been several instances in the last 12 months where co-operation between individuals, clubs and / or the trade has played an important part in making life easier in some aspect or another. Would it be true to say that co-operation is the keynote to happiness and success? It is perhaps an idea for a New year resolution.

The editor would like to wish all readers a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous 2012.