
West Midlands "N" Gauge Club

Newsletter

Volume 14 Issue 2

June 2011

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THE CLUB LAYOUTS

Waterstock . . .

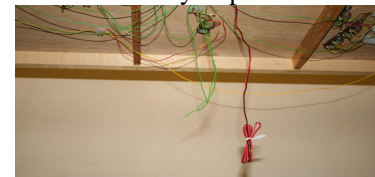
This layout has run well at club meetings with the new and replacement track not causing any problems. We are looking at the signals which seem to get damaged by human arms and sleeves – so we are replacing them with ones which will only go on the layout at exhibitions. Wiring the turntable has been delayed indefinitely and will continue to be digitally operated. That's using fingers and hands not DCC.

The turntable should have an inside track and wheel – something we don't notice when we move it by hand. When electrically operated it looks like a nodding donkey as it see saws up and down.

Waterstock has only one scheduled outing so far this year and that will be at the International N Gauge Show.

Water Orton . . .

What can be said about this layout that hasn't already been said? Mike now has a track diagram on his laptop showing electrical feeds, isolators and point motors. Look underneath the layout and see the huge number of wires already in place...



Complicated is far too easy a word for me to use – but Len will solve it – although it could be one reason we haven't seen much of him so far this year.

HEADCODE

Welcome to the June issue of 2011

In this edition, as well as the usual club notes ramblings and the thoughts of Chairman Ken we have a 'how to do' article by Tony Minchin who shows you a method for fitting working tail lamps to a brake van, which of course could apply just as well to passenger stock come to that.

We also have some news about a repeat broadcast of 'Model Town'.

In addition we have some pictures of recent club activity and also some more gibberish from me.

But then you can't have everything you know. *TB*

Volume 14 Issue 3 should appear in early September.

Copy deadlines for the next four issues are:

September Issue: 13th August

December Issue: 12th November

March '12 Issue: 11th February

June '12 Issue: 12th May

All submissions considered.

Chairman: Ken Jones

0121 777 7062

Email: westernsultan@hotmail.co.uk

Treasurer: Edgar Mason

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

There was a disappointing attendance for the NGS second hand shop held at our venue in March – despite so many society members living within an hour of the place. Pity because Carol and Ray had bought so much stock with them at really low prices and the church had catered for around 150 to 200 visitors so had over bought bacon etc. Even sadder to report is that one of our club members had a new jubilee locomotive vanish from our fiddle yard on "Waterstock".

However I'm pleased to announce that it has been returned with a full apology - it was taken in error by another member, thinking it was his own locomotive. On big and small layouts we all need to be careful that what we put on the layout in terms of our rolling stock is what we go home with.

It could have been much more serious as we all know there are always fingers around, so we are having a rethink on how we manage stock on the layouts we have so this hopefully will not happen again.

For those who did turn up at this event I think I can say it was worth it despite the small attendance.

Best wishes

Ken Jones, Chairman

Tipton Hills. .

Mike has built a self contained stand for this layout that even your chairman understands.



David has built a small fiddle yard which will also have some scenery and Rodney has added some buildings – all in all a lot of progress on this our small layout and trains from Thomas and friends to Ken's Tomix single car DMU have been operating on it. This layout is totally fictitious and will run British, Continental and American stock. It will soon be available for any exhibition that wants to see it in action. *KJ*



CLUB MEMBERS

Derek Purves has been active in 12"/ft recently. He is a driver for the Welshpool and Llanfair Railway and tells us that on April 13th Hunslett loco No 85 left Llanfair on a low loader for the NRM at Shildon where it will be on a Weltrol wagon and under cover for the next 5 years. It is 'out of ticket' at present and at the back of the restoration queue and it should give the W&LR some publicity.

The 'Earl' helped to push No 85 onto the low loader.

Their "season" started well with 'The Earl' and 'Countess' available for duty. 'Joan' is nearing the completion of its rebuild then will be ready for action again. Work is then expected on repairs to the 'Resita'.

Why not pop up sometime and check them out.

CLUB NOTES

Saturday 19th March 2011

By the time you get this newsletter – the second hand NGS sales stand at our venue will have been and gone. We were expecting lots of stock being sold and we weren't too disappointed there. We hoped for lots of visitors as Ken has noted elsewhere but it turns out that the flier for the event that the NG Soc were including in the Jan / Feb national journal ended up in the Shop Supplement so would have been missed by many members who may not have read that section, if they weren't particularly in the market for something at least. However, those who came enjoyed it and we even had a wedding party from the church next door coming in for bacon rolls before their function started. I think it is something we would consider doing again.

I would like to extend our thanks to the shop staff and to everyone involved with arranging things on the day. *TB*



CONSTRUCTIONAL FEATURE

ONE EVENING 'MAKE'

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Working tail lamp for a Peco brake...

By Tony Minchin

These days we are used to having new RTR loco's, particularly diesels, with working headlamps and these look great on any layout. But often, as the train passes we notice that there is no working tail lamp on the end of the train, or worse still no lamp at all. The bobbies in the box on the prototype would have kittens if the rear of a train did not have a lamp to signify that the train has passed complete, and the signal bells would soon be ringing up and down the line.

So, following in the footsteps of the Great Western Railway engineers I decided to fit a working tail lamp to a Peco brake wagon (fig 1).

First I took the Peco Brake wagon apart completely, this was not hard, popping the wheels out of their bearings reveals two small nuts normally hidden behind the axles. Undo these nuts carefully with the nut spinner or the tweezers, being prepared for the couplings to fall out of place as you separate the chassis from the body. Keep all the little bits and pieces to one side. We will be discarding the wheels and the weight in this case, but you may wish to retain and reshape the weight to fit back in again on completion. The roof should pretty much unclip from the body though you might find that a small amount of cement has been used to secure it.



Figure 1: This is what we're aiming at.

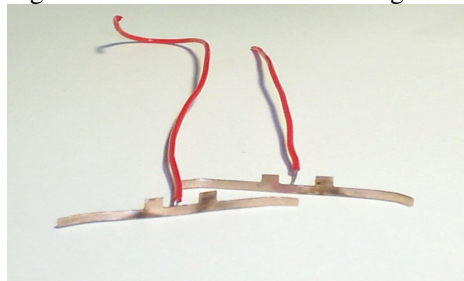


Figure 2: Making Pickups.

Now, turning our attention to the body of the wagon, locate the moulded lamp iron on the balcony end and with a 1.8 mm drill bit in a pin vice drill a hole through the balcony in its place. Whilst you've the drill handy use it to make two holes in the floor of the wagon for the connections.

We need some pickups. I had mine from the scrapbox (every modeller should have one), but if you don't have any you could make your own from phosphor-bronze or brass strips. A bit of scrap brass from an etching would be ideal! Solder a short piece of insulated wire to each pickup (Fig 2).

You will need:-

Supplies

Peco Brake Wagon.
New metal wheelsets for the above.
1.8mm red LED.
A sub miniature resistor (I used 100 Ohm).
A pack of whitmetal tail lamps from Springside Miniatures (Fig 6).
Small pieces of brass or somesuch for pickups (see text)

Tools

Small nut spinner or flat nose tweezers.
Small soldering iron 15W ideal (Not a big copper jobby that you put on the gas).
Cyano cement (Superglue).

Taking each pickup in turn, pass the wire through one of the holes in the floor of the body and glue the pickup to the floor with cyano. Arrange the pickup so that the brass strips will poke down a little through the slots that are already in the chassis above the wheel positions (Fig 3).

To produce the red glow you will need a 1.8 mm LED and a resistor (Fig 4), I used a 100 Ohm one (only a tiny one, 0.125 Watt rated will be plenty). These are available from exhibitions or from Maplins on the high street. You may find them to be cheaper online but watch out for those P&P costs! The LEDs as supplied are funny shaped things, with only the lens part being truly 1.8mm. They also must be connected the right way round or you will find that your tail lamp will only operate when reversing.

The LED will need to mount into the hole in the balcony end. Splay out the leads a little so that they can pass through the windows of the guard's compartment. Do not bend the leads too close to the body of the LED as they are rather prone to snapping off (Fig 5).

Solder one leg of the LED to one lead of the resistor. Either – or, it doesn't matter.

TIP – Use a heatsink on the leg of the LED if you think that your soldering is not as quick as you'd like it to be.

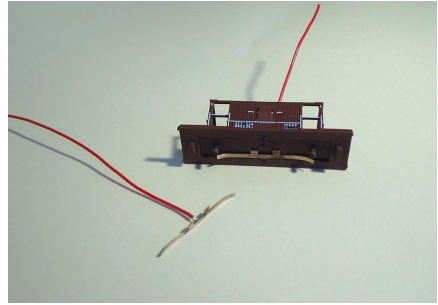


Figure 3: Installing the pickups.



Figure 4: The techie bits.

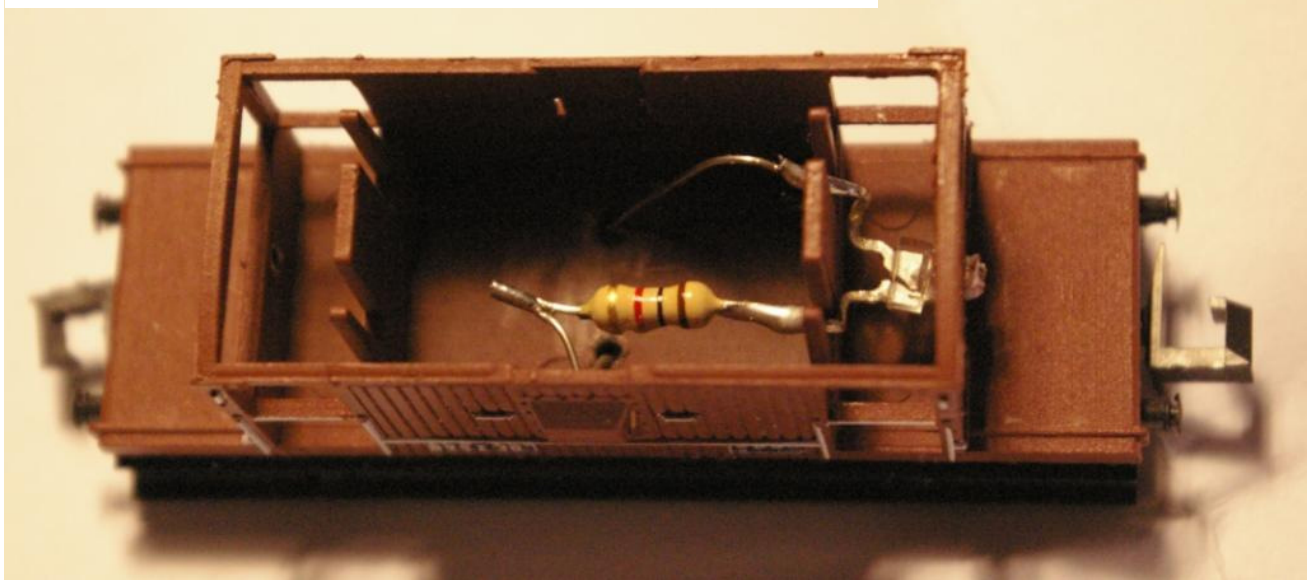


Figure 5 General Arrangement

Paint the body of the LED where it shows outside of the guard's compartment with black paint. You may need more than one coat as the object is to stop stray light from shining out of the LED body. Be sure not to paint the lens end though, we want that bit left clear.

Before we attach the assembly to the brake van - a word about polarity – you can just count on there being a 50-50 chance you'll get it right by guessing and be prepared to have to swop some wires around later, or, you can figure out which end of the assembly should be positive for it to work correctly by touching it briefly across a 9v battery or by powering up your layout track in the forward direction at about 1/3 rd throttle and just touch the assembly across the rails.

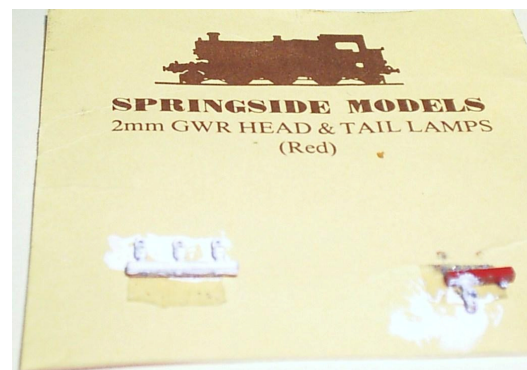


Figure 6: Springside tail lamps.

Once you know which way to go mount the LED in its hole, securing it with a little cyano applied with the tip of a cocktail stick if necessary.

Solder the LED/resistor assembly to the wires coming up through the floor (Fig 5).

Take care to get this the right way round. A general rule of thumb is that the positive rail is the one on the left facing the direction of motion, but your situation may differ.

To complete the model, drill through the lens of one of the whitmetal tail lamps with that 1.8mm drill and fix it to the position on the balcony end so that the holes line up. You may be lucky and have a little stub of the LED lens sticking through the balcony to aid location.

Paint the tail lamp if you haven't already done so then re-assemble the brake wagon substituting nice metal wheels for the discarded plastic ones (Fig 7) and remembering to include the couplings that you put to one side (You did keep them safe didn't you?).

You may need to adjust your pickups slightly so that they make contact with the wheels OK without excessive drag.

But that's it basically, you're ready to roll in an evening.

Article and Photo's by Tony Minchin



Figure 7: Nice new metal wheelsets.



Figure 8: Done. Time for a cuppa.

Model Town Returns...

Model Town returns to our screens (well, some of them anyhow) on the 11th June for a showing of the complete series. Simon Farmer creates the sleepy 1960s town of Farmerton in this creative series. Over the course of the 15 episodes we see a huge 400sq ft layout being built and we learn about some fantastic modelling techniques.

If you can only dip in and out, here is a brief guide to picking the programmes that might interest you the most. Some episodes are additionally shown at other times too, so check your local listing guides.

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 11:30am | Pt 1 Simon Farmer unveils his ambitious plans for a 400 sq ft scale model layout, before visiting the national model railway exhibition at the NEC for added motivation. |
| 12:00pm | Pt2 Simon Farmer and the modelling team lay the track before meeting the master of Z gauge - taking track works to greater heights on the smallest of scales. |
| 12:30pm | Pt3 Intricate work on the main station starts, including carefully curved platforms and station canopies. Simon is enthralled by the latest digital control equipment. |
| 1:00pm | Pt 4 Simon builds a pub for the layout and is shown how to make trees from scrap. He takes a break to check out an original model based on Emmett's satirical drawings. |
| 1:30pm | Pt 5 The team model a Cornish tin mine replete with underground workings. Then they meet the man who has created a full model of the London Underground. |
| 2:00pm | Pt 6 Simon enlists professional help to model a football stadium for the layout. Plus, the team make a splash when they try out a new product which simulates water. |
| 2:30pm | Pt 7 Simon creates cabbages from cigarette papers, masters the operation of a full size signal box, and is intrigued by a model at a former secret nuclear bunker. |
| 3:00pm | Pt 8. This episode includes a fully working canal, signalling smuggler and haunted castle complete with ghostly apparition. |
| 3:30pm | Pt 9 Military modellers explain different techniques for painting figures while Simon builds a scrapyard. Plus, top tips from a US layout specialist. |
| 4:00pm | Pt 10 Simon seeks inspiration for the model by visiting a Napoleonic powder mill and visits a model railway depicting the German post-war rail system. |
| 4:30pm | Pt 11 Simon finds all the fun of the fair in the shape of a fully working model fairground, sees how to make a character move his head and takes the inside track on signals. Plus top tips on introducing sound effects to a model are also revealed. |

- 5:00pm Pt 12 The tram work is underway in Farmerton and Simon is blown away by the power cables. He then explores a model of the Carlyle railway and learns how to highlight cliffs.
- 5:30pm Pt 13 It is time to electrify Farmerton's hotels and Simon looks at ways to enhance the light effects, including hanging curtains at the windows. Simon also learns about model cars and checks out Copenhagen Fields.
- 6:00pm Pt 14 Simon explains how he has made smoke billow from his fire-devastated cottage, opens up the mushroom shed, and demonstrates how to make stonework look realistic. Also, see a highly imaginative railway that changes seasons - and decades.
- 6:30pm Pt 15 The Farmerton model is complete and it is time to take a tour of the town. Then Simon checks out some early tram models, and looks at different ways to cut your modelling time. Simon also visits one of the most popular layouts in the country.

The salient information you need is that it is on Discovery Shed which is channel 242 on Sky, or 274 on Virgin. Sadly not available on freeview or terrestrial TV. *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.

Meeting dates for the rest of the year:

June		18 th
July	2 nd	16 th
August	6 th	20 th
September	3 rd	17 th
October 1 st	15 th	
November	5 th	19 th
December	3 rd (AGM)	--

There will be no meeting on December 17th.

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*

Summer, at least so we are told, and the attics, basements, sheds and back rooms all over the country that have been so busy during the reputedly less balmy months of the year can be excused if they collect a trifle more than their usual quota of dust.

Summer, when out of door smells and sounds appeal just a little stronger than those of sizzling flux and grumbling bearings, and the gentle chatter of a lawnmower (somebody else's) is sufficiently pleasing to the ear to prevent a sudden exodus from the midst of garden bound, family company. Summer, and this hobby of ours often gets laid up together with partially completed projects.

Strictly speaking, now is the time to pay attention to another aspect of the hobby, and one that can be combined with household responsibilities assuming there are any, namely, field work.

OK, perhaps I made the lawnmower reference sound a little more bucolic than is the reality these days, but still, now is the key time to get out of the layout room.

Go out and observe

This covers anything and everything to do with the appearance and outward operation of a model railway: Locomotives, DMU's, passenger and freight stock, railway architecture, signalling and power installations. Read all the books you like, study all the magazines, spend hours with eyeballs glued to monitors or pouring over old photo's, and you will only glean a fraction of the information available to you out along the P-way, or at some other vantage point. There to be found are the answers to most queries that arise; who better as instructor than the real railway?

OK, what you see today is, to the greater part "Modern Image", but there are plenty of "Heritage Railways" around these days too and the knowledge gained is still a top grade foundation upon which to reconstruct your own efforts, be they contemporary, recent, past or vintage.

So, when next the family chants for a Sunday outing behind the communal i.c. engine, don't be shy or slow about destinations; by leaving it to chance you'll be bound to end up as far from any railway installation as is possible.

Well in advance, pick out the route to the railway aspect that is of particular interest to you, not forgetting tea shops and other concerns kindly to the memsahib and children, and store this information in your back pocket until the next occasion when asked "Where shall we go?", then trot it out as an unpremeditated stroke of genius.

What was that you said? How about unmarried modellers? Well, some would have it that their marital status indicates genius, in any case.

Have a good summer, and don't forget that notepad and camera. *TB*