



NEWSLETTER 96 : April 2021

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Editorial



Having both had our first Pfizer jab in February, both I and my Wife are rather impatient - "chomping at the bit" in fact, to get back to some sort of normal life. After all, there are no rooms left to redecorate at home! The roadmap that we have at present promises us that self-contained, self-catering accommodation can reopen on 12 April, and we are hoping for good weather for a week at Haven "Blue Dolphin" at Filey, which is where we went to after the first Lockdown last July.



Although indoor hospitality is not to open until later, we will at least be able to - weather permitting - sit at outdoor tables for coffee and fish and chips. Even these simple pleasures are worthy of anticipation, as are games of crazy golf and hopefully a ride on the North Bay Railway at Scarborough.

Looking further ahead, we hope to be spending a few days on the Isle of Wight in August, and have been following the rebuilding of Island Line with interest. The platforms at Sandown (above) have been raised - with what appears to be a prefabricated construction - while at Shanklin (left) the track bed has been lowered. Photos - Ken Lundsten

Several Class 484 units have now been delivered, with 002, 003 and

004 now being temporarily based at Eastleigh for driver training and mileage accumulation between Eastleigh and Fareham, so once the line is reopened it will only remain for the units to be transported across the Solent, and the Island will have relatively modern (although remanufactured, originally 40 year old) trains.

Chairman's Notes

Ian Shulver

Well, it has been quite an eventful month. Firstly we have had problems with our telephone from the beginning of the month with a lot of clicking noises which after several minutes went away. Then, just over a week ago the landline went off altogether although the broadband seemed to be working. However, I suspected that it did keep dropping out so I was unsure whether I would be able to access our zoom meeting. Fortunately all has now been sorted with the fault identified somewhere in the line from our house to the

junction box at the end of the road. Luckily BT managed to find a couple of spare cables but will eventually need to replace them.



I also required a Covid test with both Heather and myself having to self isolate prior to my first cataract operation. Now, for the first time in over a year I can see clearly objects in distance (fantastic) and see the television without sitting on top of it, albeit only out of the one eye at the moment. However, until my optician can fit me up with a near vision lens (3-4 weeks) my reading, and certainly any modelling, is somewhat difficult. Fortunately I have a large magnifying glass which does help.

A few days ago, Tony sent around a link so that you could view a 1990 cab ride from Hunts Cross to Southport (apparently we have the video in our library collection). I was particularly interested in the part that showed the train passing by our clubrooms. I managed to grab a screenshot in which you can see the crossing with the old style gates. The cab ride must have been not long before they were replaced since you can just make out our white painted front door – the doorway was put in just prior to the lifting barriers being installed. You can also make out the outline of a lean-to just behind the far gate post which was our way into the clubroom but was removed to make way for the barrier mechanism.



During one of our zoom meetings, 2 or 3 weeks ago we had a discussion about the old Chapel Street Station and how much more attractive it was than the current 1960's "functional" monstrosity, replete with many stalactites and stalagmites. I came across this picture on the internet with no other details but it appears to have been taken around 1900 from the dresses worn, Interestingly it looks as though Chapel Street was pedestrianised back then. I must say a porte-cochere makes for an elegant and useful entrance. A fascinating picture.

Secretary's Notes

Jim Ford

Comrades. Well, it is now a full year since we started with lockdown and have had very much restricted social contacts. To the garden railwaymen this has been a disaster as we have normally looked forward to the spring ushering in a regular series of visits to each others' model railways across Merseyside and West Lancashire. We call our group the GOLS (Gents of leisure) and each visit starts at 1100 with the members congregating at the chosen address. Certain features are in common, for example we tend to start with some battery or even clockwork locos to check the track is clear and level and then we move on to our steam models usually a bit spaced out to give everybody a chance to run. The host will provide a boiling urn, milk,

sugar, tea and coffee and visitors help themselves to refreshments. Around 1300 there will be a brief adjournment for a light lunch provided by the host - or his wife. Then it is more steaming up with a tradition of all the engines chasing their tails at breakneck speed! That is how we do it, but other groups do it in a more sedate or ordered fashion. In between the radio-controlled trains there will usually be some manual engines running with their owner darting around after them. And inevitably Derek Pratt will bring some 'critters' with him, which could be an animal, a biscuit tin or even a spacecraft! We have a lot of fun and I don't think any of us care what the neighbours think.....

Which brings me back to Barry's comments about what is a model railway? I think that Barry has clearly set out his stall, which is one that many modellers would subscribe to - basically constructed a slice of the countryside with a replica of a railway with little compromise other than for practicality. Shaun Finucane has a further model - he has a large cellar system which is fully signalled and which runs from room to room. Operation is Shaun's specialty and if you get invited to join him (sadly not possible during lockdown) then you will find yourself operating signal levers and listening for bell codes as the team works through a pre-prepared timetable.

Finally, just a couple of reminders for members and comrades. The Committee has booked All Saints Church Hall for our usual annual one day pre-Christmas Show on **Saturday 13th November**. We are hoping that Covid permitting, this exhibition can go ahead. The current conditions for using the Hall would not permit that but we are hopeful that there will be sufficient relaxation to enable us to go ahead and we will be working on the basis that this will be possible. So keep that day free!

And as regards current lockdown affecting the club from **Monday 29th March** access to the garden at Eastbank Lane Station will be allowed for members irrespective of travel distance for up to **six**. Eating and drinking to be outdoors. From Monday 17th May groups of **six** may meet/eat inside the clubhouse. Also from **Monday 29th March** outside work may be undertaken in groups of up to **six** by all members who may attend irrespective of travel distance. Eating and drinking remain outdoors. From **Monday 19th May** there will be no limit on the size of outdoor workgroups and up to **six** people may work and/or eat in the clubroom. However it is going to be some time yet before members will be able to regularly meet together inside.

Where's Andrew?

No answers for last month's picture, which was of the Alderney Railway, where two 1959 stock London Underground cars are pushed/pulled by an 0-4-0 diesel locomotive. No doubt it is a combination of cost and the lightweight nature of the cars (with traction motors removed) that is the reason for their use. Trivia fans may like to know that the "station" at Mannez Quarry (which is more like a wooden summerhouse) carries a plaque with the London Underground roundel, showing the name "Mornington Crescent".



Now to this month's puzzle. I took this photograph in July 2017, on a preserved railway which is often advertised with a picture of a similar locomotive but in a totally different colour scheme.

Lockdown Modelling

Mike Sharples

I have attached a picture of one of my 009 loco projects. It is a 3d printed body by David Malton who does a range of Mainline locos in 009 gauge on kato chassis.

The loco itself is the class 20 which was In the 1997 bond film Goldeneye which was 20188 and two mk2 Coaches done up to look like a Soviet missile

train. I have painted the loco into Russia army winter camouflage and found some Russian nameplates so I put them on too.



Filleigh Station

Ian Shulver

Over the last few months I have been making progress on my "small" portable layout which is based on Filleigh Station on the old Taunton to Barnstaple line. The baseboards have been made and the cork base for the track laid. However, although I have a reasonably accurate track plan, courtesy AnyRail, as yet I only have about 30% of the required trackwork (it is on order and is only appearing slowly due to the national shortage). Consequently tracklaying is on hold for the moment. In the meantime, I have been getting on with producing the buildings. So far, I have scratch-built the road bridge, station, provision store, signal box and goods shed. At present they are not painted nor have they been adorned with items such as gutters and downpipes.



The photographs show the structures as a group and also roughly in position on the layout. Still to come are the Post Office, a farmhouse, a building associated with a private siding and a couple of other storage sheds. The platform also needs to be formed but not until the track is down.



Lockdown Low Line

Malcolm Evetts

I started making the 45 mm line because it was a whole six months since I'd completed my previous layout, and withdrawal symptoms had set in. I wanted to make a line for running the small amount of stuff purchased on account of the local South Oxfordshire Area Group – some of their lines are 45 mm. Also, Peco 32 mm track was hard to get at the time, but there was plenty of second-hand 45 mm available. I started in Shed 1, aka the Windamere Hotel, and it's very small so I couldn't resist branching out into more daylight.



The garden is 20th century development size, so the plan was limited to a small line, lower than my 32 mm line, and it had to weave between garden obstacles: no plants, wildlife, bird-feeders, pots, ornaments or ancient monuments were to be removed or damaged during construction. To these ends I planned to draw a detailed map for management approval, then I made it all up as I went along, especially the two path crossings. Crossing 1 is a viaduct made with pre-mix mortar in a single arch, custom-built mould

and I've kept each arch separate, so I can move the whole thing for maintenance.



Each arch masses about 12 kg, so I can pick them up. I had visions of a tall, elegant structure, despite the fact that the line is only about a foot above step level, and it looks more stumpy than lofty – more Mortar Malc than

Concrete Bob. The return crossing is meant to end up as a trestle, but the current support is a fudge until I get something more suitable built.



I completed the outside oval just in time for the weeks of continuous rain to keep it all seriously well soaked until the last week in February. The last two pictures were taken late in February -

sufficiently dried out to avoid wrecking stuff! I'm particularly cheered up by the scope for running two trains and seeing them cross, one above the other - small compensation for the absence of any opportunity to share running on a show layout, and far too quiet!



Lockdown building - of a website!

Derek Pratt

Another lockdown job ticked off. My many and various articles what I have wrote over the years now have their own website:

<https://railwaygardener.wixsite.com/articles> What that says about me I'd rather not know. (One of the articles on this website is reproduced below - Ed)

Pendle Pearlie Mine

Derek Pratt

Nestling under the witch-infested Pendle Hill deep in Lancashire's heartland, lies the little-known Pendle Pearlie Mine, where valuable edible artifacts have been hewn out of seams of sedimentary chocolate for nigh-on a century. And occasionally a golden nugget is found, the rare Yellow Smartie of perfect circular form and great beauty, which commands a high price in the courts of Continental Europe.

Naturally the mine has a narrow-gauge railway to take workers and materials into the mine, and to bring out the valuable ore. It also runs through the separation works, where the product is extracted from the cocoa mass by a secret process involving steam, sugar, and somewhat surprisingly, broken digestive biscuits . Small quantities of waste dolly-mixtures are removed and sold as pet treats. Another useful by-product is a modest amount of high-quality hot chocolate.

In the packing shed the different shapes and colours are carefully sorted before being packed into a variety of bags and boxes. Finally the railway takes the finished goods to a loading platform where a larger (but still narrow-gauge) train is loaded for export to England, Yorkshire and the World, via interchange sidings at Wigan Pier.

The model is inspired by a design from the late Carl Arendt, undisputed king of the micro layout. He conceived the idea of adapting theatre 'flies' (which lift scenery up and down during a set change) to a compact model railway. His version, named 'The Midnight Flyer', envisaged a set of scenic backboards which would be raised and lowered from a concealed storage area above the layout.

I am not sure if Carl ever built his design, in which case my effort may be a world first. For ease of construction my backboards are stored behind the

layout rather than above it, and I have used hidden side tracks to operate the trains rather than provide access from the rear. The scale is mainly G_n15 (1:24 G scale on 16.5mm track), representing a 15" gauge railway. The rearmost track is SM32 scale (1:19).

The operating sequence is as follows:



Mine, separation and loading scenery boards in place, no trains visible.

- 1) Loco A traverses mine gallery from left with miners in coaches.
- 2) Loco B traverses the gallery from right with full tubs, including a Yellow Smartie.

Mine scenery lifts, to reveal separation works.

- 3) Loco C traverses separation works from the left with wagons of sweets and a tanker of hot chocolate.
- 4) Loco D traverses from right with tubs of waste cocoa and dolly mixtures.
- 5) Loco A traverses from left with works train.

Separation scenery lifts, packing scenery lowers.

- 6) Loco B traverses the packing shed from right with packaging materials.
- 7) Loco C traverses from left with packaged sweets.

Packing scenery lifts, revealing loading bay.

- 8) Loco E (larger scale) waits in loading bay with wagons of packaged sweets.
- 9) Loco D traverses loading bay from right with wagons of packaged sweets.
- 10) Loco E leaves the loading bay to right.
- 11) Loco E and empty train return from right.
- 12) Works train with crane traverses from left.

All scenery boards lower, to return layout to starting position.

First showing of spring colour on Moss Park L R Frank Parkinson



Out in the garden a couple of days ago I was suddenly aware of the colours returning after what seems a longer than normal winter, so I thought I'd share the vista with you. This will hopefully compensate for the lack of a boat building report, work continues although at present there's little to show for it.



What lies in the future for the Class 483? Andrew Chrysler

Several of the outgoing Class 483 trains from Island Line are destined for preservation - 483006 is going to the LTTG (London Transport Traction Group) and will eventually be located at the Epping Ongar Railway. 483007 will be preserved at the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, initially as a static exhibit within their "Train Story" museum, but with the intention of eventually running. It will house a display about the history of Island Line since electrification and will show a "drivers' eye" view of the line from Ryde to Shanklin. Both of these locations are without third rail current, so alternative power sources will be required - batteries have been mooted for LTTG, and the IOW steam railway already has two "translator wagons" (ex-Waterloo and City Line) which allow for coupling the cars to a locomotive. Battery power is certainly a very expensive option, as the LTTG has been quoted in the region of £100,000!

On Tuesday 30 March, the first of the units were removed from Ryde Depot by road transport. 002 was first to be loaded, as this photograph shows.



Photo- David Fisher



483008 was initially proposed to be a static exhibit on Platform 3 at Brading Station, where there is already a preserved signal box, an island platform with historic displays in two waiting

rooms, a tea room and a small museum. Brading Station is, however, owned by the Council, and their permission was sought, but reportedly not granted. This decision could have been due to the condition of the footbridge, which - when I visited in 2019 - was limited to one person crossing at a time (although I must admit that I was accompanied by Alvin, the station cat).

It was announced on 11 January that 483008 is to join 483006 in preservation on the "North Island". The fate of 483005 and 483009 is not yet certain, and expressions of interest are being sought, but only 483002 - currently just a body shell on bogies with gaping holes in the floor, with all reusable parts removed - is destined for scrap. Of the two remaining units, 483009 is reported to be in the worst condition. The remaining four of the 484 stock (a total of five 2-car trains are on order) remain to be delivered.

For viewers of "Train Truckers" who may have wondered about the costs involved, the LTTG negotiated a price for moving the two cars of 483006 from the Isle of Wight to its new home of just under £6500 - from Reid's Haulage, substantially lower than usual, because it provided a return load from a Class 484 delivery, although South Western Trains have now arranged transport (at their cost), apparently because they would like them removing sooner rather than later.

All four cars will be repainted in London Transport Red, but the interiors will be different for each of the cars. The A car of 006 will be preserved in current Island Line condition, including retention of the signage relating to the current Covid-19 crisis, while the D car will be restored to Network SouthEast condition, which is how the trains entered service on the Island. The A car of 008 will be restored to original (1940) London Transport condition including the ubiquitous strap hangers and spring hangers, with the D car being stripped of interior fittings and used to accommodate the batteries.

The A car was - on the Isle of Wight - always facing "up" (towards Ryde Pier) while the D car made up the 2-car unit. As originally built for London Underground there were two intermediate cars, B and C (one powered and one non-powered) which were removed when the trains were converted from 4 rail electric to third rail for the Island. On the occasions that 4-car trains were required, two Class 483 sets were coupled together.



In mid-February, the LTTG announced that 006 had received the attention of local vandals, who had covered one side and the end of the "D" car with graffiti. This has been an ongoing problem at Ryde depot, and will not have any impact on preservation plans. South Western Trains are

having internal discussions about possibly removing the graffiti before transporting the cars to their temporary home at Highgate Depot until the Epping Ongar Railway has made sufficient space.

And Finally

"Lightning doesn't strike twice" isn't always true. Pictured at Hatfield, 91023 returned to service only to be involved in the rail crash at Selby just four months later. Photo: John Law.

