

Newsletter

**Issue 73: April 2019 Editor: Allan Trotter
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Editorial.

Train Sets, Lies and Television Tales.

No doubt many of us have been watching the recent two programs presented by James May on the trials and tribulations of Hornby over the last few years. It was quite an interesting insight as to how a present day business operates but really, Hornby can not be described as a manufacturer since they do not actually make anything. All their products are out sourced and manufactured by overseas factories. The difficulties with this remote operation was illustrated by the problems mentioned with an 0-6-0 tender locomotive and required excessive effort to rectify what seemed simple errors. If design, physical prototype testing (not CAD) and production took place in the same British factory, errors could be corrected promptly. To elaborate on this, in the publication, the "Hornby Book of Trains, 1954-1979", 25 year edition, in the chapter entitled "Research & Development", all is comprehensively explained.

We now come to the deliberate or otherwise travesty of reality. On the shelf in an office, prominent display was given to a portrait of Frank Hornby and it was implied that he was the founder of the present day Hornby Company. Nothing could be further from the truth. The only thing the Frank Hornby contributed to the present day Hornby Company was the name.

In the 1960's Hornby Meccano Liverpool was in a dire financial situation, no doubt brought about by trying to run two non compatible 00 model railway ranges at the same time. In 1964 they were bought over by Lines Brothers, the makers of Tri-ang Railways. The Tri-ang Railways range started off as a small business named Rovex Plastics who were supplying Marks & Spencer with train sets. Lines Brothers, one of the largest toy manufacturers in the world, saw a good thing and bought Rovex as the foundation of their model railway business, Tri-ang Railways. Buying the ailing Hornby Meccano business in 1964 achieved two objectives, it eliminated their main competition but more importantly gave them control of the name Hornby, a name synonymous with model trains. The amalgamated Tri-ang Hornby name continued until the early 1970's when Lines Brothers were broken up, the model trains division being the most valuable asset, the name Tri-ang sold off and the business then reverted to the name Hornby. So really the true lineage of present day Hornby originates with Rovex Plastics and to a certain extent Trackmaster wagons, Tri-ang Railways and Lines Brothers of Margate.

This reality can readily be seen in the Hornby products of today. The trains have a direct heritage back to Tri-ang Railways of Margate and not to Meccano Hornby Dublo of Liverpool, the tension lock coupling system used on most 00

scale models of today originated firstly with Tri-ang Railways TT and then subsequently adapted for OO and the geometry of the OO set track originates from the Tri-ang Railways days of Super 4 track as introduced in 1962. This superb geometry was later copied by other model manufacturers.

So the moral of the story is, when watching or reading anything involving the mass media, remember their operating dictum, do not permit the truth to get in the way of a popular but erroneous tale.

Events Diary.

Tue 9th Apr The PEP family and forty years of the Merseyrail Class 507 and 508 units. Fred Kerr. Clubrooms. 19:30.

Don't know what the PEP family is? Well come along to the talk and find out.

Tue 16th Apr Video evening. Foreign Railways. Part 2. Clubrooms. 19:30.

Chairman's Report.

Those of you who have been at the Club recently working on HS3 will have noted that I am struggling with my back and various other joints/muscles. I am finding it difficult to bend down to pick things up and also sitting down for any length of time so these notes will be quite brief.

At the end of February we had a video evening showing aspects of overseas railways. Many thank to John for arranging this. He originally thought this would be on overseas railways in general but eventually found that there was so much interesting material that he decided to make this a two-part event with the first part focussing on European railways, French narrow gauge to Finnish mainline. The second event will deal with railways further afield. A viewing date is still to be arranged.

During this March, work progressed at a good rate on HS3 with the vast majority of the basic woodwork completed. A few braces still need installing, the plywood sanded and then the painting to be done. There are three levels for track. The lowest level will be allocated to 9mm track such that N and OO9 can be operated. The middle level will be fitted with 16.5mm track for OO and O-n. The upper level will be for 32mm track and will be suitable for O gauge and 16mm narrow gauge (I hope I have got this right). There may even be space on this level for some TT track or similar, apologies to John.

It is proposed to work on the 16.5mm track in the first instance so it is over to you all to come up with some track plans that we can work on and make certain clearance are adequate for the mixed scales we propose to run.

I should remind you that it is the AGM this Friday, the 29th of March. Please attend and make your voice heard. **Ian Shulver.**

Secretary's Report.

No report submitted.

Treasurer's Report.

No report submitted.

Exhibition Coordinator's Report.

No report submitted.

Events Report.

No events submitted.

Contributions by Members.

Appendage to the Wagon Loads article in the March 2019 Newsletter.

Of course pipes made from drinking straws in 4mm will equate to a real diameter of about 1', in 2mm to 2' and in 3mm to 1 1/2'. As we all know pipes come in all sizes and materials (clay, steel, concrete) and so basically any tube (including cotton buds) would suffice. I would avoid Johnson's buds as they are too thick.

Clay and concrete pipes tend to be thicker than the steel ones; consequently the collars tend to be more 'chunky'. In 4mm, 305 mm OD pipes (9"internal diameter) would tend to be Vitrified Clay rather than Concrete. In 2mm, they would be Concrete with an internal diameter of around 18".

By the way, the 4mm in 3mm scale would be 1 **1/3'**. **John Howard.**

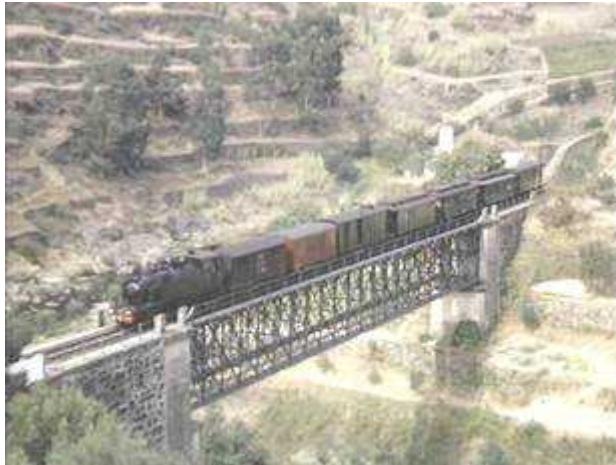
Film Night Report, February 27th, 2019.

A small but enthusiastic group gathered to watch the second Film Night on the subject of 'Foreign Railways'. The show comprised black and white and colour films from the early 1960s with commentary of the period. Countries covered included France, Switzerland, Austria, the former Yugoslavia and the Iberian Peninsula.

The railways were both Standard and Narrow Gauge while locomotives were primarily steam with electrics in evidence along with diesel railcars in a livery very reminiscent of the County Donegal Railways. Mallets were seen in the suburban lines of Oporto and made a fine sight rounding the tight curves through the terraced slopes of the Douro valley, with the unusual wheel arrangement of 2-4-6-0. Perhaps they had run out of bogie wheels. The writer was particularly pleased to see a Garratt which had been built in Gorton.

More might have been seen of the Yugoslavian railway if the film crew had not been arrested. Police thought they were sparks! All was sorted in Dubrovnic. In Austria, we were also treated to the benefits of Giesl Ejectors viz. greater efficiency with poor coal and less ash. The demonstration was accompanied by pictures of the man himself worryingly attired in a black shirt.

I attach a few photos for you unfortunate enough to have missed a fun show.



Douro Valley with 2-8-0 tank



Spirited start from Hamburg, 2-10-0



Northern Italy, 760mm gauge, 0-8-0T



Coaling Stage – Portuguese style

There is still some good stuff available both in the club and my own stuff for another 'Foreign Railway' themed show at some future date.

The next show will have the theme 'Model Railways and modelling' at a date to be announced. Fear not dear reader, it will not be grandmother/eggs situation. However, if there is an aspect you would like on screen, I will try to find it.

John Howard.

A McDonald's drive thru' with a difference.

For many years the sight of a Mc Donald's establishment has been a familiar sight in the United States of America, Great Britain and in fact many other countries around the world. The out of town premises generally have their own dedicated car parks and a facility frequently offered is ordering and collecting

food without having to alight from your automobile by using the drive through (drive thru') facility. On some occasions even riders on horses and horse drawn buggies have been known to take advantage of the drive through (ride through) facility.



This particular Mc Donald's as illustrated here is located in Oil City, Pennsylvania, USA and has an additional facility seldom if ever found elsewhere within the Mc Donald's empire for ordering and collection of your food. For those driving through on an EMD GP7 or suchlike rather than a Jeep four wheel drive, it is just a matter of halting your locomotive and ordering and collecting your Big Mac & Fries and you are ready to keep on rolling.

Wonder if this type of facility will catch on anywhere else? **Allan Trotter**.

Where's Allan?



To revive a theme from the past, a little quiz for you, continuing with the overseas theme. If you know the location and don't consider it overseas, try walking there. As usual the first correct answer received will be the winner. There is no wonderful prize on offer other than to have your name mentioned in dispatches, well in the next newsletter anyway. Good luck.

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