

Hello again from me, plus the usual greetings from the NOGGies to all GOGGers. I'll start with news of the spring show at Kettering.

As many of you will know we decided to take a 12 foot space at the Kettering show on 5<sup>th</sup> March to try to sell off the remainder of Neil's things that were gifted to us some years ago. At the time of writing the last article, I said that for those of you who like a project, this may be very good news as we have lots of bits and some loco bodies that need some TLC. Evidently, there is a huge amount of compassion out there as the stall was busy from the first moments of setting up. The cost of the tables had been covered before the time that the public were admitted. And from then, things just rocketed. Unfortunately, owing to prior holiday commitments, I wasn't able to attend, but I'm told it was so busy that the four NOGGies on the stand had to call on a friend to help out and they didn't have time to wander around themselves during the day. It was mentioned that it could have been the busiest stall at the show, and nearly everything sold. We took an amazing £4,500, and considering most asking prices were under £50, you begin to see how frantic it became. So as a club, we must say a BIG THANK YOU to all who purchased items from us helping to boost club funds by almost 100%. We hope that you're pleased with your bargains and are able to gain pleasure and satisfaction restoring them to running order.

The only downside is that we were after some items ourselves for our Kings Thorpe layout which is under construction, but no-one had a chance to get out and buy the point motors or trap points we had in mind to purchase on the day. However, that isn't a major problem and those should have been acquired by the time you see this in print. At the time of writing in late March, we have just about completed the entire task of track laying, so next stages such as starting to wire it up will start to happen. We also have to refine a few of the levels on adjacent boards to make seamless crossings.

Preparations for our July exhibition continue apace and the number of layouts and traders is nearing the usual levels. I think I can promise you a splendid show again at a fine venue. Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July is the date to note in your diaries. There will be some excellent O gauge layouts as well as a variety of other scales and gauges. We normally have around 25 layouts and have 22 signed up so far. We hope to put on a day where we can all forget the harsh economic realities of this year and enjoy a day out in the heart of England.

As the weather warms up too, thoughts turn to running in the great outdoors, with my garden railway to bring up to operating status, Les is about to uncover his set-up after this recent harsh winter and continue with his project to extend it as planned. We also are about to embark on operating days with the O gauge circuits at Lavendon too. First one is on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

Recent acquisitions for me include eight excellent BR Mark 1 coaches sold by fellow Guild member Mr K Cleghorn of Surrey. He is a real gentleman and my thanks go out to him for being patient with me as I raised the money. If you see items elsewhere in this Guild News that he's selling, snap them up; they are of excellent quality and you won't be disappointed with your purchases. I'm looking forward to seeing the coaches run in the great outdoors and perhaps on our test track. I'm having the screw couplings replaced by buckeyes to make them easier to couple up and that's another thing that should be done by the time you read this article. I've also taken possession of a RJH brass class 31 locomotive kit which is being built and painted for me by another gentleman. He is also a too highly talented craftsman by the name of Johnnie Simmonds, who luckily for me lives only a short drive away. It is going to be finished in BR 'Dutch livery' as 31206 which currently resides at the Rushden station museum as a fully running locomotive.

I'll make this a much shorter article than the last submission which had to be edited down for printing. So happy building, painting and running.

STEPHEN LLOYD (20155)