

Northampton O Gauge Group (NOGGies)

Hello all and greetings from the NOGGies to all GOGGers. Apologies that I haven't submitted a full report for a couple of issues, I hope that this one goes some way to make up for that. So what has been happening in the meantime? Well to start, we had the spring show at Kettering which we all enjoy as it is on our doorstep. We've also got some big news regarding our November show. Due to the success of our previous two exhibitions, we are going to move to larger exhibition venue for the show on Saturday 21st November. See the next Guild News for details.

There's also some news to report about the club's long awaited new scenic O gauge layout. Since I last wrote, the baseboards have been completed along with the legs. And thanks must go to all who've helped, though Graham, Peter, Len and Bruce have been the most prolific in this regard. You may remember that we were going to make a two - tier layout (called Kings Thorpe) featuring an interchange between a BR/national rail station, and one on a preserved line and had planned to include a high - level loco shed which would have been reached by a long straight climb situated right at the front of the layout for ease of viewing. Sadly however, storage space considerations have meant that we've had to drop the high level aspect. We'll still have the interchange station, but it'll now be on the flat. It'll still also be 35 ft long, consisting of eight boards. A job that may should have been completed by the time you read this will be deciding upon the track plan. All those interested will get to have a say. It is hoped that (hall space permitting) the part - complete Kings Thorpe will be a feature of our exhibition, thus attracting anyone who wishes to get involved in the club in general and layout building in particular. Depending on the work done to it over the coming months, and people availability, we don't yet know if will be a static work in progress, or whether anything will be running on some of the laid track. I may be able to update you for the November issue.

The NOGGies are also on the lookout for old Lima 16 ton open mineral wagons to upgrade (wheels, load and weathering) and convert so that we hope to end up with into a 40 wagon freight train called The Windcutter. The conversion element consists mainly of fixed bar coupling on one wagon to an under floor hole on the next that enables them all to be very quickly set up. So far we are over half-way with 21 done and some more awaiting Adam's attention. At the time of writing, we haven't completed the weathering on all yet, but we did put them together for a run on the test track on the first Wednesday of June. When done, I'm sure they'll get much use on the garden railways that I refer to in the next couple of paragraphs, as they'll be quick to couple up and the length and look will be right for a garden railway.

With the arrival of the warmer weather, thoughts have turned to garden railways. My own is now up and running, as it just needed a few tweaks to the electrics to repair winter ravages. Thanks to Les and Chris who helped immensely. There's also another one being built by a Les who is constructing a simple but aesthetically pleasing out and back two stage layout in his back garden. The first stage is a mainly two-track 40ft run from the shed in the far corner to the house end of the garden at almost eye level. It is already running and features a station with a small yard. The whole thing is being sympathetically planted with miniature conifers and other small plants. Stage two will be built later (probably next year) with a loop leading into and back out from the front garden around the central tree there.

In January, we were contacted by the Lavendon Miniature Garden Railway in Bedfordshire as they were planning an open day on Sunday April 19th to ask if we would supply four people to run their O gauge garden railway. We agreed and as there were more than four volunteers a draw for the four places was held. However, most of us visited at some point through the day, as it turned out that several of us could only spare half a day. So as the morning crew left, those who could do the 'afternoon shift' arrived.

They have a good size twin circuit of track with conventional 12v dc feeds and the layout twice crosses the pond it is built around by means of metal bridges. The day went well and the weather was friendly too. After the success of that day, we received excellent feedback and have since been asked if we would do this regularly, as they don't always have the personnel to man this feature. We've agreed and have suggested an upgrade to the power supply which they've consented to. They mainly work on Sunday mornings and have an open day about one Sunday a month. The organisation has also recently acquired a piece of adjoining land to expand their sit on and ride train operation into, and they've already started to extend into it.

Returning to the earlier theme of exhibitions, most of us have been to several exhibitions. The most notable two were the ALSRM show at Reading, which I was unable to go to myself due to other commitments, and the Guild summer show at Halifax which I did attend.

We have our AGM on submission deadline day of Wednesday 1st July, so I will update you with the main points from that in the next issue.

Anyone can visit our club website at www.ndmrc.org or call (01933) 413500 in the evening except Wednesday which is club meeting night from 7:30 to 10:30 at Kingsthorpe Community Centre, Mill Lane, Kingsthorpe, Northampton NN4 9RR.

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