

N Gauge Wight

The Newsletter of the
Isle of Wight Area Group of
The N Gauge Society

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NEWS FROM NITON SIDINGS

A happy new year to everyone, a year when we have a lot to look forward to and plan for.

Since our last newsletter we have welcomed new members to the group, we look forward to getting to know you.

By the time you read this we will already be half way through January and memories from 2023 will begin to fade. Last year was a good year for the group.

- The Steam Railway weekend at Havenstreet.
- Our Open Day in October; thank you to all who helped to make it a success
- The purchase of the Kato track so that we can now run trains at our monthly meetings.
- New members joining the group.
- The website is an asset in keeping us informed of the latest model railway news and events. Thank you, Colin, for keeping it up to date and relevant.

Following the discussion at our November meeting and the feedback received our next Open Day will be at Wroxall on Saturday 26th October and will be called:

“Model Railway Show 2024”

Details are on the website

Richard

TWO INTERESTING ARTICLES FROM PAUL BRADLEY

“SIGNAL FAILURE”

A later addition to my layout were BEKO colour light LED signals. It's a fairly basic installation as they are manually operated from a panel and not interlocked into points or power but they certainly add interest to the operation of the layout.

These units can be awkward to install as the wires are very thin and resin covered. Failures to date had always been a loose or separated wire.

Operating the layout one day I noticed a ground signal had only a green aspect. After swopping the green and red wires I found the red did illuminate but after about 10 seconds faded out. Time for a replacement.

I eventually tracked down a BEKO for a like for like but they were now very expensive and not for sale as single units. However, I did find a 2mm alternative which was much cheaper. This arrived promptly and was fitted with ease. Looked good but neither aspect illuminated!!

Now I'm aware that LED operation is very sensitive to the poles being the right way around. It seems that BEKO signals have a common cathode (+ive) whereas these replacements had a common anode (-ive). The supplier refunded which was excellent. I then ordered another cheaper make elsewhere and had their assurances that the common (the wire with a resistor) was a cathode.



Of course, when it arrived it had a common anode!! They were so cheap (4 for less than £10) I decided some micro surgery was in order.

With a scalpel I removed the heat shrink and mastic from the back of the signal head which revealed the two contacts for each LED. These wires were unsoldered and swopped over making sure the black one (common) was re-soldered to both green and red LED contacts. Once the green & red wires were soldered onto the other lugs and with heat shrink and mastic reapplied the signal WORKED.

So, when dealing with LEDs be aware they only work with correct polarity – and that can be random!!

“OPEN DAY BLACK OUT”

I thought the recent Open Day was a great success with good footfall. I found myself on the KATO layout trying to supervise the many children (& several adults) trying out running trains.

Before things got too busy I was taking the opportunity to run my six car Wrexham & Shropshire push pull set. In hindsight it was a bit of an error as it remained in situ for most of the afternoon. It was very popular not least as it has illuminated carriages.

Towards the end of the day, the lights started to go out in each car until only one was left illuminated. I decided it was time to withdraw it and leave the more robust, dare I say, basic trains on the circuit.

I was not unduly worried as these illuminated carriages are prone to dodgy connections etc.



Getting home I checked and cleaned all the contacts and the connections inside the coaches. Oh dear – still not working. Disconnecting the lighting bars (white plug connector) I tested them using a 9v battery and crocodile clips where the black wires are soldered on. All but one bar worked. This meant the contacts or any gizmo under the coach floor was the issue. With all the use they had been getting my thought was something had burnt out. However, I could not work out how to get under the coach floor and contacted Dapol. They confirmed it was a sealed unit ****!#!**! This was getting serious.

I had some other Dapol Mk111 coaches fitted with lighting bars so I removed one and put it in one of the W&S coaches. Nothing but as it ran around the layout the lights flickered a couple of times which was encouraging. Stripping it down again I gave the contacts a really good second clean with a fibreglass pencil. On very close examination it appeared there was a “pip” on the vertical contacts from the bogies to the underfloor of the coach. It was muck! So more slightly more vigorous cleaning.
Thank you, Paul, it would be good to receive more contributions/news for future newsletters from members.

INTERNATIONAL N GAUGE CONVENTION STUTTGART.

I was able to attend this annual event in November with members of the West Sussex Area Group.

There were N Gauge layouts from across Europe and Scandinavia including two layouts from the U.K. West Sussex MRC and East Surrey MRC. All the layouts are joined and trains converge on the centre piece of the show a ten-foot-high spiral which the trains travel up one side across a bridge and down to travel round more layouts in the show.

One of the highlights of the four-day event is, on the first evening after the show closes; all the exhibitors join together for a huge buffet made up of food representing each country attending. Offerings ranged from "Afternoon Tea" from the U.K. to a large heated curry from Germany, Gruyère Cheese from Switzerland and plenty of beer from across Europe. A great event and much enjoyed by everyone.

Four days of camaraderie, running trains, and some amazing layouts.

Richard



"Afternoon tea English style"

Future Meetings:

Thursdays: 18th January, 15th February and AGM 21st March.

From 6pm to 10pm

Whitwell Village Hall

Dates for your 2024 diary:

MAY 11TH and 12th Model Railway Exhibition Havenstreet

OCTOBER 26TH Our Model Railway Show Wroxall.

25 Years of N Gauge on the Isle of Wight