

# WJVintage

## January 2026 Newsletter



Welcome to the January 2026 edition of the WJ Vintage newsletter. It's a little late to be wishing a Happy New Year but I do hope this finds you all well, rested and ready for the onset of spring, and the wonderful sense of renewal that comes with it. Personally, I can't wait! I do enjoy the festive period, but I am not a great fan of the rather dreary months of January and February.

The number of events is also quite limited early in the year, so you will have to excuse my 'Out and About' reports as they all happened back in December and they all have a distinct festive feel despite Christmas being a distant memory now. Nevertheless, they are well worth a read as there were some wonderful items that came out to play.

My accounts for the year have just been completed and like many of us I have now submitted my tax return. As with most years, my accountant tells me I am carrying too much stock, which is bad for me, but potentially great for you. After review, I have decided to try to reduce numbers on a few old (but brand new) stock items. Please scroll down to the 'January Sale' feature below and take a look at some items that are offered as real bargains.

Finally, please don't forget to send me your latest news. Readers do like to see what everyone is up to, and I am always very happy to feature your latest trip, model purchase, loco modification or scratch-build in the 'Customer Corner' feature. Please don't be shy!

Stay Safe &  
Keep enjoying your trains

# Out & About



## HRCA Cotswolds Group, Northend, Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2025

For all the years that I have attended Northend, I think this was the first time I have attended the December meeting. This year I couldn't make the Christmas dinner, so I thought I'd make the effort to get along to this final running meet of the year. It was A lovely event with a real festive feel, including on the layouts!

I have to say from the offset, the ladies did an absolutely wonderful job with the food, with what seemed like an endless supply of festive snacks that just kept on coming. They do a sterling job all year round, but on this occasion, they really excelled themselves!

As I mentioned the festive feel was very much continued over on the layouts. Richard Taylor's static tinplate Locomotion made another appearance, but this time with a driver aboard in the form of Rudolph the Red (not just nosed) Reindeer.



As regular readers will know, the Northend regulars do enjoy following themes, and the main O gauge layout had a very festive rake of wagons that was hauled by different locos during the early part of the meeting. Santa was driving things, whilst a snowman was being transported on a flat wagon, with some houses and some rather hairy soldiers in a pair of high-capacity bogie wagons.



At one end of the layout a single larger version of the hairy soldiers stood on sentry duty, whilst at the other end there was a nice Lionel Christmas wagon dated 1989.



Upon the stage was a lovely little Christmas diorama in OO gauge. I believe it was the work of John Mills. This was very nicely done as a circuit of track around a Christmas tree centrepiece, and it also featured a rather hairy miniature soldier on sentry duty – clearly hairy soldiers were all the rage this past Christmas 😊



And before we leave the OO gauge theme, down at the OO end of the hall was a beautifully illuminated Christmas train. This featured what I guess was a set of Christmas lights with angels, candles and such like. Each shaped light was in its own wagon and with the lights switched off it really did look a treat – I could imagine everyone bursting into spontaneous carol singing – but thankfully they didn't 😊



What a lovely event this was, and one that I will be sure to visit again next Christmas – gosh, its less than eleven months away, ha, ha! Sorry to be the first to mention this 😊😊



**Bassett-Lowke Society Running Day – Cowper Arms, Digswell. Saturday December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
Always full of festive cheer, the Bassett-Lowke Christmas running day is one not to miss. As always, the quality and rarity of some of the items members bring along to run is quite staggering and, as always, I was mesmerised by some of these and will endeavour to give you a flavour of my highlights.

The absolute highlight for me was something that was developed right under my nose, but which I knew nothing about! Len Mills and I worked together at Corgi for around five years before he departed to join up with Allen Levy at Ace Trains around 2003. During his Corgi years Len was in charge of all the Bassett-Lowke development, including the Princess Royal and A3 class locos. It was the A3 that launched shortly before Len left, but what I didn't know was that he had a follow up locomotive in the pipeline, which he now describes as 'the one that got away'. This was based on the Princess and was the one-off LMS 4-6-2 Turbomotive, 6202, a turbine powered engine that was built as the last of three Princess prototypes. Entering service in 1935, it never went into full production and indeed the Turbomotive prototype was later converted to conventional steam power in 1952 and named 'Princess Anne'.

Being based on the Princess frames, it would have been relatively straightforward to amend the tooling to create an O gauge version of the Turbomotive, but I had no idea that Len had actually had his own one-off Bassett-Lowke prototype produced – until he presented it at this Digswell meeting!



Amongst the most noticeable features of the locomotive are the housings for the twin turbines. The large forward one ran the entire length of the left-hand side and was fully encased, giving a very smooth look. The smaller reverse turbine was on the front of the right-hand side and was only encased as far as the first driving wheel, giving a much more broken up appearance. The photos above show these features very clearly. The one smoke deflector is because the loco ran both with (during BR days) and without and presumably a choice of variants would have been available, (LMS Maroon and BR lined black) had the model been produced.

I have often said that every day is a school day for me when it comes to traditional O gauge, but wow, what a surprise to discover that Len had been sitting on this absolute gem for well over twenty years! I have to say that I am so pleased he decided to show it after such a long time and thanks, Len for bringing it along to Digswell.

How do you follow that? Well, how about some really rare Southern locomotives? A trio of real beauties were parked on the sidings. Not surprisingly I was initially drawn to the lovely H2 Atlantic 2424 'Beachy Head'. This is owned by Mark Carne along with an equally impressive S15 Class 4-6-0, 496. Both are believed to be by Exley and as such are incredibly rare.



The third loco in the trio was Tim Walker's D15 Class 4-4-0, 463. This was produced by The Windsor Model Company, a pre-war contemporary competitor of the likes of Exley and Milbro but, dare I say, with a much lower profile. Nevertheless, the model looks really nice, and I have no doubt it is equally rare like the two Exleys.



All three locos are also featured in the header photo above along with a rogue's gallery of (left to right) Bob Burgess, Robert Baker, Mark Carne and Tim Walker.

Steve Webb is a 'man that can' and is well known for rescuing wrecked models and bringing them back to life with both engineering and artistic skills. He had a couple of very nice, restored locomotives on display. The first was a fairly rare example of a Bar-Knight electric 0-4-0 tank engine in the blue livery of Glasgow St. Rollox. Steve apparently acquired this for £15 as a total wreck and lovingly restored it to bring it back to life. If you would like to read more about how he did this, the December edition of the TCS Magazine contains a 3-page article on the restoration,



His second restoration came about as a result of quite a complex combination of parts from various sources.



This lovely CR 4-4-0 'Bitza' Class Tender locomotive features a Marklin body, a Bing George V mechanism, a Bassett-Lowke Enterprise tender and various parts from Peter Dunk and Hornby. All the parts were freebies so it cost nothing, apart from the paint and Steve's time and skill to create and finish it. Whilst we are on the subject of Caledonian locomotives, Jeff Howard also had a real beauty with a bit of a story. His CR 0-6-0 tender locomotive came to Jeff from the estate of his old friend the Rev'd Alan Cliff. It is a Caledonian McIntosh 812 Class 0-6-0 and has a motor by John Hart. It was previously owned by Col. Frank Vaux via the John Hart fictitious 'Midland & Southern Counties Joint Railway', a well-known O gauge garden railway based in Surbiton during the 1950s and 60s.



Well, that just about sums up the flavour of the meeting. I might add, that Jeff Howard and Mark Armstrong travelled together all the way from North Wales to be at this meeting. That means a very early start and no doubt late return. Well done boys for making such an effort. It was great, as always to see you. The next Digswell meeting is on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2026. It would be great to see you there.

## Customer Corner

What do you get if you take the frames of a Bulldog, the chassis of a City, the boiler of a Duke, the tender from a brass kit and a scratch-built cab? Well, in the hands of a highly skilled model engineer, like Dick Austin from Tennessee, you get a truly magnificent model of a GWR 4100 'Badminton' Class, 4-4-0 tender locomotive. In this instance, he has chosen to model 3304 (later 4112) 'Oxford'.



I am sure you will agree, Dick has done a magnificent job to create a locomotive that, in all likelihood, would not be covered by a major manufacturer. What's more, he has promised an article highlighting how he achieved this conversion using parts from several other models, plus fabricating others by hand. I look forward to publishing this in a future newsletter. Thanks so much for the photos, Dick and I look forward to hearing from you again shortly.



Many of you will have known, or at least heard of, Michael Foster, who sadly died last year. Michael wrote several books, most recently the 'British Toy Trains' series and earlier the 'History of Hornby Dublo'. He was a massive railway enthusiast and was closely linked to ETS in Prague with whom he worked to develop a market for O gauge in the UK. Back in December, I received an email from regular newsletter reader Greg March, who had spotted an interesting and unusual train set being offered at

auction by Lacey Scott and Knight. Greg thought he remembered seeing the loco and coaches in an issue of this newsletter from 2021 and believed they were a prototype set developed by Michael Foster and produced by ETS.



Although he wasn't 100% sure it was Michael's set, he went ahead and placed what turned out to be the winning bid. As soon as I saw the photo of the listing, I was able to confirm to Greg that this was indeed Michael's Talyllyn loco, 'Dolgoch', & coaches prototype. Michael had this made by ETS on something of a whim. It was something he was keen to have produced but it was in an odd scale (I can't remember exactly what scale) but was close to (but not exactly) Gauge 1 narrow gauge for use on 3-rail O gauge track. Sadly, neither I nor ETS were convinced it would sell in sufficient quantity to be commercially viable, and the project went no further. Michael retained his hand made prototypes and Greg has now become the lucky new custodian of this lovely set.





About a week after his initial email, Greg was in touch again to confirm he had received the set and was absolutely delighted with his purchase. I won't say exactly what he paid but suffice to say he got an absolute bargain. Greg, thanks so much for sharing this unique set with us, and I hope you get great pleasure from owning and running your fabulous Tallylyn train. I am sure you will!

## What's New



### H2 Brighton Atlantics

Do remember, I still have a few of the ex-Raylo stock of Brighton Atlantics in stock. Liveries available are LBSCR Umber, SR Maunsell green and SR Malachite Green. All Brighton H2 Atlantics are priced at **£750.00** each plus P&P. Please get in touch to order yours now!

### ...Also still available - C1 Atlantics – 3-Rail only

I do still have a few of the C1 Atlantics left in two schemes – LNER & BR



These are now in very limited quantities and are priced at **£695.00** each plus P&P

# January Sale

I have reached that time of year again, where my accounts have been done and my accountant, once again tells me I am carrying too much stock! Fortunately, it has actually come down quite a bit over the last 12 months, due largely to the fact that I have stopped developing new items with ETS. However, it does now afford me the opportunity to offer some of my older, but still brand new, items at a very significant discount. So here we go, brace your wallets, and see if anything takes your fancy. Everything is limited to what I have left and once it is gone, it is gone for good. So, don't delay, get in touch asap!

## Y1/Y3 Sentinel 0-4-0T Shunter

**Sale Price only £195.00** plus P&P (RRP **£275.00** plus P&P)

This cracking little shunter is designed for 3-rail use only and can negotiate curves down to 18 inches (457mm). Introduced some 7 years ago, the last few of these have hung around for too long.



LMS 7161 -3 available



LNER 8163 - 1 available



LNER Lined 8400 - 2 available



LNER 150 1 available



BR late crest 57 - 1 available



BR early crest 68138 - 1 available



British Railways 47182 - 4 available

Save a massive **£80.00** per loco - only while stocks last. Please don't hesitate too long as once these are gone there will be no more!

## Hunslet Austerity/LNER J94 Class 0-6-0ST

**Sale Price only £275.00** plus P&P (RRP **£375.00** plus P&P)

Originally launched towards the end of 2019, these locos have also been in stock for the best part of 7 years and now is the time for them to go.



LNER 8008 – 3 available



BR Early crest 68017 – 2 available



BR Late crest 68012 – 1 available



Port of London Authority No.14 – 2 available



NCB 'Robert' – 2 available

These workmanlike 0-6-0 Saddle Tanks sold really well, apart from the last few which have hung around for too long and are now offered at a never to be repeated saving of **£100.00** per loco! Strike while the iron's hot – there aren't many of these left.

## High Capacity Bogie Wagons

**Sale Price only £50.00** plus P&P (RRP **£85.00** plus P&P)

Evoking fond memories of both the Hornby O gauge and Dublo versions of a bygone era, these superb wagons are capable of handling curves down to 24 inches (610mm). They are supplied with wheels suitable for 3-rail running but I can also offer 2-rail wheels with a lesser flange – just let me know. Grab a bargain while you still can!



NE Brick – 1 available



GW LOCO – 1 available



CR Coal – 2 available



LMS Coal – 3 available

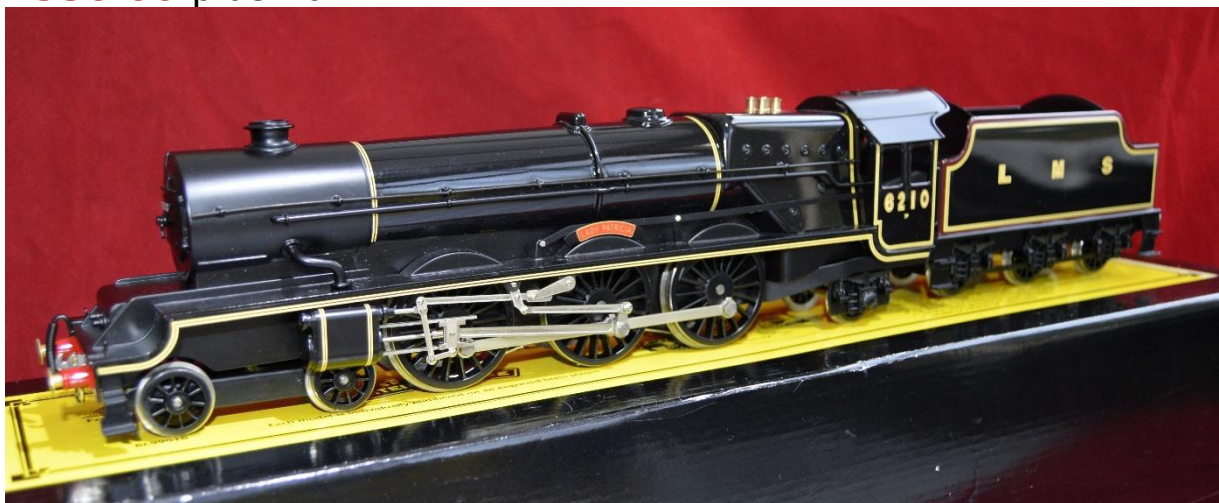
## Pre-Owned Sales

### LMS Collection

This collection has sold well over the past couple of newsletters, and we are now down to the last few items still available. If any take your fancy, do let me know asap to avoid disappointment

### Bassett-Lowke Princess Class 4-6-2 'Lady Patricia' LMS lined black

**£550.00** plus P&P

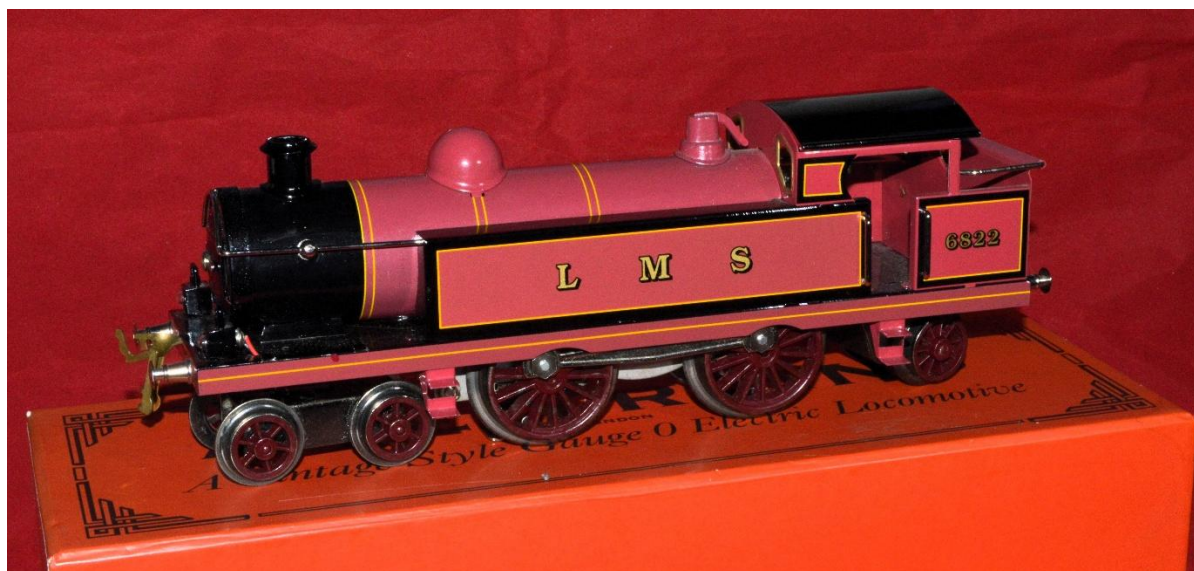


This is a Bassett-Lowke release from the Corgi era (pre-Hornby) and is presented in beautiful, unmarked gloss black with cream lining and a little

maroon edging on the tender. It comes complete with lamps and various train name plates

### **Ace Trains E/2 LMS 4-4-2 Tank Locomotive – Maroon**

**£250.00** plus P&P



This lovely tank engine is one of the earlier Ace releases. It is presented in very nice, lined gloss maroon finish (although it is a very pink-ish maroon) with very little wear showing on the spoons and a good box. There is no paperwork with this loco.

### **Darstaed Set of 6 x Clerestory coaches – LMS**

**£390.00** plus P&P

Here we have a complete set of 6 x LMS Clerestory Roof coaches, all excellent, boxed and presented in a large green carry case. Comprises 1 x 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>, 1 x all 1<sup>st</sup>, 2 x all 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2 x brake/3<sup>rd</sup>.



## Bassett-Lowke Wagons and Van - LMS

**3-Plank £27.00** (x2 available), **7-Plank £30.00** (x2 available), **12 ton Van £30.00** (x1 available) all plus P&P

All are in excellent, lightly used condition



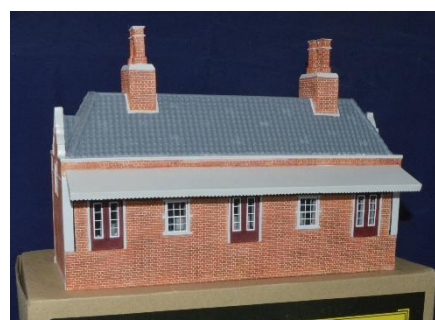
## Bassett-Lowke Buildings & Accessories

I have now acquired a few more of the last O Gauge releases under the Bassett-Lowke name whilst under Hornby ownership (to-date). These resin cast items are all in good condition and are boxed. The painting and detail on these is excellent, and they do bring a touch of added realism to an O gauge layout.

Great Northern Station

**£50.00** each plus P&P (1 only)

(platform side views – platform not included)



**Darstaed LNER Gresley Coach Set - REDUCED to £195.00**  
plus P&P



This is a non-standard set that has been made up from coaches that were surplus to the previous owner's requirements. It comprises as follows:  
1 x comp corridor 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>, 1 x corridor 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1 x open 3<sup>rd</sup>  
They are presented in the lovely LNER Gresley Teak finish and are in excellent condition. All have connector plugs to enable the lighting to be connected when attached to a coach with suitable pick-up spoon.

## **See us at Shows**

Here we have a schedule for the first few months of 2026 although do check back as there will be plenty more to add as we move towards the spring.

### **Monday February 9<sup>th</sup> – HRCA Cotswolds Group**

Northend Village Hall, Top Street, Northend, Warks CV47 2TN 3:30pm to 8:00pm

### **Saturday February 21<sup>st</sup> – Sandown Park (Barry Potter Fairs)**

Sandown Exhibition Centre, Sandown Park Racecourse, Portsmouth Road, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9AJ - 10:30am to 3:00pm

### **Monday March 9<sup>th</sup> – HRCA Cotswolds Group**

Northend Village Hall, Top Street, Northend, Warks CV47 2TN 3:30pm to 8:00pm

### **Saturday March 14<sup>th</sup> - Bassett-Lowke Society Running Day, Digswell –**

The Cowper Arms, 31 Station Road, Digswell, Welwyn, Herts, AL6 0EA – 10:30am to 3:30pm Please note The Cowper Arms is next to Welwyn North Station

### **Tuesday March 24<sup>th</sup> – HRCA Cambridge Group**

Fulbourn Village Library, The Swifts, Haggis Gap, Fulbourn CB21 5HD 5:30pm to 9:00pm

### **Monday April 13<sup>th</sup> – HRCA Cotswolds Group**

Northend Village Hall, Top Street, Northend, Warks CV47 2TN 3:30pm to 8:00pm

### **Sunday April 19<sup>th</sup> 2025 – Vintage Toy Trains at Bromsgrove**

Dodford Village Hall, Priory Road, Dodford, Bromsgrove, B61 9DD – 10:30am to 3:30pm **Note – free entry to all Bassett-Lowke Society members and their guests**



## **Don't forget to like our WJVintage Facebook Page**

With close to 650 Facebook followers, the WJVintage page is as popular as this newsletter! That said, many subscribers on Facebook are associates, friends and family with a passing interest in what I get up to – so not my key target audience. 😊 However, it keeps growing and all the latest news is often seen on Facebook before it appears in the newsletter as updates can be done instantly rather than monthly. If you are a member of Facebook, why not look us up and become a follower?

## **STOP PRESS – The Bassett-Lowke Society is now on Facebook**

Yes, it's true, The Bassett-Lowke Society has now set up a group on Facebook and is already closing in on 100 members. There is a lively number of posts and discussions on all eras of Bassett-Lowke and closely associated brands, so why not look them up and become a member of the group?



## **Plus, remember our 'YouTube' Channel!**

I have to confess, after a good start, the channel has been quiet for a while but the most recent posts are rather nice videos of the LBSCR H2 Atlantic running in Umber LBSCR and lined Black BR schemes. I am hoping that there will be more to come in future.

## **Ordering from WJVintage is Easy**

### **Online**

Please use the **WJVintage** website as a shop window and then place your order by using the dropdown menu on each product page to select and submit the item you wish to purchase. This automatically sends me your details and I will be in touch to confirm your requirements and take payment. Alternatively select what you want and then give me a call or email me. Whichever method you use I will get back to you asap and I can confirm stock, particularly for highly limited items, and postage options. Please see below for full contact details.

### **Credit Card**

We have a credit/debit card facility, so you can telephone and place your order with us by calling **07711 092497** – please have your card to hand when calling.

### **Cheque**

If you would prefer to pay by cheque, that is no problem either. Just download the order form from our website and complete your requirements. Then make a cheque out for the total and post both order form and cheque to us at the address shown. Please make cheques payable to **WJVintage**.

### **Email**

Alternatively, you can place your order by email and payment can then be made either by card, PayPal, direct bank transfer or cheque. Please note our email address is: [wjvintage@outlook.com](mailto:wjvintage@outlook.com)

### **BACS**

A growing number of customers are now choosing to send money direct to my account by BACS (bank) transfer. If you would like to use this method, please contact me and I will send you my bank account details.

Stay Safe Everyone

*Paul*

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