I’m sure many of you attended this show and enjoyed the weekend.

Only one Nn3 layout there (and that was strictly Nm) of French origin. The rail motor running on it looked similar to an Irish prototype. When Ian visited the layout, it was being operated by a Frenchman whose English was not very fluent – but far better than Ian’s grasp of French! Several questions had to remain unanswered however.

Ian asked David of Kestrel Designs whether there had been any progress on the coach details. It has been placed on the ‘back burner’ together with the complementary Baggage Car as David concentrates on reorganising the business following the devastating effects of Hornby (and now Bachmann) entering the N Gauge buildings market.

It seems we are becoming a society of wanting things on a plate. Modellers are now prepared to pay extra for a model that’s ready made and painted rather than taking a couple of hours to build and finish a kit. They don’t seem to mind that their corner shop will look exactly the same as hundreds of others and are not bothered that they don’t get the satisfaction that there undoubtedly is in building the shop yourself. Many of us use kit building as a springboard to scratch building. There is a danger that this skill will be lost.

On a brighter note, Ian spoke to N Brass Locomotives about their range of Vale of Rheidol and Glyn Valley Tramway coaches and vans for Nn3. Whilst these are produced as static models, being kits, we should be able to put them on chassis – the GVT coaches would look especially good behind the PECO tram loco. Ian purchased a couple to hack about and make them into rolling stock.
N Brass are willing to consider producing etches of rolling stock for us no matter whether they are of actual prototypes or freelance. We need to agree on what we want and submit this to them. Bear in mind that the etching process is carried out on a large piece of brass so if our requirements only fill a fraction of the sheet, we will have to wait for other items to be requested until the sheet is filled giving a minimum lead-in time of three months.

May I suggest everyone scours their narrow gauge albums to find a coach, van or wagon that could be stretched to be a push fit on (1) a standard Märklin open wagon and (2) a standard MicroTrains 40’ bogie wagon.

Also does anyone know of a shorter, ready to run chassis than the Märklin open wagon that could give us a third variant?

Similarly, Allan Doherty of Worsley Works would be happy to give us a quote to produce an etched brass coach or even loco body – again under the same terms as N Brass. Ian acquired a couple of Leek and Manifold coach body kits they already produce to play around with. These are massive beasts compared to the diminutive GVT coaches.

Ian’s first efforts at building an etched brass kit, using solder were not too great. The first stage of attaching one end piece to a side piece was straightforward enough – although Ian has yet to perfect the art of running a fillet of solder down the join. The problem came when trying to join the two sub assemblies together to form the body of the coach. How do you get the solder and the soldering iron in side the coach to solder it together? The first attempt is illustrated below.
Not happy with this, Ian decided to use superglue and thought he would be clever by laying out a strip of sellotape, sticky side up, on the workbench. The two ends and sides were laid on this, detail side face down, in the correct order. The tape was then lifted from the bench and folded, with the brass pieces to form the body of the coach. Ensuring the assembly was square; a drop of superglue was applied to the first joint.

Disaster! The sellotape caused a capillary action to take effect around the whole coach resulting in the coach sides and ends being superglued to the tape and Ian’s fingers – but not to each other!

Ian would welcome any expert advice on building these kits!

It is that time of year again when we have to submit members names, membership numbers and expiry dates to the Area Group Co-ordinator so that we may claim a grant towards the costs of running the group.

In the past, we have levied an annual subscription of £6 per member to supplement the grant and cover the costs of paper, ink and postage.

I can advise you that, as many of you now receive the newsletters by email, costs may be covered by the grant alone **PROVIDED** you let me have your **membership number and expiry date** by the weekend of 25\(^{th}/26^{th}\) November.

Remember, the Grant is only paid out for paid up members of the N Gauge Society who are in an Area Group and can only be paid to one Area Group if you are a member of two or more. So if you are a member of this Group and another Group, you must decide which Group is to claim for you.

Once we know how many we can claim for, we can decide whether or not a subscription needs to be levied. So, as Chris Tarrant would say, “Please all vote NOW!”