

The Whistleblower

May 2011

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Good news again - another 2 people have joined the club in April. We are pleased to welcome Rob Lightfoot (OO) and Jim Edwards (O) to the club. The current membership numbers are 45 Full Members (1 Honorary), 3 Associate Members & 3 Junior Members. Inquiries and visits to the club continue.

COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- The O Gauge Open Day was held successfully on May 2nd. Attendance was up by 20% over 2010 with 73 paying visitors (we don't charge for wives & children). The Open Day raised £122 for club funds. Next years O Gauge event is already booked in the diary.
- On Wednesday 11th we will be posting up a set of "house rules" for the use of the clubroom. This is primarily there to ensure the clubroom facilities are available for all members and that tidiness prevails. I ask you all to co-operate with this. Also please be aware that we have introduced a layout group rota to carry out the housekeeping each week. It's only fair that we all share this.
- You maybe aware that the club officers (Chairman, Secretary & Treasurer) change every 3 years as per the constitution. This is the Treasurers, Les Inwood, last year - Les is due to stand down at the next AGM. Are there any club members interested in taking on this job?? The only qualifications are being able to count and use a spreadsheet. Let me know if you are interested.
- The next committee meeting is on 8th June.

EXHIBITON DIARY

14th May - Greenfield Sidings at Loddon Vale
 18/19th June - Brixcombe at Bristol
 8/9th October - Weydon Rd at the Club exhibition
 22/23rd October - Basingstoke at Taunton
 19/20th November - Weydon Rd at Warley

PROGRAMME FOR CLUB NIGHTS

Date	Event	Subject
May		
Monday 2	O Gauge open day	0 gauge group event – entry £1
Wed 4	0 gauge running night	P4 running instead
Wed 11	00 gauge running night	
Wed 18	Presentation	Using the static grass master (Jim Wheaton)
Wed 25	00 gauge running night	
June		
Wed 1	0 gauge running night	
Tues 7	Club outing	Proposed trip to Miniatur Wunderland, Hamburg
Wed 8	00 gauge running night	
Wed 15	Presentation	Tba
Wed 22		
Wed 29	00 gauge running night	

ANNUAL EVENTS

- Club outing. The day visit to "Miniatur Wunderland" in Hamburg on June 7th is now booked. You can see it at www.miniatur-wunderland.com. I believe there are some club members who could not make it this time so perhaps another trip can be arranged in the Autumn.
- The annual modelling competition. Chris Webster is proposing a number of changes for 2011 to make it inclusive to the majority of members. To give members time to finish models, it is intended to move the completion to 21st Sept with a reminder of the rules and categories to be posted nearer the time. A change for this year is the introduction a "loan" class where members can display completed or partially completed models without the pressure of being judged. This will give an opportunity to seek advice and solutions that will hopefully inspire you to finish those half built models lurking in a drawer (we've all got at least one of these). Please give Chris your inputs. So get modelling and watch this space!
- The club open day. To be held on Sunday 30th October - the club layouts being erected will be Greenfield Sidings (OO) and Basingstoke (N). David Harrington is coordinating this event so volunteers are required for the various jobs.
- The photographic competition. Liphook MRCs are organising this in November. Information will be available closer to the event but keep snapping.
- The Club AGM. This will be held on Wednesday 7th December 2011

NEWS

Exhibition Brochure Cover - Don't forget we need some model railway photographs to be able to chose one for the cover of the brochure. There is still time so dig out your pictures and E Mail them to the Secretary: richard@rajp.wanadoo.co.uk as soon as possible.

Tin Plate sale - One of Alan Riches friends asked his opinion on some really old tinplate they found in the loft. After asking around Alan took the tinplate to Cottee's Auction rooms in Wareham who then entered it into their March sale. The upshot was that the lots made over £600 net for Alan's friend. There's a moral in this story - muck & brass come to mind. Apparently there is some more to sell.

Next Newsletter - This will be in early July - we already have a great article from Dave Harrington.

LAYOUT AND CLUB ACTIVITY

N gauge group new layout: "Basingstoke" enjoyed a fairly trouble free and very enjoyable excursion to Melksham over the weekend of the 9/10th April. The new electrics controlling the Reading lines worked well with only a couple of glitches left to investigate. We broke in a couple of new operators over the weekend and Alan Riches found himself roped in when he appeared as a visitor.

Basingstoke's next outing is to Taunton on 22/23rd October followed by the club open day. Before then we are planning to have a weekend session geared around operation of the layout. We would be happy for any club members outside of the N gauge group trying their hand at operating Basingstoke - please let me know if you are interested. The date is TBA.

Research on Wickwar continues. Greg and David combined a visit to the Bristol Show with a recce of the area around the former station. In particular, to get an idea of ground contours as this will inform our decision making process regarding whether we adopt flat top or open frame baseboard construction.

OO gauge & P4 gauge groups: No reports

O gauge group: Weydon Road has still a list of jobs outstanding. The replacement of the track circuit wiring with heavier gauged wire continues, signal construction is making frustrating progress and the height of turntable 1 has been reduced to allow it to be stored in the racking. Pete Smith has checked the running of all stock that enters the yard to eliminate poor running and coupling - if it doesn't have a "green spot" it doesn't go on the layout. Plans are afoot to start the rebuild of the lighting facias.

Many of you may have seen Paul Lindsay-Scott's DCC layout at the open day - very well received. As the group has expanded by 2 full and 1 associate members since Jan 2011 there is renewed energy to go for a new small layout. We expect to hold a group meeting during May to get things moving.

A DAY OUT IN WICKWAR

Once upon a time, when the world was young and Basingstoke's wiring was all neat and tidy, it was mooted that a smaller, lighter, less complicated layout might be a Good Idea. And it came to pass, after a bit, that Wickwar was discovered, researched, photographed and voted on.

That's the background to My Trip to Wickwar, on the day of the Royal Wedding and as a passenger in Mr Phillips's high-stepping fornicatorium. Mr Baker also attended, complete with antique photo apparatus. The sun shone, goodwill flowed and the Bank Holiday traffic was at the sort of level you might expect two months after the first H-bombs dropped.

And so we rolled gently into Wickwar, where we saw the Quarry that Greg's Dad managed, the House that Greg lived in, the School that Greg went to, the Pub where Greg's Girlfriend lived, and the Long Grass nearby where Greg grew up.

There followed a lengthy trek uphill through the churchyard, over a stile or two, through a gate, uphill past the old station master's house where a lady hurriedly drew her curtains as we strode athletically past. Mr Baker took a picture. Sheep grazed, DEMUs trundled along the Bristol-Gloucester line and the stile at the far end of the field wasn't there anymore. The lengthy trek was repeated, but in reverse, and uphill, and Mr Baker took another picture of the curtain lady, just in case.

One outcome of trudging through undergrowth, twice, uphill, is a growing awareness of time-of-day and proximity-of-pub and this gave rise to a 3-0 vote in favour of a short break. The pub was on the main street, which was uphill from where we found ourselves. It was decked with bunting, which we took to be a tribute to Greg's return, but was in fact dedicated to Wills and Kate. We drank Wickwar beers and Mr Baker had a shandy and took some pictures of the ladies in the pub garden. I had a "home-made Royal Wedding Burger", ordered rare. It was memorable only by virtue of its failure to comply with Trades Descriptions criteria and by the buxom presence of the barmaid, who seemed concerned that we weren't waving flags and genuflecting to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

A bit later and we made our way uphill to the Old Brewery, where we all took pictures before battling our way uphill to the Place where The Old Station had once been. The Place was opposite the Old Railway Arms, now a private dwelling. Mr Baker searched for drawn curtains, but without luck. Greg and I took pictures of each other standing by the sign that said it would now cost each of us £1000 for trespassing on the railway. A bit further on there was a cheaper place to trespass - a bit faded, but only £200.

I suppose that between us, including Mr Baker's antique, we took 200 pictures and 5 or 6 movie clips. We took houses, with and without curtains; the brewery (front, back and sides); the line; the line again but going backwards; the spot where the platforms once were, the spot where the signal box once was, the tunnel; some gravel; a wall; some fields and the main road. It was jolly good fun, I can tell you!

We then went to the Bristol Model Railway Show.

On the way back we stopped somewhere - Greg knows where - for fish and chips. They were half price because of the Archbishop of Canterbury. We were sitting quietly on a bench outside the shop munching away when a lady approached and said she wished she had a camera because we looked just like Last of the Summer Wine. Mr Baker was about to offer her his antique thing, but happily remembered that he had exposed everything earlier.

Somehow, it was a perfect ending to a perfect day.