

The Whistleblower

June 2013

SUMMER IS HERE ???

This is the time of year when the sun is out and model railways tend to take a back seat. However don't despair, there are a number of open air events featuring our hobby over the summer. If you want to see trains in larger sizes than we are normally used to, then take a trip to the Guildford Model Engineering Society's event weekend of July 20th/21st at Stoke Park. It's a great event, some fantastic railway models and the kids love it with ice creams, hot dogs, burgers, etc.

COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- A committee meeting was held on 15th May. Eddie Jackman was unable to attend.
- The Treasurer reported that Scottish Widows have advised that our savings account interest is being reduced to 0.4%. As a result of this we are looking for another account that gives much better interest for the clubs savings.
- The annual club dinner will be added to the AGM agenda to see whether the club still wants to hold this every March. The last event was poorly attended.
- We have decided that the club open day held in October will feature Basingstoke, Brixcombe and 2 private 4mm layouts. Catering to be provided as normal
- Noel Leaver is keen that we keep the website current and asked the layout group nominees responsible for their section to keep them current with information and photographs. Please see the chairman on specific items raised at the committee meeting.
- Annual exhibition planning is proceeding by the sub-committee. If you want to help in a particular area, please contact Noel Leaver - he will direct you to the sub-committee member responsible.

PROGRAMME FOR 2Q13 & 3Q13

Date	Group Rota	Event
Wed 19	N	Free evening
Wed 26	OO	00 gauge running night

Date	Group Rota	Event	Subject
July			
Wed 3	O		
Wed 10	N	American night	O, HO & N running of North American stock + food.
Wed 17	OO		
Wed 24	P4	00 gauge running night	
Wed 31	O		
August			
Wed 7	N	0 gauge running night	
Wed 14	OO	N gauge running night	
Wed 21	P4		
Wed 28	O	00 gauge running night	
September			
Wed 4	N	0 gauge running night	
Wed 11	OO	N gauge running night	
Wed 18	P4	Modelling Competition	Details for entry in August Newsletter
Wed 25	O	00 gauge running night	

AMERICAN NIGHT - JULY 10TH (CHANGED DATE)

Will all members please note that we have changed the date of the American night to July 10th.

As this event was very popular last year, we will be holding this again with the N, OO and O Gauge running tracks being erected. Running will start at 6.30 pm and finish around 9.30 pm. We would appreciate club members assistance in taking down the running tracks at the end of the evening. No other club activity will be taking place in the main hall on this night. We will be inviting members of other clubs to bring along their North American stock.

Richard and Bron Puddephatt will be providing American catering for a nominal cost (hot dogs, pancakes, etc). Please come along and enjoy the event even if you don't have any stock - it's a fun evening.

Plaid shirts, cowboy boots and hats are encouraged. No spitting please!

MODELLING COMPETITION - SEPT 18TH

Just some advance warning, the modelling competition is coming up in September so get those modelling projects finished. We have already seen some very nice items appearing in the clubroom well on the way to being finished.

I will be publishing the rules and entry form in the August newsletter.

EXHIBITON DIARY

Club layouts

- 15/16 June - Brixcombe @ Chatham

Exhibitions of interest

- 15/16 June - Chatham MRC, Gillingham
- 6/7 July - Basildon MRC, Laindon
- 13/14 July - Bentley MRG, Calne
- 20/21 July - GMES, Guildford
- 21 July - Alton MRG open day
- 3/4 Aug - Waveney MRC, Southwold
- 31/1 Sept - Andover MRC, Andover

ANNUAL EVENTS IN 2013

Diary dates for members, here are the club events to be held throughout the year.

- Summer club outing. The visit to the NRM, York on Thursday 11th July to see the 6 A4 locos together is now arranged.
- American Night. We will hold this again on Wednesday 3rd July (please see page 1). We will invite other local clubs to this.
- The modelling competition. Planned for the evening of Wednesday 18th Sept.
- The Club Exhibition. To be held on the weekend of 12th/13th October at The Connaught Centre, Aldershot. Greenfield Sidings will be attending.
- The Club Open Day. To be held on Sunday 27th October. The club layouts being erected are still to be determined - please let me have your inputs now!
- The photographic competition. This will be organised by F&DMRC and held in our club rooms on Wednesday 13th November.

LAYOUT REPORTS

N gauge group: Progress continues on Wickwar - nearly all the track is in place, though not yet all fixed down permanently, the whole road surface is down, some more protective ply has been added to boards lacking it (making a couple a very tight fit in the covers!), and most of the foam for scenic areas has been added and roughly shaped. Work should start in installing the electronics soon.

OO gauge group: Work has continued on track laying for the new fiddle yard. The tracks for the fast lines at the "Town End" are finished and the fast tracks at the "Farm End" should be completed by mid June. This will enable us to decide what extensions can be made to the "Slow" fiddle yard lines. The Greenfield section of the Club's web site has been revised with new and more up to date photos. The running track has made its regular appearance during May.

P4 gauge group: After successful outings at Epsom & Ewell and West Herts, Brixcombe will next be exhibiting at Chatham on June 15th/16th. A number of enquiries were received at the Epsom & Ewell show but, to date, only one definite invite has been received, for Tonbridge in February next year. However, we have since learned that we will also be invited to EXPO EM 2014 at Bracknell, one of the premier 4mm finescale shows in the country. Work on the layout has been limited to essential maintenance while we have regular exhibition commitments. The latest work has centred on the track exits from the fiddle yard turn table where we have experienced some derailments during exhibition running.

O gauge group: Construction of the new baseboards is well under way, boards 1&2 have been assembled and joined to check alignment, there is still work to be done on both boards but the major parts have been glued, doweled and screwed together. The material for Board 3 will start being cut on Wednesday 12th June. This board is a little more complicated as it has the sector plate at the rear moving between the fiddle yard and the main lines. we are planning to use cassettes on the fiddle yard to slide stock back on forth to the sector plate. The track assembly is just starting with rail sleepers being cut and laid on a plan of the first crossover/point, other members not as yet working on the new layout are getting on with stock building etc, Pete Smith has managed to get the clubs compressor running after fitting the missing parts, When Mike Raybould gets back from leave we hope to have more instruction on track building.

WOKING TO ALTON

For those of you that are interested, the adjacent picture is of the new panel being installed at Woking signalling centre to control the line to Alton. This means that the current signal boxes along the line will be closed.

The timeframe for the change over is late August 2013 for the Network Rail line. There will be a new interface into the Mid Hants Railway to control stock arriving/departing across the connection with platform 2 at Alton - this is expected to be commissioned in 2014.

Rumour has it that the gate currently across the line at Alton will disappear. However the planned use of the MHR Meon Loop for the weekly oil train diesel to run round its tankers has been turned down by DB Schenker - pity.

Please note, no more levers and block bells!



END OF THE ROAD

Copied by Colin Freeman



In 1955 the **British Railways Board** published its '**Modernisation Plan**', a document that set out plans for massive investment in the system's infrastructure. The plan was a bold one, intended to reverse the effects of years of under-investment and to enable the railways to adapt to the very different social and economic conditions of the post-war era. Central to the plan was the commitment to abolish steam traction and replace it with new **Diesel-Electric** and **Diesel-Hydraulic** locomotives. Many factors contributed to the decision to end steam operation. Steam had always been labour intensive. Labour had been plentiful and cheap before the Second World War but that soon changed in the booming post-war economy. The railways found it increasingly difficult to recruit maintenance staff. Diesels were more fuel efficient, and their crews were spared the physical hardships of the steam locomotive. Steam locomotives required hours of preparation and disposal time each day, whereas diesels could be started and stopped at the touch of a button. The price of coal had more than doubled in the six years between the end of 'Grange' construction and the end of the **Second World War**. Many other factors also contributed to the feeling among both the railway operating authorities and the general public that steam had had its day. The London smog's and the resultant '**Clean Air Act**', the decline in railway morale resulting from the centralisation of power within the nationalised railway, the heavy financial losses being made by much of the network all played their part. Increasingly unfashionable in the 'brave new world' of post-war Britain, steam locomotives such as the 'Granges' began to be sent to scrap yards from the early 1960s onwards as their diesel replacements rolled out of the factories. The first to be withdrawn was 6801 **Aylburton Grange** of Penzance Shed in 1960. Such was the pride of the men who worked for the old Great Western and the regard in which the 'Granges' were held that she was cleaned as if ready to work the 'Cornish Riviera Express', before beginning her journey to Swindon Works to be dismantled. The final four in traffic, 6847, 6848, 6849 & 6872 lasted until the end of Western steam in December 1965. Like most of the steam locomotives withdrawn for scrap during the 1960s the 'Granges' had many more miles of useful life left in them. They had averaged over 900,000 miles in service.

The mid 1960s were the darkest days for anyone who cares about British steam locomotives. The steam preservation movement, today a multi-million pound industry was still in its infancy. Those locomotives that survived that period mostly owe their survival to selection by the British Transport Commission (for the National Collection), the favour of a wealthy individual, or the fluke of being bought for scrap by **Woodham Brothers of Barry**. The 'Granges' were not considered to be of sufficient historical significance to be saved for the nation. Many were cut up at neighbouring scrap yards in South Wales, but sadly Woodham Brothers acquired none. Renowned railway filmmaker **Patrick Whitehouse** (who made the *Railway Roundabout* series for BBC TV in the late 1950s and early 1960s) was offered the opportunity to buy a newly overhauled 'Grange', but settled instead for a 'Castle'. The foremost Great Western preservationists, the Great Western Society at **Didcot**, were also faced with a choice, this time between a 'Grange' and a 'Hall'. Again, the 'Grange' lost out, this time because of its higher scrap value. Another 'Grange' had slipped through the net of preservation. Time and good fortune had run out for the 'Granges', with only the cutter's torch ahead.

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ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER

As you can see, I have received another article since my last appeal. Keep them coming - why not write something for the Newsletter yourself. It can be about anything around railways and if you have pictures as well then that's fantastic. Any electronic delivery method is acceptable.

Thanks
The Editor