

# WHISTLEBLOWER

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FARNHAM & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

NOVEMBER 2015

Welcome to the November 2015 edition of Whistleblower. There are several club notices and a couple of articles for you to read.

### **Annual General Meeting 2015**

The Annual General Meeting of the Farnham & District Model Railway Club will take place in the main hall at 8pm on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December. A copy of the convening notice is attached along with the Minutes of the 2014 Annual General Meeting.

### **2015/6 Subscriptions**

Will all members please note that their 2015/6 subscriptions are now due. I would be grateful if everyone could pay promptly to avoid me chasing up - thanks.

The subscription for this year are:-

Full Members = £75.00

Associate Members = £20.00 (please note the change in rules to qualify)

Junior Members = £20.00

Payment can be received by cash or cheque made out to F&DMRC

Ron Patterson

F&DMRC Treasurer

### **Open Day Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> November**

The Club Open Day will be held on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> November. Many of the tasks have now been allocated but extra help on the day is always welcome. If you can come on the day, even if only for a couple of hours, your help will be appreciated.

### **Photographic Competition**

In the last edition of Whistleblower we asked if anyone was interested in continuing to run the Photographic Competition. We have had a nil response. Would there be any interest if we made it a club only competition and held it on the same night as the Modelling Competition?

### **Club Diary**

Attached is the Club Diary completed up to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2016.

## What were they doing there?

### Solving a puzzle from the 1960's creates an opportunity to run something different.

As every knowledgeable schoolboy in the 1960's could tell you, the longest station platform in Europe was platform 11 at Manchester Victoria station. At 2194 feet long it could handle 3 full length trains simultaneously by using its sets of intermediate scissors cross-overs. It was actually two platforms that had been joined end to end in 1929 when platform 3 of the former LNWR 's Manchester Exchange station had been extended across the River Irwell to meet platform 11 of the former Lancashire and Yorkshire railway's Victoria station.

Manchester Victoria in the 1960's was a grim place for passengers. Its original design had neither the magnificent train-shed nor the grand hotel frontage of many large Victorian city centre stations, the L and Y railway being more interested in moving coal than passengers. The extensive alterations carried out by the Luftwaffe were still very apparent. Over the following decades its original 17 platforms were reduced to just 6 in what became the ugly concrete basement of the Manchester Arena. Years of neglect resulted in the station winning the dubious accolade as Britain's worst city centre station. Fortunately this autumn has seen the completion of a £44m. re-development of the station to fulfil its new role as the key part of the £600m. "Northern Hub" scheme.

Manchester Exchange had always been the more interesting of the two stations. The LNWR had originally operated from the L and Y's Victoria. Frustrated by the difficulties created by being the junior partner in this sharing arrangement, the LNWR built Exchange as its own station. Incidentally because the River Irwell is the official boundary between the two cities "Manchester Exchange " station was not in Manchester but was in Salford. Although much smaller than Victoria with only 6 platforms the LNWR built it in a grand style; it had an imposing frontage and a magnificent 3 arched roof train-shed. A subsequent deal with the Great Western brought that company's services into Manchester Exchange via Shrewsbury and Chester. Sadly Exchange station was almost totally destroyed by the Luftwaffe in Dec. 1940. It continued in a much patched –up form until closure in 1969 when its few remaining services were transferred back into Victoria.

Nevertheless, in the 1960's platform 11 was a fascinating place to watch the trains go by, and not just for its multiple arrivals and departures. Facing it were the two through lines running east/west through the centre of the station and beyond them was the siding where the banking engines waited for their next duty. The reason for the bankers was that immediately at the east end of the station was the steep Miles Platting bank, originally a rope-hauled incline. Trains heading east through the station had the choice of turning on the power and taking a run at the bank or stopping and waiting for a shove from the banker. Either option provided an entertaining display of the noise and power of steam.

A particular highlight for the steam enthusiasts was the "Belfast Boat Express" which ran a round trip each evening between Victoria and Heysham harbour and had the honour of being the last named train to run on BR scheduled for steam haulage. The final steam run was on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1968 by the first built and now preserved black 5 45025.

One of the noticeable features of Victoria was the abundance of parcels trains on view. A couple of factors contributed to this. The world's first modern mail order business had been established by Pryce Pryce-Jones in 1861 with his "Royal Welsh" company which despatched the comforts of home to the distant servants of the Empire. It was based in Welshpool where the 2 large ornate brick buildings still dominate the town centre. However the 1950's and 60's were the boom years for the mail order catalogue industry, with a variety of companies each issuing millions of copies of their twice yearly catalogues. Many of these

companies were located in the former cotton towns around Manchester where the former mills, stripped of their machinery, offered acres of cheap floor space for storage. The lion's share of the "goods inwards" and the millions of orders despatched went via the rail parcels network.

The second factor was the size of the newspaper printing industry centred in Manchester. Circulation levels of daily and evening newspapers were many times that of today and most of the national newspapers printed "northern editions" in Manchester which were distributed by rail covering an area from the north Midlands up to the Scottish border and across to northern Ireland. Some went via dedicated newspaper trains but many were despatched as parcels traffic. The scale of the business going by rail was such that after its closure to passengers Exchange station was taken over for loading the newspapers.

These parcel trains were fascinating to watch because of the sheer variety of the different types of vehicles involved including 4 wheeled short or long wheel-based, 6 wheeled or bogie parcel vans, originating from all the pre-nationalisation companies as well as newly designed BR vans. Some were purpose-built parcel vans; others were from former uses such as milk vans, fruit vans, or fish vans (still a bit nifty!). And all displaying layers of what we modellers refer to as weathering. Then there were the variety of engines that pulled them; anything from 6 or 8 coupled freight engines, ancient or modern, through to express passenger engines well passed their former glory and working out their last days before withdrawal. Parcel trains offered a good opportunity for a rare "cop".

And so to the puzzle:

It was not unusual to see a lengthy parcels train roll past, the guard travelling in his full brake coach, but at various points amongst the parcel vans would be an unoccupied goods brake van of the kind normally seen dangling on the rear of a freight train. They looked totally out of place. What were they doing there?

The answer to this puzzle was finally solved last Christmas when Santa brought me a set of DVD's showing the steam railway scene in the northwest during the 1960's. One sequence showed a short parcels train heading for Manchester where it would have been combined with other similar "feeder" trains to form a single lengthy train. The short train consisted of just 5 parcel vans, being a mix of ex "Southern" 4 wheeled long-wheelbase PLV or CCT type vans and a couple of bogie GUV's. The significant point was that as none of these vans contained accommodation for the obligatory guard, a goods brake van had been hooked on the rear for the guard to ride in.

On seeing this, the penny finally dropped! I assume that the lengthy parcels trains that I had seen were the result of several of these short trains being joined together. The full length train contained at least one full brake coach for the guard to ride in so the goods brake vans were no longer needed. Presumably a lack of either time or interest meant they had just been left in the train formation to go along for the ride.

So for the modeller looking to run something different, try a short rake of parcel vans with a goods brake van hooked on the end for the guard to ride in. Alternatively, try a long parcels train with a few goods brake vans spread along the length of the train. If anyone queries the authenticity of using the goods brake vans in this way, you like me now know the answer.

Happy Days

Ian George

## **Back to the Future**

Weydon Road took its first overseas trip last weekend to the Wight Model Railway Group's exhibition in Newport, IOW.

The team were suitably prepared for the forthcoming adventure at the club on Friday afternoon with Quells, waterproof clothing and ferry tickets. Having braved the elements (the ferry bar) we arrived via the time machine to a world some of us had never seen before. The first surprise was the hotel in central Newport which could only be described as "tired" (in fact very weary). Four of us had rooms facing The Guildhall complete with a clock tower spookily like that in the famous film - fortunately there was no flaming telegraph wire. As good railway modellers we found a pub close by which was full of railwayana, a large selection of bitters (one) and what appeared at first to be self-service. The time warp had happened.

The crack of dawn challenge was to find a café/restaurant open at 7.00 am for breakfast as the hotel didn't start until 8.00 am. Suitably fed, we arrived the Medina Leisure Centre (virtually next door) and "stocked up" Weydon Road with BR period trains for the off - starting running with plenty of time to spare. Apart from the usual operator finger problems and a few minor gremlins (I forgot to clean the wheels on my Class 700 despite Julian's instruction) everything ran very well. There was steady flow of people throughout the day, many of which spent a long time watching Weydon Road. Lots of very complimentary comments.

On Saturday night we forwent the exhibition dinner somewhere in deepest, darkest IOW and opted for a very nice pub/restaurant on the river recommended by Dave Bradley our one and only IOW associate member. Good beers (many this time) and good pub grub including Bettys hot-pot. Interestingly, the pub emptied when the band started - not sure whether it was the food finishing, the music or everybody goes to bed early in the IOW.

Fortunately Sunday was a later start so breakfast was "in" rather than "out". Another good day with the 2 minute silence of course. The day finished with return to the club to unload and home. A very successful weekend that we all enjoyed.

Overall this was a very nice show in a modern location, friendly people and an experience of the slightly old fashion lifestyle of the IOW. I would definitely recommend attendance by our other layouts if asked.

Ron Patterson

## **FARNHAM & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB**

### **NOTICE OF THE 2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Farnham & District Model Railway Club will be held in the Wrecclesham Community Centre at 8pm on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2015.

Members wishing to have an item placed on the Agenda should submit their request in writing to the Club Secretary to be received by him on or before Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> of November.

The Annual General Meeting will also elect the members of the Executive Committee and the General Purposes Committee to serve until the 2016 Annual General Meeting. The existing Executive Committee (the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary) are all eligible for re-election and have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The Exhibition Manager and the Gauge Representatives have also confirmed they are willing to stand for re-election. Nominations for alternative candidates with Proposer and Seconder should be submitted to the Club Secretary to be received by him on or before Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November.

## FARNHAM & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Farnham & District Model Railway Club held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 2014 at the Wrecclesham Community Centre.**

The meeting commenced at 8pm with Mr Keith Wright in the Chair.

#### **Item 1 – Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Richard Puddephatt, John Scambler, Charles Jolliffe, Julian Everson, Chris Webster and Eric Adriensen.

#### **Item 2 – Minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting**

The Minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting had been published on the notice board and were taken as read. It was proposed by David Bentley and seconded by Mike Brown that these Minutes be accepted as a true record of the Meeting. **Agreed.**

#### **Item 3 – Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting**

There were no matters arising.

#### **Item 4 – Treasurer’s Report and Acceptance of the Accounts**

The Treasurer, David Taylor, presented his report and balance sheets (attached).

The budget had predicted a £400 loss but in the event a profit of £1052.49 was recorded. This was primarily due to an underspend on layouts and reduced rental charges during the temporary move to Crondall Church Hall.

The Exhibition Balance sheet (attached) were presented. Costs were higher this year on visiting layout expenses. David thanked Les Inwood for his assistance during the exhibition. Greg Phillips asked for thanks to be made to those who worked so hard on the Bring & Buy stand which produced a £500 profit.

The Club Subscription rate, as expected, had not covered the running expenses of hall hire and insurance. Club membership had reduced by two, the Club now having 50 Full Members and one Disabled.

Acceptance of the 2013/14 Accounts was proposed by Ian Gordon and seconded by Alan Riches. **Accepted Unanimously.**

Concern was expressed that the Hall Rent had not been raised for 2 years. The Treasurer informed the Meeting that an Auditor was being employed by Farnham Town Council to assess the going rents for Council properties. The Treasurer proposed that in order to cover the existing running expenses the Membership Fee should be £85 per annum. Discussion became a little heated. A vote was taken with 15 Members voting for the Membership Fee for 2015/16 to be £85 and 10 Members voting for the Membership Fee for 2015/16 to remain at £75.

The following Proposal was the made by David Harrington – Having due regard for the degree of dissent amongst the Membership, and having due regard to the to the reported review by Farnham Town Council of

the rent applicable to the Club's use of the Community Centre, and having due regard to the motion approved by a show of hands to increase the Subscription from £75 to £85, it is proposed that the Committee be tasked to conduct a thorough review of the Club's financial situation, and available options and, if appropriate, to call an Extraordinary General Meeting to present such options to the Membership and to recommend an optimum strategy for the short and longer terms. Proposed by David Harrington and seconded by David Taylor. For 29. Against 2. **Agreed.**

#### **Item 5 – Exhibition Manager's Report**

Noel Leaver commented on the Exhibition expenses that they were slowly increasing and that in order to increase income he proposed to withdraw the Concession Rate which would result in an estimated extra £500 income. The General Admission Rates had not changed for 3 years and the venue hire is cheaper than that paid by many other exhibitions. Noel Leaver stated that he did not consider it essential to raise the General Admission Rates.

#### **Item 6 – Chairman's Report**

Keith Wright presented a summary of events over the past year (attached).

#### **Item 7 – Changes to the Constitution**

This item was withdrawn at the request of the Secretary without discussion.

#### **Item 8 – Clean-Up Duties**

The following pre-notified proposal had been received: The Membership request the Committee assign the regular 'clear-up' duties so as to more closely reflect the proportion of the Full Members in each sub-group. This was proposed by Richard Harris and seconded by Vic Beyer. **Agreed.**

#### **Item 9 – Election of Officers**

There were 2 nominations for the post of Chairman: David Harrington proposed by Ian Stockley and seconded by John Scrambler and Keith Wright proposed by Simon Hucker and seconded by David Bentley. On a show of hands David Harrington was elected Chairman for 2014/15 by 24 votes to 2 with 1 abstention.

The following were elected unopposed:

Treasurer	Ron Patterson
Secretary	Mike Le Marie
N Gauge Rep	Noel Leaver
OO Gauge Rep	Wilf Pateman
P4 Rep	Richard Harris
O Gauge Rep	Ian George
Exhibition Manager	Noel Leaver

#### **Item 10 – Appointment of Auditor**

Kevin Desmond was nominated as Assessor for the 2014/15 Accounts Proposed by Paul Huxley and seconded by Richard Harris. **Appointed**

There being no further business the Meeting was declared closed at 9.25pm

Farnham & District Model Railway Club Diary				
Date	Running Night	Event	Exhibition	Notes
<b>2015</b>				
14th Nov			Tolworth	Brixcombe
18th Nov	OO/P4			
22nd Nov		Club Open Day		Wickwar, Weydon Road
25th Nov	OO			
2nd Dec	O Gauge	Club AGM		
9th Dec	N Gauge			
16th Dec	OO/P4	Christmas Dinner		
23rd Dec				Club Room only
30th Dec		TBC		
<b>2016</b>				
6th Jan	O Gauge			
13th Jan	N Gauge			
20th Jan	OO Gauge			
27th Jan	OO/P4			
3rd Feb	O Gauge			
10th Feb	N Gauge			
17th Feb	OO Gauge			
24th Feb	OO/P4			
2nd Mar	O Gauge			
9th Mar	N Gauge			
12th/13th Mar			Huntingdon	Greenfields
16th Mar	OO Gauge			
20 <sup>th</sup> Mar		N Gauge Open Day		
23rd Mar	OO/P4			
30th Mar		Presentation Evening		Possible Guest Speaker