

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FARNHAM & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

Committee News

The General Purposes Committee has continued the pattern of meeting once every 3 months. In addition to routine matters the Committee has reviewed and agreed the Club's Safeguarding Policy and is currently in the final stages of producing a new Constitution for consideration and adoption at the 2016 Annual General Meeting.

The Committee also authorised the publication of a Club Handbook which has now been circulated to members. If you have not received this then please contact the Secretary who will ensure you receive a copy.

Annual Model Railway Exhibition

Members are reminded that the Annual Model Railway Exhibition will be held at the Connaught Leisure Centre on the 8th and 9th of October. We need as many Club Members as possible to help set up on the Friday evening, act as stewards etc over the weekend and help with the clear up on Sunday night. Please put these dates in your diary.

Some of you will have seen press reports about the closure of the Connaught School. At the present moment Hampshire County Council have not made any decisions and in any case if closure is decided it could take some time to implement. However, if any of you are aware of other potential venues that could accommodate a similar size exhibition if needed then the Committee would be interested to hear from you.

009 Group

There has been talk in the Club recently about setting up a 009 Group either as a sub group of the N Gauge or as a separate group in its own right. If any Member is interested in becoming part of this group could you please speak to either David Harrington or Mike Le Marie so that we can judge how much support there would be.

Club Diary

A copy of the Club Diary is attached to this Newsletter.

Club Modelling Competition – Wednesday 21st September

The modelling competition will take place this year on 21st September. This will be held in the main hall so no layout activity will be allowed after 7.30pm. The competition is intended to be a "fun evening" and an opportunity for all the club members to take part and demonstrate their modelling skills at all levels.

Categories

(open to scratch built, kit built or modified proprietary models)

- 2mm scale locos and rolling stock - N and 2mm finescale
- 4mm scale locos and rolling stock - OO, EM, P4 finescale
- 7mm scale locos and rolling stock - standard & narrow gauge
- "Other" scale locos and rolling stock (From Z to Gauge 3)
- Trackside/Scenic features (Any scale) - a railway/scenic feature not exceeding 2ft square.

Please note all locos and rolling stock must be running models and will be tested on the night.

Rules of entry

- All entries must be owned by club members.
- The closing time for entries will be 8.00pm.
- A completed entry form must accompany each item.
- Voting will be on a one vote for each category basis.
- The winner of each category will be that with the most votes.
- The Best in Show will chosen from the category winners based upon the highest number of votes.
- The adjudicator's (to be appointed on the night) decision will be final.

To encourage members who do not want to compete, there will be an additional non-judged category:-

Loan Category - Any model, any scale, out of the box, completed or under construction. Your chance to either show off "work in progress", seek advice/encouragement in completing a model, show off an uncommon proprietary item or just bring along your latest acquisition.

Tea and Biscuits will be serve from the kitchen. Good Luck!!

Wanted

A Member to store the Exhibition Equipment and Club Stand. There are several boxes of equipment which is only used once a year but takes up valuable space in the basement. This requirement could be undertaken by more than one member. If you can help then please speak to Noel Leaver, the Exhibition Manager.

Wanted

A Member willing to take on the production of Whistleblower. For more information please contact Mike Le Marie, the Club Secretary.

“Coal staithe”; fact or urban myth?

A reader’s letter in the May edition of the Railway Modeller raised the subject of what modellers refer to as “coal staithe”, ie those familiar sleeper-built structures for storing coal that appear on almost every model depiction of a goods yard. Positioned with the rear of the “staithe” alongside a siding they always imply coal being unloaded into them direct from a railway wagon. I have even had it explained to me by modellers how these coal staithe had been built to a specific size to match the capacity of the coal wagon. But there’s a problem with all this.

The letter-writer highlights a concern that has bothered me for some time, namely that in the thousands of photographs of real goods yards I have seen over the years in railway books and magazines I have never seen a single photograph of “coal staithe” located in the position beloved by modellers.

Photographs do exist of these type of storage structures, sometimes sleeper-built, sometimes brick or corrugated iron but invariably they are located some distance away from the actual sidings, often around the periphery of the yard. What many photographs do show are coal merchants’ lorries parked directly alongside a siding of coal wagons in the position where the modeller would have positioned his “staithe”.

Thinking about the operation this is a far more logical way of working. Why would you shovel 10 tons of coal out of a railway wagon down into a ground level storage staithe, only to then shovel it back up onto your coal lorry? Far easier to park your lorry right alongside the coal wagon then weigh and bag your coal directly from the wagon directly onto your lorry. Apart from the sheer physical effort, your coal is a friable item so the less you man-handle it the better its final condition.

So you would weigh, bag and load as much coal as you could directly onto your lorries straight from the wagon (or several wagons containing different grades of coal). You would do this over the course of several days until the railway told you they wanted their wagon back or you’d be charged demurrage. You would then have to transfer only the remnants from the wagon into one of your storage “staithe”, located away from the tracks next to your yard office. This is a far more logical way of working and seems to be supported by the photographic evidence.

So how have we ended up with all these model coal staithe located next to the sidings? I think it’s simply a case of modellers copying other models. But how did it originate? I suspect it’s a modelling equivalent of the urban myth. So come on guys; dig out those photographs and let’s nail the evidence.

Ian George

How to avoid going hungry.

During the days of BR steam many long distance trains included some form of restaurant /dining car set offering a silver-service meal. However, this provision wasn't universal and while some trains included two dining sets, one for the front portion of the train and one for the rear portion, other long distance trains lacked any offer of food provision. To avoid going hungry it was often left to the canny traveller to study the timetables beforehand.

Take for example the case of the 09.10 train from Liverpool to Plymouth and the 09.10 train from Manchester to Swansea. Both had a similar number of coaches, 10 or 11, both being comprised of Western region coaching stock. While the Liverpool train included a restaurant/dining car set the Manchester train included no food provision at all, not even a buffet car for the 7 hour journey. However, with a little prior knowledge it was possible the Manchester traveller to get fed in style.

Both trains were routed via Crewe then onto the Western's "north and west route" via Shrewsbury and the Welsh Marches, hence the Western region coaching sets. Both trains arrived almost simultaneously at Crewe into the adjacent platforms 4 and 5 where one of the Crewe station pilot "Jinties" operated at its usual unhurried pace adding and detaching coaches and parcel vans at the rear of the 2 trains. At the front of the Liverpool train the Edge Hill shed Jubilee was replaced by one of Crewe North shed's Duchess pacifics. These operations took almost half an hour to complete giving plenty of time for the canny Manchester passenger to cross the platform and join the Liverpool train to await the call from the steward to take a seat in the dining car for lunch.

Both trains departed Crewe within a few minutes of each other for Shrewsbury where the Liverpool train engine was changed again, the Duchess being replaced by a Western region Castle which would take the train through as far as Bristol. From Shrewsbury the 2 trains followed each other at a leisurely pace first to Hereford where the Longsight shed's Scot heading the Manchester train was finally replaced by the Castle that would take the train through to Swansea. Then on together to Pontypool Road where our canny traveller, suitable well fed, would leave the Liverpool train and re-join the Manchester for the remainder of the journey to Swansea, arrival time 16.10.

During the remaining few hours of his journey our traveller would no doubt ponder on why the Liverpool train had needed 3 engine changes to reach Hereford while the Manchester train had covered a similar distance with just the one engine. Or why, when the London Midland region was so chronically short of Class 8 pacifics that the Manchester sheds had no allocation to cover even their heaviest trains, Crewe North could spare a class 8 Duchess every day for a leisurely canter to Shrewsbury and back with just 10 coaches.

Had our traveller been a railway modeller he may have thought of adding variety and interest to his rake of corridor coaches by including some form of catering car. Some ready to run catering cars are available in most scales, usually some form of a single buffet car, an RMB. For a modeller willing to take on a kit there is much more variety available ranging from the magnificent ex GWR and ex LMS 12 wheeled kitchen-diner cars to the ultimate in the form of one of the ex LNER articulated triplet kitchen/dining sets which comprised of a central full kitchen car flanked by a first and a second class dining saloon.

Another point of interest to the modeller is the practise of changing engines or adding and removing coaches or parcels vans at intermediate stations using a station pilot engine. This was a common occurrence on the real railway but doesn't appear very often in model form. I think part of the reason for this is that the various manoeuvres involved can require intricate manipulation of electrical section switches when operating with DC control. On "Weydon Road" we did attempt to include these types of manoeuvres in our operating sequence but have abandoned the moves due mainly to the delays to the flow of the sequence caused by the operators trying to follow the detailed switching instructions to make the moves happen. Perhaps the alleged simplicity of DCC control will bring about an increased depiction of these kinds of moves. I hope so.

Happy Days. Ian George

We all had a ticket to Ryde.....

.....including Robin, who by some alchemy was driving his car. But that's by the by. 'Twas the morning after the night before (after, that is, our American Night, which, despite some members preferring, hopefully racked with guilt, to watch football, was nevertheless a success). Some 20 members and a couple of guests turned out to watch and listen to the Big Lads' stuff making circuits with horns and sirens. The genuine steam whistle from my tiny Castle was lost amid the hoots and wails from the 7mm track. Richard and Bron did their usual magic with hot dogs and pancakes, which were gratefully received.

But back to Ryde. Around a dozen of us gathered, amazingly with no-one adrift, at Portsmouth Harbour, bristling with cameras and brochures and got front row seats on the Cat. Club member Dave Bradley was waiting on the quayside and took us all under his ample wing for his Special Guided Tour, beginning on what Islanders call the "mole train" – a couple of decrepit Underground trains, with bits flaking off and odd noises from beneath our feet - to Smallbrook Junction. On the way Dave gave an eloquent description of the Heritage Line and its history, much to the astonishment of a couple of tourists who happened to be in the same compartment.

We transhipped to the steam railway in a reserved and beautifully restored dark green coach where Dave continued his rhetoric all the way to Wootton, the end of the line. Here we admired the very short head-shunt, usable by the Line's Ivatt only if it presses very hard up against the buffers. We looked at the signal box, and imagined it in its final splendour once restoration work has been completed, and had a pee in the posh new gents. We looked at where the Queen had once walked down the slope onto the platform and examined where the point rodding came to an end just beyond the platform. It began to rain and for some reason we failed to visit the pub.

Then with a shrill whistle the next train appeared round the bend and Richard took pictures. This time it was a Terrier, pulling a short rake of magnificent 4-wheel coaches, all shiny and dark green, with "proper" First Class accommodation and superb upholstery. Truly the 100 or so volunteers who make it all happen have done a magnificent job.

I now know exactly why 4-wheel milk tankers were abandoned in favour of 6 wheels back in the early 30s – by the time they got to where they were going they were carrying cheese. It was really hard to stand up once the train got moving, even when clutching some handy support. It wasn't helped by having longitudinal seating although it did help to get better acquainted with the chap sitting next to you.

So we rocked and swayed back to the mid-point of the line, Havenstreet. There we trekked round the carriage works and marvelled at the serious amount of work required to restore the remaining stock of original carriages, some of which were held together with hardboard patches and the last few flakes of the 19th Century top coat of paint. At least one still bore the traces of the thatch that the farmer had applied when the carriage was in use as a hay store. Many thousands of man-hours of work lie ahead for the intrepid volunteers.

We had a cracking lunch – with a well-deserved accolade being given to the meat pie. Not that Ian George would know – he was last in the queue and was forced to eat salad, much to the sympathetic merriment of his pals.

Overall memories? Well, maybe the bang-crack-bang-crack of the Westinghouse pump on the O2 as it stood waiting in the platform. Certainly the diminutive Terrier that, I'm sure, is put back in its box and replaced on the top shelf once its duties are done for the day. The rattling ride on the 4-wheel coaches and the superb workmanship of the restorers. And of course, Dave Bradley's excellent tour-guide stuff that brought everything to life.

Lessons? Probably if you see Pete going in one direction and getting on a train it's a safe bet to go in the other, or you could end up far from where you need to end up. Happy days.

David Harrington

Farnham & District Model Railway Club Diary				
Date	Running Night	Event	Exhibition	Notes
2016				
6th July	O Gauge			
13th July	N Gauge			
20th July	OO/P4			
27th July	OO			
3rd August	O Gauge			
10th August	N Gauge			
17th August	OO/P4			
24th August	OO			
31st August		Presentation Evening		4 x mini-presentations
7th September	O Gauge			
14th September	N Gauge			
21st September	OO/P4	Modelling Competition		
28th September	OO			
5th October	O Gauge			
8th -9th October			Aldershot	Annual Club Show
12th October	N Gauge			
19th October	OO/P4			
26th October	OO			
2nd November	O Gauge			
9th November	N Gauge			
16th November	OO/P4			
20th November		Annual Open Day		
23rd November	OO			
30th November		Presentation Evening		TBD