



January 2017 Edition

THANK YOU & WELCOME

I am please to report that all club members paid their 2016/7 subscriptions by the end of the year. Thank you for this - it helps The Treasurer no end. Membership cards will be issued shortly.

We now have 47 full members (down 6 on 2015/6), 7 associate members and 1 junior member. Please join me in welcoming David and Alexander Holt who joined the club in December.

Given our significant running expenses, we need everyone to help recruit new members. Please help the club reach it's target of 55 Full members.

COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- A committee meeting was held on 18th Jan. All committee members attended.
- The AGM was held on the 7th Dec 2016 at which 31 members attended. The following members were re-elected to the committee:-
David Harrington - Chairman
Ron Patterson - Treasurer
Mike LeMarie - Secretary
Noel Leaver - Exhibition Manager
Group leaders remain the same
- The new club constitution was accepted at the AGM unanimously.
- Our Chairman and Treasurer met with the WCC committee in December and was advised that the clubroom and hall rent is going to be increased. The proposals made by the WCC committee were discussed on the 18th Jan and an offer was subsequently made to the WCC in line with what we can afford. We have now received a favorable reply. Finalization of a new lease is in hand.
- A visit was made recently by Farnham Town Council Health & Safety expert to inspect the clubroom. As a result of this, work is in hand to improve power outlets, outside lighting and access doors. A big thank you goes to Dave Bentley who significantly contributed and offered several good improvements.
- The purchase of more storage racking has been approved is being purchased to allow better use of space in the basement.

CLUB DIARY FOR 2017

2017	Running Night	Event	Notes
Wed 1st Feb	O Gauge	Layout running night	Haydon Sq E. 1.
Sat 4th Feb		Layout @ Yate	Bolden
Wed 8th Feb	N Gauge		
Sat/Sun 11/12th Feb		Layout @ Bournemouth	Wickwar
Wed 15th Feb	OO/P4		
Wed 22nd Feb	OO		
Wed 1st Mar	O Gauge		
Wed 8th Mar	N Gauge		
Sat/Sun 11/12th Mar		Layout @ Basingstoke	Wickwar
Wed 15th Mar	OO/P4		
Wed 22nd Mar	OO		
Wed 29th Mar		Presentation Evening	
Fri 31st Mar		Club outing	Swanage Railway
Wed 5th Apr	O Gauge		
Wed 12th Apr	N Gauge		
Wed 19th Apr	OO/P4		
Wed 26th Apr	OO		
Mon 1st May		O Gauge Open Day	Clubroom
Wed 3rd May	O gauge		
Wed 10th May	N Gauge		
Wed 17th May	OO/P4		
Wed 24th May	OO		
Sat 27th May		Layout @ Northolt	Haydon Sq E. 1.
Mon 29th May		OO Gauge Open Day	Clubroom

SWANAGE RAILWAY OUTING

David Harrington is arranging a club outing to the Swanage Railway 50th Anniversary Strictly Bullied event on the Friday 31st March 2017 where 5 light Pacific's will be running. The cost for an advance ticket will be £25.00. Please register your interest on the booking form on the club notice board.

David will arrange the advance booking - full payment will be required then. Travel to Swanage will be by shared private car.

PECORAMA SUMMER OUTING

A Club visit to Pecorama has been arranged for Wednesday 7th June. 2017. The visit will include a factory tour, a behind the scenes visit to the Beer Heights Light Railway, a visit to the permanent exhibition and shop and a presentation by Michael Pritchard (MD Peco) on Peco followed by a question and answer session. Final travel arrangements will be made in due course but in the meantime please let Mike Le Marie (mjandcilemarie@btinternet.com) if you would like to go.

JOHN THROSSELL

It is with great sadness that I have to report that John Throssell has died in hospital after a long illness. John was a long-standing and very much liked member of a number of local club clubs including our 0 gauge group. I have fond memories of John proudly bringing his grandchildren to operate Weydon Road at many of our Open Days. Our thoughts are with Doreen and his family at this sad time.

Ian George

EXHIBITION CHARITY LAYOUT

In the last Whistleblower we announced that the club would like to build a small OO layout to be raffled at the club exhibition for charity.

Charles Jolliffe's reports on progress:-

Ian George and the club chairman came up with the idea of bringing the club to a wider audience within our community by raffling, for a local charity, a children's layout at our 2017 exhibition. Terry Hillyer kindly donated a layout complete with track to the club for the purpose of building this train set. We then had another wonderful donation from a friend (a non-member) of buildings, rolling stock, people, cars and so on together with a donation of two locos from another source. After lots of suggestions as to how the layout should look - a train set or an exhibition layout, we decided on a train set. Whilst we have the financial support of the club it is our intention to try and produce this child friendly layout at no cost. With a lot of scrounging and box diving we are making good progress. However, we still need some additional help - two or three plastic Hornby type houses.

We are also looking for input local charities (not national charities) from which we can choose those that will benefit from our endeavours. We also would welcome any help making contact with local charities, advice on construction, help on building and donation of bits and pieces from any member. Above all we welcome your support in our endeavour.

LAYOUT REPORTS

N gauge group: 4 exhibitions are being attended during the next 3 months as reported last time, and one further invite for Wickwar has been accepted for Wycrail November 2017. The possible invite to the N Gauge Society 50th anniversary event in May is not going to happen as the show has been cancelled due to a mistake in booking of the venue.

There has been investigation of various options for the next big exhibition layout. Some members are doing experiments with hump shunting to see whether a model of a hump shunting yard is practical (this will be a low cost trial, mainly using scrap materials).

The proposed modular layout has been set back by the principle driver of the project – David Calvert – having resigned from the club because of ill health. I need to get one of the other enthusiasts for the project to pick it up.

OO gauge group: No report received.

P4 gauge group: We have now received proofs from the Chris Nevard photoshoot last November. They are excellent. We have been asked to keep them 'private' for the present – no doubt prior to the magazine article publication. For that reason we must refrain from web-site publication and I would like to discuss in committee what other precautions to take.

Planning activity on enhancements to Brixcombe continues.

O gauge group: We have finalised the line-up for the next 0 gauge group Open Day on Bank Holiday Monday 1st May 2017. In addition to "Haydon Square E1" and "Round the Bend" we have invited 2 further layouts, 1 from a member of Southampton MRC and 1 from a member of Luton MRC, plus a trader and the Gauge 0 Guild area rep. As usual we will be grateful for assistance on the day from other club members.

At a meeting of 0 gauge group members on 4th Jan. we re-affirmed our decision to retire "Weydon Road" from the exhibition circuit at the end of 2017 which means we will be declining the invitation to take it to the Warley/ NEC exhibition in 2018. Our offer to take HSE1 instead has been accepted. The group also confirmed its intention to dispose of "Weydon Road" and to subsequently build a replacement, plans for both actions to be developed during 2017.

TRAIN FACTS

by Liam Rasbid

1. In 1869, Chinese and Irish labourers working on the Central Pacific Railway managed to lay down 10 miles of tracks in just one day. This accomplishment has not been matched even in modern times.
2. In 1896 Auburn ROTC cadets greased the skids of a railway track before a football game. The train with the incoming team couldn't stop and slid halfway to the next town, forcing them to walk 5 miles to the game possibly contributing to their 45-0 loss.
3. After WW1 the French had the railway cars that Germany surrendered in stored in a museum. During WW2 when France was preparing to surrender, Hitler ordered the walls of museum torn down and the railway cars returned to the exact spot of the 1918 armistice in order to humiliate the French.
4. The London Underground has its own implementation of the KERS (Kinetic Energy Recovery System), where the platforms are actually uphill from the surrounding track, so that the Kinetic Energy is turned into Gravitational Potential Energy, and recovered when the train leaves the station.
5. During the Battle of Stalingrad, Soviet losses were so great that at times the life expectancy of a newly arrived soldier was less than a day, and the life expectancy of a Soviet officer was three days. Combat was so fierce that at one point a railway station changed hands 14 times in six hours.

THREE MEN ON A TRAIN.

by Ian George

In The Warley club traditionally invite a full sized engine to form the centrepiece of their exhibition at the NEC and this year they invited the Betton Grange Society to bring theirs. Being a Society member I was offered a free exhibition ticket in exchange for a few hours helping on the Society stand. As I hadn't previously had the Warley experience, and haven't seen the recent progress on the engine this was a chance to kill two birds.

I decided to "let the train take the strain", catching the Virgin Cross Country Bournemouth to Manchester/ Newcastle service at Winchester for the 2 hour journey to Birmingham International from where it is a 5 minute walk into the NEC. The train was a 5 coach set, with coaches lettered A,B,C,D and F, the missing coach E acting as a reminder that these were originally planned as 6 coach trains. That coach was badly missed as arriving at Winchester the train was already fairly full; by the time we reached Reading it was standing room only in standard class, and by Oxford it was ram-packed.

Fortunately I didn't need to do a Jeremy Corbyn as I'd had the common-sense to pre-book a cheap rate Advance First seat. My fellow travellers around the table were a very entertaining cross-dressed gentleman in a leopard-skin dress, black stockings and high heels who said he was an operations manager with Network Rail, and a former Arsenal centre-back/current TV pundit on his way to appear on Match of the Day. I don't think they were travelling together. The conversation combining my two favourite topics of railways and football made me reluctant to leave the train. After that quite surreal experience what would the exhibition hold for me?

Well 6880 "Betton Grange" looked superb with its boiler temporarily in place for the exhibition. For those unfamiliar, the GWR built Granges 6800-6879 between 1936 and 1939 and basically they were a smaller wheeled version of the "Halls". To maintain the correct geometry between the cylinders and smaller driving wheels the GWR needed to redesign the "Hall" cylinder block. A consequence of this necessity was that the new cylinder design proved extremely effective, the Granges quickly gaining the respect of footplate crews for their free-steaming, speed, and especially their additional "grunt" when called for. These capabilities led to the Granges typically being shedded in areas with challenging terrain such as Devon and Cornwall, or at sheds handling heavy express freights such as banana trains. Intending to build a second batch, the GWR allocated the number 6880 and the name "Betton Grange" to the intended first engine of that batch; World War 2 meant they were never built and sadly none were preserved.

The current project to create the 81st Grange was launched in 1998 and, based at the Llangollen Railway, is a hybrid between the traditional restoration of an ex- Barry wreck and a complete new build such as "Tornado". Large parts have had to be newly built including the frames, the unique Grange -pattern cylinder block, and the cab. The Society also intends to build a 3500 gal. Collett style tender the proportions of which seem to best suit a Grange. Meanwhile the famed GWR policy of "standardisation" has allowed major parts to be acquired from other Barry wrecks; the bogie has come from 5952 "Cogan Hall", the boiler from 7927 "Willington Hall" and parts of the motion from a variety of donor engines. This GWR use of standard parts has also allowed the Society to recover from its darkest hour when the newly cast and hugely expensive driving wheels were found to contain microscopic flaws barring them from future main-line use. Fortunately the Society was able to do an exchange deal to obtain a set of suitable wheels from the group restoring a large Prairie which is not being restored to main-line standards.



From the NEC, 6880's boiler is being delivered direct to Tyseley Locomotive Works to begin its £225k. restoration. Interestingly this is the first time in its life that this boiler has been overhauled, having only 5 years of use by BR, being built in 1960 and withdrawn on "Willington Hall" in 1965. The aim of the Society is to have 6880 in steam towards the end of 2018, initially on the Llangollen Railway, then visiting other preserved railways and ultimately out on the main-line. If you want to find out more about 6880 "Betton Grange" visit the website at www.6880.co.uk, or better still why not join the Society and help to see the GWR "engineman's engine" in steam for future generations.

And what about the exhibition itself? Having done my (short) stint in front of 6880 shaking a collection bucket and winged my way through various technical questions I explored the 90 plus layouts, traders and other "railwayana". My personal reaction was that I found the standard of exhibits to be patchy; a few were excellent, most were good, some were there just to make up the numbers (an inevitable problem if you are trying to find 90+ fresh layouts for each year's show). I also thought that too many layouts disappointingly had the annoyance of "looks good but nothing's happening". Most of all however, I found the whole thing to be overwhelming. For me Warley was too big, too crowded and too impersonal. I missed the opportunity to linger in front of each layout, to take in the scene, observe the operation, study new building techniques, and chat to the operator. I felt as

if I was being force-fed a whole selection box of chocolates without having the time to fully appreciate each individual item.

In defence of the show's organisers, the very fact that it is so crowded means that it clearly must be popular, with many people visiting every year, many for both days so my personal view appears to be in a minority. So was it something worth experiencing? Yes. Would I do it again? Probably not, although the day was not entirely a let-down. I'd experience that remarkable train journey conversation any day of the week.

IMPROVING CLUB ROOM TOOLS.

by Noel Leaver

We have made a financial surplus on the last 2 exhibitions so the committee propose to spend some of this on improving the tools and workstations in the club. We would like to:

Upgrade or replace old tools, throw out ones in a poor state or never used

Buy additional tools that would be useful

Have a defined place to keep each tool, so they are easy to find. For example, for a mini-drill have a labelled section of shelf where it goes, and write this on the box as well. (This may involve some reorganisation of the cupboards.)

Where appropriate, have a box or tray that holds the tool and all its associated accessories/consumables. For example, a glue gun and its supply of glue sticks (I believe we have at least 2 which cannot be found), a set of drills with each drill, etc.

Provide "workspaces" for use on tables - a rectangle of MDF to work on with a lip on lower front against table edge and other sides to stop stuff rolling off. For some attach a high-quality jewellers vice.

Decide what consumables we stock, where they are stored, and replenish where necessary.

Tools must be easy to find and ready to use with the minimum of hassle.

We are buying a PAT tester to allow us to do safety tests on electrical equipment in the club including any power supplies built by club members (which many exhibitions require to be tested). It will also be useful for testing layouts attending our exhibition.

We won't be able to buy everything on the following list but we have tried to cover likely items. The next step will be to agree a list of what to buy for the £600 or so available. Therefore, we would like your views on the list and any suggestions for additional items.

1. Replace/Upgrade Existing Tools

Examples would be replacing old incomplete sets of drills, and perhaps some new files. Sets of drill bits can cost £10 - £20

<http://www.screwfix.com/p/hss-metal-boxed-drill-bit-set-metric-25-piece-set/14117>

<http://www.screwfix.com/p/dewalt-combination-drill-bit-set-100-piece-set/13266>

2. Additional Hand Tools

Some small quick release clamps (£7 each): <http://www.screwfix.com/p/irwin-quick-grip-12-mini-one-handed-bar-clamp/98247>

Machine vices - the existing (large) one is used a lot. Proxxon do one for £13:

<https://www.cousinsuk.com/product/proxxon-machine-vice?code=D9746>

Soldering iron tip cleaning pots (ones with "swarf", can get them for £3 each or less). They work better than a damp sponge, don't need dampening, and some of the sponges need replacing anyway. https://www.amazon.co.uk/Soldering-Cleaning-Nozzle-Cleaner-Sponge/dp/B01F0TJLD2/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1484933056&sr=8-1&keywords=soldering+iron+tip+clean

3. Power tools

This is where most money is likely to be spent.

Rechargeable drill (£100): <http://www.screwfix.com/p/bosch-gsb18-2-li-plus-18v-1-5ah-li-ion-cordless-combi-drill/96471>

Small vertical drill such as Proxxon (£162 inc VAT): <https://www.cousinsuk.com/product/0100-to-320mm-proxxon-tbm>

Oscillating Multi-tool, for example (£50): <http://www.screwfix.com/p/energer-enb518htl-200w-multi-cutter-240v/61122>

Portable vacuum cleaner, for example (£29): https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B015QZH2EU?ref=emc_b_5_t

A cheap ultrasonic cleaner intended for jewellery though that would not be much use of the O gauge group. Ron has a large non-working one that he will donate if we can repair it. This fairly large one from may be worth a look (£93): <https://www.rapidonline.com/jpl-ultra-8050-dh-ultrasonic-cleaner-2-5-litre-87-3274>

4. Consumables

We have quite a lot around. Some neatly stored, others you have to hunt for. Wire is well organised, nuts and bolts are not bad but patchy, we perhaps should restock. Sandpaper and wet and dry could be better organised.

Some items are in gauge specific cupboards - these would be better put together. Examples: PVA, brush cleaner, IPA, wood glue.

We ought to have club stocks of solder; heat shrink tubing; stocks of card, bits of plastic sheeting, useful scraps of metal, etc.

5. Workspaces

Make some as recommended for modelers attending the Missenden Abbey courses:

"A piece of mdf 9mm thick 24" wide x 18" wide with a ½" square stripwood edge around three sides and on the front underneath to provide a stop against the edge of the table it is placed on. Give it a coat of varnish all over. This provides a cheap work surface that will protect a table and can double up as tray so items may be left on it when it is put away at the end of the day."

We should have several of these, some perhaps fitted with a vice (1 already bought)

<https://www.cousinsuk.com/product/screw-down-1-45mm-jaw-watchmakers?code=V9692>

6. Familiarisation

Once we have the tools, we should devote a "5th Wednesday" talk to introductions to some of the more complex and esoteric tools, more explanation on why you might need to use them and what they are good for. For example, resistance soldering, lathe, air brush kit.

Contact:- Noel Leaver n.leaver@btopenworld.com or Richard Harris richard_j_harris@hotmail.co.uk