

WHISTLEBLOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FARNHAM & DISTRICT MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

September 2017 Edition

EDITORIAL

In this edition we have important news about the Club Exhibition next month, the Club Christmas Dinner and the AGM. Please have a look at these and note down the relevant dates.

There is clearly a regular band of contributors to this newsletter, but please don't think it is a 'closed shop'. All contributions are welcome, so let other members know what you are modelling or about any railway-related subject which interests you. If you need help in writing a piece, just talk to me and we will see what we can create.

PREPARATIONS FOR OUR EXHIBITION – Noel Leaver

Our exhibition is on the 14-15 October, the briefing will be on the Wednesday before, 11 October, at 7.15. If you can't make the briefing but want to volunteer for some duties, I'll put a list up on the clubroom door a couple of weeks in advance.

This year instead of marking out plot areas for each layout, we will mark out exactly where we want the layout to go allowing for barriers and access gaps – I hope this will avoid very large gaps between layouts when both have left a passageway. Trade stands will still be a plot.

The 2mm Scale Association AGM will be held alongside the exhibition on Saturday in the Music Room (the large room accessed by a door opposite the side entrance to the gym). The Association is paying a lump sum for members to get free entry to the exhibition – they need to go to the Music Room to collect a ticket before entering the main exhibition.

We will be doing a survey on the door of how people found out about the exhibition to see what advertising worked best (ask as they come in and tick the appropriate box on a sheet). It is 5 years since we last did this, and we are trying out a couple of new adverts this time – Facebook and the Aldershot News and Mail.

Finally, I need a volunteer to sort out how many tables and chairs are needed in each hall (from spreadsheets of what each layout and trader needs), and to put together the exhibitors packs. That involves printing out lunch tickets and the sheet that says how many chairs each stand needs, and stuffing envelopes on the Wednesday before the exhibition with badges, tickets, and a show guide (you can rope in club members to help with that part).

EARLY WARNING: ELECTION TIME AT THE AGM

Under the Club's constitution the Chairman and Secretary will be standing down at this year's AGM after completing three years in office. The Treasurer will also stand down as agreed at the time of his appointment. We are therefore looking for new members to fill these roles from this December.

Nominations in writing, properly proposed and seconded with confirmation from the nominee that they are will to stand must be submitted to the Secretary (Mike Le Marie) by Wednesday 22 November. Each of the current office holders will gladly discuss their roles if approached.

For completeness, the other members of the Committee are the four Group reps and the Exhibition Manager. The Constitution imposes no requirement on them to stand for election/re-election after each year in post, nor is there a three-year time limit. However the Club has, by convention, chosen the occasion of the AGM to accept their appointment (or otherwise). It is up to each Group to nominate one of its members to the General Purposes Committee and the AGM takes due note. Appointment of the Exhibition Manager is similarly informal; although an AGM vote is taken it's invariably 100% in favour of the incumbent!

CLUB CHRISTMAS DINNER – Mike Le Marie

This year's Christmas Dinner will be held at the Hen & Chicken on the A31 between Farnham and Alton on Wednesday 13th December. Time 7pm for 7.30pm.

This year we have exclusive use of a room provided at least 30 people book. Full details and booking form will be sent out to all members on or about 1st October. The cost will be £20.50 for 3 courses and £16.50 for 2 courses. There will also be a quiz with suitable prizes.

Please put the date in your diary now.

LEAD-FREE?

Until about 6 months ago there was a roll of sheet lead on the windowsill in the clubroom. However, it's disappeared. Does anyone know where it went to? If so, please inform the club Chairman or Secretary. Thanks.

NEW 009 GROUP – David Harrington

The Committee has approved preliminary steps towards creating a 009 Group within the Club. Anybody interested is asked to meet on Wednesday 20th September at 6.30pm at the Club – currently we think there are eight people interested, but more would be welcome. The intention is to try to reach agreement on the way ahead such as leadership, layout(s), storage, operation and costs. Of course we must try to avoid damaging existing 00, 0, P4 or N groups by "poaching" members from them. There is no reason why anyone can't be a member of more than one group.

Assuming agreement I will present to the committee any request for funding or other support.

RESULTS OF CLUB MODELLING COMPETITION

The Club Modelling Competition was held on 13th September. The organisation was excellent (thank you P4 Group) and the number of voters good. However, the number of entries was a disappointment. The more entries there are the more fun it is for everyone, so don't be shy! For those who weren't present, here are the winners in the various categories, with thanks to Richard

Harris for the photographs:

2mm Scale: Noel Leaver – BR (ex LMS) Corridor Third Coach



No runner up

4mm Scale: Robin Baker – LT (ex Metropolitan Railway) Bo-Bo Electric No. 9



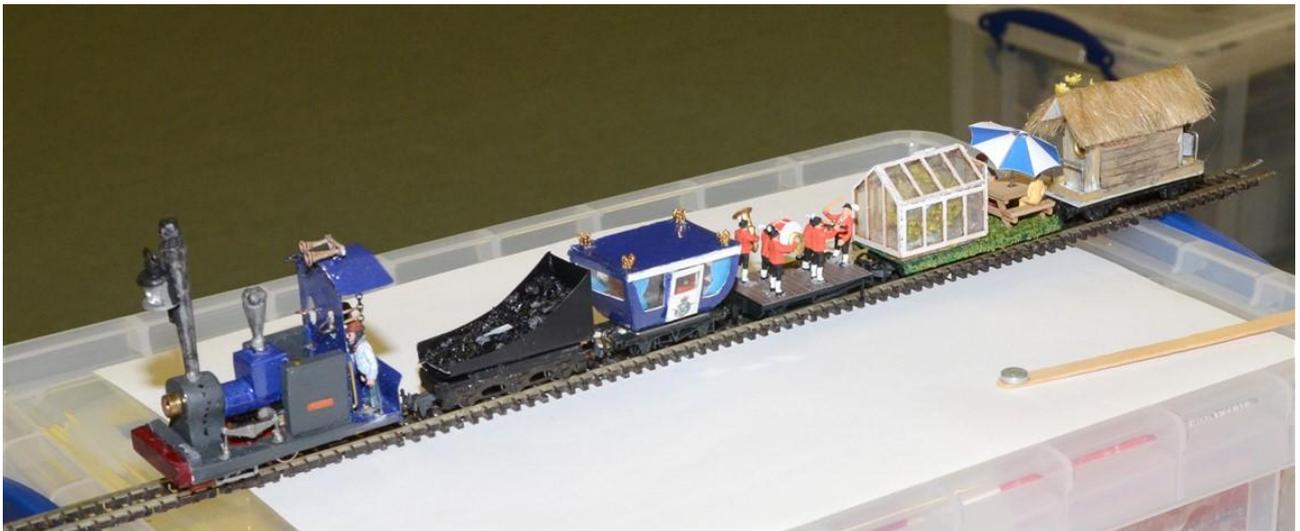
Runner up: Robin Baker – Southern Railway Q1 0-6-0

7mm Scale: Julian Evison – GWR (ex Welshpool & Llanfair) Brake Composite Coach



Runner up: Julian Evison – BR (ex LMS) 20 ton brake van

Other Scales: David Harrington – Poppy and Train



Runner up: Wilf Pateman – Southern Bogie Van

Trackside/Scenic: Chris Robert – Horse Drawn Brewery Dray

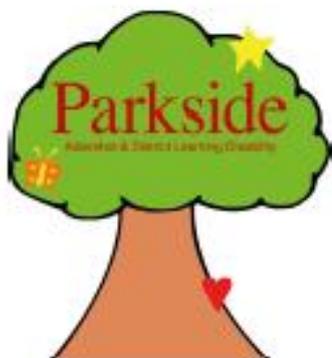


Runner up: Wilf Pateman – Greystone End station

'Best in Show': **Noel Leaver – LMS Corridor Third Coach**



CHILDREN'S LAYOUT RAFFLE



WIN This Fabulous Childrens Model Train Layout!

To be in with a chance all you need to do is attend the Club's Annual Exhibition, held at:
Alderwood School (Formerly Connaught School) Aldershot

14th & 15th (draw date) October 2017

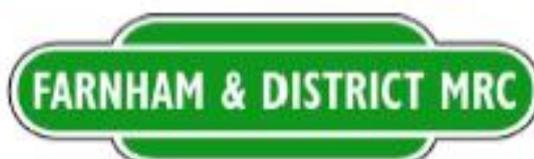
Tickets £1 each

All proceeds to Parkside

Parkside is a registered charity based in Aldershot that provides support services for children and adults with learning disabilities, living in the local area, covering both Hampshire and Surrey. The charity has been part of the community since 1963.

Parkside's aim as a charity is to give both children and adults the opportunity to develop their individual skills and take part in activities within the local community.

Parkside want to say **THANK YOU** to the members of Farnham and District Model Railway Club for creating this wonderful working layout and raising funds for Parkside!



Parkside charity reg
no/ 1154756

The Chairman writes, "As part of the Club's wish to engage with the local community we have constructed a small OO layout for children (of all ages!) which we will raffle at our forthcoming Annual Exhibition in aid of a local charity. The Club is grateful to Charles Joliffe and his team for their time and effort in support of this worthy cause."

THE CALEDONIAN SLEEPER – Ian George

I have had an interest in the railway overnight sleeper services ever since I used to lie in bed listening to the still-steam-hauled lengthy sleeper trains passing through my home town along the West Coast mainline in the early hours of the morning. When I read last year that major changes would be taking place to the 2 remaining Scottish sleeper services at the end of the 2017 season I decided to take a trip before the changes took effect.

The two sleeper trains to Scotland run 6 nights each week from London Euston along the West Coast mainline. The “Lowland Sleeper” departs at 23.50 and serves Glasgow and Edinburgh, the train dividing at Carstairs junction. The other service, more interesting and the one I chose, is the “Highland Sleeper” which serves Aberdeen, Inverness and Fort William. This departs earlier, at 21.15. At 16 carriages, it is the longest passenger train handled at Euston, using platform 1. It is usually made up of 2 sleeping cars for Fort William, 4 for Aberdeen, and 6 for Inverness. The remaining stock is 2 “sleeper reclining seater coaches” and 2 “lounge cars” serving food and drinks.

After stopping to pick up at Watford, Crewe and Preston the train leaves the West Coast mainline at Carstairs junction and arrives in Edinburgh Waverley at 0400 hrs. There then takes place 45 minutes of very noisy shunting guaranteed to disturb all but the heaviest slumbers as the train is split then re-assembled into the 3 separate trains. The 2 sleeping cars for Fort William are augmented by a lounge car and 2 standard day coaches, the resulting 5 coach train being the last of the 3 trains to depart at 04.50hrs.

At this point it's appropriate to mention the rolling stock used.

The two classes of loco normally used (provided under contract by GB Rail Freight) are interesting in that both were originally built for an entirely different purpose. The 400 miles trunk haul from Euston is handled by a Class 92. This class of 46 locos are dual voltage (third rail and 25 KV overhead) mixed traffic electric locos originally built in the early 1990's specifically to work through the Channel Tunnel on international freights and the then proposed “Nightstar” international sleeper trains. Six are now used on the Caledonian Sleeper contract.

The locos used from Edinburgh northwards were originally built in 1962 as class 73's for the Southern Region, and were built for third rail electric but with a small (600hp) diesel engine for limited use away from the third rail. GB Rail Freight bought a batch of 73's made redundant from the Gatwick Express operation and had them rebuilt, removing the third rail equipment and installing a 1600 hp diesel engine, to become the class 73/9. Their power/low axle weight makes them ideal for weight-restricted routes such as the West Highland line.



The sleeping cars themselves are BR Mark 3 coaches dating from the early 1980's (they replaced stock from the steam era). These sleeping cars and their accompanying lounge cars were refurbished in 2000 along with a batch of standard Mark 2 coaches which were fitted with reclining seats. The sleeping cars offer first and second class berths, the style of which can best be described as "compact /traditional" with toilets located at the ends of each coach. It is the announced withdrawal of these traditional style sleeping cars that prompted my trip as they are being replaced for the 2018 season by a fleet of 75 new (Spanish built) Mark 5 vehicles which are planned to contain all the modern facilities including en-suites; a different experience altogether.

Getting back to my own expedition, I had been warned that getting a berth on the Fort William sleeper on your choice of date (other than mid- winter) required booking well in advance; I booked 6 months in advance. The reason for this is that the platform length restriction at Euston usually limits the Fort William section to just the 2 sleeping cars; hence also why the Fort William lounge car has to be added at Edinburgh.

From Edinburgh, the Fort William train of the class 73/9 plus 5 coaches heads first to Glasgow, passing through Queen Street station whose layout is unusual in that the upper level is a terminus with the tracks aligned north-south, and below is the lower level of 2 through platforms aligned east-west. From Glasgow, the train first follows the busy Strathclyde 25KV commuter line hugging the north bank of the Clyde for 21 miles to Craigendoran Junction just outside Helensburgh, where it then diverges and climbs away to the north; this is the start of the 99 mile single track West Highland line proper. The line has its distinctive features of red coloured ballast, island platforms, and Swiss chalet style station buildings. Most of the stations are now unmanned but all are well cared for, with many of the original buildings used for tourism facilities.

The scenery along the route is magnificent, starting along the shores of the sea lochs, then climbing across to Loch Lomond (which is breakfast time in the lounge car), then through Crianlarich where the 40 miles branch to Oban diverts away. On round the spectacular “horseshoe curve” to Bridge of Orchy after which the main road and the railway part company, the road heading directly to the coast down Glen Coe whilst the railway strikes away north across the bleakness of Rannoch Moor and the summit of the line at Corrouis, 1347 feet, the UK’s highest and probably remotest mainline station. The railway then skirts around the Ben Nevis range, still snow-capped in mid-May, and on down steep river gorges before reaching Fort William on the shores of Loch Linnhe.

Arrival at Fort William is 10.00hrs and waiting to depart from the other platform is Black Five 45407 “The Lancashire Fusilier” heading the “Jacobite” service along the 41 miles of the West Highland Extension line to Mallaig via the Glenfinnan viaduct and more stunning scenery. Sharp reverse curves and steep gradients create hard and noisy work for the engine.



After a couple of days in Fort William doing the steam trip to Mallaig, and also exploring the Oban branch I returned home on the Scot-rail service train from Fort William to Glasgow Queen Street upper level (another chance to take in the scenery), then a leisurely walk across the architecturally impressive brown-stone city centre to Glasgow Central for the Virgin “Pendolino” service back to Euston. Booking as far ahead as possible for these parts of the journey plus use of the Senior Railcard paid dividends, £9 for the 4 hours Scot-rail journey, and for the 400 miles Virgin Trains journey, first class with a 3 course meal and drinks included, £36. Happy Days.

I can recommend the trip; definitely one for the bucket list.

CLUB DIARY TO END DECEMBER

2017	Running Night	Event	Notes
Wed 20 Sep	00/P4 gauges		
Wed 27 Sep	00 gauge		
Wed 4 Oct	0 gauge		
Sat 7 Oct		Club Layout at Fareham show	Wickwar (N)
Sat 7 Oct		Club member's layout present at Croydon Club show	St. Mary's (Julian Evison)
Sun 8 Oct		Club Layout at Fareham show	Wickwar (N)
Sun 8 Oct		Club member's layout present at Croydon Club show	St. Mary's (Julian Evison)
Wed 11 Oct	N Gauge	All members requested to attend club in preparation for Annual Exhibition	
Fri 13 Oct		Set up Annual Exhibition	Late afternoon and evening at Alderwood School (formerly Connaught School)
Sat 14 Oct		Club Annual Exhibition	Alderwood School (formerly Connaught School)
Sun 15 Oct		Club Annual Exhibition	Alderwood School (formerly Connaught School)
Wed 18 Oct	00/P4 gauges		
Wed 25 Oct	00 gauge		
Sat 28 Oct		Club Layout at Beckenham Club Show	Haydon Sq E.1. (0)
Sat 28 Oct		Club member's layout present at Newbury Club show	Garsdale Head (Mike Le Marie)
Wed 1 Nov	0 gauge		
Sat 4 Nov		Club Layout at Wycrail, High Wycombe	Wickwar (N)
Wed 8 Nov	N Gauge		
Sat 11 Nov		Club member's layout present at Romford Club show	Aldermouth (Jim Edwards)
Sun 12 Nov		Club member's layout present at Romford Club show	Aldermouth (Jim Edwards)
Wed 15 Nov	00/P4 gauges		
Sun 19 Nov		Club Open Day	N, 00, P4 and 0 scale layouts
Wed 22 Nov	00 gauge		
Wed 29 Nov	5 th Wednesday		
Sat 2 Dec		Club member's layout present at Wessex Narrow Gauge Modellers Open Day (Colehill)	St. Mary's (Julian Evison)
Wed 6 Dec	0 gauge	Club AGM	
Wed 13 Dec	N Gauge	Club Christmas Dinner	Hen & Chicken, Froyle
Wed 20 Dec	00/P4 gauges		
Wed 27 Dec	00 gauge	Club Closed	

Would club sections please keep me (Julian) informed of exhibition invitations. Likewise for club members who are attending exhibitions with their own layouts.

Julian Evison (Editor)