

GAUGE NEWS



 **Merry Christmas, Everyone! . . .** 

A Publication of the 7 1/4" Gauge Society Ltd

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THE 7/4 in. GAUGE SOCIETY LTD.



Membership of The 7/4 in. Gauge Society

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- A Publication of
The 7 1/4 in. Gauge Society Ltd. -

7 1/4" GAUGE NEWS

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FRONT COVER:

Perhaps the largest of 7 1/4 in. Gauge locomotives, 5901, East African Railways 'Mount Kenya' steams from the Weston Park Railway sheds, with Bruce Whalley looking to be just in control, as Dave Holroyde records this recent A.G.M. scene.

BACK COVER:

Here, amongst the smallest locomotives on the 7 1/4 in. Gauge, two very small budding engineers are very much in charge of getting this little Maxitrack Simplicity 11 looking its very best; also spotted at the recent A.G.M. at Weston Park.

Mike's Christmas Message

By any yardstick, the A.G.M. 2000 at Weston Park must be judged a great success. Quite the sunniest A.G.M. day on the Saturday that I can recall was seemingly enjoyed by quite the largest gathering of the fraternity ever. Never did so many engines of all shapes and sizes, as well as their owners and builders, along with many friends and visitors bathe in such balmy weather. However, by the Sunday we had reverted to our more usual wet variety of A.G.M. weather. The engine shed was full of so many engines and the field nearby full of so many campers and caravans all obviously enjoying themselves with such intensive activity on the mile and more long facility afforded us by the Weston Park Railway. A never to be forgotten sight of two 7 1/4 in. size Garratts in action brought immense crowds and interest. Our grateful thanks are due to Bruce Whalley and his very small resident team, as well as to groups of members from other clubs, and of course to Brett Rogers and his helpers who had all worked so hard for the Garratts to be in steam for our day. The organisation was tremendous, so thank you to you all. The marquee was full to capacity, sitting and standing for the A.G.M., with train-loads of members being delivered by passing trains in the evening sunshine. The business of the meeting was most ably chaired for the first time by Brian Reading, and thanks to Brian and also our very hard working Secretary, John Nicholson for all their work in preparing and organising the meeting. Soon it was time to award the Charles Simpson prize, and our Vice President, Eric Doyle now did the honours; a unanimous committee decision to award the prize to Dave Holroyde proved most popular and Dave thanked the meeting saying he could now afford a new note-book which brought much hilarity and rapturous applause. Next a surprise award was made to our President, Brian Rogers for his 27 years of work with the Society since his idea to form a 7 1/4 in. Gauge Society. A very surprised indeed President thanked everyone to much prolonged applause. An equally surprised Editor was also given a framed tribute for his 13 years as Editor of the 7 1/4 in. Gauge NEWS, of which he is very proud and I do thank the Committee and contributors to the NEWS which makes this publication much acclaimed. Since we had only two nominations for the two committee positions to be filled, no voting procedure was necessary, even though there may be some feeling that the

members had missed out on their rights to vote for the Committee. Accordingly, we welcome our two new committee members as directors of the Limited Company. David Boyde from Bedford is well known as the driver of his superb Gresley 'Great Northern', and I am sure David will perform equally as well as his 'Pacific' does. We welcome also Tony Gosling, again well known with his private railway at Shute, and so our member in Devon is strategically placed for next year's A.G.M., which our Chairman had pleasure in announcing to the meeting, namely at Beer Heights Light Railway, at Pecorama, the brainchild of my old friend, the late Sydney Pritchard, but most ably carried on by Michael Pritchard who hopes to welcome you all there in 2001. Finally, it remains my great pleasure to wish you all a Merry but Peaceful Christmastime on behalf of the Chairman and Executive of the 7¼ in. Gauge Society Limited, and again so soon.... Merry Christmas to you all.

Mike.

MESSAGE from The President.....

When, at the A.G.M. at Weston Park, Eric Doyle presented me with the framed tribute recognising my work for the Society, I was startled, amazed and very delighted; the accompanying applause was quite overwhelming. I fear that my stuttering impromptu speech was inadequate, and would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee and all those present for their kindness and generosity. May the Society continue to give pleasure to its members for many years to come.

Brian Rogers.

Your Editor was pleased to receive all of the following

Absolute Block; Newsletter of Wortley Top Forge Model Engineers, issue 11 and 12, 2000.
Ashcombe Miniature Railway, newsletter No 30, for Summer, 2000.
Buffer Stop; Journal of Leicester Society of M.E's, Vol 2, issue No 9, August, 2000.
Birmingham Society of M.E's, Ltd, Newsletter, issue 353 for July/August/Sep/Oct, 2000.
CON ROD, Harrow & Wembley Society of M.E's, issue No 50, Autumn, 2000.
The Call Boy, publication of the Golden Gate Live Steamers, Inc, Aug thru' Oct, 2000.
Cromar White Light Railways. Miniature Railways Engineers, updated price-lists.
The Coupling; Newsletter of Bedford M.E. Society, Vol 3, issue 5, August, also Oct, 2000.
J.W.Nemmeth; Scaleway Signals, colour catalogue, 7th ed, June 2000, and see review
The P.L.S. Gazette; Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc, issue May/June/July, & Aug/Sep/Oct, 2000.
Narrow Gauge NEWS, N.G.R. Society issues 239 and 240, for July/September, 2000.
De Regulateur; Stoomgroep West Zuidepark issue nr 111, herfst, 2000.
Stockholes Farm Miniature Railway newsletter for August, 2000.
The WHISTLE; publication of British Columbia Society of M.E.'s, Aug/Sep/Oct 2000.
And finally, 'Roundhouse'; Newsletter of Malden & District Society of M.E's, Autumn, 2000.
Again, very many thanks to all concerned for forwarding all these interesting items.....

Mike.

THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE MEADOW VIEW PRIVATE NARROW GAUGE STEAM RAILWAY

Sunday 2nd July, 2000

by Tony & Merlyn Lewis

The Rev. Bob F. Jackson B.A. was in charge of all the official bits, including driving my resident steam loco Charlotte: I think Bob liked this bit the best.

We had 178 guests on site, and despite a wet bit of weather mid-afternoon, the event went very well.

A highlight of the afternoon was a raffle and the winner will receive a helicopter cockpit flight over the Merseyside waterfront.

A 'G' scale model railway was also in operation during the day.

We intend to hold an annual Open Day with proceeds being donated to Merlyn's Teddy Bear Air Care, a national charity providing specialised inter-hospital medical intensive care helicopters for the rapid transportation of sick and injured children throughout the United Kingdom.

Visiting locos, on the day, were Mike Holt with his Wren (01479), Ian Cromack with his (heavy) Hunslet (02405), and Brian and David Mansergh (02473 & 02485) also with their Hunslet, John Price (00123) with his Tram Car, and Mike McKie who assisted driving Charles.

The children were kept entertained with a bouncy castle and a dutch street organ provided music during the afternoon. Food and drink was also provided.

After nine years of hard work it was good to see our railway officially opened by our good friend Bob Jackson.



KESTREL AND FRIENDS
Birthday Weekend 2nd/3rd September, 2000
at Swanley New Barn Railway
by Matthew Rutherford, member No. 2458

Back in September 1999, HS4000 'Kestrel' escaped exile from the infamous 'Mardyke Cavern' and after a winter of restoration the bird was ready to fly, and fly she did!.... The debut of the Brush prototype was at Easter, 2000 and has performed faultlessly since. So we thought it appropriate to give the old Essex bird a bit of a 'birthday bash' and so invited some friends to join in. To make this happen, many months of planning and preparation had to be done. More than 80 locomotives have been built by the Essex based Mardyke Railways and the idea was to get as many of them together as possible for the Kestrel's birthday week-end, so the enquiries went on with positive results and some very interesting finds, although Hong Kong did seem a little far for a Mardyke HST!.. The Gala was certainly going to be modern-traction orientated, but it was decided to add a few steam kettles to the event to keep an even keel. The event coincided with another arrival to the ever growing fleet of locomotives, since Peter Jackson's 'Snowplough', sorry A4 Gresley Pacific, must have predicted a heavy fall of snow when he built the A4s!.. Anyway, she would be a useful tool to the Swanley New Barn Railway, both pulling passenger trains and for waving the flag for our Railway at events around the country.

It was at this stage that we decided to extend the invites to non-Mardyke locomotives, since 'Kestrel' wasn't fussy, being an Essex bird. By early August final negotiations were being made for the use of locomotives from Chingford, Moors Valley, Great Cockrow, Hollycombe and even Mr De-Smedt who retired some years ago from locomotive building, began to show interest and offered two locomotives for the occasion. By this time Brian Howorth confirmed that would bring his famous 'Sprinter' multiple-unit to Swanley, so we knew that we had an event and that the Gala was really starting to take shape, and 'Kestrel' got so excited with all the goings-on, she suffered a bit of a coolant leak!.. On August 6th, members of our railway took the opportunity to visit the E.W.S. Open week-end at Old Oak Common, West London, and as well as looking at all the trains there, we handed out some of our leaflets, well a few thousand, but obviously they wouldn't all come to Kestrel's Gala, but it did raise awareness that there was a top 7¼ in. Gauge railway in the South-East.

The first locomotive to arrive on site for the Gala was the Mardyke Deltic from the Great Cockrow Railway at Chertsey, this having been collected by our member three weeks beforehand, since the loco would need a bit of work on it before we could run it on passenger trains. The G.C.R. used the 'Deltic' on works trains and so its condition had deteriorated somewhat over the years and kept out of the public gaze. Members of the G.C.R. must have thought we were mad as we left with their decrepit 'Deltic' in tow as we headed back to Swanley, and as we passed the M25 services station, suddenly it dawned upon us that we were!.. On arrival at Swanley, we unloaded and shunted it into our workshops, not before she got a glimpse of our own Mardyke 'Deltic' D9015 'Tulyar' as it was working a passenger train passing the sheds. It must have been love at first sight for the two Deltics, but 'Pinza' as the G.C.R. one would become, would have to wait. The next week-end, off to Mardyke's to collect the 'A4', which was part of a collection, but this was going to have a new lease of life working trains at Swanley, and also we were to pick up the first of two engines that were just coming for the week-end Gala. The G-G-1 is a 20 wheeled American Electric locomotive which ran on the Pennsylvania Railroad, but the miniature has a small petrol engine and has not been

seen in public before, having been stored since 1982 and so needing a little spruce up and encouragement before it ran. With both the 'A4' and the G-G-1 safely at Swanley, and 'Pinza' nearly looking like a 'Deltic' once more, the sheds became very interesting indeed.

Thursday before Gala time, it was then off to the Moors Valley Railway near Ringwood to pick up 'Tinkerbell', no ordinary locomotive, but the original Tinkerbell built by Roger Marsh. It would be nice to see it double-heading with our own Tinkerbell 'Owd Rosie', but this was in the workshop for major boiler repairs. We arrived back late, so 'Tinkerbell' had to sleep in very alien surroundings with the diesels!...urrr...

Friday morning saw us back to Essex to collect the second engine from Mardyke's, and yes, we had a date with a frog !. This locomotive was an S.N.C.F. Electric Co-Co which also had not seen daylight for years and so maybe it thought it was stuck in the Channel tunnel? Anyway it was back to Swanley with the Frog, and the Toll-collectors at the Dartford crossing must have thought that we were building a 7¼ in. gauge railway across the bridge with all these locos crossing the Thames!.. Upon arrival back at the 7¼ in. Gauge Museum, alias Swanley New Barn Railway, the 'frog' was off the trailer and on to a train which it worked for the rest of the day. By tea-time, Brian had arrived with the Sprinter unit, which was put in the shed ready for service on the Saturday, whilst Brian sprinted to his hotel.

In the evening it was off to Chingford to meet John Baker at their track to pick up their Mardyke Deltic 'Mayfly'.... try looking this one up in your ABC. We had not met anyone from this club before and so it was virgin territory on both sides. We arrived late and saw a dodgy-looking car lurking at the Park gates around 11.p.m. We'll let you off John, but the Police may not be as tolerant. John led us through the dark park towards



Des de Smedt holding his mounted presentation



their railway . . . we didn't look at all suspicious in our boiler suits!?. And so the 'Deltic' was loaded and back to Swanley, well past midnight, but the sight of three 'Deltics' in the moonlight was pretty stirring. Since we wanted some sleep now, we shut up shop without realising that our illustrious Chairman was still putting his locomotive together in readiness for the Gala.... oh well... that settles the theory that Chairmen are not ever seen at the Railways; they just turn up at night, see nocturnal.!

Saturday arrived with the first departure from Lakeside being the birthday girl herself 'Kestrel' and showing off all her capabilities upon the track. 'Tinkerbelle' was in steam and soon followed much to the pleasure of the punters. Highlights of the day included the arrival of a second locomotive from the Chingford club, being a big narrow-gauge diesel-electric type which baffled our Chairman... 'I thought that my loco was going to be the biggest at the Gala', anyway the Chairman's loco, also a narrow-gauge diesel, made its passenger-hauling debut in style, double-heading with 'Tinkerbelle' during the day.

Around 1 p.m. and it was time for a deltic mega-thrash, the three 'Deltics' heading a 10-coach load.. Hell-fire!. The assault up the bank from Lakeside could only be described as X-rated. The Class '08' from Hollycombe Steam Collection was also proving popular, that's if it got out of the way of the triple-headed Deltics. Later in the day there was a presentation to Des de Smedt of a nameplate mounted on wood of 'County of Kent', since this is the name of our Mardyke class '47'.

On Sunday the Gale continued full swing, with lots of departures from Lakeside and many of the trains packed to the gunwales. The Gala was a great success and the weather kept fine. At the end of the day, all the trains were 'on-shed' apart from Brian's Sprinter which was still running with everyone having a go. Brian, you may get your Sprinter back at some point later this year.

I would like to thank the following on behalf of the Swanley New Barn Railway Society for making this such a memorable week-end. Jim Haylock, Ian Allan, John Butt, John Baker and his team, Des De Smedt, The Hollycombe lads, Ken Rutherford, Brian Howorth and everyone else who came and supported the event.

Locomotives in operation over the week-end; 2/3 September 2000

Number	Name	Class	Based	Builder.
HS4000	Kestrel	Brush(Prototype)	Swanley N.B.R.	Mardyke.
150.001	Sprinter	Class 150	Parkside	B. Howorth
-	Dougal	Class '08'	Hollycombe	Curwen.
D 7076	-	Hymek '135'	Swanley N.B.R.	Mardyke.
-	Tinkerbell	0-4-2T	Moors Valley Ry.	R. Marsh.
40101	-	S.N.C.F.	Mardyke	Mardyke.
-	Mayfly	Deltic	Chingford	Mardyke.
D9007	Pinza	Deltic	G.C.R	Mardyke.
-	-	Bo-Bo	Chingford	Chingford.
-	Tegan	0-4-0DH	Swanley N.B.R.	J. Deans.
D 7612	Steptoe	Class '25'	ditto.	E. Ward.
-	Romy	Romulus	ditto	-
D9015	Tullyar	Deltic	ditto	Mardyke.

Locomotives on static display

47512	County of Kent.	Class 47	Swanley N.B.R	Mardyke
-	Tich	Tich	Hollycombe	?
414	Montezuma	C 19	Swanley N.B.R	J. Stubbs
4468	Mallard	LNER A4	ditto	Mardyke
4727	Pennsylvania	G-G-1	Mardyke	Mardyke
-	Owd Rosie	2-6-2T	Swanley N.B.R.	J. Stubbs
1	The Lorry	0-4-0	ditto	E. Ward.

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TRADE TOPICS

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION. I am sure readers will be pleased to see the photograph of Richard and his Birthday cake, presented to him for the occasion whilst he was at Comrie. We all join in the sentiments expressed in Scotland, with belated Birthday wishes but also to thank Richard for the sterling work he does for the 7 1/4 in. Gauge Society, and for the excellent coverage he gives our traders under the "Trade Topics" heading. The 7 1/4 in. Gauge NEWS would be all the poorer without Richard's efforts in this field. Happy Birthday, Richard and many, many thanks from the Committee and all the members.



Photo:
Mark Sharphouse

By Richard Shaw

I would like to thank all those members who I met at the AGM, I am sure that, like me you were impressed by the large range of models displayed and operated during the weekend, one of the busiest ever! I would like to thank all of you whom bought an engine and made the weekend so enjoyable. It's just a pity that the rain significantly curtailed running on the Sunday. I would like to thank all those traders who came to show their products. It was a good opportunity for members to see some of the traders who do not normally exhibit at the model engineering shows.

I would also like to thank those members I met at the recent open weekends at Moors Valley Railway and Eastleigh Lakeside Railway. Both are very impressive commercial lines and it was interesting to see the dual gauge 7¼ in. and 10¼ in. track at the latter. I also visited an open day at the Chesterfield Society of Model Engineers, although sadly the number of visitors was very low due to the event occurring during the fuel crisis. I was very impressed by the amount of hard work being carried out by members in developing their ground level 5 in. and 7¼ in. dual gauge track. I was also shown the route where they intend to lay an extension and their steaming bays, which are currently under construction. The completed line should look very impressive in its wooded location.

Also a new advertiser in the last issue and this issue is Bruce Whalley who operates the line at Weston Park. Members who were at the AGM will have seen the substantial 22hp diesel hydraulic locomotive built for the line at Weston Park. He can also offer Steam and diesel repairs and overhauls construction of new diesel locomotives and passenger carriages, track, signalling and point manufacture. Bruce also offers a safety inspection service.

At the AGM Adrian Sant showed me their 7¼ in. bogie kit. These bogies have been around for some time and are a proven design. Just recently they have reduced the price by £50.00 and offered as a 'home assembly' kit. Only spanners & a screwdriver are required. The steelwork is all galvanised to reduce the risk of corrosion and can be put together in around 20 minutes. He was intending to let me loose on assembling a kit, however during the show he sold the examples he had brought with him for me to put together and review! These kits are priced from £330.00 plus vat per bogie.

Also on display were samples of the various rail sections that Cromar White can supply and samples of their new polythene sleepers. A 4000mm (13ft 1½ in.) length of their 27 mm high steel rail with undrilled plastic sleepers costs £47.50 plus vat. If the sleepers are drilled the price increases to £66.50. The price also includes bzp hex head steel coach screws and washers to attach the rail to the sleepers.

The sleepers can also be supplied separately 30mm high by 38mm wide by 355mm long. Undrilled price is 86p plus vat and drilled price is £1.20 plus vat: a minimum order of 100 applies. Cromar White suggest that a length of 27mm high alloy rail requires 26 sleepers per 4000mm (13ft 1½ in.) length of rail- this can be reduced to 20 sleepers if the steel rail is used. A 4572mm (15ft.) length of the 32mm high alloy rail will require 30 sleepers.

They can also supply uncut planks of the polythene. A 3100 mm length of 30 mm x 147 mm polythene costs £13.06 plus VAT. By my sums you could get 24 sleepers approximately 380 mm long by 30mm deep by 38mm wide from one piece of this material. For more lines with very heavy axle loadings, i.e. large narrow gauge locomotives/commercial lines it may be worth increasing the sleeper width to approximately 72 mm and cut 16 sleepers from a plank.

Polythene, whilst being rot proof, will burn, so remember to protect with a sheet of aluminium or similar in those locations where you plan to drop your fire!

Roger Greatrex of Knightley Light Railways had a part complete model of one of his battery locomotives on display at the AGM. I was very impressed with the standard of finish on the body. Roger also had a display of his electric motors and gearboxes as advertised in the last issue of the magazine, along with a range of the cnc turned steel wheels he has available.

Members have for some time been asking about obtaining society name badges. David Tedford has kindly agreed to arrange this. If you require a name badge please send a cheque for £3.50 made payable to Gibson Plus to David at 10 Leslie Hill Crescent, Donaghadee, Co. Down BT21 0HX. Please CLEARLY PRINT the name you require and include a self addressed envelope. The badges are approximately 1in. by 3in. and are complete with the 7/8in. Society logo.

Members may also be aware that there are some management changes under way at Reeves, unfortunately an announcement is due shortly after the press date for the magazine so I am unable to give you any further details. I hope there may be a note in the Newsletter if time and space permit, otherwise I will have further information in the next issue of the 'News'.

Ian Holder, who produces plans for the GWR combined vacuum brake valves, and the completed valves to order, has sent me a note to that he has moved; his new address is 'Hulvers', Crescent Road, Aldeburgh, Suffolk, IP15 5HW. Also Robert Baker, who produces a range of boiler fittings, is moving; his new address will be 69 Leymoor Road, Longwood, Huddersfield, West Yorks. HD3 4TN. His phone/fax number remains unchanged at 01484 654421. He hopes to have examples of some new fittings including a new whistle, suitable for 7/8in. locos and globe valves for 3/4in. pipe on display at the London Model Engineering exhibition at Pickets Lock. (12-14 January, 2001).

Rodney Weaver has sent me a copy of *Industrial Gwynedd - Volume 4* published by Plateway Press (ISBN 1 871980 44 5) at £7.50. This 52 page book features the Dinorwic Quarry and its industrial heritage, whilst the cover features a typical scene of a Hunslet shunting in part of the quarry. The book features several aspects of the quarry including the iron waterwheel at Gilfach Ddu, the restoration of the Vivian Quarry V2 incline and various boats that have been discovered in Lyn Padarn and Lyn Pens. The railway section is limited to a review of the distinctive Crampton Locomotive 'Fire Queen' which was unusual in that it did not have the conventional locomotive frames but all the fittings were attached to the boiler in the style of a traction engine. It operated on the Padarn Railway from the 1840's until withdrawal in 1886; remarkably the locomotive WAS retained at the Quarry until preservation at Penrhyn Castle Museum. The railway section only takes up 5 pages of the book but I found the rest very interesting; if only I was a generation or two older and been able to have seen the quarry in its heyday, rather than as a tourist attraction!

Member Ken Richardson has a number of surplus Dihart adjustable tungsten carbide reamers with a No. 1 MT shank for sale at £3.65 each including p&p.

They are available in 1/4in., 3/8in. and 1/2in., also 16 and 17mm. For further details please contact Ken on 01564 741881 for further details.

Brian Baker of Eastwood Carriage and Wagon Company has dropped me a line to say that he has two new wagons, which he intends to release at London Model Engineering Exhibition at Pickets Lock (12- 14 Jan 2001). Our society will be having a stand at this exhibition as in previous years.

It is planned that the society will also be present at the Sinsheim Show 12-14 January 2001 as well as the above show. I am particularly looking forward to this later exhibition due to its size and the appetising reports given to me by members who visited this year's exhibition. Prepare yourself for a Trade Topics with a difference! That's if I can translate the catalogues; the less said the better about my German exam grade the better!

I have recently seen some examples of the safety notices produced by Fincken Miniature Railways for fitting to coaches. I think this is a very good idea since in the event of an accident you can prove that safety information was made available to the passengers. The adhesive appears to be quite strong resisting attempts to remove it. The price also seems reasonable. Christopher also hopes to produce a larger version to display on stations giving passenger safety information. Contact Christopher for further information.



Safety notices produced by Fincken Miniature Railways

Photo: Richard Shaw

An interesting book I have recently read is 'Locomotive Boilers their Construction and Maintenance' produced by the Heritage Railway Association and edited by Alan Garraway. Whilst the book does not make any reference to miniature locomotives, it details the main working parts of a boiler and types of stays. The book also offers guidance on maintenance of boilers, which are applicable to boilers irrespective of the gauge, such as warming the boiler up slowly to avoid stressing the boiler and using water treatment in areas where the water is acidic or hard. The book also includes a number of illustrations of boilers that have failed and there are photos of the components of some boilers belonging to preserved locomotives showing the corrosion that has occurred. The story of what happened to the boiler of a Pacific locomotive (4-6-2) of the SNCF (French National Railway Company) should make anyone think, since the boiler was blown off the chassis and came to rest 512 feet away. Although the boiler pressures are generally lower in our miniature locomotives (although there are some that run at similar pressures to some of the smaller standard gauge locomotives) this book further highlights the need for competent construction and maintenance of our boilers. One only has to remember the problems some preserved railways are currently having with their boilers! Ian Allan publishes the book at £9.99 (ISBN 0-7110-2746-3). Overall it is an interesting book with a lot of useful facts for those who may have limited experience of steam boilers and are just getting involved in the hobby, however I do think the book is a little expensive at the cover price for only 56 pages, although it is a hard backed book. It is a pity that a cheaper soft back version is not available.

Dave Carder of Roanoke has dropped me a line to say they are constructing a 0-6-0 petrol hydraulic, the size is approximately 40 in. long by 22 in. wide by 28 in. high. It will be powered by a 5½hp electric start engine and come with working headlight and horns. Also under construction is a Model T Ford Railcar approximately 30 in. long and 14 in. wide, and is powered by a 2hp engine through an Easton Hydrostat. Many industrial and light railways used vehicles converted for rail use either as works vehicles or light passenger use. Examples include the British Aluminium line at Fort William (the book published about this line by the Narrow Gauge Society is most interesting) and I believe several Colonel Stevens lines including the Kent and East Sussex Railway had such vehicles.

Keith and Derek of Express locos had the initial stage of the plug (from which the mould will be made) of a cab for the British Railways Warship diesel hydraulic locomotive. The prototypes were used on the Western region of British Rail until they were deemed to be non-standard because of their hydraulic drive. The locomotives were painted in green, maroon and finally blue. Two examples are preserved. These can usually be seen at the Severn Valley Railway and the East Lancs Railway. The model will be battery powered with two 3kW motors (roughly 8 hp) and the loco can be fitted with either air or vacuum for the train brakes (as can the F7). I was impressed by the F7 running at the AGM which has now been fitted with a sound generator that reflects the speed of the full sized locomotive, from ticking over to full power. The sound generator, which is an optional extra, actually produces the sound of a full size F7 from recordings that have been programmed onto a computer chip. Express locomotives hope to produce a similar system for their Warship. Express locos now have a web site at expresslocos.com.

At Donington, Winson announced they are to build a batch of 25 GWR Small Prairie tank locomotives (2-6-2T) based on the 45XX class. The model is based on the later models with an enlarged water tank capacity. There are a number of these locomotives surviving in preservation including examples at Didcot, West Somerset Railway and the Dean Forest Railway. I believe some locomotives in this class were fitted with push/pull apparatus for use with auto coaches and I am sure that one of these would look very smart coupled to either an Aristocraft or Beveridge Engineering auto coach.

Finally, for those members with young children or grandchildren, the latest storybook from the Moors Valley Railway series 'The Little Railway in the Big Park' entitled 'Talos and his New Train' is now available. The book is priced at £3.99 plus post and packaging and can be obtained from the Moors Valley Railway on 01425 471415 (ISBN0-953X113-1-X). An ideal Christmas Present for the train drivers of the future!

Whilst at the Moors Valley Jim Haylock showed me the glass fibre matting he is using to lag the boilers of his engines. It comes in a variety of sizes and thicknesses. Apparently the Mid Hants Bullied Pacific 'Bodmin' was fitted with this lagging after its last rebuild and during steam trials it still had steam on the gauge 2 days after the fire had been dropped! The material is available from the Carborundum Co. Ltd., Mill Lane, St Helens, Merseyside, WA11 8LP. Phone No. 01744 882941. The specification most suitable for 7¼ in. locos would be the 13 mm (approx. ½ in.) thick. Reference code CAR128/13.

I would like to finish by wishing all our members well for Christmas and all through the forthcoming year. I look forward to seeing members at Sinsheim, the London Model Engineering Show at Pickets Lock and not forgetting the AGM at Pecorama in Seaton, Devon between the 28-30 September 2001.

RODE WOODLAND RAILWAY.

Note from Michael D.Marshall & David N.Underhill.

As many of you will know, the Rode Woodland Railway operates within and as part of the attractions at the Tropical Bird Gardens at Rode in Somerset. Unfortunately, due to financial circumstances, the Bird Gardens are to close, unless a buyer is found, on 29th October, 2000. The Railway will then be unable to operate, and will therefore also have to close after 13 years of running. Our Open Weekend on 16th and 17th, September will be our last, and we welcomed all those who have supported us in the past, and indeed anyone who had not been able to visit us before. We are graceful to the staff at the Bird Gardens who have always been most helpful, and very supportive of our efforts, especially Mike Curzon, a Director and Manager, and Keith and Sonia Glen, the owners. It may be that the railway could continue if the Bird Gardens should be sold- we hope it is not 'the end of the line'!.....

BOOK REVIEW

SCALEWAY SIGNALS

For the Connoisseur Railway Operator

by J.W. Nemeth, Engineer

This is an excellent and colourful catalogue of what is available from this source to finish off our miniature railway scene. Whilst much time, effort and indeed cash is spent in building or acquiring our dream engine, and the 7½ in. gauge trackwork to run on, there is no doubt whatsoever that the installation of even one modest starter or home signal gives the outfit purpose and a degree of atmosphere out of all proportion to this expense. The aim of many has often been to have a fully signalled miniature railway, and this adds profoundly to the operating pleasures. Herewith, Joe Nemeth has admirably filled a need with his lovely scale signals and all the accessories as listed and illustrated in his new 7th Edition catalogue, dated June, 2000.

A well presented 18-page loose-leaf A4 size 'encyclopedia' of 7½ in. gauge signalling equipment is well worth having for the moderate cost. Recently I observed a possibly unique installation of one of Joe Nemeth's junction signals, seen outside the premises of Martin's Models, the Garden Railway Specialists, at Hatton Gardens, secretively situated at Kington in deepest Herefordshire; it most usefully signalled me in the right direction as one entered the small industrial estate there, and the exquisite fully operational and detailed signal gleaming in the sunshine was quite a joy to be seen.

M.A.T.

TRACK SIGNS

by Jeff Hurst

I have had trouble with children running on the track, which has actually caused minor damage. To try to deter them I made a pattern and got my local foundry to cast a few copies which seem to be having the desired effect. The foundry charged me £10 each for them, and if anyone wants one or two I'll be happy to organise delivery. You will, of course, have to paint them and make a suitable stand. You can find my address in the members' directory.



TANDY'S MARAUDERS

by Harvey J Fisher

The conception of this idea came about through meeting other like-minded people who, like me, enjoy going to other clubs to run their engines.

The name 'Tandy's Marauders' came about because I and two friends went to Bedford Track on one of their open days last year, where I met Mike Tandy and his friend from Oxford Club, whereupon I invited him and his friends over to the Northampton Club for one of our open days.

We mainly drive 7½ in. gauge but sometimes also 5 inch gauge. This is not to say that people who have 3½ in. gauge are to be excluded.

Some time later I had an invite to a private garden railway, for a set number of people, so I invited Mike and he was able to bring along some of his friends and their locos, and so it has gone on since. We keep in touch with each other by fax and telephone.

Now I feel sure that there must be other like-minded people, throughout the model clubs in Great Britain, who like me, enjoy going to other model clubs, finding out what they have to offer and, most important of all, remembering to put your name and the club you represent in the Visitors Book. Also it would be beneficial to all, if you belong to a model club which has at least one of the three track gauges, and you have a current boiler certificate.

If you think you come into this category of model engineers, why not get in touch with me, Harvey Fisher, by phoning me at home on 01908 511103 (which has an answerphone) or 01604 827245 (work number between 4pm and 5pm tuesdays only) or by fax on 01604 661024. The old gentleman himself Mike Tandy has asked that his phone/fax number be included - 01993 841463

Yours with great expectation, Harvey Fisher.

MAY YOUR FIRE ALWAYS BURN BRIGHT WITHOUT CLINKER!

THE GLENROY MINIATURE RAILWAY

by David Day

The property was chosen for its suitability for retirement and the construction of a 7½ in. gauge railway. It is not in the middle of Scotland, it is in the middle of Norfolk.

The plot is 280 feet by 55 feet and slopes slightly towards the back. It contains a brick built workshop 30 ft x 10 ft - what luxury! It also contains a nice bungalow. While negotiating for the purchase the surveyor commented that it was a workshop with a bungalow annex.

The hardest and least interesting job is unfortunately the first one during railway construction, digging out for the trackbed. Hiring a mini-digger would have made life much easier, but at least I became very fit. As the garden sloped gently downwards towards the back the spoil was used to construct an embankment on the bottom curve,

which reduced the maximum gradient to 1 in 50. The 20in x 9in trench was half filled with builders rubble and well compacted. I managed to obtain a supply of plastic woven mail bags which were slit down the sides, opened out and placed on the rubble. Sharp flint was used for ballast, this is the local stone and is cheap, I know it is not recommended but most of the preserved railways in this area use it and that is good enough for me. Mine has been down for three years now and I have a stable and weed free "top".

Track construction was the next big job. After some investigation I decided to use Don Fifer's lightweight aluminum rail. As my interest is narrow gauge I was a bit concerned but Don assured me that it is suitable for all known 7¼ in. gauge vehicles as long as you use the recommended sleeper spacing of 6 inches between centres. He was right. I must say that I was pleased with this rail as it was quite easy to curve and work with generally. Construction began by building a 10 foot by 2½ foot bench, well worth it if you have the space. Enough timber for sleepers was obtained direct from a local saw mill, who pressure treated and delivered it at no extra charge. 3in. x 2in. x 18in. sleepers look very narrow gauge in 7¼ in. and make for very stable track. After cutting to size I gave the sleepers a soak in a mixture of creosote and old engine oil for a further six weeks.

I made simple track gauges and sleeper spacers and after a bit of practice could make six or seven 10 ft lengths of track before boredom set in. Fish plates were cut from steel flat sections and anointed with a good dollop of waterproof grease during assembly. Rail was curved by bending between two lengths of round steel bar turned to fit in the convenient holes drilled in the wooden jaws of a Black and Decker Workmate. After a bit of practice I became quite expert at applying the right amount of pressure to achieve the required curve without kinking the rail. Nine sets of points were constructed - this is where the bench was very useful - much easier on the back than crawling around on the ground. You really need access to a milling machine to machine the point blades and recesses in the stock rails. Making and laying your own track and seeing it grow is extremely satisfying.

The line consists of a continuous circuit in the rear garden with a diagonal reversing loop at the far end. There is another loop serving a small halt and the two road carriage shed on the inner side of the circuit behind the workshop and another road leading into the combined workshop and loco shed. A branch line runs into the front garden from the main circuit leading to the turntable and runaround loop. There is a total of approximately nine hundred feet of track in all.

So the usual route consists of as many clockwise circuits as you wish, followed by reversing the train via the reversing loop and repeating circulating, but in the anticlockwise direction. You are now going in the right direction to turn onto the branch line when the fancy takes you. Having decided to go down the branch, uncouple when you reach the turntable, turn round, run round the train and couple up again and off you go back to the main circuit. This can be repeated until you get fed up. I never have yet! Plenty of variety here, small railways do not have to be boring.

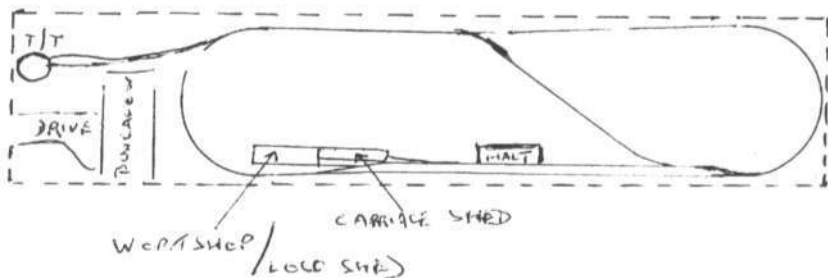
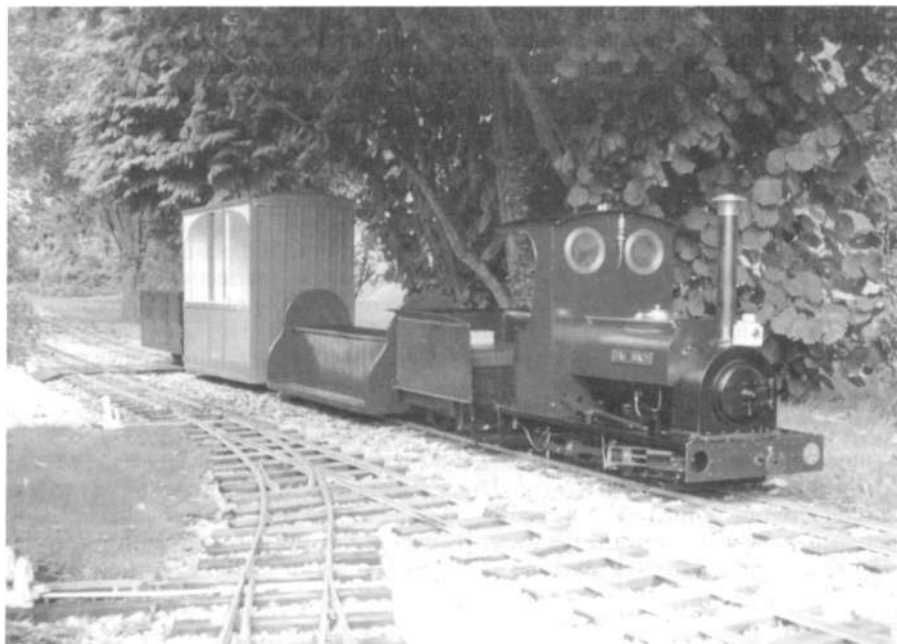
The relevant pointwork is controlled from the cab by the driver using rodding extensions.

Motive power is an Alice class Hunslet which was built to to my own design, but I utilised some castings from both the Reeves and Milner models.

The rolling stock is all semi-scale historic Ffestiniog, and all four-wheelers. Two coal wagons, two open class bug boxes, and one semi-open bug box (observation car). They are designed to sit people in, rather than being accurate scale models. On the drawing board I have two enclosed bug boxes and a quarryman's coach. As some of the rolling stock have 22 inch wheel bases and some of the track has 24 feet radius curves, it is

essential to machine the wheels to Society recommended profiles for narrow gauge rolling stock, and essential to have one eighth of an inch gauge widening on all curved track and turnouts.

So what of the future? I am not sure, but while the official railway cat, Livingstone Thompson, is patrolling the permanent way, I often dream of a "Prince" hauled heritage train.



WATER CRANE AND TOWER FOR THE WILLOW WOOD MINIATURE RAILWAY.

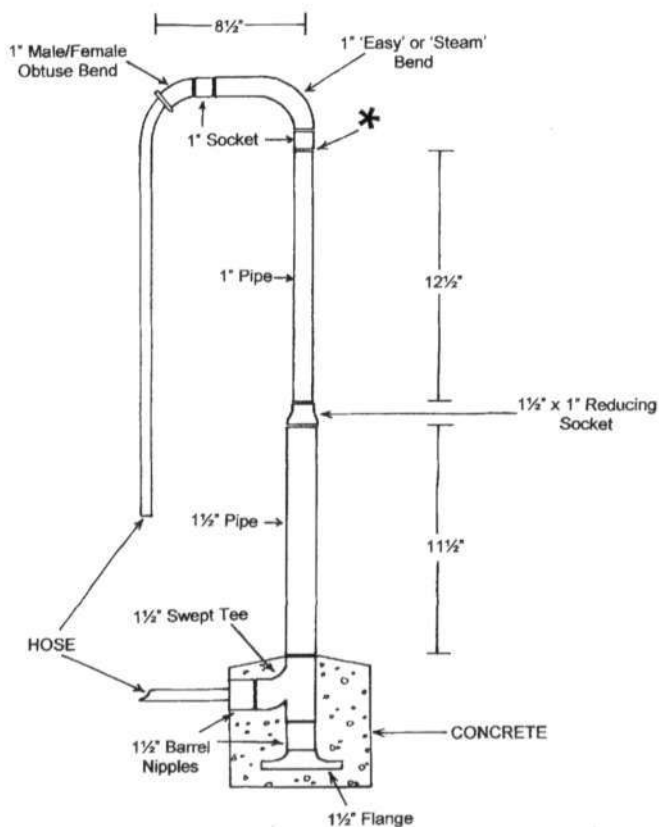
by Michael Ward

Wishing to install a water crane and water tower for the Willow Wood Railway, a number of sketches were made but, in each case, arranging a joint that would allow a swivelling arm without leaking proved a problem. One of our group came up with a simple solution - we built up a water crane using standard iron plumbing fittings and iron pipe (see sketch) and then threaded a length of good quality garden hose through the centre. The hose has sufficient flexibility to allow the head of the crane to rotate through 180 degrees without leaks. The photograph shows the water crane standing in front of the water tower prior to installation. A neighbour gave us an old rivetted galvanised tank which had been used as a water butt and therefore had no holes cut in it to spoil the appearance. The tank rests on a brick tower and the space below the tank, which is furnished with a door, serves to contain loco coal and oil etc. A felted roof covers the tank. The actual water container within the tank IS a plastic dustbin and the connection to the water crane is by plastic pipe thus ensuring perfectly clean water with no risk of contamination by dirt. A valve to control the flow of water is located just below ground level adjacent to the concrete base of the water crane and is protected by a wooden cover. Most of the materials used were either left-overs from other projects, from the scrap box or gifts from friends. A fair estimate of cost for the water crane together with the tower had everything been purchased new would be £120. We intend to add two further water cranes to cater for our annual enthusiasts day. Although the Willow Wood Railway is a small garden railway (end to end, two stations and passing loop with signal box) we can have up to four steam loco's running at a time - as well as several electrics. A final note: the household water supply is via a water softener and so softened water is used to fill the tower. For those loco owners who prefer it, mains water is available at the loco shed and rain water is also available.



WATER CRANE

DIMENSIONS AND CONSTRUCTION DETAILS



Note: All joints except * screwed up tight

KEEPING ON TRACK

by Peter Zwicky-Ross, No. 1692

We are all going to hear a great deal more on the topic of health and safety. Doubtless we shall be subjected to an ever increasing barrage of Eurobunkum embracing every conceivable aspect of our hobby - and things not foreseen to-day will doubtless be scrutinised and tested for every possible hazard, real or imagined. Government and the state of democracy being what it is, we need to be very certain to do nothing to attract undue attention to our activities.

Of course it goes without saying that we should all do our best to run our railways safely. This means, among other things, using common sense and applying imagination in order to forestall accidents. Looking critically at a railway in its entirety is quite a big job; so many things can present hazards and by no means all accidents arise from lack of foresight on the part of the operator. We all know just how daft can be the behaviour of passengers of all ages, not just the kids. Taking a look at all aspects of safety could fill volumes; this article narrows down to a consideration of one specific peril.

Most of us will doubtless agree that the worst thing that can befall a trainload of passengers is a collision of some kind, either with an immovable object or another train. The next worst thing is hardly less serious, or alarming to passengers, a derailment of rolling stock at service speed. This of course can be actually injurious and, at best, will cause immediate consternation and loss of confidence. It is absolutely vital that, come what may, trains stay on the track. Avoidance of collisions is largely a matter of organisation - and, obviously, route and layout design, among other things, including brakes which is a big subject not raised in this article. Staying firmly on the rails is mostly determined by track and rolling stock design and maintenance.

Much of what one can say about track is so obvious that repetition seems tedious. But I have observed that attitudes to track gauge can be perfunctory. The truth is that seven and a quarter should mean just that - with possibly a slight easing to seven and three-eighths on plain track curves of less than about twenty feet radius. The accuracy with which gauge is maintained can be much influenced by the design of the track. Flat-bottomed rail secured with screws looks fine, indeed is fine, but gauge is only held if screws of the correct type fit snugly into pre-drilled holes in sleepers that bring the plain shank part of the screws hard against the rail foot. Some people are inclined to derogate track made of steel strip pressed into slotted sleepers. Certainly it is visually less attractive than other types, but mass-producing the sleepers using a machine that cuts the slots very accurately actually results in a track of exemplary gauge constancy. Jig welding track to steel sleepers is similarly good for holding gauge. We will all agree that a vehicle on our lines is actually supported on the very narrow baseline of about eight inches. This means that if the centre of gravity is to remain firmly within that baseline the rail "top" must be carefully maintained. However, it is true that derailments seldom occur on plain track without severe curves; mostly they happen on points or crossings.

But I shall not be sidetracked into lengthy considerations about the design of points except to observe that I can see no good reason for a wheel back-to-back measurement of other than $6\frac{1}{4}$ in., with check rails to suit, no matter what sort of rolling stock is run. Purists may argue about the scale appearance of wheels but the truth is that true scale wheels are simply impractical on a passenger-carrying line unless it is engineered to most demanding limits and with nothing but large radius curves. Like the rest of the track, points should be made true to gauge, check rails should be accurately fitted and switch blades should be machined to fit snugly so that point-splitting cannot occur in the facing direction. Point operating mechanisms should be designed to exert a steady

pressure on switch blades when set for either road. Really all very obvious, as I said. This leaves the rolling stock.

Firstly, a few thoughts and images. Imagine sitting on a dining chair with the legs the usual distance apart front to back but only about eight inches apart crosswise. Very little sideways movement would result in our biting the Axminster. If we were to take a saw and shorten the legs to about ten inches or so a big improvement would result. If we were then to add arm rests that confined us to a central area on a seat about 19 inches wide we would then have to make a much bigger effort to fall over. Childish? Perhaps, but it does drive home the point that passenger-carrying coaches should be designed a) for as low a centre of gravity as can comfortably be achieved and b) that it is a mistake to make vehicles wider than just enough to accommodate the normal backside - and I will say no more about that than I should, except to say that a seat width of 19 inches seems to be comfortable for most folk. So what about the carriage type?

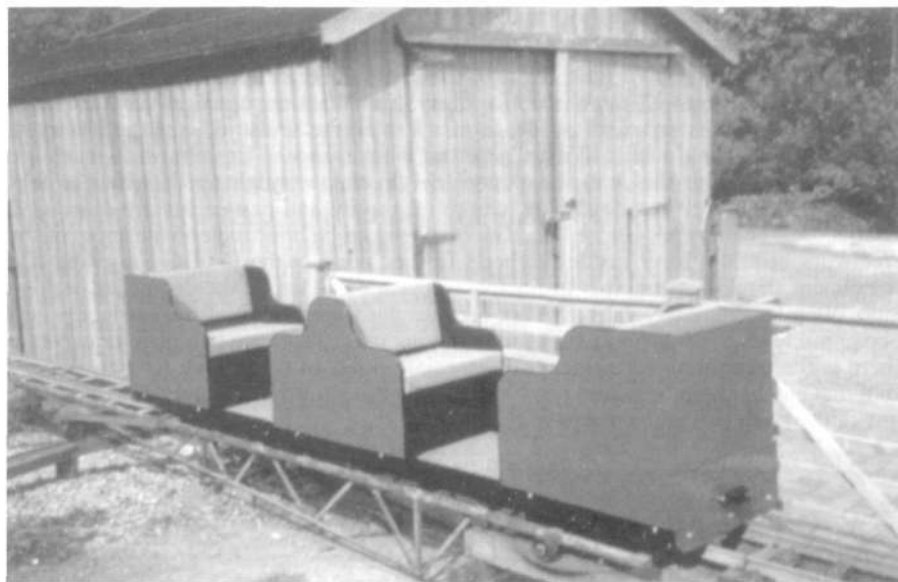
It has of course been well-established for many years that our passenger vehicles are of two basic designs: sit-in or sit-astride. In many ways, the sit-astride carriage has much to commend it. The design will usually permit the passengers' legs almost to reach rail level and this, with the seat at no more height than enough to sit with the legs comfortably bent, gives a fairly low centre of gravity and passengers are quite well confined to the vehicle's centre line. The carriage can be constructed with most of the steelwork at a low level inside the body further keeping the C of G low. And if a derailment should happen, it is instinctive to reach out a leg on the downward-leaning side, often lessening any danger. Also, because the widest point of the carriage is just above rail level it is inherently resistant to tipping over. There are two main drawbacks: there is the temptation for passengers, especially kids, to try to kick passing fixtures (not that any ought to be within reach); and of course sit-astrides simply don't resemble any railway vehicles in the macro world.



Millerbeck "Sit Astride" footboards only an inch above rail level

Photo: P. Zwicky-Ross

I illustrate a pair of sit-astride coaches designed and built at the Millerbeck Light Railway. They are fitted with bogies of our own design of which we have now made a dozen. Another illustration shows a sit-in coach holding four passengers; the bogies are located under the seats. The basic chassis of the coach takes the form of a low perimeter frame with cross-stiffeners which support the floor. Both types of vehicle have a low centre of gravity and are very stable on the run. When building such vehicles it is no bad thing to err on the side of making them heavy. I know of at least one public railway where the coaches carry concrete paving slabs at floor level. They feel remarkably stable when stepping aboard.



This brings me to the nub of this article: designing and making rolling stock that stays on the track. I should stress that what follows is about the activities of the Millerbeck Light Railway group and no criticism of other operators is implied.

Some railways carry passengers on the rooves of scale model coaches, and I have personally nothing against this except that it does look a bit odd, as if some travellers had chanced upon a Lilliputian world and hitched a ride on a passing train. And it is of course difficult to upholster the roof without spoiling the appearance. Mostly, however, we believe that passengers are best carried in one of the two types of coach I have mentioned. This being so, the overall design should be right for the job while still aiming for a pleasing appearance.

Adopting the narrow gauge wheel profile as defined in our Guidelines for Construction (I am quite aware that much of the guide is now invalidated) and a wheel size of not less than about $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches diameter, together with the back-to-back dimension of $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches will be a good start. The safest and most effective flange profile on full-size trains has been settled for many years. Its performance is actually quite subtle and, taken with the correct rail top profile, is virtually derailment proof in normal service. Our preferred flange profile is the same but larger than would result from a scale reduction from standard gauge. (It is really quite astonishing that a full-size flange is no more than about $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep. I was pondering that fact recently whilst being

whisked across northern France at 185 mph. Actually, the motion was steady beyond belief.) The wheel diameter mentioned will ensure a reasonable area of flange and minimum tendency to climb the track at certain risk points. There are several more requirements to be fulfilled.

The axles of a bogie must at all time be held perfectly parallel and the wheels must follow identical paths i.e. the axles must not slop from side to side in the bearings. Since there is no such thing as perfect track, the suspension must allow all the wheels to stay firmly in contact with the track even in the face of considerable irregularity. This is of course stating the obvious, but it is not all that easy to achieve. Our greatest problem is the ratio of laden to unladen weight of our coaches - which is another good reason for not making them too light.

If you take four persons in an average medium-sized car you could increase its weight by around 30 percent. A fully loaded coach on our lines can be more than doubled in weight. So we need to design the right sort of suspension. To dive off at a tangent for a moment, any four-wheeled vehicle with solid axles cannot be described as having "independent suspension". The term means only that wheel movement can take place entirely without affecting the wheel on the opposite side of the vehicle. It is true that certain railway vehicles are indeed fitted with true independent suspension; this in spite of the long-held belief that only wheels secured to solid axles can properly follow curves in track, or "centre" on straight track. So the suspension must allow adequate wheel deflection at all loadings to ensure that the wheels never leave the rail head. We need to take a long look at springs.

Given our maximum deflection of 0.5 inch, it follows that the spring must have a "curve" that progresses over a half inch travel from a figure derived from the unladen weight divided by eight, to another figure which is the estimated fully laden weight divided by eight. (The whole sprung weight of the vehicle being carried on eight springs.) In other words, the spring must have a sharply curved rate increase. If we get this right, we shall find that the springs all the time bear the weight of the vehicle, being slightly compressed when unladen, and nearly fully so when laden.

What follows makes no claims for originality, other workers will have come to similar conclusions. After experiments, we have decided that the optimum wheelbase for our bogies is 12 inches. Maximum axle deflection is 0.5 inch. That is, when carrying a medium load the axle is about central with a vertical movement of plus or minus 0.25 inch. The suspension springs are selected from the Kato Entex list and are intended for use in die blocks. They have just the right characteristics for our use. The overall design of the bogies aims for simplicity and reliability. The 6 mm mild steel side plates are precisely laser cut to our pattern with the axle box guide slots embodied. The axle boxes are cut from bright steel bar, bored to take heavy duty ball races and with curved guide slots to fit the side plates. Spring recesses are milled into the top faces of the boxes. We started by making the upper spring abutments adjustable but have since found this to be unnecessary.

We make our own wheels and axles using mild steel rod and discs cut from large steel "rounds". The use of cuts from the round ensures no grain orientation problems - which could result with wheels made from cut flat plate. We have complete faith in Loctite 601 - when it is properly applied. Incidentally, I quite fail to see why anyone bothers with cast iron for wheels. Granted, it's speedier to turn in the lathe but it fails on just about every other count.

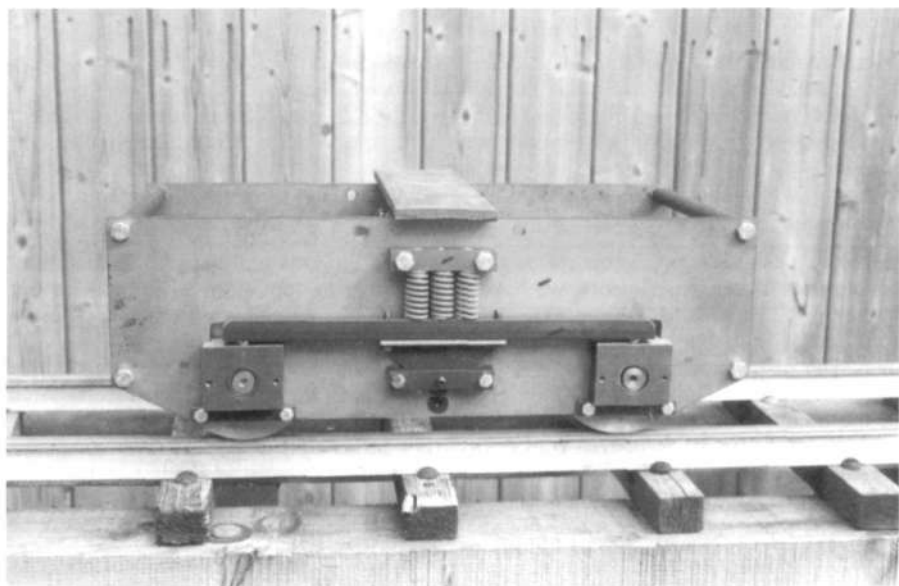
The bogie side plates are bolted to five stretchers made from $\frac{3}{4}$ inch rod. The pivot is mounted on a 10mm x 100mm plate bolted to the top of the bogie and the chassis mounted bolster is of similar material. The pivot works around a barrel-shaped centre to

allow a small degree of fore and aft tilt. Two domed greased nylon pressure pads allow free rotation and tilt. The bogie thus has freedom to follow even quite severe track undulations.

I can report that these bogies have now run many miles over three years without a single derailment due to vehicle malfunction. A useful by-product of getting the suspension right is that we are often complimented on the ride quality and general comfort of our vehicles. We are embarking on a further development; compensated suspension.

This is of course another quite old idea. Applied to locomotives, the design intention is to ensure equal wheel loading between adjacent pairs of axles. We have just completed, and will shortly be testing, a pair of bogies the design object of which is to give greater roll stiffness without the penalty of a harder ride. A system of compensating levers is used to give a balanced downward force which provides for greater roll stiffness without the penalty of increased hardness of ride. Our experimental design makes use of readily available stock materials; specially shaped connecting bars involve the use of castings or heavy machining. We are also gestating ideas about active suspension. More details later.

As I said at the beginning, keeping our passengers safely on the rails will hopefully help to keep the do-gooders at a safe distance.



Prototype compensated bogie - soon to be evaluated.

BOOK REVIEW 1

MODEL LOCOMOTIVE BOILER MAKING.

by Alec Farmer

Published in 1988 by Patrick Stevens & Company.

Available from the author Alec F. Farmer,

Cherry Tree House, 111 Coleshill Road, Marston Green,
Solihull, West Midlands. B37 7HT at £13.00 post free inland

This is of course a standard work that has been around for some years. The latest edition is a well presented informative book that will guide the model engineer through the various steps of constructing a copper locomotive boiler.

The 190 pages comprise a step by step description with an easily followed format of numbered paragraphs - 302 in all - and most of these are supported by a photograph. The reader can follow the various steps in the construction of the boiler, the example shown in the book is for a 5" Gauge G.W.R. Manor Class locomotive.

There are some helpful tips - mix a little detergent (washing up liquid) with the flux which helps to keep the joint being silver soldered clean and aids cleaning up after soldering. Partly tap the bushes (including safety valve and regulator bushes) before soldering into the boiler which saves trying to drill these after construction is complete.

The author is well known for his talks on boiler making and the origins of the book stem from a suggestion made some time ago that these helpful occasions should be committed to print. The result is what must now be regarded as one of the major reference points for this form of construction.

I particularly liked the excellent range of photographs that compliment the easily understood description. They are well presented and clearly show the various stages of construction, often with the tools in evidence that were used for that particular operation. Important with regard to the not too easy task of forming the copper sheet into the correct profile.

In summary, an interesting read, which will also become a useful companion for the model engineer who wishes to tackle the art of boiler making.

Brian Reading

CREWE AND WESTON MINIATURE RAILWAY

by Martin Green

Having read other society member's articles about their own railways large and small, I thought it was time to submit one about my own line, which is actually to a gauge of $9\frac{1}{4}$ in. This is quite a rare gauge now and I suppose that $7\frac{1}{4}$ in. is its nearest cousin.

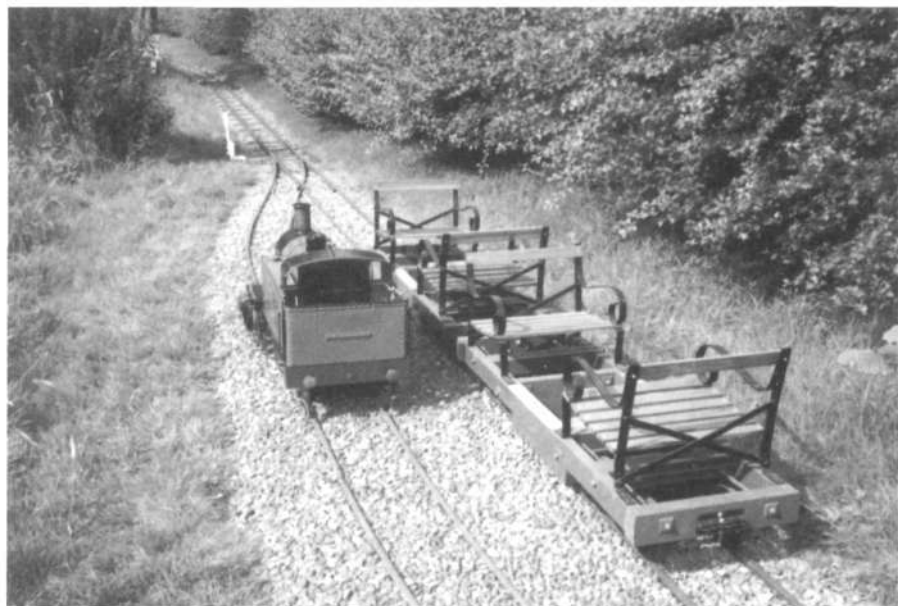
During my childhood, our family took regular holidays in North Wales and we became friends with an elderly gentleman who (to my delight, as I had been a railway enthusiast from a very early age) owned a small railway and engine that he kept on a small property near to where he moored his fishing boat.

In 1984, when I was 15, my father agreed to purchase the railway and it was duly transported back to my parents home on a hired 3 ton lorry. A short line was laid and over the years the rolling stock and steam locomotive were gradually renovated.

In 1991 I moved to my own home at Crewe in Cheshire and by April '95 I had located and rented a site nearby, where I could build a much longer line. Since then construction has slowly progressed and the main running line is now complete. This is in the form of a upside clown 'L' shape of approximately 150 yards. There is a long siding which runs to a steel clad shed and at each end of the line there are run round loops (or will be when I build and install turntables). About a quarter of the line is on a level gradient but the remainder is either 1 in 100 or 1 in 70.

The original track was old 121b per yard flat bottom rail on steel sleepers with two points. As the line extended south I have used 1in. box section welded to steel bar and screwed to wooden sleepers. This is not ideal, but is cheap, which is the overriding factor at present due to family commitments - Heath Robinson seems to be the name of the game! Over the last year the top end of the line has been extended using 2nd hand





121b rail and a stub point has been constructed for the run round. All the track is laid on 4 in. of limestone ballast, which has been the greatest cost so far. Although it is an odd gauge, most 7¼ in. materials can be used which is very useful (anyone out there with a defunct turntable?).

Steam motive power consists of a unusual 0-6-0 outside framed, outside cylinder tank engine, which dates to between 1910 and 1920ish (having had work done on it by HSC Bullock at one point). Due to its age I only steam it once or twice a year. I have also built two petrol locos - one an 0-4-0, powered by a 70cc motorcycle engine and mechanical gearbox and the other a 'sit in' bogie loco powered by a similar 90cc engine and utilising a Reliant 3-wheeler gearbox for the transmission. In the future when funds permit I would like to convert one of them to hydrostatic drive with a 4-5hp Honda engine.

Rolling stock consists of two 2 seater coaches, which were originally built for a 1924 Wembley exhibition, a simple flat bed bogie truck, which has seen a lot use during the construction of the line and finally a 4-wheel open truck.

Being a one-man operation, with limited time available, things take a while to develop but I hope to have most of the major jobs finished by the end of this year.

I hope that this has been of a little interest, even if not strictly 7¼ in. gauge.

THE FIRST ROLL OUT

by Jean Paul Gemmer

As you reported on the summer edition 98 (issue 85) on our project of a 7¼in. railway, I send you hereby some photos of the progress of this layout .

Indeed after several administrative problems we had the construction authorisation in September 99. We had luck to find a constructor who could begin immediately the construction of the sheds so that these ones were finished in April 2000.

By that time we moved all our material (rails, points, rolling stock etc) from home to the sheds. In May ground moving started and was finished end of June 2000.

Ballast was put 30 cm deep in the ground where rails had to be layed later. So we could begin to lay track in the beginning of July 2000. This was done quicker than we expected and the laying of track progresses well (ca 25m per day).

Up to now we have layed ca 200 m track of the main line and the tracks in the station. (3 roads on each station - goods station and passenger station)

A lot of work still has to be done. Finishing the interior of the sheds, installing the turntable, construction of the platforms and setting the bridges etc.

Also the electric wiring for the signals, lights and track circuits has to be done. The constructor has to finish a tunnel and a concrete bridge.

So we hope having finished next year in late spring .

I have added a map of the definitive layout.

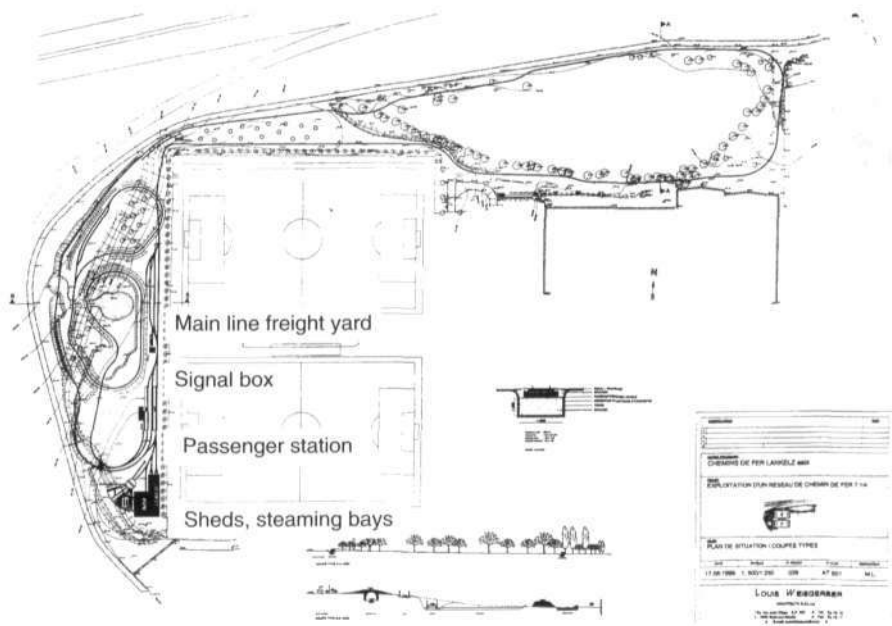
If you have more questions you can contact me.



Mixed train on the track to the sheds - driver Paul Gemmer. The track was just layed.



Diesel loco (Mardyke) driven by our junior member Kim Roulling in the curve just before entering the station (also on the top of the map)



Track Plan, Chemins de Fer Lankelz asbl, Luxembourg

MIDLANDS SHOW REPORT 2000

By Richard Shaw

This was the 5th to be held at the Donington Exhibition Centre. For this year we decided to have a change and feature scale (and semi-scale) freight stock, with just a few locomotives, several of which were part-built. Thanks to the organisers for allowing us more space to exhibit all the vehicles.

The show seemed quieter than normal with a number of the regular traders and club stands not in attendance, however there were several traders in attendance for the first time, several of which reported brisk business. A number of reasons were put forward from visitors for the reduced display including clubs not being able to afford to attend due to the higher fuel prices compared to 5-6 years ago, whereas the donation from the hosts has not increased, clubs not being able to persuade sufficient members to display models, too many shows each year and high entrance charges when compared to other shows. My guess is that it is a bit of all!

I would like to thank all those members who offered items for display and thanks to those who came along for a chat. Magazines and Binders sold well again. It was also the first opportunity for many members to see the clothing items we now have available, my thanks to Sid Weedon for arranging for a stock to be sent to me in time for the show, as a result these sold well. We hope to have a stock of clothing at the exhibitions at Sinsheim and Pickets Lock.

I would like to finish by thanking all those who assisted in manning the stand and providing models for the show, without which quite simply there would be no show! Particularly Pete Smith who made the journey up from Cornwall and stayed for the duration of the show and Jeff Stevens for the loan, yet again, of his TV / Video unit. My thanks to all those who provided videos to show during the exhibition.

The models displayed on the 7¼in. gauge Society Stand were as follows:

Description	Owner
Armstrong 4-4-0	Ray Jones
Hercules	D. Crookes
LMS 4F 0-6-0	Jim Parker
GWR 4-2-2	A. Whysall
Bagnall 0-4-0ST chassis	R. Jones
Full brake coach	Jeff Stevens
GWR Autocoach	Phil Keating
Toad Brake Van	Jeff Stevens
Closed Van	Jeff Stevens
G.W.R. Lowfit wagon	Jeff Stevens
Milk Tanker	Jeff Stevens
Brake Van	Ken Smith
Cattle Truck	Ken Smith
Open Wagon	Ken Smith
Closed Van	Graham White
Open wagon 7 plank	Graham White
Toad Brake van	Graham White
China Clay Wagon	Steven Gosling
Bogie Flat wagon	Richard Shaw
Closed van	Phil Keating
Closed van	Phil Keating
Open wagon - private owner	Phil Keating
Open wagon - private owner	Phil Keating

Steel Mineral Wagon
Coal truck
Coal truck
Closed wagon
Closed wagon - long wheelbase
Brake van

Phil Keating
D. Crookes
D. Crookes
D Crookes
D. Crookes
D. Crookes

Other 7¼ in. items on display included:

Description	Location/Owner
F7 Diesel	Express Locos
Stockton 0-2-2 (u/c)	PNP Railways
GWR Mogul (u/c)	J. Boydon (Wolverhampton Society)
GWR Mogul (u/c)	R. Haddock (Wolverhampton Society)
Sweet William	R. Bellamy
GWR 'Dart' 0-4-2T	B. Harris
Jessie 0-4-0ST	RF Smith
LMS Brake Van	RF Smith
0-4-0 ST Hunslet	K. Baum
2-4-0 Isle of Man tank engine 'Mannin'	D. Heydenryck
Bogie Coach	Nottingham Society
LNER Garratt 2-8-0 + 2-8-0 (u/c)	Nottingham Society
Britannia	Winson
Jessie 0-4-0 ST	FT Martin (Burton Society)
Freelance 0-4-0 tank (u/c)	LA Services

And finally, the comment of one younger visitor caused same amusement to stewards when he asked "Are the AGM plaques solid gold?" So if you find a large debt in next years accounts you know the reason why!



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1999 - 7¼ GAUGE A.G.M. at DONAGHADEE - £13.99	

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MEMBERSHIP NO 2328

WESTON PARK RECORD BREAKER

Dave Holroyde

With a run of 1¼ in. miles, a huge engine shed and a central location, it was inevitable this AGM would be huge. 78 engines were booked in and despite the fuel crisis, we still got 71. The line is a dumb-bell shaped with a maximum gradient of 1 in 36, a test for both engine and driver.

Throughout the weekend the resident 4w - 4wDH, built by operator Bruce Whalley earlier this year, hauled a regular passenger train. Bruce and his team had planned this one carefully, even down to emergency water supplied by the trackside and 2-way radios.

Many locos arrived on the Friday and by early afternoon Walter Scott was first out on the line with his "Caribou" 291, van and caboose.

By Friday night, 51 locos had arrived as trailers and vans disgorged both new and familiar locos and old friends met up. The two East African Railways "59th" Class 4-8-2+2-8-4 Garratts were already here and were soon joined by the likes of Ron Manning's single Fairlie Merlin Ambrosius, R. Billington's Squamish and Lillooet RR 2-4-2, the two D&RG "Old Rubes" of Messrs Harris and Thompson and Bep Blom's King George V.

Unfortunately there was only a little night running on the Friday evening with Peter Rimell's Samson last one back in shed.

Saturday dawned free and clear as gems like D Edisbury's huge Leek and Manifold 2-6-4T, M Savage's "Li'l Lima" 2-4-0 and Bob Washington's "recycled spin drier" tram arrived. One fine sunny day we were treated to the two "2MT" 2-6-2Ts of Messrs Wadhams and Taylor double headed as were John Davis' 1803 River Itchen and Keith Barnes' "S160" 1893 AB MacLeod from the Netherlands. A brave A. Phillips steamed his "2MT" 78004 for the first time. Incidentally, the aforementioned Leek & Manifold engine also bravely enjoyed its first steaming.

An event like this always produces the unusual locos. There was 1978, an 0-6-0T from Scotland, D. Hodgson's 6wPM model of Kerr Stuart 4415 which once ran on the Welsh Highland Railway and Bob Atkin's 0-4-0+0-4-0DH with sit-in cab.

Meanwhile down at the shed, the Garratts were getting restless. By late afternoon they were turned loose, 40 ft of power, one coal and one oil fired, a spectacular sight and sound. After a slight hiccup with 5901, Brett Roger's 5928 provided the sound effects alone during a packed AGM along with John Hancock's 6965 Thirlestaine Hall, the Leek and Manifold tank and 2 or 3 other locos.

By the end of the AGM, 5901 had been fixed and they double headed again until after darkness fell. This was the first time in 25 years they had been in steam together. The grins on Neil Simkins' and Ken Houlthby's faces said it all.

Sunday dawned dull and misty with the rain descending mid-morning. Another 3 locos arrived with Brian Howorth's Sprinter going straight into service and Ian Tricklebank's "Wren" and De Winton steaming up in the rain. Despite the weather, there was no shortage of takers for the "slots".

To combat the rain, many resorted to umbrellas, oilskins and in Bob Atkins' case, cunning fold down side sheets on his cab. Also of note was the steady rumble of the sound system on Express Locomotives "F7" unit - very realistic and somewhat, disconcerting when it creeps up behind you!

By early afternoon some were starting to depart but there were still enough locos left to have 10 out on the track on Monday lunch time.



R. Thompson's Green River steams by

Photo: R. Shaw



David Boyde, our new committee member, proudly displays his lovely Pacific

Photo: M.A. Taylor



Ron Manning and his single Fairlie

Photo: D. Holroyde



Bruce Whalley's newly-built resident locomotive

Photo: D. Holroyde



Men and Machines at work!

Photo: D. Holroyde



A. Phillips' new 78004 on its first steaming!

Photo: D. Holroyde



Keith Parkinson brought along his newly-built Class 25 'Diesel'.

Photo: M.A. Taylor



The unusual Kerr Stuart 4415 of D. Hodgson

Photo: R. Shaw

Many thanks to Bruce and his team for all the hard work they put in to make the weekend such a success. Thanks also to the trade stands of LA Services Ltd., Cromar White Railways, Knightley Light Railways, Ellis Boilers, Express Locomotives and Fincken Miniature Railways for supporting the event.

7¼in. Gauge Society A.G. M. at Weston Park Railway; 22/23/24 September, 2000.

List of locomotives, etc, attending the 2000 A.G.M. event, compiled by Dave Holroyde.

Builder	Year	Wheel arr.	Name/ No.	Type	Owner.
W. Scott	1999	0-8-0	Z91	Caribou.	
D. Parnell.	1995.	2-6-0T	Kingfisher, 495		
J. Harris	1998	2-8-0	Kenosha Pass, 346	Old Rube	
D. Hoad	1994	0-4-0ST	Lady Jane	Hunslet	
M. Freestone	1997	0-6-0BE	8000	L.N.E.R. 'J45'	
D. Payne	1999	4w-4wPH	280 A + B	F7 A + B	
A. Bezeck	1994	0-4-0	Lancashire Lad	Romulus	
C. White	1993	4-6-0	Green Knight	B.R. '5MT'	C. Chandler
P. Davis	1991	0-4-0ST	Red Rum	Hunslet	B. Cook
R. Gurney	2000	0-6-0T	Holmside		
G. Peers	1983	0-4-0ST	Nellie Madora	Hunslet	C. Timbrell
G. Prestwich	2000	0-4-0ST	Sir William	Sweet William	
Cormick/Barber	1997	2-4-2T	Ellan Bee	R.Lee	
B. Howorth	1990	BER	150.001	Sprinter	
M. Savage	1991	2-4-0	Ella. No 3	Li'l Lima	
J. Walker	1996	0-4-0	Marie Estelle 3	M/Estelle	
H. Greenley	1939	2-6-0	River Itchen 1803	S.R. 'U' class	J.Davis.
P. Edmonds	1997	6w-6wPH	8005	SD 40	
J. Goodall	1998	0-4-0ST	Swarf	Bagnall	
S. Wood	1989	0-4-2T	1431	Dart	G. White
B. Ward	1996	0-6-0T	7105	L.M.S. '2F'	
K. Parkinson	1998	4w-4wBE	D7581	B.R. class 25	
I. Triclebank	1980	0-4-0ST	Idris 1.	Wren	
"	1984	0-4-0VBT	Pentewyn 2	De Winton	
J. Price	1972	4wBER	No 1	Tram	
J. Horsfield	1988	0-4-0ST	Robert	Hunslet	C. Manning
C. Harthill	1991	4w-DH	Squirrel		
D. Edisbury	2000	2-6-4T		Leek & Manifold	
Maxitrak	1993	0-4-2ST	Tigger	Pearl. Berleigh/Alderman	
K. Smith	1999	0-4-2T		Bridget.	
?	1978	0-6-0T	1978		G.Thrower
G. Wadhams	1998	2-6-2T	84003	B.R. '2MT'	
B. Sharpe	2000	0-6-0BE		B.R. '08'	D. Parsons
B. Blom	1993	4-6-0	King George V.6000	G.W.R.'King'	B.Blom
R. Thompson	2000	2-8-0	Green River 400	Old Rube	

D. Bussey	1988	0-4-0ST	Lady Be	Hunslet	F.Sidebottom
TMA Engr	1986	0-4-2	Finn MacCool	Thomas 2	B. Jones
Cockell/Rimell	1985	0-6-0T	Samson/1994	Hercules	P. Rimell
R. Atkins	1997	0-4-0	0-4-0DH		
Compass House	1998	0-4-0BE	Ojolo. No 7		R. Pierce
R. Major	1994	0-6-0T	L.M.S.	Hercules	
Maxitrak	2000	0-6-OPH		Simplicity 11	M. Taylor
K. Young	1999	4-6-0	5293	L.M.S. '5MT'	
R.Washington	1993	4wBER	3	Tram.	
S. Hazlewood	1999	0-4-0ST	Mythago	Hunslet	
J. Hancock	1996	4-6-0.	'Thirlestaine Hall'	G.W.R. 6965	
R. Manning	1998	0-6-4T	Merlin Ambrosius	Single Farlie	
A. Beard	1991	0-4-0	3	Marie Estelle	
J.Sterry/ White	1999	0-4-0ST		Bagnall	A. Siddall
D. Hodgson	1999	6w-PM		Kerr Stuart, 4415	
R. Billington	2000	2-4-2	4	Porter	
Roanoake	1999	0-4-0PH	Maryellem. 7	Roanoake	A. Walton
H. Watson	1990	0-4-0ST	Isabel. 13	Titch x 2	
P. Taylor	1997	2-6-2T	84028	B.R. '2MT'	
D. Ketley	1997	2-6-4T	80076	B.R. '4MT'	
R. Spalding	1989	4wBER	Bradford Twys. 2	Tram	M. Taylor
D. Croft	1991	0-4-2ST	Breakheart	-	
?	?	4-6-2	Great Northern, 4470	L.N.E.R.	D. Boyde
?	1985	0-4-2ST	Cygnus, 983	Bridget	N.S ales
Stubbs/Phillips	2000	2-6-0	78004	B.R. '2MT'	A. Phillips
?	-	0-4-0T	783	Titch x2	A. Meredith.
Buckler/Jackson	1995	0-4-0ST		Sweet William	Dr.Jackson.
F. Halshaw	1994	0-4-0ST	Lancashire Witch, 4	Hunslet	
K. Hartley	c1995	4w BE	Mossup	71286	G. Eddison
Martin/Sheard	1993	0-4-0ST	Idris	Hunslet	N. Sheard.
K. Parkinson	1982	4w BE	Dock Authority		J. Nicholson
Saul	1946	2-8-0	A.B. Macleod, 1893	S.160	K. Barnes
Express Locos	1999	4w-4wBE	X6393	F7	
Milner Engr.	1977	4-8-2+2-8-4T	Mount Kenya, 5901	E.A.R.	N.R.M. York.
Coleby/Simpkins	1973	ditto	Mt.Kilimanjaro, 5928	E.A.R.	B. Rogers.

RESIDENTS.

B. Whalley 2000 4w-4w DH.

TRADE SUPPORT.

L.A.Services	?	0-4-0ST	Amazon	Wren
D. Lewin	c1987	0-6-0T	4082	
Maxitrak	?	4w BE		Maxitrak Simplicity
R. Greatrex	u/c	4w.BE		Knightley Lt Rlys



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mike,

I enclose a photograph of my 'Schools' Class No 30907 'Dulwich' which has just steamed at Southampton after an extensive overhaul. The locomotive is quite historic being started by Douglas Bastin in 1935, and is as old as its owner, but in better condition!... A number of members may remember it being offered for sale at the Sutton Coldfield A.G.M., when it looked somewhat distressed. However, realising it had potential, and after washing off considerable grime and grease from its underside, dismantling and grit-blasting the tender, I began to see that I was right after all. Firstly the tender tank was scrapped and a new plastic replacement was obtained at modest cost from Henderson Plastics, Ltd of Dereham, via the 7¼ in. Gauge News advertisement.

The exterior was retained but made 'user-friendly' for future occasions so that the interior can be removed without major surgery. The wheels were turned, the bearings were either re-bushed or renewed, the pistons and valves were rebored, and a new boiler



was fitted as well as a variety of other items. The 8 inch diameter original boiler was scrapped also, and a new steel one obtained - this being surprisingly in-expensive, but being of steel construction is subject to an annual boiler test. This is a pain, since I am used to copper ones tested bi-annually, but it is well made and was considerably cheaper, so I can't have everything. Originally, I had always wanted a Bassett-Lowke locomotive, but also one at the right price, which never came along, therefore I will enjoy this one instead. Apart from improving the plumbing and eventually having split axleboxes on its driving wheels it is now almost ready for its next 65 years. I would like to thank all my friends and fellow 7¼ in. Gauge Society members for their practical help and advice. Several people have also written or 'phoned giving me details of its history and also mentioning two articles in 'Model Engineer' concerning its building or operation at Brockwell Park, and one of it in use at Greywood Central for a period, for

which I am grateful. I had hoped to enter it for the Weston Park A.G.M. this year, but the problem over fuel makes this difficult. One other thing I would mention is that a party of 30 or so have just returned from 'The Meet of the Millennium - 7½ in. gauge' at 'Train Mountain' in Oregon, U.S.A. plus various other venues. This was organised by Paul Mash and Sylvia of the Chaldon Light Railway with all their usual flair and enthusiasm. I thought of sending you a couple of photos but with so many going, you may have had others, or even an article!. If you have not seen Tom Miller's superb railroad near Portland, with his 'Big-Boy' in action, or visited 'Train Mountain', where you can leave Central Station there and return some 22 hours later having travelled some 10 miles, ...as they say, "You ain't seen nothing yet!". They are still laying 1000 feet of track on their track sessions!.....

Sincerely,

Don Cottle, (Member No 179)

Winchester, Hants S022 6DE.

Dear Mike,

I thought it would be helpful if you could publish this letter in "The News" to clarify the situation with regard to Hemsby Week for 2001 and future years. As members will know, I asked Brian Reading to announce during this year's Hemsby Week that I had decided that it would be the last: I would like to repeat that this is in fact still my decision - certainly in the form that we have come to know in recent years.

Reluctantly I have decided that it can no longer be a completely open week - it has in fact outgrown the resources of my railway! I intend to phase things out next year with a much reduced week in terms of a small number of locomotives booked in on an invitation basis.

As Brian has already said, this year was the twentieth consecutive Hemsby Week and I would like to thank all the members that have taken part over the years which has given me many happy memories. In particular I should like to thank the members of the Norfolk Group who continue to assist in the maintenance and running of my railway and the role they have played in more recent years in providing the stewarding support during Hemsby Week.

With Best Wishes,

Don Witheridge,

Blue Riband House, Parkland Estate, Hemsby, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR29 4HA.

* * * * *



Dear Mike,

I have just returned from the Belfast and County Down Miniature Railway Society's birthday rally (their hospitality is legendary, but as an added bonus they arranged for sunshine this year!) with a cautionary tale for all those members who transport their precious locos and stock by trailer. Fifty miles from Stranraer on the A757 I noticed black smoke coming from my near side trailer tyre, stopped to investigate and found that only the mudguard was holding the wheel on - all four wheel nuts had disappeared - the friction between tyre and mudguard had ruined the tyre, and the mini wheel holes were oval. An AA approved garage man was with us in fifty minutes and after relaying

the trailer to his premises found four old wheel nuts and bolted my spare wheel on. I bought a second-hand mini wheel and a new tyre in Belfast.

The point of my writing is that I have travelled thousands of miles, in the UK and abroad, hauling trailers of various kinds and never had a similar incident, yet the AA expert assured me that that wheel nuts loosening on trailers was a fairly common event. I now carry a wheel brace and will check the nuts at regular intervals. I recommend that members with trailers do the same!

Best wishes,

Mick Savage,

Sheffield, S17 3QC

e-mail micksav@globalnet.co.uk

Dear Mike,

THE WAY FORWARD?

Some years ago, Eric Doyle, who was then Chairman, wrote in the 7¼ in. Gauge News a request for ideas as to how the 7¼ in. Gauge Society should progress towards and beyond 2000.

The writer sent a long script with personal views as to how the Society should progress, and although this was discussed by the Committee, no formal reply was received, nor was it printed in the 7¼ in. Gauge News, and the only way the writer knew it had been received was by one or two oblique references to its contents in subsequent editions of the News.

It is interesting to the writer, therefore, to read in the Minutes of the 26th A.G.M. that Geoff Nicholson asked about donations to the hosts of the A.G.M. In the writer's original script, a slightly different proposal was put forward:

It was suggested that the venue for the A.G.M. be decided at least 2 years ahead of the event, and that the hosts should be allowed to apply for a grant of, say, a maximum of £2,000 to realise a project which would permanently improve the railway or its infrastructure. Once approved, the grant would be made and the Society could proceed with the project. That way, the 7¼ in. Gauge Society would not only be seen to actively improve railways throughout the country, but also its members would benefit from the investment. Originally, the proposal excluded commercial operations, but on reflection, all hosts should be allowed to benefit.

The idea was not necessarily to reduce our bank balance, but the money is not doing any of the members any good sat in the bank is it?

Also, the annual subscription has not risen for many years. This is, in the writer's view, a mistake, as it will inevitably rise by £5.00 to £20.00 - a 30% rise. Not all members will be happy with that, whereas if the subscription was raised annually by at least the rate of inflation, the Society would maintain its financial position and the increments of increase would be small. If grant applications, as outlined above, were adopted, an additional £1.00 or £1.50 could be added to the subscriptions and the whole concept would be self-financing.

Other ideas set out in the original script were to limit the timescale a member could remain a director. The proposal was 3 years with re-election for a second term after 3 years making a total of 6 years. The member would then be ineligible to serve as a director for 2 years. This allows a constant influx of "new blood" and ideas and prevents the Society becoming too entrenched in its ways. In addition, it is purely the writer's view that no member who is engaged professionally in model engineering or

the supply of model engineering products should be eligible to be a director so that any accusation of conflict of interest does not arise.

The foregoing are purely the writer's opinions and intended to provoke debate, the beneficiary of which will ultimately be the 7/4in. Gauge Society.

Yours sincerely

Garry Tyso,

Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B72 1LG

Our Chairman responds.....

The question of a fixed donation has indeed been raised at an A.G.M and it has been explained that the Committee always has full discussions with the host railway so that any additional expenses are covered together with any expenses that refer to the A.G.M arrangements. I have always been given to understand that this flexibility is preferred, as the needs of different railways will also differ.

So far as the annual subscription is concerned the view of your Committee is that proposals should not be placed before an A.G.M. until this becomes necessary and it must surely reflect on the credit of the Society that we have held the subscription at its present level for so long

In my view the problem with fixed term appointments for the Committee can be the lack of continuity as sometimes a mandatory change in the post holder of a particular office can come at a time when this would not be beneficial. I agree that it is essential to have "new blood" from time to time and with our larger Committee of recent years I would have thought this would happen naturally - for example we have two new Committee members this year.

However as Garry says, any discussion on these issues is helpful.

Brian Reading - Chairman

Dear Mike,

ARISTOCRAFT BOGIES.

I was interested to read the article on Aristocraft Bogies from Rob Hall which described his own particular solution to the vexed problem of obtaining adequate suspension for these vehicles at a commercially viable cost.

Use of rubber and similar compressible materials in suspension components is of course well known (viz original Mini). Whether this design gives a true secondary suspension is open to debate and depends to some extent on how one defines secondary in this context. However - does it matter? If it works well then semantics are irrelevant. I have no doubt that this design fulfills all the expectations of its author.

I am however particularly concerned by Rob Hall's last paragraph where he appears to imply that he has achieved that Holy Grail - the ultimate in bogie design. This particular design is one among many which perform adequately and to suggest that any design is incapable of improvement could in my view be considered at best unwise and at worst ??

I feel that it is of vital importance that progress and improvement is not held back by any attempt to restrict further development of any design - bogie or whatever! That Holy Grail still beckons!

Regards,

Eric J.B.Doyle

Bromley Cross, Bolton, Lancs. BL7 9AU.

Dear Mike,

Two things happened today. Firstly the wife of a Castledare Miniature Railway member brought me a copy of a photo she took recently followed just a few minutes later by the postman delivering my copy of the 7¼ in. Gauge News. My immediate thoughts were that I should send the photo to you for possible inclusion in a future copy of The News.



Photo: Mrs Lesley Pitt

The picture was taken at the Castledare Miniature Railway on a recent run day as I sat waiting for the carriage shed track to clear in order that I could collect my train. The brick building in the background is the steam loco shed from which I had just moved via the turntable and water column where the loco water tanks were topped up.

With best wishes to you and yours.

Sincerely,

R.L. Moss, Member No. 1263.

Ferndale 6148, Western Australia.

Dear Mike,

I am writing to confirm the effectiveness of the 7¼ in. Gauge NEWS in spreading the information into the right quarters. News No. 94, contained a letter and photograph from me appealing for information about a Mr. Burnage and a locomotive which he had built about 20 years ago. On the morning after publication of the NEWS, I received a telephone call from a member, Derek Boyd, giving me details of Derek Burnage whom he knew well and that very evening I had a call from the latter himself. Derek confirmed that the locomotive concerned had indeed been based on 'CRANMORE', from a Peckett & Sons catalogue and also from a scaled-up drawing of a 3½ in. gauge 'Peckett'. Construction had been started in 1980 and was completed the following year. Why I had had so much trouble in tracking down Derek Burnage seems hard to

understand in retrospect. Apart from 21 steam launch engines he has also built three 3 in. scale Burrell traction engines, several 3½ in. and 7¼ in. gauge locomotives and over 25 Gauge 1 steamers, so he is clearly well known in many model engineering circles. We hope it will be possible to re-unite him with the engine in the not too distant future. Subsequent to that conversation, I also received notification from member John Crawley, so I am grateful to both members for their help and to you for publishing my appeal which has been so effective.

Yours sincerely,

John L. Townsend.

Hereford, HR1 4EH.

Dear Editor,

Whilst at the AGM at Weston Park, a most enjoyable event, I took several photographs of the locomotives which attended. Most of these were taken on the Saturday which was a glorious day weatherwise but I only managed to take a few on Sunday before the rains came down.

I am in the process of transferring the photographs, about 50 in all, onto my web site, the address of which is www.grant2222.freemove.co.uk if members would like to log on and look at them.

If I have made any mistakes with names or numbers or if anyone would like to have an image (about 80K each) emailed to them please contact me, my email address is on my web site, also, my apologies to those whose locos I did not manage to photograph.

Finally, my thanks to Bruce and all his helpers for a great weekend.

Yours sincerely

Robert Grant, 2222

Sheffield, S11 8AX Tel: 0114 255 7253

Dear Mike,

YOUNG MEMBERS

If like me you were at the A.G.M. at Weston Park, you will have heard Gordon Eddison's plea on behalf of and encouragement for young members without whom the 7¼ in. Society WILL DIE. Being retired from the education fraternity, his appeal struck a sympathetic chord and set the grey matter thinking. Young people by and large are short on cash to fund a project, short on skill and experience to attempt the usual 7¼ in. gauge programme and short on the confidence to see a project through. What can we old codgers do to help? That depends on where you set your sights, my experience working with young people tells me to endeavour to build success into any project that is set, and so, building a loco is perhaps way down the road, but, a wagon, a signal, some signs for the railway and a host of other things spring to mind, but it depends on us, the old codgers. If you are so focussed on the minutia of your own project that anything else is a distraction, that your loco is the be all and end all of your interest then carry on, but be assured the hobby WILL DIE.

If however, you are prepared to offer a little help, advice, and share your long acquired depth of knowledge things could look up. Unfortunately craft work as such is not taught

in schools today and so proficiency with tools hand or machine is somewhat of a lottery. Some youngsters naturally work carefully, some less so, therefore high degrees of accuracy may be hard to achieve, but if the desire is nurtured improvement is sure to follow and with practice, who knows what the future may bring. When I left school I went into industry and served a bound apprenticeship. I learnt by standing at a tradesmans elbow and watched as the work progressed. I was then set to repeat what I had observed and encouraged to do my best and so my fund of knowledge was built up and my skills were honed. Have you got the tact and patience to instruct a young person, are you prepared to devote a little time to ensuring the survival of our hobby? If you are, our hobby WILL LIVE. The future may not be steam loco's but skill, interest and endeavour will combine and the future of our hobby will be secure.

I have talked to several young people to gauge their responses when I talk about hopes and ambitions. My over-riding finding is that young people resent being patronised, appreciate being encouraged and above all welcome being allowed to participate, being part of the scene.

Are you or the Society prepared to allow young people a "hands on" experience of the fun of our hobby or do you want to keep them at arms length? I know that when it is busy and passengers are milling around you, safety interests mean you must concentrate, but when things are slack please give some time to encourage the youngsters and explain things - don't keep it all a secret, a dark mystery.

Nearer to home, how about a young people and beginners section in the 7¼ in. Gauge News? I am prepared to help, will you let it happen?

Before I "pop my clogs", I want to see some young people who can roll up their sleeves and do something constructive. I don't want to depart and leave behind a generation of square eyed, "idiot lantern watchers". I want the up and coming generation to enjoy some of the fun I have known through the great hobby. Remember the future is in our hands.

" OLD CODGER",

A.M. Westby - 0998

Dear Mike,

Hope this is not too late for the next issue but I have only just got out of hospital. Reading through trade topics in the last issue I was pleased to read that Richard thinks it would be a good idea to comprise a list of problems other people have found with drawings, so come on chaps and send them in. My 'Lucky 7' went well in the early stages with wheels, cylinders, rods, front and rear bogies and then came the bombshell with the boiler not fitting the chassis and followed by the rear bogie brake lever stopping it swivelling the one way and thus defeating the whole object of being able to take tight bends, the across chassis-rod to operate the cylinder drain cocks will foul and have to be repositioned and if you want to drive your engine, then cut down the height of the brake column otherwise you will not be able to see the water level sight glass.!

There are a few other minor ones and they can all be got over but really they should not be there in the first place.

My next engine is going to be a 'Koppel' and I have high hopes for this one, since at least Ken Swan has built one and thus proved his drawings. On a happier note I have never really had a proper go until recently at driving steam engines; I bought a video from Pecorama called 'Steaming the Beer Heights Light Railway' and what an excellent video it turned out to be even though they forgot to mention about notching back, but maybe Peco have now rectified this.?

On another matter, we've just had a day at Malden's open-day, and what a friendly lot they are with lovely food and facilities and all members appear so willing to pass on useful information. Back to 'Lucky 7': I spent hours on the steam operated water pump but could not get it to work, likely my fault, so I decide to replace it with a non-original looking one and had just finished it when I met a chap from an Essex club at Ascot's club open-day who had a lovely looking steam operated pump on his engine and he was kind enough to send on the plans which were taken from the American magazine, Modeltec (1984), which proved very difficult to absorb. I wish to warn you that the exploded drawing which is supposed to be helpful in making the head, is full of errors, so watch out, but it is nevertheless a lovely little double-acting pump, which is self starting and near scale for the 7¼in. size. It not so difficult to make as first seems, so do give it a go and castings are not required.

Many thanks for producing such a good magazine.....

Dennis R.Evans.

Crowthorne, Berks. RG45 6JG.

Dear Mike,

Please find enclosed a couple of photographs taken on Sunday 3rd September at the Grand Chigwell Railway which is situated within the Metropolitan Police Sports Club, Chigwell, Essex. They were taken on the last day of this years 'Chigwell Show'. This two-day show, which attracted thousands of people, was the final such show of its kind and marked the end of an event which has lasted for 50 years exactly. One of the exhibitors at the show was AXA Insurance. They displayed a tethered hot air balloon which was as tall as Nelsons Column in the shape of the F.A Cup. Due to the day being rather windy, they had great difficulty in keeping the balloon upright as you can see in the photograph. The railway station named Chigwell (Roding Lane) can be seen dwarfed in one of the photographs behind the balloon.

Also on display was the real F.A Cup which is sponsored by AXA. This was closely guarded all afternoon as many people queued to have their photograph taken alongside it. I asked the officials in charge if there was any chance of carrying the cup on the railway which ran alongside their display tent and they were only to pleased to oblige. The only proviso was that the cup touched no metallic objects. I even had to remove a whistle I was wearing around my neck to avoid scratching.

The other photograph shows me holding the cup with my wife Marie, daughter Jane and friend Brian in attendance with a train of puzzled onlookers. Although I always regard the passengers carried on the railway as my most precious cargo, carrying such a famous piece of silverware did give us all a buzz and may have been a first for a 7¼in. line!

Since you kindly published the problems I had encountered since building the line in 1997 (7¼in. Gauge News Summer 1999), things have got better following my dispute with a neighbour. I made a further planning application to use steam locomotives (following his objection) which was allowed by the planning committee provided:

1) I only use smokeless fuel!, 2) I erect a 6 foot high wooden fence some 100 feet long to prevent steam drifting into the neighbours driveway (his house is 150 yards away) and 3) I may only use steam engines no larger than the ones I have at present. The largest is an 0-6-0 narrow gauge tank loco.

I do feel saddened by the ignorance and lack of understanding from the local planning councillors who impose these ludicrous restrictions without properly investigating the situation.



Still, the railway is still going strong and 1999 and 2000 have been very enjoyable years for everyone involved with the running of the line. We even have our own newsletter. The quality of the photographs is not too good but feel free to use them if you wish.

My best wishes to you and everyone involved in one of the best reads going with the quarterly News.

Bill Dadswell

Romford, RM2 5XA

Membership No. 2568 Tel: 01708 700036

* * * * *



Leisure and Community Services Department

Dear Dr Taylor,

Knowsley Borough Council in Merseyside is currently considering the possibility of establishing a 7 1/4 inch gauge railway at Court Hey Park, Huyton.

However, before the scheme can get off the ground, we are looking to hear from committed miniature railway enthusiasts and clubs in the North West who would be interested in helping us establish a local club.

I can be contacted at: Parks & Countryside Office, Court Hey Park, Roby Road, Huyton, Knowsley Merseyside L15 3NA

Yours sincerely

Dave Thompson

Parks and Countryside Operations Officer

Dear Mike,

Many thanks to you and the rest of the 7¼ in. Gauge Society Committee for an excellent A.G.M. at Weston Park. It was nice to see the 'Bradford Tram' again, a frequent visitor to Northern tracks including the Millerbeck Light Railway - I hope you get as much fun out of it as Roger Spalding did. I enclose three photographs not directly connected with 7¼ in. gauge locomotive running but they may be of use to go in the magazine. Brian Ward on the day of his 70th Birthday with a surprise birthday cake on the top of his loco, baked by Anne Hazlewood and presented at this years Harrogate Model Engineering show on the 7¼ in. Gauge Society stand there, is seen in the accompanying photograph.



The other photographs show Richard Shaw with his surprise 30th Birthday cake taken at Comrie at this September meeting.. Ed note; see TRADE TOPICS for this photo

*....a case of when you can have your cake and eat it, even at a 7¼ in. Gauge event !'

Regards,

Mark Sharphouse ('Hamish')

Grange-over-Sands, LA11 6HW

Dear Mike,

I recently read then re-read the article by Mr. Rob Hall with regard to his Aristocrat coaches, especially the bogies. In principle what he says is sound and correct as far as it goes, however he does not deal with the problem completely to their derailing, as I have experienced on some occasions. I would like to point out that I do not own such

coaches, so have not been able to have a really proper investigation into the matter. The following comments are from my observations and analysis of the problem.

It is necessary to provide a variable rate spring, for the suspension, that will cope with all loads from the weight of the coach alone to that of being fully loaded, which may be a ratio of some 8-10:1, in the extreme case. This means that the spring must have a rate to match, plus the ability to keep all wheels on the track, typically when traversing through a portion of track with varied super elevation. The most obvious solution to the problem of the spring is to make it conical, which by its geometry has a variable rate. Added to this if the coils are wound in such a way, that when compressed to their limit then the spring forms a spiral, the thickness of the wire, thus taking up very little height.

Unfortunately when using rubber type suspension one does not have this latter advantage, as the rubber has a thicker finite thickness, when compressed to the equivalent maximum load.

As the height allowed for the suspension is minimal, there is insufficient travel allowed for all cases, to ensure that all wheels remain on the track, at points of maximum differential in super elevation. It is not only the ability of the suspension to compress, but its ability to ensure that all wheels have sufficient pressure on the track, so that the flanges can not ride over the rail. Naturally a flexible chassis would help the loaded condition, with flexible mounting of the coach top to the chassis. (As far as I know this is how Morgan cars are made, owning two myself).

There is nothing wrong in using rubber, suitably laminated to approximate to the variable rate conical spring, but its finite total height must be capable of ensuring that all wheels always remain in good contact with the rails upon which they run.

One problem that has not been addressed is that of lateral stability when carrying passengers. Passengers do not feel very safe, when the carriage upon which they are riding is able to rock from side to side. Unfortunately coil springing has no dampening action by itself, as opposed to leaf springs, which can rub against each other, thus providing some dampening. To build effective dampers into the suspension means a further complication, so one alternative is really a hard ride with little freedom of movement when loaded.

It would seem that the height of the springs is insufficient to deal with all circumstances, so perhaps a slight re-design, to accommodate longer or thicker springs would solve the problem that does occur at certain tracks. This really means the fitting of dampers as well, which is contrary to the previous paragraph...?

Philip T. Bellamy.

CH - 8311 Brütten, Switzerland.

Dear Mike

Quite a number of people have approached me concerning the origins of the four chocolate and brown carriages running during the AGM at Weston Park last month.

To clear up any misunderstanding, the three open carriages, including the wheelchair carrying vehicle, were built by myself for use on the railway which I used to run at Pangbourne, they being subsequently sold on and have now been bought by Bret Rogers for use behind his East African Garratt. The fourth coach, the covered one, is a new build this year to the same basic design, the bogies being made by myself, the frame by Bret Rogers and the bodywork by Derek Burwell. It is likely that we shall be building more of the latter.

Speaking to our Editor, he has twisted my arm to pen (process?) an account of the wheelchair vehicle which, time permitting, I shall try and get into the next copy of the News.

Yours sincerely,

Eric R. Smith

Bucklebury, Berks, RG7 6TE

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We are trying to raise a substantial amount of revenue, so every donation will be gratefully appreciated.

Further fact sheets and information can be obtained from Merlyn at the above address.

We hope to see you at Welshpool.

Kindest regards,

Tony Lewis

Member No. 01289

BACK NUMBERS of the 7¼ in. Gauge NEWS are still available from the Editor, all are now priced at 50 pence per copy, whilst the Post Office charges are now quite expensive with recent increases and the lowering of the weight bands, so allow 50 pence also for postage each one. Kindly note that issues No 91 onwards are only available by annual subscription, which remains at £15 for home and overseas presently. The following issues are available; Nos 0, 27-32, 34, 35, 37-45, 47-53, 55, 58-75, 77-83, 85-90.

All reasonable care is taken in the preparation of this publication but The Society cannot be held responsible for loss or inconveniences arising from errors or omissions; advertisements are accepted in good faith and reliance placed upon the contents is at the reader's own risk.

SPELLING CHECKER.

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Eye halve a spelling chequer. it came with my pea sea
It plainly marques four my revue, Miss steaks eye kin knot sea.
Eye strike a key and type a word, and weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong oar write, It shows me strait a weigh.
As soon as a mist ache is maid, it nose bee fore two long
And eye can put the error rite, Its rare lea ever wrong.
Eye have run this poem threw it, I am shore your pleased to no
Its letter perfect awl the weigh, My spell check toll me sew.

Thanks to the Editor of 'Call Boy', Bill Stauffer for permission to use the above.
Your Editor is about to get computerised, and hope its not too painful, but does wonder
if his spelling may now himprov. ?.....

... MERRY CHRISTMAS
EVERYONE ...



PRESS DATES for Spring, 2001 issue No 96 of the 7¼in. Gauge NEWS are;

Advertisers instructions please to Richard Shaw by 7th January, 2001, and notices of
events and private member's announcements to John Nicholson by 1st February, 2001.
Your Editor will be especially pleased to have your news, articles and photographs for
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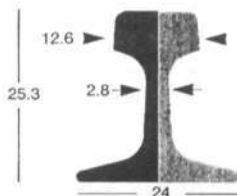
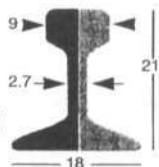
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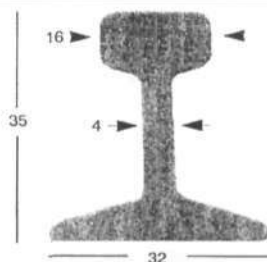
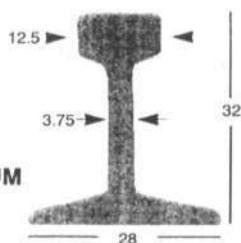
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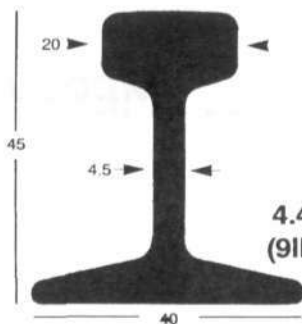
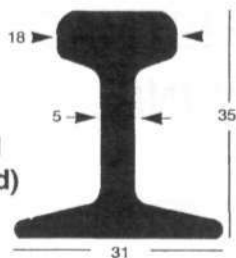
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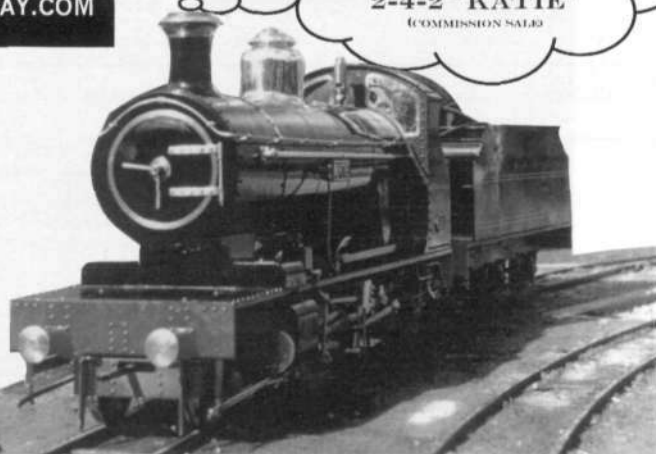


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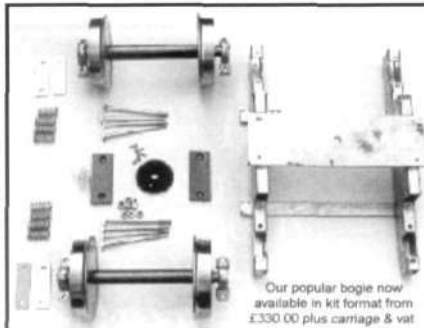
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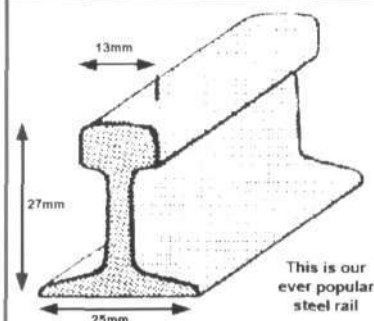


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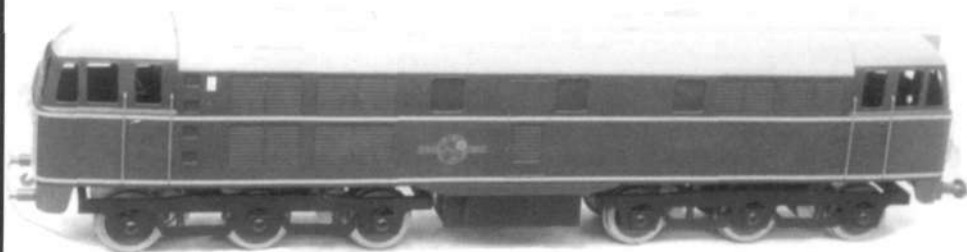


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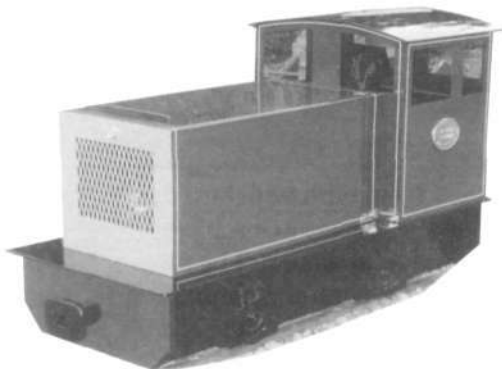
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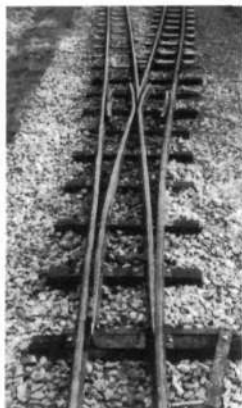
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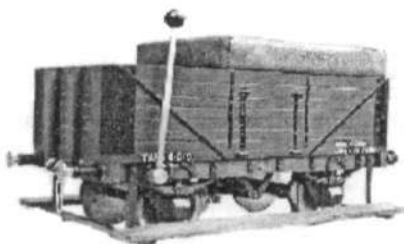
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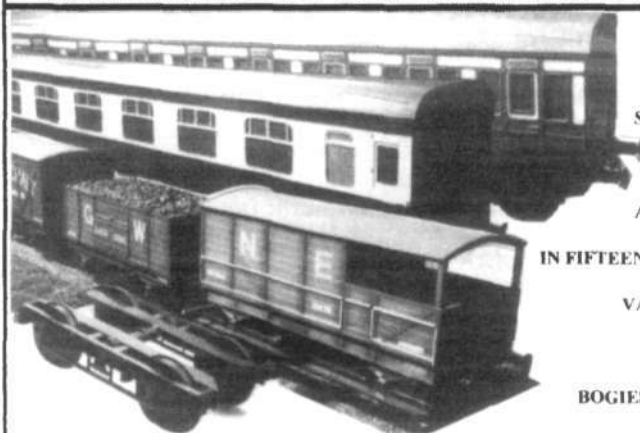
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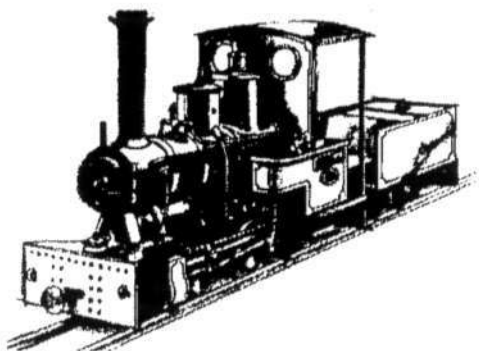
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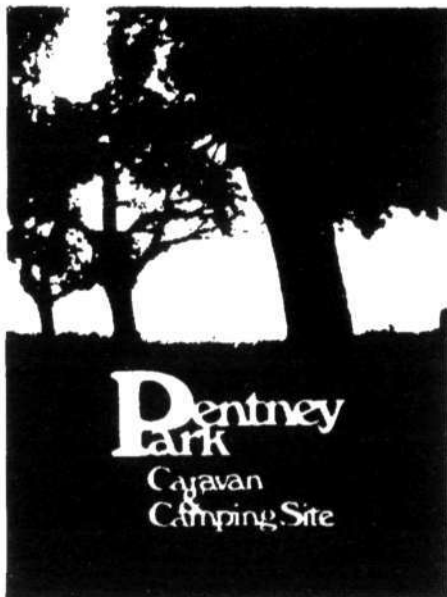
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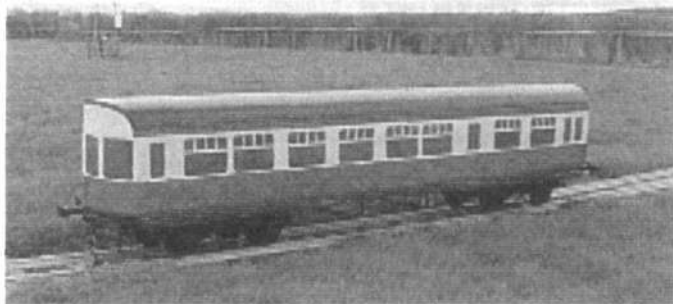
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Those badges that have been out of stock for so long will now be available (again from another supplier) but the screen printed badge will not be stocked, unless there is an unprecedented demand. The cost will be such a small amount less than the embroidered badges that it seemed pointless to have an alternative.

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