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# West Midlands "N" Gauge Club

# Newsletter

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Volume 13 Issue 4

December 2010

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the last issue of 2010 – and, sadly for me, the last issue for which I can be held responsible! However, the good news is that a successor has stepped forward to fill the breach, and I warmly welcome our own Tony Butler to take over in the ‘hot seat’. Do give Tony your full support (and articles, photos, etc. without which no editor can edit!) as he settles into his new post, for what I hope will be for him (as it has been for me) a long and satisfying tenure.

My final issue is such a bumper number I should surely have provided an index! I hope readers will forgive me for indulging myself a little in this issue, but the trip across Canada was such an enjoyable experience I did want to share it with you. And Steve at Grimy Times did such a good job of lightly weathering, renaming, renumbering and detailing a ‘Jubilee’ for me it was worth a picture.

We have very little in the way of progress reports on the layouts. That doesn’t mean there has been no progress, but that comprehensive reports will appear in the newsletter throughout the year. A complete list of meetings for 2011 will be found on the back page.

There’s an account of the Warley show, that always seems to lead us nicely into the Christmas season, and a ‘plug’ for some upcoming exhibitions, including the Stafford show, which, for me and many others I expect, well and truly launches the new modelling year.

Have a very Happy Christmas, and a very N-gauging New Year!

Volume 14 Issue 1 should appear in March, with Tony Butler as the new editor. Don’t forget to bombard him with copy!



## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As I write this early in November (so that as part of the church bazaar events.

So, as always, a lot is happening before would like in our Christmas stocking!

Have a great time over the holiday season 2010.

Here’s wishing you all a very Happy Christmas.

And, of course – happy modelling!

*Ken Jones, Chairman*

**Chairman: Ken Jones**

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**Treasurer: Edgar Mason**

## THE CLUB LAYOUTS

Updates on our layouts will appear in the 2011 newsletters.

Meanwhile, we are trying to put together a team of from six to eight people who would like to operate *Waterstock* at exhibitions in the UK further afield than the ones we go to now.

Currently we don’t go further than 50 miles from our home base, but a team of such operators would enable us to submit the layout to all exhibition managers, and would allow it to be seen and appreciated by a wider audience than at present.

For example, Brian Darbyshire in West Yorkshire is willing to help operate and erect the layout if we are ever exhibiting in Yorkshire.

If you would like to be part of this team or want more information, please contact David Griffin by email at:

[griffinrail@blue.yoner.co.uk](mailto:griffinrail@blue.yoner.co.uk)

## Newsletter Editor

Two newsletter editors (Julian and Rock) have produced our newsletter without complaint since day one, with Rock, our current editor, doing it for many years. We are pleased to announce that our very own Tony Butler (not the sports commentator on local radio) has stepped forward to edit the newsletter from January, and his first newsletter is due out in March. We wish him every success, and welcome your articles, pictures and other copy.

## The Stafford Show 2011

For me, as I'm sure for many West Midlanders, this is the show that kick-starts the New Year. It has grown steadily over the years, and now occupies all three halls of its chosen venue, the Stafford County Showground

It's such a popular show many of my modelling friends from the north-west make the trip, and it's very unusual for me not to run into one or two and spend valuable viewing time just chatting and catching up with events and old acquaintances. And, needless to say, there's usually the odd bit of advice thrown in, which almost always proves invaluable.

This year the exhibition occupies all three halls, the Prestwood, Argyle and Sandyland Suites, at

### **Stafford County Showground**

This is situated on the A518, 3 miles east of Stafford Town Centre (for those of you using maps), and at ST18 0BD (for those of you who don't have to).

The show will be held on

**Saturday 5 February**

**Sunday 6 February**

*(10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on both days)*

There is extended free parking at the showground, or you can travel free by preserved bus from Stafford railway station.

With at least 34 quality layouts, full trade support and refreshments.

**Adults: £7.00**  
**Children: £4.00**  
**Seniors: £6.00**  
**Family: £18.00**

The Exhibition is promoted by Stafford Railway Circle whose website is at:

[www.staffordrailwaycircle.org.uk](http://www.staffordrailwaycircle.org.uk)

## The York Show 2011

For many modellers, their Easter would not be complete without a visit to York. There is the station, with its wonderful awe-inspiring roof, and the nearby National Railway Museum, with not only a splendid collection of locomotives but much else besides. As if this were not sufficient, out at the racecourse is what must rank as the foremost model railway show in the north.

This is the 49<sup>th</sup> annual show, held at the

### **Knivesmire Stand York Racecourse**

and you can reach it by car – there's free parking for 800 cars – or by train – a bus service operates from York Railway Station.

Easter is very late in 2011, so you'll have to wait until well on into April to indulge, in fact

**Saturday 23 April**

**Sunday 24 April**

**Monday 25 April**

*(10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily)*

There will be over 100 stands, including over 40 layouts. There will also be demonstrations, trade stands and specialist societies, and a full refreshment service will be available.

**Adults: £8.00**  
**Children: £6.00**  
**Seniors: £6.00**  
**Family: £22.00**

Advance booking (at slightly reduced prices) available from:

*17 Danesbury Drive, Acomb  
York, YO26 5EQ*

Enclose an SAE and make cheques payable to *York Model Railway Show*.

Visit their website at:

[www.yorkshow.org.uk](http://www.yorkshow.org.uk)

## Websites Great and Small

The modern personal computer is a wonderful device – how much more difficult it would be to put this newsletter together without one! And out there on the Internet are some inspirational websites showing splendid examples of the modeller's art. It's tempting on occasions to spend more time looking at other people's efforts than getting on with our own!

The national society's site can be found at:

[www.ngaugesociety.com](http://www.ngaugesociety.com)

while our own club website is at:

[www.ngaugewmg.co.uk](http://www.ngaugewmg.co.uk)

Excellent news is that Ken, our Chairman, hopes to update his website in January. I always enjoy a peek at his micro-layouts, and he was always too modest to let me put much in the newsletter! Check out:

[www.kenjonestrains.co.uk](http://www.kenjonestrains.co.uk)

If you're interested in buses as well as trains (your editor was a bus conductor in an earlier life), then you'll enjoy:

[www.focustransport.org.uk/](http://www.focustransport.org.uk/)

which is updated daily and to which Ken is a regular contributor. Some excellent shots of buses and trains doing their best in the snowy conditions – well worth a peek.

Which reminds me of my favourite modelling site, that of Carl Arendt, whose monthly scrapbooks augmented by mid-monthly bonus issues most months, just seems to get better and better. True, he tends to like small layouts in the larger gauges, and frequently features narrow gauge, but it's a site I find I can't keep away from. It's at:

[www.carendt.com](http://www.carendt.com)

Happy surfing!

## ON THE CANADIAN TRAIL

*The second part of your editor's Canadian adventures . . .*

While in Toronto, the CN Tower is a 'must-see', though, as a vertigo sufferer, I'd no intention of venturing up. Instead, I kept my feet on *terra firma* and headed across the road, to seek out the Toronto Railway Heritage Centre, opened earlier this year. The Canadian Pacific (CPR) John Street Roundhouse of 1929 and a 120-foot long turntable form the backdrop and setting for a number of locomotives, and the small CPR Don depot (station) and fully-restored Grand Trunk Railway Cabin D interlocking tower were interesting exhibits from a bygone age. Locomotives included CP switchers 7020 and 7069, CN diesel 4803 and the iconic steam locomotive 6213, a 'Northern' class 4-8-4 built by the Montreal Locomotive Works in the early 1940s.

### The Canadian

Dusk was falling as I made my way back to Toronto's historic Union Station for the next leg of my journey. Departure time of train No. 1, the 'Canadian', was 9 p.m., and we began to board about half an hour before. Shown to my cabin, I surveyed my surroundings with interest, since I would be spending three nights aboard on my way to Jasper. Anyone familiar with the Scottish or Penzance sleepers



would feel at home, since there were all the usual facilities. There was a little more room due to the more generous loading gauge of North American railroads, but the two bunk beds with ladder access to the top bunk, and the washing facilities with a good supply of hot and cold water were all very familiar. A tap for 'drinking water' was useful. Also, still more useful to those of us who've reached the age when we can no longer last the whole night through, a private toilet in an adjacent cubicle. And, if you needed to shake off the dust of Toronto, down the corridor was a shower.

As we pulled slowly out of Toronto station (involving a setting-back manoeuvre), I reflected on the history

of this famous train. When first introduced by the CPR, way back on 24 April 1955, the starting point was Montreal, and it ran via Ottawa and Toronto through to Vancouver. It was a last-ditch attempt to halt the decline in passenger travel on the railways, and what a splendid effort it was. The passenger cars were built by the Budd Company of Philadelphia, and were lightweight and cheap to maintain due to Budd's patented shot-welded stainless steel sheathing. One impressive feature was the provision of a 'dome car', seating in an upper deck giving all-round views of the scenery, while the lower deck served as a coffee lounge. Only one of these cars was marshalled in the train, more than adequate in winter when the consist might be down to seven or eight cars, but unpopular in summer with twenty or more cars on the train. Even more impressive was the last car in the rake, one of the so-called 'Park' cars, named after national and provincial parks in the Provinces. These too had an upper deck like the dome cars, but the rear of the car formed an observation lounge, with its characteristic wrap-around windows. The coffee lounge, or 'beverage room', was decorated in each 'Park' car by a mural on the end wall, executed by a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, and in consequence was generally known as the 'mural lounge'. CPR President Norris 'Buck' Crump reportedly admitted that, financially, this train was the worst mistake he'd made: I for one was thankful that he'd made it.



I finally fell asleep, soothed at intervals by the sounds of the locomotive horn as the train approached a grade crossing (level crossing to us Brits). Major roads are protected with lights and barriers, much as in the UK, but very minor roads and tracks often have only a warning sign. I recall the horn sounded something like ‘long, long, short, loo-oong’, this final blast as the train thundered over the crossing.

Next morning, awake, washed and more or less refreshed, I took a walk along the train to find my allocated dining car. Superbly appointed, excellent service and wonderful food made this an experience to be savoured. I looked forward to lunch (I was to have vegetable soup, Caesar salad and ice cream that day) and dinner (salad, pickerel with potatoes and vegetables, chocolate cake, and a bottle of Mission Hill white wine from the Okanagan Valley were much appreciated): I was certainly not to be disappointed. On returning to my berth after breakfast, I found the cabin attendant had, miraculously it seemed, converted it into a day cabin, with a couple of easy chairs where you could sit and watch as the world passed by your window.

But even better accommodation could be found, and so it was off to find a dome car from which to really enjoy the views. There were two, as well as the ‘Park’ car, on this twenty-four car train, an improvement since CPR days. Since 1977 practically all passenger services in Canada have been taken over by the government-sponsored VIA Rail, including the prestigious *Canadian*, and the stock has been refurbished to a high standard. The work included all but four of the ‘Park’ cars, but these lost their wonderful murals. Many of the original artists have become much better known, and the value of the murals has consequently increased (they each cost \$1,000 originally), so the decision was made to remove the murals for cleaning and restoration, enabling them to be viewed as works of art and appreciated by the general public at exhibitions all over Canada.

One delightful railway habit from the old days that remains is the practice of stopping at each divisional point.



These were set up every hundred-odd miles or so, where the locomotives could be changed or coaled and watered, where crews might be relieved and where the train could be serviced. This gave the opportunity for passengers to get down and stretch their legs. Nowadays, there is the added need to find somewhere legal to light up – not so much a ‘flag stop’ as a ‘fag stop’, you might say. So, when we pulled in to Hornepayne, the steps were put out and we detrained under the watchful eye of our car attendant. This was a good opportunity to have a first look at the engines, there having been little opportunity before departure from Toronto. I noted these were F-40 locomotives, part of a fleet of 54 such engines, and was told that government investment has enabled a

rebuilding programme that will extend their lifespan by 15 to 20 years at less than half the cost of new equipment. In addition, new technologies have been incorporated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 12% and diminish maintenance costs by 8% annually.

While at the front, I was able to observe the handling of baggage in the baggage car at the head end next the engines, and to stroll to the rear of the train and admire the ‘Park’ car attached, in our case ‘Tremblant Park’ (named after Mont-Tremblant National Park in Québec). There was a relaxed and free-and-easy atmosphere about the station, and passengers generally behaved responsibly, but staff were quick to act when necessary.



At Rivers, I saw a sight to gladden the heart of a railway modeller. A brace of locomotives arrived and coupled up to a cut of cars. The buckeye couplers worked a treat, just like well-adjusted Micro-trains couplers on a quality exhibition layout. The locos then backed off a little for air hoses to be connected. Following a brake test, the train then departed. Just the sort of manoeuvre modellers do on a daily basis – but this was the real thing.

At Winnipeg we stopped for four hours, giving time for a little sight-seeing before departure. Platform loiterers (aka railfans) are not nearly so common in Canada as in the UK, but the station staff were invariably polite and obliging, and I was able to take the shots I needed without any trouble. Due to the length of our train, we were blocking the main line and preventing passage of those all-important freight trains. So the locomotives detached a number of head-end cars, as far back as the first dome car, and stabled them over in Platform 1. A sense of humour is never far away – while chatting to our train manager, Janet, who was coming on duty at Winnipeg, she asked which car I was travelling in. '146', I replied. 'Oh', said she, 'that's the one we're cutting out!'

As we pulled out of Winnipeg, car 146 still, fortunately, attached, I pondered on another change brought about by VIA Rail. We were no longer routed exclusively on CPR metals, but spent much of our time travelling along the tracks of its old rival, the CNR. We had already left out the spectacular run along the shores of Lake Superior in favour of a more northerly route. Now, as we waited at Portage le Prairie, where the depots of the two companies stood side by side, here we were at the CNR platform, while over to my right stood that of the CPR. And, as we rattled over the diamonds where the two routes crossed, I wished heartily we had been heading along the tracks of the CPR towards Calgary, Banff and the Spiral Tunnels. But today the only passenger train which that line ever sees is the tourist train, the *Rocky Mountaineer*. This uses the classic route in both directions, the Connaught Track over the Stoney Creek viaduct, along with eastbound freights, while most

westbound freights use the more easily-graded new route through the Macdonald Tunnel. The reason seems to be that CP Rail wants to keep the new tunnel as clean as possible, and the *Rocky Mountaineer* has toilets which discharge directly onto the track!

As we rattled across the prairies for mile after mile, I kept a lookout for the 'prairie skyscrapers'. Most of the old wooden grain elevators had been replaced by modern structures, but there were still a handful to be seen trackside on our route, a reminder of the importance of freight in general and grain in particular to this part of Canada. A further reminder was the frequency with which we pulled off the

out this manoeuvre managed to 'blow the electrics', causing a three-hour delay while this was fixed. There was no such problem on this occasion, and by noon we were rolling into Jasper. Here I left the train, for, while it would continue through the Rockies to Kamloops and on to Vancouver, I had other plans.

## The Skeena

Last time I was in Jasper the sun was shining gloriously but the temperature was down to -11 degrees. This morning, as I walked to the depot, it was much milder, but the sky was overcast. I found train No. 5 being made ready, and was able to take some photographs. The overcast sky now



single-track main line into a passing siding, where we were obliged to wait while a long freight train highballed through. These freights invariably had well over a hundred cars (bogie wagons) in transit, an enormous tonnage requiring several powerful freight locomotives to haul such a train.

After my third night on the train, I awoke to find dawn breaking and our train reversing into Edmonton depot. Some re-marshalling took place, in order to position a vista-dome car in the middle of the train for the run through the Rocky Mountains and to attach new motive power. I was told that, on a previous occasion, carrying

became an advantage, as I was obliged, because of the track layout, to take my photographs from the north side of the tracks.

*The Skeena* was a sort of mini-*Canadian*, a single F40 at the head, baggage car, two coaches, and a 'Park' car. (For model railway enthusiasts, it's the sort of train you could easily model – you might even get away with running just one of the two coaches.) While it's a two-day trip to Prince Rupert, the train stops overnight at Prince George, and, as there are no sleeping cars on the train, it is advisable to book some accommodation in advance, or at least make sure your tent is handy.

I understand that, in summer, a vista-dome can be added, of the sort attached to the *Canadian* back in Edmonton, but I was happy to spend the sightseeing hours in the observation lounge of the 'Park' car. Ours was *Banff Park*, the first 'Park' car to roll off Budd's production line back in the 1950s.

Immediately on leaving Jasper we began to enjoy the Rocky Mountain scenery. It had to compete for our attentions with lunch (it was approaching 1 o'clock), served on a tray which you placed on a little fold-down table hidden in the arm-rest, just as I'd experienced on the Ottawa-Toronto train. There were no cooking facilities on the train, so all food had to be served cold (it was sandwiches for lunch). There was, theoretically, a choice, but if they had run out of your particular craving by the time the attendants reached you, well, tough! But the staff were all extremely obliging, and went out of their way in their efforts to accommodate passengers' wishes. Come the evening, we had a salad dinner with wine. More Canadian humour was in evidence: 'You only get one glass – so be sure you hang onto it for a refill!'

The atmosphere was much more informal on this train than on the *Canadian*. I met George, aged 86, from Ohio. He spent much time in the dome section of the 'Park' car, and I envied his ability to climb easily up and down the stairs. There was a small group of keen photographers from Germany, generally to be found in the observation lounge, and we had interesting conversations about camera technique. We stretched our legs at division point McBride. Pride in their railway heritage is evident in many of these towns, and you will often find a freight car, caboose, or even a locomotive, on a plinth by the lineside.

While the train is largely patronised by tourists, it is a life-line for some of the small communities in this largely-unpopulated region of British Columbia. One lady detrained at a very small depot. There was no other building in sight. Without a backward look at the train, she headed off into the forest, as if this was a common,



everyday occurrence. We tourists just stared open-mouthed. At Penny, population 12, we dropped off the mail and collected the out-going letters – a whole new meaning to the expression 'Penny Post'.

Having slept on board the *Canadian* for three nights, it can come as a bit of a shock when you realise you have to get off your train at the end of the day.

Our arrival at Prince George soon after seven, well-fed, meant the chance of a good night's sleep. With a departure time of 0800 next morning, this was essential.

After the excitement of the Rockies, the rest of the journey had seemed quite tame, with little to see but trees.

Now, however, as we began to travel along the valley of the River Skeena, there was more to see, and tunnels and viaducts became of absorbing interest from the observation lounge. The highlight was the traverse of three tunnels in quick succession on a perfectly straight alignment. Just before we reached the spot, train boss Diane appeared with a lap-top computer, showed us the sort of photograph we might attempt at the location, and gave us some hints on how to judge the moment when the shutter should be pressed. She then unhinged the safety bar from the rear of the car and opened wide the door, to avoid the need to photograph through the glass. This caused a little initial consternation among the 'Elf 'n' Safety' Brits, but they were soon





## On the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway – the Dayliner

The taxi dropped me off, together with what seemed like a mountain of luggage, just by the compact, red-brick railway depot and a few yards away from Victoria's sky-blue Johnson Street Bridge. Not yet half-past seven in the morning, the station was deserted as I made my way along the platform looking for a vantage point from which to catch an image of the morning train as it pulled off the bridge into the depot. I'd photographed the train many times before. I'd walked over the bridge, ignoring notices about trespass and 'employees only' as do the city's commuters as they ride in on their bikes. But I'd never ridden the train.



I was expecting a single-unit rail diesel car (RDCs - they often use two in the summer), built by Budd back in the 1950s to replace steam-hauled trains on branch services. If that makes you think of the old bone-shaking Pacers on British lines, I urge you to think again. These share the same sound construction and stainless-steel sheathing of the *Canadian* stock we've already encountered on this trip. Although many lightly-used lines have had their passenger services discontinued, and this has caused many such railcars to be scrapped (some even preserved), those in service on Vancouver Island are well-maintained, and the cars have picture windows giving an excellent view, and legroom airline passengers can only dream of.

jostling good-naturedly for the best positions. The tunnels arrived, the shots were taken and comparisons made – it was the lady photographer judged unanimously to have taken the best picture.

In the short space of two days, train, crew and fellow passengers had become familiar friends, and it was rather sad to say goodbye to them as we left the train at Prince Rupert. It was a short night, for I was to make the ferry crossing to Port Hardy on Vancouver Island next morning. And after boarding the ferry, while awaiting sailing time, I looked out to see *The Skeena* on its way to the station to start its run back to Jasper – a fitting farewell.



The railcar rumbles over the bridge and I get my shot. Suddenly passengers appear as if out of the woodwork, and there is an unseemly (and unnecessary) scramble for seats. The conductor does his best, loading foursomes first of all so that they can find seats together. After that, it's every man for himself, as the conductor has to find accommodation for all the luggage coming on board (no baggage car on this train). This he commendably does, and I find a seat and settle back to enjoy the trip.

Once out of the suburbs, train No. 199 heads into leafy forest and begins to climb the Malahat. The mist is down as we traverse two trestle bridges in quick succession, the Niagara Bridge and the Arbutus Bridge, both offering hair-raisingly steep views.

Gentle meadows take us into Duncan, famous for its handsome totem poles, and then Chemainus with its giant murals.

In no time it seems we are rolling into Nanaimo, the island's second city. The station is being refurbished after a fire, so we alight at the adjacent parking lot on the other side of the line, totally confusing me for a few moments. But John is there to photograph our arrival and to greet his little brother.

This used to be a refreshment stop for the train, where passengers could step down to stretch their legs and buy from a pick-up truck parked on the platform. This practice now appears to have ceased, and the train is soon away again on its way to Courtenay.

But refreshment is not a problem for us, for, as we drive away from the station, I know John and his wife will have refreshments waiting for us at his home. I guess (in theory at least) this is where my holiday really starts.

*Rock Battye*

*(All photographs were taken by the author on the journey described.)*



**Photo Captions:**

*Page 3 (top) CN motive power at Toronto Railway Heritage Museum. The 32-bay roundhouse can be glimpsed on the left, the coaling tower behind.*

*Page 3 (bottom) The 'Canadian' is held in a loop road for a CN freight of double-stacks to pass by on the main line.*

*Page 4 (top) The 'Park' car on the 'Canadian', photographed during the stop at Hornepayne.*

*Page 4 (bottom) Locomotives of class F-40 Nos. 6441, 6418 at Winnipeg during our four-hour stopover.*

*Page 5 The 'Canadian' arrives in Jasper, and the baggage handlers get to work.*

*Page 6 (top) 'The Skeena', preparations completed, is ready to move into the depot for passengers to board.*

*Page 6 (bottom) Passengers detrain at McBride, to stretch their legs and explore the station. 'Banff Park' is bringing up the markers on this train.*

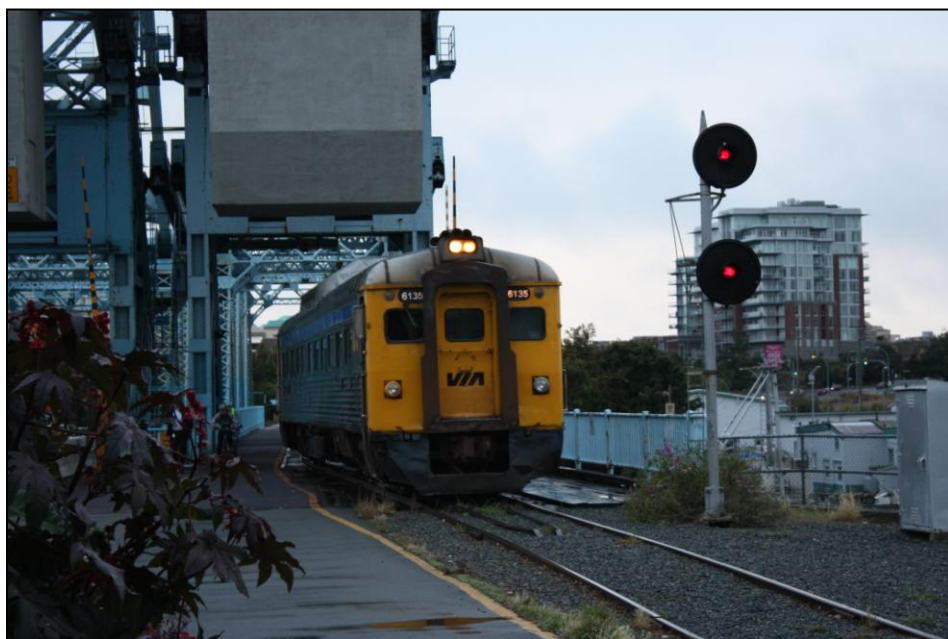
*Page 7 (top) CN caboose plinthed at McBride.*

*Page 7 (middle) Shooting the tunnels – preparations are made. The lady who will take the best photograph is prominent, while an idea of what the view looks like can be faintly seen through the curved side window.*

*Page 7 (bottom) Journey's end for 'The Skeena', and a last baggage check.*

*Page 8 (top) The small depot at Victoria, with passengers awaiting the 'Dayliner'.*

*Page 8 (bottom) The 'Dayliner' comes over the Johnson Street Bridge into the depot at Victoria.*





## PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

*The Warley show, as seen, described and photographed by Peter Bailey*

This was one of the best exhibitions I have been to in over forty years! There was truly 'something for everyone'. This being the 65<sup>th</sup> year of the British branch of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) and the Golden Jubilee of the 2mm Scale Association, both were well represented.

The *pièce de résistance* was clearly the 2mm *Copenhagen Fields* – an outstanding diorama – and, judging by the crowd around it all day, most people thought the same.

'Less is more' was my verdict overall, however:-

*Bassenthwaite Lake* (N) was outstanding,

*Larpool & Essington* (3mm) remains evergreen,

*Goose Lake* (3.5mm) was absolutely delightful (especially the waterfall),

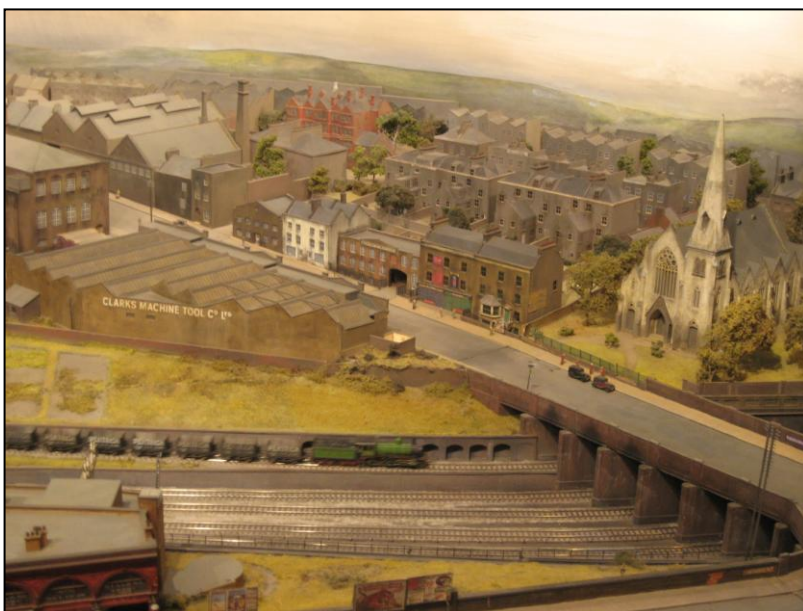
*Gamle Carlsberg* (1/45) was verging on 'Santa's Grotto' with its varied lighting effects.

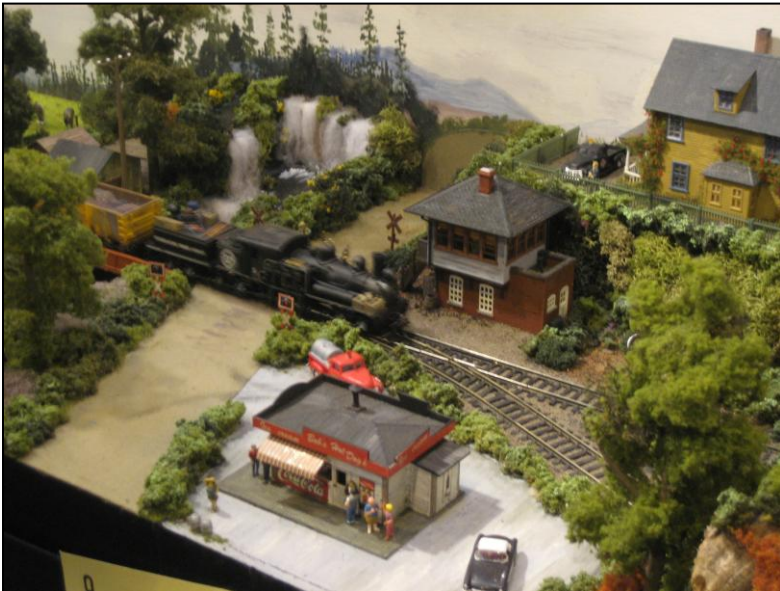
Two elevated electric railways were modelled. *Herculaneum Dock* was a 4mm outline of the south end of the Liverpool Overhead Railway, and a wonderful recreation of the 'Dockers' Umbrella' in its last years. *Myrtle Avenue* was a 7mm scale model of this multi-level station on the New York subway/elevated in Brooklyn.

In fact, the North American scene featured strongly, with lots of pine-clad hillsides and desert regions.

Our continental cousins were well represented, notably *Havnegade* with its ferry and *Rymenzburger Chnollebahn* with impressive Alpine gorges. But the 'gold star' from this spectator goes to *De Hezelpoort 1927*, with steam train, and steam and electric trams, as well as a pedalling cyclist!

As a Geordie, I found *Wansbeck Road* (2mm) and *Harton Gill* both captured the atmosphere of the north-eastern rail scene to perfection. I've also a liking for seaside models, and *Westcliff*





had the most authentic recreation of a beach and the cliffs that I have yet seen.

Overall there was almost too much to take in! Organisation seemed excellent, with plenty of circulating space and enough seats to give tired feet an occasional rest. And while I'm conscious in this account of using the word 'outstanding' too much, I felt all the exhibits would fall into this category.

*Peter Bailey*

***Photo Captions:***

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*Page 9 (top) Bassenthwaite Lake in N Gauge, South Lakeland Railway Modellers.*

*Page 9 (middle) Copenhagen Fields in 2mm scale, The Model Railway Club.*

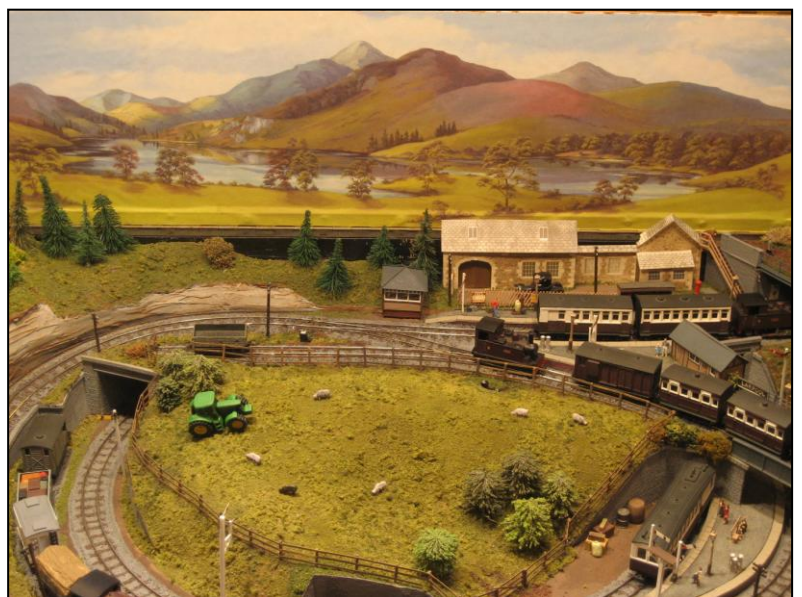
*Page 9 (bottom) de Hezelpoort 1927 in H0 gauge, Loek Bronkhurst.*



*This page (top) Goose Lake in H0 gauge, Raven MRG.*

*This page (middle) Harton Gill in P4 gauge, Carshalton & Sutton MRC*

*This page (bottom) Larpool and Easington, Stephen Pugmire*



## Fudging Branch Locos

My micro-layout *Lakebank* represents a branch-line terminus on the southern tip of Coniston Water. Like many layouts, it's based on a 'might-have-been' situation: a branch line to Lakebank from Greenodd on the Furness Railway's Lakeside branch was proposed in 1900, but the proposals came to nothing.

Services on *Lakebank* are based very much on the actual services operated on the Lakeside and Coniston branches. This means the branch passenger service (an Ivatt 2-6-2T) and the local goods ('Jinty' or a Fowler 0-6-0).

I was looking for ways to add a little more excitement to the roster, and recalled that, during the long, hot summer months (remember those?), day excursions would be run from various towns during their 'Factory Fortnight' or 'Wakes Week' (the layout is set in the carmine-and-cream days of 1954). Locomotives appeared from some fairly esoteric locations, and even a B1 found its way over from the North Eastern Region of BR. The real Lakebank would have been a suitable destination for such trains, so I'm eagerly checking out the reviews of the B1 engines that are appearing from our two major manufacturers.

A little 'modeller's licence' has the possibility of yet more variety. Out on the old Furness Railway main line, the evening Manchester train was a Crewe working (no – don't ask!) which was often used as a running-in turn, bringing in ex-works locomotives of class 6 or class 7. Should the fitters detect a problem, I thought, then it might be sent for a gentle run up the branch rather than the rostered trip up the Cumbrian coast. So I've an excuse for a Patriot (wish someone would make one!), Jubilee, Scot or even a Britannia.



*One of these days I'll sort out the track layout I want for London Road Shed. I have seen one or two models where the coaling road (on which our engine is standing) is a dead-end siding. I'm sure that would lead to problems, with engines getting blocked and unable to get out after coaling.*

*So I need to have some sort of run-round loop, so that engines, having coaled, can run back on an avoiding line. The Americans seem to have arrival and departure roads for their engine terminals. Perhaps I'll try that!*



I have a Britannia on order, and had hoped to review it here, which is the reason for all this waffle!

However, I can portray an ex-works Jubilee, on shed before working back to Crewe on the afternoon London service.

This is the work of Steve Johnson of Grimy Times, whose work in weathering locomotives, both in 00 and in N gauge has already been reviewed in one of the model railway periodicals.

Requiring an ex-works loco, I didn't want the heavy weathering for which Steve is renowned, but I did think a little light weathering below the footplate might help to bring out the detail.

Two things I did require, which I wouldn't trust my old eyes and less-than-nimble fingers to accomplish, were, firstly, to rename and renumber the locomotive, and then, to add those little details that make all the difference to a model.

A couple of photographs will give you an idea what Steve was able to achieve. The loco is, of course, 45553 *Canada* (what else, I guess?) at the coaling stage (yes, it's still a mock-up).

Sadly, the Britannia will have to wait (perhaps the new editor will allow me a little space in the next newsletter!).

## Shop!

The (national) N Gauge Society's second-hand shop, to be precise, and it will be at our venue, which has good road and rail access to many parts of the country (and, while the scenery may be nothing to write home about, an interesting industrial past).

Please make a note in your diaries – the date is

*Saturday 19 March 2011*

and, as they want to clear as much of the second-hand stock as possible (to save taking it home), expect good prices.

The club will also have *Waterstock* and *Tipton Hills* running, and you will also be able to see the progress on *Water Orton*.

If this is not enough to tempt you, the church will also provide bacon sandwiches, drinks and other refreshments at exceptionally good value for money.

Entrance will be free to members of the N Gauge Society only, on production of membership cards. As an event for N Gauge Society members only, this looks like being a good day.

More details will appear in the N Gauge Society Journal, so make a note now in your diaries, and don't forget to bring along your N Gauge Society membership card.

## 2011 PROGRAMME

All meetings are held at Tipton Green Methodist Church Hall, Park Lane West, Tipton, West Midlands, DY4 8LD, on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays in each month, except in December, from 2pm to 5pm.

January		15 <sup>th</sup>
February	5 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>
March	5 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>
April	2 <sup>nd</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>
May	7 <sup>th</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>
June	4 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>
July	2 <sup>nd</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>
August	6 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>
September	3 <sup>rd</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>
October	1 <sup>st</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>
November	5 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>
December	3 <sup>rd</sup> (AGM)	

There will be no meeting on Jan 1<sup>st</sup> or December 17<sup>th</sup>.

Any changes to these dates will be notified on our website or in our quarterly newsletter.

For more information, contact Ken Jones:

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website: [www.ngaugewmg.co.uk](http://www.ngaugewmg.co.uk)

Please use the **rear entrance** to gain access to the church hall.

If you are in doubt, please ring first, especially if you are travelling any distance.

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# A Merry Christmas to all our Readers!