
West Midlands "N" Gauge Club

Newsletter

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HEADCODE

Welcome to the September Edition for 2012.

Well that's the Olympics sorted then, and didn't we do well. I'm not much of a sports fan myself, the 100 yard armchair dash being about my limit these days, but the absence of anything else on TV meant I could get on with a bit more modelling.

Since the last issue my inbox has been inundated with an e-mail. No, not from Mrs. Trellis of Anglesey, but from Phil Hunt who reminds us that August is traditionally the month of Garden Railways in the Model Railway press. He presents us with his version of a garden railway – in 'N'. Thanks Phil.

So, as the wettest summer for a hundred years draws to its inexorable end, this seems an appropriate time to publish Phil's article, and perhaps make plans for the future. There's always next summer... *TB*

Volume 15 Issue 4 should appear in early December 2012.

Copy deadlines for the next four issues are:

Dec '12 Issue: 12th November
Mar '13 Issue: 9th February
June '13 Issue: 5th May
Sept '13 Issue: 10th August



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Whether we struggle to wire a set of points or find ourselves suddenly redundant as in my case, we need support from friends who with their experience, help and guide us to a successful outcome.

We'll never be a big "in your face" type of club, boasting about our membership figures, or similar.

We try to be there when people need our help, supporting local model railway exhibitions and helping to play a key role in other events as you will see later in this newsletter.

On the subject of newsletters – a special thanks to Tony, our editor for producing such an excellent bumper last edition.

Best wishes

Ken Jones, Chairman

Chairman: Ken Jones

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Treasurer: Edgar Mason

THE CLUB LAYOUTS

Waterstock . . .

I mentioned last time that during shunting operations, power to the shed area was mysteriously lost under certain conditions and made an appeal that if Len, our resident 'sparks', was reading this perhaps he could get in touch? And, somewhat tongue in cheek, perhaps bring one of his wife's cakes?

Well, imagine my surprise when on the very day of publication, on arriving at the club that afternoon, there stood Len. Not only an electrical genius, but psychic to boot apparently.

Well, we set to explaining the problem to him and this was ably reinforced by a practical demonstration by Derek G.

Len, in his usual manner studied the dilemma for a minute... sucked his teeth a little... leant over to the control panel... And **THREW THE SWITCH FOR THE ISOLATING SECTION!!** Problem solved - I told you he was a genius!

By the way, the cake was excellent too. Thanks Len and Mrs. Len.

Tipton Hills...

After its appearance at Chasewater we need to get some things sorted out ready for its busy autumn schedule. Not least what to do with its new Allen key, after the last one was lost and meant we couldn't dismantle the legs.

Work continues on the scenic caravan site being built next to the holding loops. *Cont'd*

THE CLUB LAYOUTS *Cont'd*

Tipton Hills... Cont'd

The latter were wired up in time for the Chasewater exhibition.

Wartson Hall...

Mike Turner has missed a few meetings due to catching shingles and not wanting to pass it on to other members – He's a kind person. When he is at the club he has been trying to resolve problems with the legs and fiddle yard of this layout – sounds familiar? - Then read back issues of this newsletter especially focusing on "Water Orton".

CLUB MEMBERS & FRIENDS

In July **Tony and Jane Minchin** had a layout at AMRTM in Aldridge while the club exhibited "Tipton Hills" at Chasewater and **Ken Jones** had his N gauge bus layout on show in Conwy. All layouts worked well – (especially when someone turned on the power to the "Tipton Hills" controller).

Linn and Shirley were injured in a road accident recently, which was not their fault. We wish them both a speedy recovery.

We wish **Pam Purves** a speedy recovery following her triple heart bypass operation - and look forward to seeing **Derek** back at the club when possible

Heather Scott has had to leave Peco Group due to ill health. She did much to help our small club in many ways. We wish her successor Ingrid Rose every success in her new role.

MEMBERS LAYOUTS

The Green Wood Railway (GWR)

By Phil Hunt.

As summer finally arrives and our thoughts turn to getting outside and enjoying the sun, we leave our layouts for a while and tend the garden etc. The model railway press gets into season with a number of articles highlighting all of the garden railways that existing in OO and O gauge so that we can get the best of both worlds but none in N gauge.

The loft in the summer is just too hot to manage. The wife confirmed that a garden railway was totally out of the question so what to do. I turned my attention to the garden table that sits in the middle of the garden and wondered what I could do with this.

The answer was to create a layout which I could lift out of the garage and place on top of the table; it must still act as a table top in some form to place



The solution was to create a constant moving layout which required no control and some level of controlled shuttering / running. Overall dimensions of the table were 1.1m across flats.

The layout is basically an open frame with plywood strips under the track to lessen the weight and allow more flexibility on the landscaping. The premise was that a loco pulls up a load of empty wagons around the mountain, enters the sawmill, and then continues down the inside of the layout to wait at the bottom again. Once the loco

enters the sawmill a delay occurs and out comes a fully loaded train to go back down the mountain and enters the timber yard at the bottom where the empty train then reappears.



The inside loops have a reduced running length to allow a period of cooling down on each circuit.

The outer layout is basically a circle with a station to act as a way of changing the movement on the layout. Steam one way diesel the other. I did add a siding where a freight train can be stored and swapped with the other stock. As long as the steam locos ran in the opposite direction the DMU could swop platforms.

The end of the siding has been built so that the end can be removed and a fiddle yard added but that is thinking into the future and would become phase 2.

In trying to still create a bit of table on the top I elected to have a managed forest at the top.

I have built this into three sections of scenery so that I can take two sections off to create a table, the third can be removed but will stay on to hide the entrance to the sawmill area. This then provides the space for the glasses of wine, beer tea and coffee.

I am still building up the scenery at the base of the layout and still need to hide the entrance to the sawmill at the top, and get all the stock required still Christmas is coming, so this is still very much a work in progress position.



TRIP WORKINGS

Rodney & Christine Hodge and Ken Jones are exhibiting layouts at **The Bournville show** on September 1st. Rodney and Christine will also have layouts at **The International N Gauge Show** in Leamington on September 8th and 9th.

Ken's Suitcase layout will also be making an appearance at the International N gauge show in September.

The club will be supporting the **Tipton Canal Festival** on September 22nd and the **Church Bazaar** on November 17th when "Waterstock" and "Tipton Hills" will be running on both days at our club meeting room, plus you can see the progress on "Wartson Hall". (There will be bacon sandwiches on offer for September 22nd and the Church will be having a few stalls and other refreshments from 10am to 4pm).

Coventry Transport Event

There will be a charitable event on October 21st based at The Air Museum in Bagington, Coventry and at the Electric Train Museum next door. Under the title of Trains, Planes and Automobiles there will also be classic cars and commercial vehicles.

Our club is helping with the model layouts and The Model Bus Federation will be putting on displays of various model buses. We are taking "Tipton Hills", plus Rodney & Christine Hodge are taking their layout, Tony & Jane Minchin are taking a layout too – possibly their new one based on Arley, additionally Ken Jones will be taking a couple of his small layouts.

For transport fans you'll be able also to see inside cockpits, get up close to a Vulcan and see the excellent EMU collection.

Waterstock is booked for the Warley Show at the NEC in 2014.

2012 PROGRAMME

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

Meeting dates for the rest of this year:

September		15th
October	6th	20th
November	3rd	17th
December	1st (AGM)	15th?

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

For more information, contact
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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.

TAIL LAMP by TB

It seems to be a year for celebrations. HMTQ had her Diamond Jubilee, our own Chairman had a 'Diamond'

birthday and even I managed last month to nick one through the slips to notch up my own half-century. This milestone caused me to reflect that hardly a year goes by in the Model Railway world without some stormcrow decrying the fact that we have no young blood in the hobby. True, we have a different demographic to that enjoyed forty years or more ago, but I note with some pleasure that we have in our little club a couple more members now than we had this time last year. Perhaps I will be forgiven for saying that none are exactly in the 'spring chicken' league, but the point is that it is *new* blood, as distinct from *young* blood, and this is also a very good thing.

I think that many now come to the hobby in adult life and the days of a 'train-set for Christmas' are something of a distant memory. However, those of us at the 'grown up' end of the hobby – scratchbuilders, layout designers, kitbuilders, armchair theorists and not forgetting newsletter editors, magazine publishers, manufacturers and exhibition organisers – can easily forget the importance of the Boy (or Girl) entrant. Whilst it may be increasingly difficult to prise teenagers away from FaceTwitter or YouBook there is no reason why, given the amount of RTR kit available - and some in 'budget' ranges - why some deserving younger child known to you should not have a railway for Christmas.

And you have only sixteen weeks to build it! TB.

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor, the Chairman or indeed any individual club member. On the other hand - they might.