

CAMERA



The Newsletter of the Chiltern Model Railway Association

No. 14

December 2013

St Albans Exhibition - 11th & 12th January 2014

THE CMRA's exhibition at the Arena in St Albans will soon be with us. 2013 saw us barely covering our costs and, although we do not run the exhibition as a means of keeping the Association afloat, I hope that 2014 will see us being comfortably in profit.

As I have mentioned on other occasions, my health is not as good as it once was; I now suffer from a distinct lack of stamina and find interacting with other people for long periods stressful and extremely tiring. It was the AGM the day before yesterday, and I should have got this article to Mike yesterday, but was so knocked out by the AGM that I could not concentrate sufficiently to start. Oh, why hadn't I done it before? Partially because I leave most things until the last minute (despite my lack of stamina, I still work better under a degree of pressure) and I thought that a few things would be tidied up at the AGM.

I have been to a few exhibitions again this year and those thanks to Chairman John doing excessive mileage to collect me

and take me to shows. However, at last, I have started to drive but my six-gear manual car is a bit much for my desensitised, painful and rather clumsy left hand. But when the exhibition is over and I have time to look seriously at automatic cars, I should be more mobile again – but I cannot see me doing the 200 miles or more round trips both days of many weekends as I once did. But our combined intelligence web will continue to key us into getting excellent layouts into the future. I have been encouraged by the support I have received from my CMRA colleagues in ferrying me to and from meetings

I believe that we have another excellent selection of layouts this year. It will have a bit less of a British feel this year but the non-British layouts are a very diverse collection and very good. I will prepare a layout list by mid-December, which will be published on the website and elsewhere, when I feel confident that everyone should be turning up! Whatever, you can be assured that there will be things there that you will really appreciate.

We have a really strong team of helpers, drawn mainly from the Management Committee, who front our exhibition effort. They start at midday on Friday and some of them work all weekend, finally leaving the Arena about 7pm on the Sunday. There is also support from the clubs who load, unload and transport the equipment from and to the Welwyn Garden stores. Abingdon and the MRC have performed these functions for many years and are doing so again this year; but it's time they had a rest. Perhaps your club could consider giving us a hand by taking over the Friday or Sunday trips? We also rely on Roy Mears and his band of helpers from the former Barnet MRC for taking on the electrical distribution to the stands over the weekend.

We also rely on many additional volunteers to help out with running the exhibition over the weekend. Fortunately there is a core group of individuals who do something to help each year but we will need more volunteers; we are all getting older and some volunteers drop out each year for a variety of reason, the old man with his scythe being one. So we still need more help. As the years roll by we become better organised and offer greater security to exhibitors which means that, despite some increased efficiency, we need a slightly larger workforce. Friday evening, Saturday morning and Sunday at exhibition close are times when we must continue to improve security. We will need help with setting up on the Friday, stewarding on Saturday and Sunday, and in getting everything out of the Arena again on Sunday after the exhibition closes. Sunday evening presents us with the most difficult problem for us; it is amazing how quickly the helpers tend to drift away as soon as the exhibition closes. It's good to get off home after a long day, or perhaps a long weekend and the pull to leave must be quite strong, particularly if a journey of any length is involved.

A poster for the 2014 St Albans Model Railway Exhibition. At the top left, it says '2014 St Albans Model Railway Exhibition' in large, bold, red and black text. Below this is a photograph of a white and grey model train. To the right of the train, there is a small circular logo for the Chiltern Model Railway Association and the website 'www.cmra.org.uk'. Below the train, there is a blue box with white text that says 'More than 20 high quality layouts in many scales, gauges & prototypes'. At the bottom, it says 'January 11th & 12th Saturday 10.00 - 18.00 Sunday 10.00 - 17.00'. Below that, it says 'Admission £8 per adult including free admission for two children (5 - 16) with each adult. Free colour guide Additional or unaccompanied children £4 Tickets available at the door or from the Box Office - 01727 844488'. At the bottom right, it says 'ARENA CIVIC CENTRE, ST ALBANS, AL1 2JG'. At the bottom left, it says 'St Albans Model Railway Association'.

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Copy for future issues to be sent to the above addresses.
Deadline for the next issue : 1st April 2014

However, giving us an extra hour after the show closes on the Sunday would be of immense value. I recognise that the Sunday evening support at the 2013 show was much improved – please keep it up. Most setting up and clearing up jobs do require a certain amount of lifting and carrying but providing security monitoring, on Friday evening, first thing Saturday and on Sunday evening, and stewarding during the exhibition opening hours is not physically demanding. And there is the added attraction of plenty of time to look around the exhibition, either in the generous free time while stewarding or by free entry and enjoy a free lunch for helpers doing only out of hours duties. Please volunteer for something if you are sure you can help. Information on stewarding has been sent out by email to those on our circulation list. Alternatively the information will be on the members' page on our website. I'm pleased to say that Peter Vestey and Alan Hannington will again be sharing the role of chief steward.

There will be the usual CMRA Members' Sales Stand in the basement, operated by John Baggaley and his crew, mainly

New Vice President

I am very pleased to say that at the recent AGM and Delegates meeting held recently it was decided to appoint a new Vice-President to the Association.

It was my pleasure to be able to propose Philip McGovern and I am pleased to say that there was overwhelming support for Philip McGovern and he was duly appointed.

Over the years Philip has been on the Committee, has been the minute taker at committee meetings and at delegate

drawn from Hemel Hempstead MRS. If you wish to sell things on the stand you will need to be prepared in advance. The form and details of the procedure to be used for selling things will be on the members' page on our website shortly. If you still have a copy of the 2013 form and your club was an Association member then, you can use that form as your club code will not have changed.

For those of you who just wish to come to the exhibition advance tickets will be obtainable from John Doyland at £6.00 each, a £2 saving.

Opening times for the exhibition and so on can be found on the adjacent copy of the exhibition poster. The complimentary bus service will be operated by the 712 Preservation Group and will connect the Alban Arena to the Abbey and City train stations.

I think we have got a good line up of layouts. See you in January at the Arena?.

David Crossley, CMRA Exhibition Manager

meetings. Philip has a great deal of knowledge on many things and was recently co-opted on to the committee to be able to advise us on protocol and other matters.

Now as Vice-president I am sure that he will bring to committee meetings his quiet but firm manner and keep us on the right track in many matters of importance in the running of the affairs of the CMRA.

John Doyland, Chairman CMRA



Forthcoming CMRA Events		
2014		
11 Jan}		
12 Jan}	Exhibition	St. Albans.

A general view of the Monsal Dale layout of new CMRA Club member Southport MRC. See page 5 for a club profile

Editorial

Firstly I would like to thank those in the Brighton area for their suggestions of a good fish and chip restaurant. Some very good locations were put forward but the consensus of those that sent me information was for the Regent Fish Restaurant and it did not disappoint. The reason for seeking such good local knowledge was to find a suitable place for lunch during a regular outing with one of my God Daughters. We had a great day out, and had a ride on the Volk's Railway as well as a visit to the Brighton Pavilion, which was stunning. We had to make time for a bit of retail therapy on the way back to catch the train and on the way we found a stunning French Patisserie very close to the station and had cake and tea before returning to London.

This edition of CaMeRA is a bit slimmer than I hoped, as there seems to be not a lot of news and doings about at the moment. My thanks to those that have sent me items for inclusion but the remaining clubs within the Association must

have something they would like to share with the rest of us. Have a go at putting something on paper for the next issue and let's make it a bumper one.

The next big event is the St. Albans show and I look forward to seeing a number of you there. If you want to have a chat about CaMeRA or you would like to discuss any ideas you might have for material for the newsletter, I hope to be there on Saturday.

Best Wishes for the coming festive season, I hope Santa remembers to have the right book, kit or tool you want on his sleigh when visiting to fill your stocking. If he hasn't, the fault is entirely yours for not writing a clear enough message for him, either posted to Lapland or placed up the chimney or by any other process you use to keep him informed of your preferred gifts.

Mike

Hemel Hempstead

Alan Woodard is searching (unsuccessfully so far) for photographs of Hemel Hempstead Midland station to help build an accurate scale model. He is looking for photos of the goods shed, engine shed, stables, and especially the station building. There were many chartered trains and rail tours in the 1950s and 60s, one of the enthusiasts must have photographed this station. I have lots of photos with buildings in the background, and all three books but no detailed photos of any of the buildings. I am happy to pay any out of pocket expenses. Please contact alanwoodard56@yahoo.co.uk.

With the Clubs

We are very pleased to report a hugely successful Warley National Model Railway Exhibition 2013 at the NEC recently. Attendance was up by 3%, and is our highest attendance for a number of years. In particular we saw many youngsters and teenagers at the show, which bodes well for the future of the hobby. We thank all our visitors and our exhibitors for their support of the event.

Many complimentary comments were received at the show, and subsequently, as to the quality and variety of the exhibits. There was certainly something for everyone at the show, and many regard this year's event as the best yet. The prototype locos, particularly the part built Patriot Class 'The Unknown Warrior' proved very popular, with visitors able to 'get close and personal' with these locos in a way not usually possible!

One of the features of our Exhibition is a number of annual trophies that are awarded during the course of the Exhibition. The winners this year are as follow:

1. The Bachmann Cup for the best layout in 4mm scale was won by The Gresley Beat by Cliff Parsons.
2. The Continental Modeller Trophy for the best layout of an overseas prototype was won by Graubundenbahn, exhibited by Niek Talsma.
3. The Calvert Cup for the best 2mm/N Gauge layout was won by John Spence and Steve Watson with their layout Melton Mowbray (North).
4. The Virgin 7mm Trophy for the best 7mm layout was awarded to Rhydwyn Fawr by Ian Blackburn.
5. The Hornby Hobbies Modern Image Award for the best modern image layout in any scale was won by Loch Oran built by Barmates, Bridlington & District MRC.
6. The ALSRM Trophy for an exhibit in a scale larger than 7mm was won by B.A. Bodil built by Modelspoorgroep Valkenswaard.
7. The Glascott Narrow Gauge Trophy, for an exhibit modelled in a narrow gauge was won by Corris 1890 from Peter Kazer.
8. The LMS Society Trophy for the exhibit best portraying the LMS or its predecessors was won by Adrian Ford, for his model in 7mm scale of LMS Mainline Diesel No. 10000.
9. The Cwyn Humphries Award, for innovation within the model railway hobby was award to Romiley Methodist Railway Modellers for a combination of small scale innovations on their layout 'Gillan & Brown' including the working wagon tippler, the card system of wagon loads, and the information provided to visitors through the use of an operator stationed at the front of the layout.
10. The Mayor of Sandwell's Trophy, awarded to the exhibit most enjoyed by the mayor during her visit to the exhibition was won by Baile Cois Farrage, by the Model Railway Society of Ireland.
11. The Signalling Record Society Award for the best signalled layout in the show went to Borchester Market from Newhaven & District MRC.
12. The Railway Modeller Award to the best layout in show in the opinion of the Railway Modeller editorial team was won by Scorbton presented by Kendal MRC.
13. The Michael Heaven Memorial Award, made for the first time this year following Michael's untimely death in the summer, is awarded to a student modeller (under 18 years old) who has promoted the hobby on a regular basis. The first recipient of this award is David Miles, a student member of Warley MRC.

Without doubt the 21st Anniversary Exhibition at the NEC, the UK's Premier Model Railway Show, run by enthusiasts for enthusiasts, was an great success. It again proved that the model railway hobby is very much alive and well in the 21st century!

Banbury & District MRC

Pleased to report that we had a successful exhibition, even though the numbers through the door were down. This year we had a new venue, even though it was still Banbury School in Ruskin Road, however, the actual site was in the sports hall about 50 yards farther on from our usual school - with its myriad of classrooms and corridors to negotiate - as it was closed for refurbishing.

Our caterer was happy, the traders were as happy as traders ever get, the exhibitors were happy, which made club members happy. One large open space with enough room to get in another row of layouts or traders. Another thing we did was to simplify entry to Adults, Children and Families as we felt that a 50 pence difference between adults and concessions wasn't worth the hassle - anyway, the majority of our attendees are pensioners (including most of the club members!).

We had approached the day with a little trepidation but in the circumstances it turned out well and we are looking forward to next year.

On the Club front, our membership has crept up to 25 but it looks as though we're going to lose a couple in the near future. There is a buzz on club nights and we are looking to put on seminars for members with the finer points of soldering, track-laying (and building), spraying and painting, etc, with a few members looking to building a layout between them which can be used to represent the Club at shows - we've got two small OO end-to-enders already that were at our show and both have been invited out.

So, presently, we are enjoying ourselves. We are now firmly settled in our new clubroom and if you've got the time we'd be delighted to see you. We meet regularly on Tuesday evenings from 7.00 p.m., Thursday mornings from 10.30 with an occasional Sunday open day (not very well attended). Full details can be found on our web site: www.bdmrc.co.uk or telephone Secretary Keith Bristow on -1295-252931, e-mail: bristow_k@sky.com

Three Counties MRS

Over the past few months we have been working to extend, and improve, our extensive continuous run, fine scale 7mm layout, 'Stanton Road', which is now capable of being operated partially, in both Analogue and/or DCC mode. Considerable progress has been made on the scenery and various scratch built buildings, as a result the layout has attracted a great deal of interest at our regular open afternoons.

Following extensive planning, work has also now started on our latest project, a 4mm exhibition layout based loosely on 'BROOM Junction', which is also being constructed to allow both Analogue and DCC operation. It is hoped this layout will be available for exhibitions sometime in late 2014.

We also have a 4mm double circuit 'Test Track', also wired for both Analogue and DCC running, which is now in regular use by members on club nights and afternoons.

Meetings continue to be held in our clubroom near Aston Abbots, approximately mid way between Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard on Thursday evenings from 19.00hrs to 22.00hrs and Friday afternoons from 14.00hrs to 17.00.

New members, irrespective of expertise, or modelling experience, are always welcome particularly anyone modelling in 4mm or 2mm scales. Further information can be obtained from: John A. Page - 07541 241714 or by e-Mail: threecountiesmrs@btinternet.com

John A. Page, Hon. Secretary, Three Counties Model Railway Society

Watford & District MRC

The Watford club have a new web site which is now hosted by the Scafeour Society. Whilst it is early days in the development of the site, the club have been able to get the details of the Watford Finescale Show in place. The show will be held on 15th & 16th February 2014 at Parmiter's School, High Elms Lane, Watford. WD25 0UU.

The previous website was hosted by the Missenfen Modellers and the club would like to them for managing the site on their behalf.

The site address is watfordmrc.org

LIFE IN THE LAST COMPARTMENT, AND OTHER TRAVELLER'S TAILS.

I suspect that today's commuter, buried in his paper, laptop, i-pad or some other electronic gadget, apart from a grunt to his usual companion, doesn't see or care who is travelling with him.

After World War II when things settled down and firms that had occupied country mansions returned to their City offices, commuting came into its own. Some of us, old school friends returning from the Services to the humdrum of earning a living, with a few acquaintances, took to occupying the last compartment of the coach that was invariably attached to the rear of the 8.00am to Marylebone – it meant a longer walk at Marylebone but it was most days 'our compartment'. Somehow we managed to collect Pop, an elderly Civil Servant, and Hugh, a Lt/Colonel ENT Consultant/Surgeon in the Royal Army Medical Corps. Our daily journey took us onto the Bakerloo and here, Hugh, a Rugby blue of large stature came into his own. The Bakerloo train was always solid but Hugh could, with great politeness assure crowded passengers that there was room, moved forward and we followed into the space that he created. Sometimes, if he felt enough was enough, he would stand still while others, trying to board, literally bounced off him while he, an officer and gentleman, again politely told them there was no room. Once a month he announced it was 'production line day' – tonsil ops on servicemen's children at Woolwich – brash perhaps, but he was a gentle giant.

None of us will forget Rhubarb Day. Pop arrived with a bundle about 30 inches long wrapped in newspaper and put it on the rack. 'What's that?' Hugh asked Pop. 'Rhubarb', he replied, 'it's the Civil Service Horticultural Show today and I've won the prize for rhubarb for years'. 'Is it firm?' asked Hugh, reaching up to the rack. 'Leave it', said Pop. Too Late – Hugh unwrapped the newspaper and examined the contents. Pop tried to stop him; one of the sticks snapped and war began! We cowered in one corner while the rhubarb was reduced to bits and both Pop and Hugh stank of rhubarb juice! Stupid – yes, of course, but we were much younger then. Pop didn't win that year and was back to normal in a few days!

We had an elderly Polish gentleman join us some days at Pinner. He had come to this country before World War II but English customs and sport were still a mystery to him. He had some business friends over from Poland who wanted to see something typically English – he bought tickets for a four-day Test Match at Lord's – what could be better. They sat and watched four days play and the result was a draw – this was beyond his friends' comprehension and he sought explanations from us, bemoaning the expense with no winner!

Then there was Noddy – a young lady who joined the city-bound train at Chalfont. The Met silver trains had a rhythm to them and she nodded to that rhythm which was pretty fast between Chalfont and Chorleywood and again before Rickmansworth. She always slowed down for the stations.

Homewards travel was usually by London Transport. They produced odd bods too. A man joined the train each night at Moorgate, lit a cigarette and promptly went to sleep. The fag burned slowly and by Kings Cross or Euston Square, his lips were getting warm; he would wake up, remove the stub, tread on it and return to sleep. The ash had periodically dropped onto his greasy, well-worn waistcoat. We found out he was a PO telephone engineer and had with him a highly varnished box about shoebox size that sat on his lap with a broad strap around his neck. Against his ample stomach was his name on the box in Dymo-tape but we could never read it. The cigarette

procedure was repeated at Harrow – another fag lit and a return to sleep. This one acted as an alarm clock, waking him up just before his station. It amused us; it fascinated occasional travellers! One day the box turned as he got off and we saw the name. Unbelievably, W J Ash!

With the benefits of flexi-time, I sometimes caught an early train from Marylebone and travelled with two men, advertisement typesetters for the Times (still in Central London at that time). They had their own little act that amused them and was repeated countless times. You must appreciate the Marylebone trains took either the direct route to Aylesbury which we used, or the other line via Gerrards Cross and Beaconsfield to High Wycombe.

Soon after leaving Marylebone, one would ask the other: 'What's on at the pictures at Gerrards Cross?' The reply would probably be: 'Don't know for sure, but the one at Beaconsfield is a good one'. Conversation about that area followed. The stranger in the compartment was now showing some unease until he could contain himself no longer; 'This is the Aylesbury train, isn't it?' They reassured him, smiled at each other, and winked at me – daft? Of course, but they enjoyed it!

My father-in-law told a wonderful story of two Jewish gentlemen who had a long-lasting argument on a Met train during the Second World War. Travelling could be a nightmare, everyone wanting a place on the first available train. One gentleman, not very tall, got on at Baker Street, saw a seat and stood on it to put his case on the rack. He was followed by others, one of whom sat down where the short one was still standing on the seat. He was followed by at least a dozen more who stood like sardines between the seats. The man standing on the seat complained bitterly that it was his seat while the seated one moaned back that he should not have been standing on a seat anyway. At Finchley Road no-one got off or on. The argument went on: 'You are no gentleman to take my seat' (this from above); 'You are no gentleman to have climbed onto a seat' (from below). 'Gentleman or not' (from above), 'I'm a gentleman to tell you your trousers are on fire!' Panic and flap!! The sitting gent had dropped a cigarette end which had lodged in his trouser turn-up. He forced himself upright, the seat-stander sat down and the 'sardines' standing helped put out the smouldering turn-up. Max Sennett or Chaplin could not have conceived better!

There were four blokes who liked to play cards going home on one of the Marylebone trains. They had a black cloth a yard or so square with tapes at the four corners to tie round their waists. Sitting two facing two, they played cards on the tightly drawn cloth. At Harrow and Amersham the platform was not the usual side so if someone wished to get off, two had to stand to let the passenger push behind them to the door, and play resumed.

A gentleman from Amersham always seemed to be the first to finish the Times crossword, watched out of the corners of their eyes by the other 'crossworders'. One day, probably his last before retirement he left his paper behind; it was grabbed by another traveller who found he had just filled the squares with any letter. He had had his moment – many of them!

So, you computer buffs, i-padders or whatever – look up occasionally. There is a world of interest, even entertainment among your fellow travellers.

60512 Steady Aim

A Little Bit of Space Left Over

Can you fill it in future issues?
Please get in touch with the Editor
at newsletter@cmra.org.uk

Southport MRS - a Profile

By Ian Shulver

As a new recruit to CMRA, I thought it might be of interest to give a brief profile of our club. To set the scene, we are located in the North West, about 20 miles north of Liverpool, and this year is the fortieth anniversary of our formation. However, we believe that there was a model railway club in the town club in the 1950's but we can find no record of it.

We are a relatively small club, with just short of twenty five members, although some do live in far flung corners (Australia, Swindon and the Lake District). Of our twenty or so local members we have a very active armchair section – most of these do work on their own layout at home but seem to prefer to reminisce in front of a roaring fire in our comfortable lounge. That is not to say that we are not an active club, we certainly are. But more of that later.

Clubrooms. Starting with our clubrooms, we are extremely fortunate in having unlimited access to a small but cosy building which just happens to be a historic railway structure. In fact it was the first station in Southport, built in 1848, but only supported that role for two years before the Liverpool, Crosby and Southport Railway was extended to its current terminus at Chapel Street. For the next 130 years it was variously the signalman's house and then the crossing gatekeeper's residence before becoming a convenient resting place for various down and outs. In the 1980's thoughts turned to demolishing the building, but there was some disagreement between various parts of British Rail about the cost of the demolition and who would meet the not inconsiderable sum of this. Why the large cost to demolish a four roomed house? Well, the front door of this building is just less than 4ft from the running line and to knock it down by mechanical means would have meant shutting a busy commuter line for several days (significant loss of income to the operating company – Merseyrail or its predecessor). To take it down brick by brick would have taken several weeks and the Property Board balked at this. Fortunately the father-in-law of one of our members heard of this predicament and our committee made a suitable offer to take on the building and maintain it for a nominal rent. We have now been in residence for over twenty five years with the building now enjoying listed building status.

The building itself comprises four rooms, a small kitchen, an outside privy and woodstore, and a small garden. Three of the rooms are dedicated to model railways (one for a permanent set up and two that can be used for portable layouts). The fourth room is the lounge, complete with a coal fire where we have a library and can socialise.

Club Layouts. We currently have two working layouts, with another three under construction. Of the working layouts Portland Street Upper (N gauge) and Lower (OO gauge) is a permanent layout for members use at any time. Our other working layout is an exhibition layout based on Monsal Dale on the old Midland main line through the Peak District. This is a N gauge layout and is the third exhibition N gauge layout that we have constructed. The others were Dulverton and Saltash & the Royal Albert Bridge. Both are still in existence albeit under new ownership. Monsal Dale is a still evolving layout which, although in an exhibitible format, still needs more detailing (trees and shrubs in particular) as well as more appropriate LMS stock.

Of the layouts under construction, Talisker Glen is to OO/ OO9 standards and although nominally based in Scotland (with the OO9 line serving a distillery from the exchange sidings) is in fact inspired by various narrow gauge lines in Wales (and further afield). Another layout yet to be completed is a small N gauge one that can be popped in the back of a car and taken to various local school fetes etc as a showcase for our Club. The final layout under construction, or rather reconstruction, is the garden layout (32mm track) that our members with various narrow gauge steamers can use. The original line that we had laid needed to be partly lifted so that we could effect repairs to the outside loo and woodstore, including trying to get the better of some Japanese knotweed. This, along with renewing the garden shed, has given us opportunity for a redesign and improvements.

Exhibition. By the time you read this, we will have just had our fortieth exhibition with upwards of twenty top class layouts, including Liverpool Lime Street, and a full supporting cast from the trade and societies.

Social Activities: Social activities are as important to the Club as modelling activities. As well as the aforementioned biweekly armchair discussions, we have a monthly meeting where one of our members gives a talk/slideshow on various aspects of railways (models, electrics, techniques, etc, or even the real thing). The talk is usually preceded by a meal and concludes



General view of Monsal Dale station

with a raffle. These talks provide an important revenue stream to help with running the Club.

There are also group excursions to some of the larger exhibitions, one of our members usually providing a picnic lunch, including wine. Additionally there is the annual "sleeper" trip; a week long excursion to one of the far flung corners of our Kingdom, visiting various sites of railway interest and which has to include at least one journey by sleeper. This can involve

some unusual itineraries such as journeying from Lancashire to Kent via Glasgow.

Finally, mention must be made of our monthly newsletter which keeps are members up to date with what is happening in the Club as well as including articles and information snippets provided by the members. If you wish to know more about our Society, then please visit our webpages on www.southportmodelrailway.org.uk

