

# Lancashire & District Section



April 2002



## *Festival of Hobbies* 45mm LADS Invited

### Commonwealth Games Manchester 2002

As many of you probably already know, Chris MacKenzie's indoor layout "Open Day at Timpdon Sheds" has been invited to exhibit at the prestigious Festival of Hobbies event.

For anyone who's not seen a local newspaper for the last 12 months, this is the exhibition which precedes the opening ceremony of the M2002 Commonwealth Games, 26 July, at the new Sports City Stadium, Manchester.

The week long event (19th to 25th July) will involve falconry displays, BMX bicycle stunt riding, golf information stands, war game re-enactments, model soldier painting, embroidery, arts and crafts, flower arranging, music, and much, much more.

The drawback was whether we could sustain manning the layout for 12 hours each day, for 7 days constant. Although playing trains for so much time may sound ideal, it can quickly become tedious and very tiring. It would have therefore been essential that we had enough volunteers to run and guard the layout.

Of course the layout would have been inside the stadium hall, fully protected from the weather. Unfortunately this meant that the fire regulations prohibited live steam loco's. So it was battery only.

#### *45mm option outside*

It is for these reasons Chris took the decision to cancel the layout's attendance and take up the far better suggestion of running on the outside track. In this way, we can turn up at any time, run live steam loco's, and leave when we want. The trouble with this option (*have you noticed that there's always a "but"!*) is that the track is 45mm gauge only.

Of course the new elevated track is in superb condition and the 400 metre totally level oval should provide excellent running. During the games the track will be used for the trackball camera - the radio controlled device which follows athletes running around the

running track. Apparently, 45mm is the film industry norm as it is deemed to be the ideal compromise between minimum gauge and maximum stability. (*And in case you're wondering if there's a loco to pull the camera, well sorry to disappoint you! The camera unit is built by a TV production company specially for the job and is worth thousands of pounds. And no, Phil Sixsmith, you can't borrow it to film your line!*)

We are therefore seeking volunteers to have a go at this once in a lifetime opportunity and put their names down on the roster.

*400 metres of perfect running conditions*

We are only after people for the first six days, as on the 25th July the track will be in use by the camera crew testing everything.

All operators will have to undergo a Health and Safety course before being allowed to run a loco. This is simply a 10 minute video film on safety, security and counter terrorism. To be allowed into the controlled zone of the inner circle (where the trackball camera runs on the track) you will also have to undergo security vetting. Apparently this is more of a formality than anything else. Supplying your name and date of birth to Chris MacKenzie when you put your name on the roster will do.

It would be nice to stage our very own Commonwealth games events. How about the 100m race (with Mamods)? Tug of war between two Shay's? Or the long jump? (Mamods on the first bend).

So please come along and book a run. I know we don't have many 45mm lines in Lancs, but there must be many re-gaugable engines.

Book early!

### On T'Internet



Peter & Sheila Harling's line has been causing quite a stir on the internet 16mm e:group recently. This followed a visit by Keith Butlich who shared a few photo's.

Understandably, many people refused to believe that the picture of the Spread Eagle Railway's Quarry was a model!

Peter's brilliant modelling and Sheila's clever use of miniature planting enhances the scene to play with perspective and scale. All in all, a delightful scenic line

I just hope the Photostating does the small picture justice.

#### Contributions?

Send anything to  
Chris MacKenzie

2 Curzon Drive, Timperley,  
Altrincham, Cheshire, WA15 7SY  
0161 980 7804 or e:mail  
narrow.gauge@btinternet.com

Keep your articles coming.  
It might seem like rubbish to you  
(and to be honest the rest of us)  
but when all said and done, you  
need something to read on the loo.

# Tickled Pink with White Rose Show

*Cliff Robinson reports on this year's Narrow Gauge North Exhibition, Leeds*

**Y**our Editor and I had a rather early start to this year's event as we had been invited to display "Open Day at Timpdon Sheds". A van was obtained and the layout was placed in it on Friday ready for a 7am start on Saturday. We shoe horned ourselves in with me sharing the front passenger seat with a 1½ person wide stack of boxes. I didn't quite need my mobile to pass on instructions at T junctions but you get the idea. Ever tried to communicate with a driver who's hard of hearing? (hearing aid in bag) It made conversation (well, shouting) around the boxes en route rather interesting in the noisy diesel van. We did put the world to rights and decided that a long wheelbase jobbie was needed next time.

The event in the Lawnswood School at Leeds may be one of the last there, as the building was "condemned" 3 years ago, with a new one being constructed alongside.

There was the main ground floor hall housing many traders (Roundhouse, Brandbright and Atropos) among others. I spent several minutes watching someone demonstrating how to make resin castings. The method seemed very good for making a rake of one type of van wagon or coach, or indeed anything that needs many one-off parts. It also had the new Huddersfield group layout. This was still under construction and it was in my view more interesting as you could see how it was done. Very large and impressive. On stage was a G scale layout – all tight bends and artificial steam sound and whistle electric locos (not to my taste but well presented and many beer tokens worth of LGB etc). At the other end of the hall was the scale 00 gauge live steam by Brian Caton who really has got this sussed. All home made steam stock and etched kits for the bodies to keep the prices realistic. Wonderful! I drooled around here more than once.

Perhaps I should have started by telling what you met on the way in where Steve Warrington had his "Back 2 Bay 6" stall with all the IP Engineering goodies, rust paint bottles and other items for both ourselves and G scalers. The corridors either side had book stalls, and videos etc.

Down one corridor was the 009 room with superb layouts and traders with their gear.

The other corridor contained 4 rooms, one with small layouts (Senior moment, can't remember, but I think 7mm/16.5mm gauge), then Rob Bennett's wonderful 16mm Himalayan layout complete with appropriate engines stock, people and animals. The buildings are also worth more than a casual glance. The next room contained a 7/8" to a foot layout. Absolutely super, you can really detail your kit in this scale. The skips had been weathered with the rust paint and although plasticard you needed a magnet to tell that they were not rusty mild steel. One of his diesels was made from cnc milled brass in the States, the manufacturers name was in



*Cliff Robinson in action "busy fielding the queries and keeping guard".*

raised letters – about a dozen pages of codes worth I believe.

Last but by no means least was Timpdon Sheds, in a classroom with Thomas the Tank and a 7mm trader who does milled frames etc. Well you have all seen it and as usual ran very well. Chris really does keep it in good condition. We soon settled into a routine, usually Chris behind and me in front of the layout, busy fielding the queries and keeping guard with the wealth of probing public fingers. We did meet several friends from the e-mail group - nice to put faces to the names.

The only major thing I have missed on the ground floor was the Catering section where "Flower" looked after us all, a wonderful lady who used the endearment flower to all requests. The drinks and bacon butties (for those early enough) and sandwiches were so good in value it wasn't worth taking your own – and the profits go to a good cause.

We haven't finished yet – there was another floor to go. Downstairs was a 12" to 1 foot set of 2' gauge steel track of the throw it down and run on it type complete with wagon turntable. Very interesting – but thank goodness I didn't have to carry any of it to a van or trailer. It was lightweight track unless you try and pick it up!

Then there was the gymnasium – this contained a further batch of traders, and the Yorkshire Layout called Mount Dowd. Very good and manned by our pals from t'other side of the great divide (ie the wrong side!).

Many of our number actually attended. Tony Turner had a run, so did Richard Elton, Phil Sixsmith, Dave Wilding and several others who's names escape me at the moment (Sorry - there was so much happening). Mike Ousby also took control of the layout several times allowing us to have a look around. This is another good thing about being in a group, it was much appreciated by both of us.

I hope we don't lose the event, it provides cheer at the end of a long winter.

So special thanks to the Yorks group for organising the event. I'm sure it must have again raised a great deal for charity (last year was nearly £5,000!!!)

*Cliff Robinson,  
Culcheth Light Rly (at last it has a name)*

## Riveting News

**I stumbled** upon this method of creating a rivet effect on thin plasticard some time ago. It's very simple to do and creates a straight run of 'rivets' in no time at all.

The magic tool is available from any sewing machine shop although I don't know what its technical name is or in truth what it's used for.

My request for a toothed wheel on a stick had the desired effect and fortunately the assistant didn't enquire what I wanted it for.

The other tools needed are a steel straight edge, a centre punch, hammer and a 'soft' cutting mat

For modelling rivets all you need to do is run the tool along the steel straight edge using

light pressure to create a line of equally spaced, slight indents with the points of the teeth on the wheel.

Next using the centre punch locate the first indent and give the punch a tap or two with the hammer.

The indents created by the teeth on the wheel make locating the next position very easy. I usually punch every other spacing.

Turn the plasticard over and there you have a straight line of equally spaced rivets.

Cut to the desired width and apply as an overlay using Plasticweld or similar.

Simple and I think effective.

*Phil Sixsmith*

# Part 3

in a 3 Part Series

# Paint Your Wagon

Alex Milne supplies more expert notes from his workshop

## *A nice bit of Lining...*

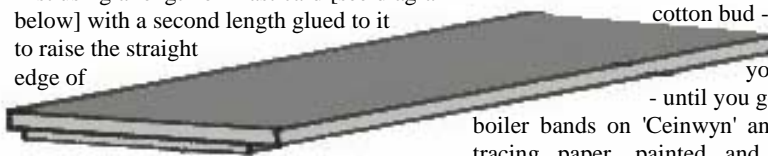
## *...Suit you Sir!*

**T**here are a number of occasions, connected with modelling that I can recall over the years. One of the most memorable was watching Alan Brackenborough lining an 'O' gauge boiler using a long bristled fine brush - freehand. That really was the Art of lining.

The delicate complexity of models lined by Geoff Munday of Liteline is something I can only admire and certainly not emulate.

So what can those of us with shaky hands and poor eyesight do to produce a lined loco or coach? I can only tell you what I do and apologise to the above gentlemen and similarly skilled practitioners for presenting such an approach.

Some years ago I purchased one of the 'Bob Moore Master Lining Pens' and this is what I use, although not totally in the way it was intended. My 'Lady Anne Class' loco "Ceinwyn" is lined in Humbrol BR Chrome (Orange) and Black. The orange is put on first using a length of Plasticard [see diagram below] with a second length glued to it to raise the straight edge of



the loco - if you don't do this there is a tendency for the paint to run under the straight edge.

The side tanks, cab and coal bunker are lined as in the second diagram. The concave corners are drawn round a piece of Plasticard with that shaped filed out. Orange is done first and then, with a brush, the area behind it is painted. When dry a black line is drawn and again the area behind is filled in. The thickness of the Orange line is therefore determined by where the black is drawn. The Lining Pen draws a line which I think is too narrow, in scale terms, for our locos.

If the Humbrol is new, it can be used straight from the tin, however I usually thin it down with a little lighter fuel - Ronson is, I recall, recommended. If you make mistake it is easy to wipe off the paint with a little petrol on a cotton bud - it dries almost instantly and you can try again - until you get it right. The boiler bands on 'Ceinwyn' and 'Russell' are tracing paper, painted and fixed to the Roundhouse brass boiler bands with varnish.



I always give a coat of satin varnish on top of the lining, before weathering, because, yes, I do make mistakes - its the only way to learn!

## Building an Indoor Layout

*Competition for Timpdon provided by Richard Elton*

**T**he conventional approach to building baseboards for indoor railways, steam or electric has been to take a solid sheet of plywood, chipboard, MDF etc, brace it with 2 by 1 timber and slap the track on top. I am currently experimenting with building an open frame system to produce a live steam indoor layout (about 16' by 8') at 45mm gauge.

The first frame has been constructed using 4" wide strips of 9mm ply rescued from work. They weren't 4" wide when rescued but a few minutes on the circular saw produced a huge number of strips from otherwise useless timber. It seems slightly less rigid than a "conventional" board but will be perfectly OK when finished.

The saving in weight is remarkable.

The pressure is on as I have to have the layout finished for the 16th of July. This is a "Horizon Widening Day" for our students and I'm entertaining the little darlings by taking my steamers in to work and instructing them in the fine art of the steam engine. A little elementary thermodynamics, followed by building a model turbine and finishing the day by driving the locos, is the plan.

Hence the need to construct a track (but as usual no finance).

Further instalments to follow.

### *Things I'd wish I'd known years ago...*

De-litter the streets – collect lolly ice sticks, bleach them as you don't know where they have been. Use them to make models, stir paint, act as a spatula, mix epoxy / filler, adjust super-elevation on tracks, make fencing, make canopy edging for your station, use for making planked stock, impress the wife glue on sandpaper for use as nail file etc – a very versatile free material and you will be doing your "green" bit as well.

*Cliff Robinson*

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# Dear LADS....

**So many letters! I've got out of the habit of making them up!**

Dear LADS

I wish to grovel most apologetically for my pathetic attempts to run my Excelsior locomotive on the excellent Timpdon Shed layout [Ed: *This is what he called it - I didn't edit this bit, honest!*] at Narrow Gauge North and the embarrassment my sudden stops caused the rest of the LADS present.

I have taken all necessary steps to punish myself for such an offence and severely beaten myself with the remaining lettuce leaf found at the bottom of my fridge.

Seriously, though I thought I'd better make this apology before the editor took the p\*\*s out of my tribulations. [Ed: *Me? As if!*] The problem with the loco was of my own making. I had fitted RC by replacing the valve push rod with one of my own and fitted a servo under the cab floor. This worked fine on my own railway which runs on the true gauge of 45mm and has curves no less than 4ft radius. But when regauged to 32mm and on hitting a reverse curve the pony truck collided with the servo arm causing a somewhat rapid stop.

So if you have an excelsior check your clearances before making the same modifications.

*Yours crawlingly*  
Richard Elton

## News from the Colonies

Dear LADS,

I'm a former resident of Bolton, having immigrated to Canada in 1946, but have been back lots of times. I am a newcomer to 16mm garden railways and since June have just about completed my main circuit of about 110 feet.

I thoroughly enjoy reading your newsletters and gaining loads of useful information. I have become an incurable scratchbuilder and kitbasher, presently building a rake of coaches and a bogie diesel.

I run Lady Anne, a much modified Mamod and various battery creations. There are three of us in the Victoria area. We also run battery powered O scale stuff just for fun too. We use radio control for the steamers and some of the battery stuff.

If you don't mind a request / idea for your newsletter, could you please try and include dimensions when you publish construction articles and tips.

Keep up the great work & many thanks  
Bob Walker  
Victoria, B.C.  
Canada

Dear LADS

I am writing to thank those ladies (LADesses?) who helped with the catering at my do at the end of November. It made the whole event so much more enjoyable for Carol and me. I was torn between the banter in the kitchen and that in the garden!

Whilst on the subject of catering, I am in a similar situation to Mike in so far as our extended family gather for a meal together at 5:30ish on Sunday. Hence why I tend to disappear about 4:30pm. I think some others do too.

I think one thing has been achieved, we have aired the subject in a nice way, and hospitality will remain as always with the hosts. At least everyone appreciates that tea/coffee and biscuits are fine. Also we nearly all need to get our heads into gear during the week prior to a steamup to let the host know if we are going to attend. I agree that phone calls on the day are an annoyance when you are fighting the ice / leaves / snails / cats / moss or other things that spring up overnight when a meeting is imminent.

Railway loop reconstruction on the Culcheth Light Railway has not yet restarted. When will it stop raining?

Here's looking forward to the next do.

*Regards,*  
Cliff the dragon driver  
(now for sale) (the car not me!)

### Things I'd wish I'd known years ago...

To test a PP3 battery (9 volt) when no sensible alternative is available (eg voltmeter) try putting the contacts on your tongue. Believe me, you will know if it is a good one! Not too pleasant - but don't try it with anything bigger, or more powerful.  
*Cliff Robinson*

### Video's on Display?

Chris MacKenzie has had donated a portable TV/Video unit for taking to exhibitions and promoting our activities.

Has anyone got a suitable video about our gardens to show - or is capable of making one? Let us know please!

### Things I'd wish I'd known years ago...

Put new brass track and chain for links outside as soon as you get it, so it can be weathering.

*John Rogers (internet)*

# Dear Diary...

## 16mm Association LADS Events

**- Bring an engine & have a run**

**Any Wednesday evening - Wakefield**  
Ring Calvin Green on 01924 281169

**Monday 1 April - 1pm - John Angell**  
Preston - 01772 725308 (32mm) *Note correct date (it's not an April first joke!)*

**Sun 28 April - 1pm - Derek & Phil Eaton**  
Liverpool - 0151 428 2366 (32mm)

**Sun 19 May - 1pm - Peter Harling**  
Settle - 01729 822581 (32mm)  
**NB Note change from 12th to 19th**

**Sun 26 May - 1pm - Phil Pacey**  
Fulwood, Preston - 01772 729203 (32mm)

**Sun 2 June - 1pm - Chris MacKenzie**  
Altrincham - 0161 980 7804 (32mm)  
*Indoor 16mm layout also running*

**Sun 16 June - 1pm - Mark Haydock**  
Burnley - 01254 399 388 (32mm)

**Sun 30 June - 1pm - Andy Lether**  
Fulwood, Preston - 01772 713849 (32mm)

**Sun 14 July - 1pm - Steve Colling**  
Rishton - 01254 883200 (32mm)

**Sun 4 Aug - 1pm - Calvin Green**  
Wakefield - 01924 281169 (32mm)

**Sun 25 Aug - 1pm - Ian Lowcock**  
Barnoldswick - 01282 812842 (32mm)

**Sun 29 Sept - 1pm - Bill Cook**  
Southport - 01704 535170 (32mm)

**Sun 27 Oct - 1pm - Chris MacKenzie**  
Altrincham - 0161 980 7804 (32mm)

## 16mm Railway Exhibitions

**Sat 6 April - 16mm Assoc AGM**  
Stoneleigh Agricultural Showground

## Model Railway Exhibitions

**- All scales, not necessarily 16mm**

**30 & 31 March & 1 April 02 - York**  
York Model Railway Exhibition  
The Racecourse Exhibition Centre, York

**Sat 6 April - Leyland**  
St Andrews Hall, Worden Lane

**Sat 6 & Sun 7 April - Macclesfield**  
School, Ryles Park Road.  
Chris's 32mm gauge layout will be there.  
Bring an engine for a run (there's enough rolling stock - just engine's)