

Lancashire & District Section



January 2003 - No. 32



It's a Date!

**The Steam-Up Events Diary is filling up
"...but we need more volunteers" says Cliff**

"So far I am completely *underwhelmed* by the offers of meetings (but thanks to a select few)" says Cliff. "I will be making some calls in the next week so if you were thinking of volunteering your line - now's the time!"

We reckon that we have about 15 running lines active in the area and various others under construction or reconstruction (come on Mark, Alex, etc!) so there should be enough to fill our Diary.

Hopefully we will have a working plan for the first few months by the time of the next meeting at Cliff's on the 12th Jan.

Don't forget that we will "kick off" at Cliff's about 11am with soup and pies between 12 and 1pm for those with hunger and probably cold fingers. If it's anything like last year, Cliff will be busy de-icing the track as we arrive.

If the weather is too dire though, Cliff has promised us a showing of some narrow gauge videos. Of particular note is the one on the Darjeeling, recorded off Sky the other night (with non railway type ads, definitely post watershed). Of course tea & coffee will be on hand all day.

Hopefully Cliff won't have started the building work when we all arrive. He's knocking the lounge about to create his own office / study / radio-shack, to make way for overnight stays by his young granddaughter (he's currently set up in her bedroom).

Cliff has also written in with an admission to make - Andrew Armstrong was instrumental in setting up this group and I did not give him recognition in his last missive.

"Apologies Andrew" says Cliff "It was a senior moment! When I got my brain in gear I realised yours was the first line I visited too." [I didn't notice it either, and coincidentally it was also the first line I visited in the group - Ed]

Come on then! Don't wait to be called! Give Cliff a ring (first come has first choice of dates) and let's not let the group die.

And don't forget you don't have to provide a huge feast. Tea, coffee and maybe a few biscuits is all that everyone expects and the majority want.

The PDR & adjustments

**Phil & Dawn Gower give an
update on what's been
happening on their new railway
since it was featured in the
July (No. 26) issue**

What's been happening on the PDR?

Well, not a lot really! Building work has slowed to a crawl (slower than a snail). This is because the builders are in still constructing our extension and scaffolding's all over the rear garden (and I have the bumps on my head to prove it).

Dave Wilding has been round for a "consultancy visit" and made a lot of well received suggestions and recommendations. Only trouble is the amount of work needed for these "minor adjustments". This scale and having the track on a raised bed doesn't make it any easier, either. Out came the lump hammer and bolster chisel and in a few minutes what took hours of work to lay was reduced to a rubble. Planning alone doesn't always work - asking advice does though!

Dave made us a steel bridge, one of his steel minimalist type. We love it.

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What's My Line?

**Phil Sixsmith shares his experience
of getting 15 minutes of fame**

How often have you opened the pages of the latest edition of your modelling magazine and thought quietly to yourself that your own garden line is at least as good as the ones featured?

The vast majority of the lines in these magazines are built for exhibition and I assume there is a steady flow of submission for publication for this type of layout. The vast majority of modellers in any scale are however building layouts, which will only be seen by the invited lucky few.

*"It can be inspirational to see
what others have achieved"*

I for one, whilst impressed with any layout that you can stand on its end and the scenery stays put, find the permanent layouts entombed in the loft or shed just as interesting. Even more interesting are the permanent 16mm garden lines which I'm glad to say are featured in the RM (Railway Modeller) more and more often these days. It can be inspirational to see what others have achieved and at the same time comforting to see that your own efforts are not totally without merit!

I would like to see one garden line a month, if only to spur me on to finish one or two of those many unfinished projects, which I hope, will enhance my own line.

*"Preparing an article
for submission is not as
daunting as you may think"*

The only way to see more garden railways published is to get more articles submitted. Every one of us has their own story to tell so why not get those photos out and sort a few which show off what you have created.

For me the thing that makes any article is always the photo. We all must have half a dozen shots that show are own lines off at their best and this is all you need.

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No More Burnt Fingers

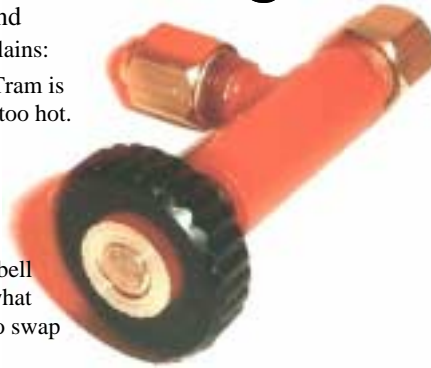
Mike Ousby has been busy inventing and manufacturing goodies again. As he explains:
 "The gas knob on my Roundhouse Stanley Tram is knurled brass and the problem is that it gets too hot.

"I've made a replacement similar to the Finescale knob, with a brass centre and Nylon 6.6 outer."

If anyone is interested in buying a nylon replacement knob, then simply give Mike a bell or see him at our events. It doesn't matter what fittings you have, it's only a simple matter to swap the knob over.

Price £5.00 plus postage at cost, with fitting instructions supplied.

[Ed's note: I've ordered one for my Bertie loco as I was very surprised how good it looks. I also think I deserve recognition in not using a heading more suited for the gutter press. They would have had a field day!]



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Caption Competition



It seems last month's picture provided the opportunity for some very good comments - but most LADS were reticent to put words in Sheila or Ruth's mouths for fear of reprisals!

We didn't even get a caption from their husbands - Peter Harling and Steve Colling!

There was the "safe" (and therefore unfunny) proposed conversation:-

Ruth: I'm bored with this 16mm, how about you?

Sheila: Yes I think that Gauge 1 must be more exciting than this!!

Mike Ousby, who's never let tact and diplomacy confuse an issue bravely sent in the following:-

Ruth: "Why is Chris MacKenzie so excited about this Mamod boiler and bobbins loco he's built?"

Sheila: "Well, like a typical man, it doesn't seem to do much. Then one quick spurt and the boiler's empty."

Your 'umble Editor was even going to suggest a caption along the lines of "Sheila & Ruth Feature in Readers' Wives Section of LADS Mag" - but then thought better of it (cowardice is always the best policy).

So this next month we're playing safe. You can insult the Editor.

The new competition picture shows Chris MacKenzie (left) and David Rhodes (16mm Association Chairman) both pointing to a model of a VW Caravenette. Apparently David owns a similar one. What are they saying? What's a good caption or headline?

The best entry, as always, receives a years free subscription to this newsletter.

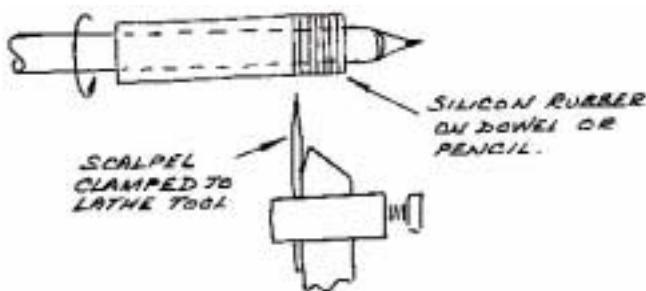
Performing Seals

Colin Binnie offers another useful tip

I make my sealing rings from model aircraft silicon rubber exhaust tube by slipping it over a piece of dowel or a pencil and popping it in the lathe.

A blade is clamped to the side of a lathe tool and the rings parted off.

When an inch or two of tube has been turned into rings they are slipped off the ruined pencil. A few moments work and a lifetimes supply is made.



0.020"; 0.040" and .060" in stock.

In use the seating is best given light countersink so that steam pressure ends to force the ring into joint.

O-rings / filler plugs need be garter tight. *Colin Binnie*



Captain Flack's Rail Transport

John Fox's new home built fire car mentioned in last months newsletter caused a lot of interest. So much so, we asked John to produce more information.

What's followed is a picture book story (well, John was a professional photographer not a journalist) showing how to construct something similar for yourself.

You don't have to build a fire engine - I think you'll find that you can easily adopt the process for anything which takes your fancy.



1 Take one £10 radio control car from a Debenhams Store (but don't forget to pay first)



2 Unscrew the body to expose the goodies...



3 Top & tail the chassis:
Cut the front and rear wheels away and also cut the sides down until you are left with just an AA battery box (you have to remove the radio PCB before doing this! (I bet you're only glad you paid a tenner now that you've destroyed it!))



The model as purchased.

The model cost £34.95 from a toy shop in Bury, Lancs (Planes Trains & Automobiles in Mindow Parade)

Pictures by
John Fox
(& ruined on the
printer and photo-
copier by Chris)

6
The rear subframe
ready to be mounted
under the body of the truck



4 I wish I remembered where all the wires went! Rewire the batteries to the PCB via a new switch and connect up to the motor. The radio's 27mhz, with a 20-30' range.

The completed model - Fantastic!

Incidentally, the steering wheel & spare wheel would have usually been retained, as the car would've been converted back to road use in Winter



5 The brass cowcatcher and subframe to take the front 4 wheel bogie (LGB I think)

Dear LADS...

Get your crayons out

Dear All,

Last month I sent out a leaflet with the mag informing people about our group. What I neglected to do was request your approval and thoughts on the content. So I'll ask now. Does the leaflet seem okay with everyone? Are our rules (or lack of them) okay? Is it a correct description of events?

We definitely need a leaflet because we get asked so many times when taking the indoor line to exhibitions.

I would also genuinely appreciate feedback and thoughts on the direction of our group.

Chris MacKenzie

For Sale

Toyo mini lathe ML-210 & milling machine. 3 jaw chuck, tailstock drill chuck, fixed steady, toolbits. Milling head is complete with 6/8/10mm collets & drill chuck. Ex-con & mounted on small baseboard. Cost £1,200 new, but accept £450ono or ex for Lady Anne kit. John Fox on 0161 725 9808.

The PDR & adjustments

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We are now (at the time of writing) waiting for the second one to be made before track can be laid up to either side. This was another "minor adjustment"! It's amazing how two tape measures can be so different! My excuse is that mine shrunk in the wash (sorry Dave).

To get my 3'6" curves Dave loaned me his rail bending machine. After it bends the rails, I then lay the track with a tracksetter 3'6" template and screw down. It makes it easy to do, no kinks to be seen, and is truly brilliant.

On a different note, I would like to assure everyone that the photo of my wife's bottom in issue 26 was not exaggerated. I took the picture with the smallest camera I could find! Sorry there are no photo's this time, the camera broke taking the last picture! [Ed: The LADS rag, for reasons of personal safety, would like to distance themselves from any comments made about the size of Dawn's derriere and how it broke the camera. Phil does so at his own risk. I simply misunderstood when he said there was a large crack in the lens...].

Dear Editor,

We were pleased to read Martin Williamson's letter and were happy to note that he has been further encouraged by his visit to the Spread Eagle Light Railway on "t'other side o't Pennines."

Sadly, we must correct his deliberate (?) error. Nobody who has heard my Blackburn accent or Sheila's Chorley accent would accuse us of being "pseudo Lancastrians".

Admittedly we have to confess that we are both descended from ancient Yorkshire stock, but please don't tell this to anyone, as we could lose our street cred as missionaries in Yorkshire!

A happy New Year to you Martin and to all the LADS,

Peter & Sheila Harling, SELR (Settle)

What's My Line?

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Most of us also have in our heads the history behind our railways with an imaginary setting and reason why the line survives.

How we laid the track and how it has developed over time can be the content for the next paragraph or two. By the time you have described the locos and stock the article is all but complete ready for posting off to the Editor.

The RM has more than once published guidelines on what they require:

- The text should then be ideally typed, double-spaced on one side of each sheet of paper only.
- 6 x 4 colour prints are preferred to slides and they will always return the originals.
- An overall layout plan should accompany any submission.

Once accepted it can sometimes be a long wait to see your article in print but it's all worthwhile and they even pay you per page printed with a complimentary copy of the magazine. So why not have a go and get those keyboards tapping, even if it is with just two fingers at a time and only one word a minute?

If you don't have access to a word processor then I'm sure there are enough of us in the Group who would be willing to lend a hand with the typing. Who knows I could be reading all about your line as Railway of The Month!

Phil Sixsmith

Dear Diary...

16mm Association LADS Events - Bring an engine & have a run

Any Wednesday evening - Wakefield
Ring Calvin Green on 01924 281169

WOT NO STEAM-UP'S?
There are no dates organised!!
We need Garden Steam-ups!
Please see story on first page and
then send your details to Cliff Robinson.

Sun 12 Jan - 1pm - Merseyside

Rob & Eileen Guinness have invited us all back to his fabulous little line (32mm)
Give him a ring on 0151 486 1626

16mm Exhibitions:-

Sat 22 & Sun 23 Feb 03 - Lincoln

Lincoln Garden Railway Exhibition,
Lawns Visitor Centre, Lincoln
Medium Show - mainly 16mm, some G

Other Exhibitions:-

Sat 1 & Sun 2 Feb (10am) - Rochdale

Oulder Hill Leisure Centre
Large exhibition - probably not any 16mm

Sat 15 & Sun 16 Feb (10am) - Bolton

Bolton School Arts & Conf Centre,
Chorley New Road, Bolton
Large exhibition - probably not any 16mm

Contributions?

You know when you went and hid in the shed from the relatives over Christmas? Well, we want to know what you were up to. Why not write it up for the LADS?

We've got no more articles in stock waiting to be published.

Isn't there anything happening out there?

(Aren't you fed up reading about just what Cliff, Mike & Chris were up to?)

Simply send your text to:-

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0161 980 7804

or email
narrow.gauge@btinternet.com



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