

# Lancashire & District Section



No. 38 - 1st April 2006

## Four Packed Pages!

There's so much to include in this latest edition of the Lancashire And District Section's (LADS) newsletter, we don't know how we'll fit it all in!

LADS members have responded to the call for articles with a vengeance, and as you can see there's a wide variety of news.

This doesn't mean that you shouldn't write anything, though! The stock pile will run out next issue and so now's the time to put pen to paper or fingertips to keyboard. We'd prefer articles emailed (to save us retyping them) but don't let that stop you (Chris's one, occasionally two fingers, are a blur over the keyboard). Anything will do. If you're in doubt, then send it in!

### New Features!

On page 3 Readers tell us about their own Railway. Roger "Doc" Fletcher kicks off the series (I say "series" optimistically) with his Henbury Railway. It's brilliant!

We've also a problem page for those questions you were always wanted to know but were afraid to ask. Don't worry, it's not a repeat of Uncle Agony's marriage tips from a few years ago - this is serious stuff!

So even if you don't think you know enough about railways to write an article, you can now ask a question!

The next issue has a target date in the beginning of June - so get busy! Please! We need you!

The dates are now available for this year's steam-up events. Again, this doesn't mean they're set in stone - so watch the back page and we should have a great summer.



Billy on the mountain section of the Henbury Railway

## Water water everywhere and not a drop to steam...

Many of us LADS are lucky enough to live in an area which enjoys soft water. Of course many other live steam modellers are not as fortunate and discussions on the best sort of water to use can often be heard at any 16mm gathering.

But does this mean that *soft* Lanc's tap water is the best choice? Could we sell this to less fortunate Southerners? Unfortunately not.

You see tap water is less than ideal for our miniature loco's. Of course it works fine, but if you want your miniature engineering marvel to last anything more than 10 years without problems, you need to start investing in the future now and using the correct sort of water.

But what is the right sort? (we're now enjoying the same arguments as our hard water companions).

### Pure Science

The problems come about because pure water consists of hydrogen and oxygen (H<sub>2</sub>O), and is therefore a colorless, odorless, tasteless, transparent liquid, which is very slightly compressible. At its maximum density, 39[deg] Fahr. or 4[deg] C., it's the standard for specific gravities, one cubic centimeter weighing one gram. Of course it boils at 212[deg] Fahr. or 100[deg] C.

But, of course our tap water is far from pure H<sub>2</sub>O. Unfortunately it's frequently impregnated with foreign matter (unfortunately for us that is - I'm sure the Water Board don't consider model steam engines when gleefully stirring all sorts of concoctions into the huge vats).

Most of these added chemicals can be

removed by distillation. That's why a lot of people use rain water. But the rain water may hit the rooftops free from a lot of additives, but by the time it's run over your average Lancashire roof tile, it's probably got more dangerous chemicals in it than Dr Shipman's first aid kit.

### Another answer

Another answer is to use a dehydration machine. These large devices, as you probably know, are intended to be left switched on in a damp room. They draw the water from the atmosphere, leaving a very useful bucket of dehydrated water.

The main problem to most of us, is that these machines are far too expensive to purchase (especially to support a weekly steam up).

### And it can be free

Why am I telling you this? Well, this dehydrated water is now in popular demand by the organic and green brigade (it's supposed to be medicinal or something) and is therefore easily obtained. Don't bother going to a supermarket though, they'll charge you more for the fancy label and bottle. Instead go to your local chemist shop and they'll sell you a nice handy sized bottle of dehydrated water. It has even been known to be free if you take your own bottle!

Another useful LADS tip!



**News & Rumours  
from around the region**

**Steve Warrington of Back 2 Bay 6**, the suppliers of garden railway accessories, is opening up a shop in Telford. As from the 4 April he's at Unit B26, Maw's Craft Centre, Jackfield, Ironbridge, Telford. Telephone 01952 884 785.

The Whistle Blower is ashamed to say he's heard no gossip since the last newsletter. Either people are behaving themselves, or people are now clamming up when our spies are about!

Hopefully the first few Steam Up events will correct this regrettable situation and rumor and gossip will abound!

# Dear LADS...

*The safety valve where you can let off some steam*

Dear Ed,

Wearing my ACME Engineering hat, I have available to give away for free a quantity of battery holders, on/off switch, receiver lead, which are surplus from my RC conversions to Accucraft locomotives.

The battery holders take four AA size batteries. One free per applicant – either send me £1.50 to cover P&P, or wait until the next steam up.

Best,

Mike Ousby

children's' playground and the toy and model museum.

For more information regarding the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch railway, it's exhibitions and the timetables please visit [www.rhdr.demon.co.uk](http://www.rhdr.demon.co.uk)

The Renaissance Hotel is located just opposite the main station of the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch railway and we can offer you very attractive rates for your overnight stay (the normal price for a single room is £19.99 and a double room is £17.50 per person per night. The Renaissance Hotel offers visitors from the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch railway a special price of £17.50 for a single room and £14.99 per person per night for a double room if you are able to show us this letter upon your arrival. All prices include our continental breakfast)

I hope I have persuaded you to pursue your interest in model railways by paying a visit to the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch railway and I hope I can welcome you in our hotel in the near future.

*Yours faithfully,*

Jeroen Kramer

Reservation Department

Renaissance Hotel

Dear LADS

As a train and locomotive fanatic you have probably heard of the famous Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway station.

As a fanatic myself I can definitely recommend a visit to this beautiful triumph in miniature engineering.

The railway station was first opened to traffic in July 1927 as the 'World's Smallest Public Railway' and is now covering a distance of 13.5 miles from the picturesque Cinque Port of Hythe, near the channel tunnel, to the cottages and lighthouses at Dungeness.

In the New Romney Main Station you will find the 'Heywood Buffet' restaurant, a

## The Cluttermere Clarion

### Rail Services curtailed as blizzards rage through the Vale of Clutter

*By our cold correspondent Rob Guinness*



A spokesperson for the Muddledale Railway Co has assured our reporter that every effort is being made to restore services between Cluttermere and Muddledale. However, this is likely to take some time, with snowdrifts up to 10ft high in places.

The company has apologised for the inconvenience and requests tolerance from its customers.

## Problem Corner

*Whatever the question, we can find someone who has the answer*

One reader has started this new feature with a technical question about lubrication. He asks what lubricants we should use on our little steam dragons. We turn to Mike Ousby, well known LAD and proprietor of ACME Engineering for technical advice. The oracle replies:

Lubricants serve three main purposes.

1. To cool
2. To clean away any detritus or foreign bodies (that's muck to you and me)
3. To provide a film separating moving parts in contact with one another, reducing friction and wear.

First the lubricator on your engine. Use only good quality steam oil which is able to withstand the heat and wetting. I personally use steam oil from John Prescott. As to which grade, follow the manufacturers recommendation. In the absence of any try a medium grade (that's what I use).

Secondly the valve gear, axles, etc.

Please, please do not use steam oil. Steam oil is thick and clings to moving parts. However any dust or grit thrown up becomes mixed with it and forms a superb grinding paste, which accelerates wear. What I recommend is the 3 in 1 type bicycle oil normally sold in small squeezable tins with a plastic spout.

Cleaning. To clean the valve gear, wheels, etc of your dragon use WD 40 or equivalent. If you stand the engine on paper kitchen towel you will see the dirt in the WD40 which comes off. It is also superb for cleaning paintwork, etc and does help protect from rust. Don't however use it as a lubricant in the place of 3 in 1.

*Until next time Happy Steaming and keep those questions coming in!*

**Heard any Rumours? Something happening? Then the public have a right to know! Tell us NOW!**

# New Feature!

Readers tell us about their Railway

# Start of a New Series

Roger Fletcher's

# Henbury Railway

This garden railway has evolved rather than been planned.

It started life as what I now realise was an entirely futile attempt to run a fine scale O gauge railway in the garden. After many hopeless attempts to get a battery operated, tarted up Lima 0-6-0 with radio control to run without derailing, I realised that track laying in the great outdoors was harder than I had realised, and that something a little more robust was needed.

16mm was the answer. I had dreams of 1950s Talylyn-style tracks barely visible through the grass.

I discovered Roundhouse, and that was it; Billy was purchased.

We already had a pond in the garden. In the nature of things one pond beget another; I constructed a new one at the top of a mound left by a previous owner. This allowed me to construct a channel and a waterfall to connect the two; a pump returns the water via a filter.

The filter keeps the fish healthy. The railway circumnavigates the upper pond, crossing the artificial channel on a bridge.

The part of the trackbed round the upper pond was created as a

series of concrete rafts, running a foot or so above the lawn. Peco SM32 track was laid on it, initially using bird grit, bought in a 12kg bag, with diluted PVA glue to keep it in place. This grit ballast has stood up quite well to usage. Part of this loop goes out of sight, squeezed as it is between pond and garden fence. This bit of line gets a very authentic mossy look! More recently I have experimented with different Rowlands variations, including chopped up moss. However, my Rowlands mixes have not

lasted as well as the PVA covered grit. Currently I am trying Grano covered in dilute PVA. I had the outside of the house painted recently; the decorator used a PVA adhesive / primer / sealant to get a better result on the brick. I found this product easier to dilute than the adhesive PVA I had previously bought.

A spur was taken off the inside of the curve, and a flyover constructed; it had existed in the 0 gauge days, but had to be elevated to create the extra height required by Billy's chimney!

Roundhouse confirmed that Billy would cope with the extra gradient required to get over. A second spur then came off the loop, and this too went under the flyover. Both spurs make their way to the end of the garden to a 3' radius return loop, the lower one on a low stone wall. The beauty of this arrangement, which was not in the least planned, is that there are now in effect two continuous circuits.

For "one engine in steam" there is a flattish dumbbell arrangement, with a common central section. With more than one train running, I use the "figure of eight" which includes the

high level spur and the "mountain section" leading up to it from the bridge over the artificial stream. The mountain section ascends at about 1 in 35, a heroic grade more suited to Welsh Highland than Talylyn.

With three trains running at a steady space, I can sit in the garden with a glass of wine and watch events!

A terminal station has been constructed behind the house, taking over what had always been a scruffy part of the garden, and



making it neat, a point I made to my ex-wife, who was forced to agree; where the railway went, order was brought to the garden. The tidying up procedure consisted of "Madoc" walling. This area is at a generous 2' above path level, good for the aching back when rakes are being assembled and locos steamed.

My delight is in simply watching the trains go by, but visits from other owners can lead to a deal of manic activity as trains are coaxed up gradients, restrained down them, and made to wait for slower moving traffic. Future plans include an expansion of the left hand end loop to a more generous 5' radius (from 3'). This will, as those of you with a slide rule can work out, lead to an almost threefold increase in the area enclosed by the loop, and thus a more substantial station area can be established within it.

Locos, apart from the aforementioned Billy, include an IP Jack, now christened "Matthew" and a J D Turner budget diesel, christened "Jenny", both after my stepchildren. There is also a Smith & Harrison Scarab, who goes under his own name. Rolling stock includes Brandbright Easy, Brandbright kits, an Imp Gladstone bogie, and a fine Ffestiniog-type bogie brake made by Martin Williamson.



Could your railway be next?

500 words only please  
- we can even arrange photos

# Dear Diary...

## LADS Steam-Up Events

These events are held in a member's own garden.

All 16mm Assoc members are welcome (and relatives) but please let your host know you're coming a few days before.

**EVENT CANCELLED**  
Sun 9 April - Bill Cook Southport

Sun 30 April (Bank Hol) - Sam Sparks  
Ulverston, Cumbria Tel: 01229 583074  
samprakes2004@yahoo.co.uk

Sat 20 May (not Sunday) - John Sharp  
Lancaster Tel: 01524 65804  
No radio controlled loco's please

Sun 28 May - Andy Lether  
Preston. Tel: 01772 713849  
lancsandy-web@yahoo.co.uk

Sun 4 June - Phil Pacey  
Fulwood, Preston Tel: 01772 729 203  
philandgill.pacey@virgin.net

Sat 10 June (not Sunday) - Alex Milne  
Ribchester. Tel. 01254 878 816 'Grand  
Opening' LADS only, or by invite.  
Local families will also be there.  
alexribchester@aol.co.uk

Sun 25 June - Ian Lowcock  
Barnoldswick, Tel. 01282 812 842

Sun 2 July - Peter Holland  
Warrington. Tel. 01925 266 314  
peter@pasemanagement.co.uk

Sun 16 July - Steve Colling  
Rishton. Tel. 01254 883 200  
scolling@dsl.pipex.com

Sun 30 July - Mark Haydock  
Accrington. Tel. 01254 399 388

Sun 20 Aug - Geoff London  
Carlisle. Tel. 01228 526 140  
g\_y@lineone.net

Sun 10 Sep - Phil & Derek Eaton  
Liverpool. Tel. 0151 428 2366  
phileaton@hotmail.com

Sun 17 Sep - Alex Milne  
Ribchester Tel. 01254 878 816  
alexribchester@aol.co.uk

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## Garden & Model Railway Exhibitions

Sat 1 April - Association of 16mm Narrow Gauge Modellers,  
Nat. Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh Park, **STONELEIGH**,  
Warwickshire, CV8 2LZ. 10.30 - 5pm

Sun 2 April - Friendly Engines Day, West Lancs Railway  
Contact Details

Sat 8 April - Leyland Model Railway Exhibition, St Andrews  
Church Hall, Worden Lane, **LEYLAND**, PR25 3EL. 10-5pm

Sat 8 - Sun 9 April - Large Scale Model Railway Exhibition,  
Fosse Way, **LEAMINGTON SPA**, CV31 1XN. 10-5pm

Fri 14 - Sun 16 April - Easter Model Railway & Transport  
Exhibition, Forum 28, Duke Street, **BARROW IN FURNESS**,  
10-5pm. 8 working model railway layouts.

Sat 15 - Mon 17 April - York Model Railway Show, York  
Racecourse, **YORK**, North Yorkshire, YO23 1EX. Huge  
event!

Sat 22 April - G Rail 2006 (G Scale Society AGM)  
Newbold Road, Rugby, **WARWICKSHIRE**, CV21 1EH

Sat 22 - Sun 23 April - Model Railway Exhibition, St Luke's  
Church Hall, St James's Street, **NELSON**, Lancashire,

Sat 29 - Sun 30 April - Model Railway Show, Archbishop  
Blanch Secondary School, Mount Vernon Road,  
**LIVERPOOL**, L7 8UD. 10-4.30pm

Fri 5 May - Sun 7 May - Northern Model Engineering  
Exhibition, **HARROGATE**

Sat 6 - Sun 7 May - Model Railway Exhibition, 10-5pm  
Grammar School, Buxton Road, **STOCKPORT**, SK2 7AF.

Sun 14 May - Roundhouse Engineering Open Day 10-2pm  
Churchill Bus. Park, Churchill Rd, **DONCASTER**, DN1 2TF

Sun 14 May - Teddy Bears' Day, West Lancs Railway



OKAY, FOLKS - YOU CAN COME  
AND ADMIRE MY TRAIN LAYOUT  
NOW - RIGHT THIS WAY - PLENTY  
OF ROOM...



CHECK OUT THIS CRAFTSMANSHIP,  
FOLKS... I Poured MY HEART  
INTO THIS THING... YESSIR...  
RIGHT THIS WAY... GET OVER HERE



SEE A MAN LAY A BIG, FAT OL'  
EGG RIGHT HERE, FOLKS... SEE A  
GUY BOMB BIG TIME... TOTAL  
LOSER RIGHT HERE... BIG ZERO  
COMIN' ATCHA...



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