

Issue No. 841

February 2022

The News Sheet

North London Society
of Model Engineers



February 2022

You can see this News Sheet in
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Front cover photo; -

Paul has a great run passing the steaming bays at a steady pace travelling in the wrong direction on New Year's Day. An account of the day can be found on page 21 of this News Sheet



Your editor is very grateful to all those who have contributed to this edition. Your efforts are much appreciated by all the members of NLSME. This News Sheet would not be possible without you.

Articles long or short on any subject which would be of interest to members of NLSME will be gratefully received for inclusion in future editions. If you don't want to put pen to paper but have a suggestion for a topic which is of interest let the editor know and we will do the rest.



Chairman's Comments

Les

We had a splendid New Year's Day run at Tyttenhanger with many members in attendance. I counted 17 locos in operation. Thoughts are now turning to this year's functions and we have already received requests to hold three charitable events, Keech Hospice, Barnet Beaver Scouts and our neighbours, St Marks Church. Fetes and Fairs section are receiving requests and we will, fingers crossed, be able to open for public running at Tyttenhanger.

In amongst these events, we must find time for ourselves. We already have Bank Holiday Monday 2nd May in calendar as a member's day to celebrate 60 years since we first had access to Tyttenhanger. In addition, we have it in mind to hold a summer event when we run clockwise on the RT as we do on New Year's Day.

A night time run is also long overdue, perhaps this can be on one of our Friday general meeting evenings. Also contemplated is an afternoon for members children and grandchildren. The idea being that only persons under 16 years of age, and relatives of members of course, will be allowed to drive - with parent/grandparent as passenger on train.

Since we last opened to the public (2019) the requirement for UK clubs to undertake defined inspections and record keeping has been issued by the HSE in the form of HS2020. Consequently, we are incorporating requirements applicable to our own operations into our procedures, an article in this issue provides more information. Also, there are a number of club documents that require updating, our Safety and Security Manual, Tyttenhanger Risk Assessments etc. These are in hand and will be in place prior to the 2022 season.

Sadly, I must advise you of the recent death of Keith Bartlam, a member since 1994. An obituary can be found on page 7 of this News Sheet.

On a more upbeat note Les is making good progress after his accident at home, and has now left hospital. We wish him a speedy and full recovery

Work continues at Tyttenhanger with ballasting the GL and sleeper replacement of the RT. The general access workshop fit out continues and we will soon have completed all actions necessary prior to removal of the old concrete workshop. An update to the current approved plan for the steaming bay project is under preparation and will be presented to the membership for approval.

At HQ those that attended the January general meeting were supportive of the plan for improving the kitchen and toilet facilities there. Accordingly, we hope to develop budget costs and present the proposal to another general meeting (May this year, immediately after concluding the AGM).

TYTTENHANGER INTERIM RULES EFFCTIVE 19th July 2021 **UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

OR AS MAY BE AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME

(Issue: Rev 4)

- Members only, their families and invited guests allowed on site
- Site is closed to the public
- Gate to remain closed at all times

Council will review the requirement for interim rules in February 2022

The new washroom

In the December issue our chairman paid tribute to the team who constructed and fitted out the new washroom. Unfortunately, we didn't have a picture available to publish in that edition. So, to correct this omission this picture shows just what an excellent new facility we now have available to all members who visit the site.



As you can see, we have two wash basins and a urinal. Also, just out of sight is a hand dryer. If you do use this facility, please leave it as you would hope to find it in a clean and presentable condition ready for the next person.

Treasurer's Report

By Mike



Another New Year and let us hope that it is a better one than the last two years. For various family health reasons, I have mainly been absent from Colney Heath and meetings at HQ since the middle of October. However, personally I think things are improving and by continuing to wear a face-covering when in the OO and HO rooms at HQ, I feel happier attending meetings. I did make the New Year's Day steam up at Tyttenhanger and was pleased to see so many engines and their owners and families turning out for this seasonal event. I hope everybody who attended enjoyed themselves.

After the 1st January run the RTR track has been closed whilst a long section from the steaming bays under the trees is being re-laid with plastic sleepers as the existing sleepers were becoming rotten and porous messing with the safety of the signalling system.

Sadly, Keith Bartlam passed away recently and will be greatly missed. He and Jack were our major contributors to our heavy steel construction projects. Over the years they contributed to numerous items around the site from hand-rails to the fabrication of the RTR bridge and the GLR viaduct on the New Land, the base unit of the RTR traverser project, which is still in progress. They also constructed from a rudimentary sketch the additional double deck track frame which went onto the hydraulic lifting table in the number 7 loco storage facility, which is now in use.

Finance wise, as we are only too aware the cost of electricity, materials, not to mention petrol has been escalating at an alarming rate. This brings into question how much should the subscription renewal rate be set at for the forthcoming year. Last increased was 1st April 2017 and with very little income coming in from Fetes and Fairs efforts and nothing from the public at Tyttenhanger until we re-open the railways on selected Sunday afternoons during the Summer, we are reaching the point in the Society bank balance that I do not wish to go below. This will be a subject of discussion at the next Council Meeting in February, prior to our recommendation being put to members for approval at the March General Meeting.

Apart from the inevitable Direct Debit for electricity at HQ our only major expenditure has been for a new specialist mower for Tyttenhanger. Many who attend Tyttenhanger will be aware of the GLR granite chippings saga, which after a rocky start has resolved itself in a most satisfactory manner. Having ordered a further 20 tons of Mountsorrel 'pink' granite chippings in October, the driver sent with the load was unable to get into our site gate and returned to depot. Some weeks later a second attempt with the same size lorry was successfully made to negotiate the gate and dumped the load. However, instead of granite they offloaded 20 tons of MOT type 1 in error. Asked if we had a means of reloading

a lorry to correct their mistake, this was declined as average 60+ age members with shovels was not on. End result we got our 20 tons of granite and as a 'goodwill' gesture we got to keep the MOT. Maybe we will be able to put some of it onto the bridleway 'lake' after we have improved the drainage. But we will certainly be putting the MOT to good use.

Keep safe and keep engineering.

Keith Bartlam

Sadly, we have to report that Keith passed away on 12th December 2021.

Keith and Jack Edwards formed the core of our structural engineering team at the Tyttenhanger Site for many years. Keith was a regular attendee on Thursdays and Sundays throughout the year contributing to the successful expansion of both the ground level and raised tracks into the new land.



Keith was an intrinsic part of the structural team who designed and constructed many of the major items of infrastructure we now enjoy around our site at Tyttenhanger.

Amongst the many that were successfully tackled Keith will be well remembered, in particular for his considerable contribution of time, resource and skill manufacturing both the raised track and ground level railway steel bridges, the hydraulic loco lift in the loco storage container and the raised track traverser which is part of the ongoing steaming bay improvement project. In addition, he was part of the team which installed the anti-tip rail around the whole of the raised track which has improved the safety of hauling of our passenger carriages for members and public alike.

His quiet and unassuming manner, willingness to take on a challenge together with a can-do attitude to take on the various projects presented to him and Jack was an inspiration to those who knew him.

Despite the pain he suffered from neck spasms he was still able to attend working parties each week and just got on with the job in hand, up until the Covid pandemic required him to self-isolate. He will be much missed by all who knew him.

His humanist led funeral took place in Stevenage on the 24th January and was attended by his family and a number of society members.

NLSME Record Keeping for Tyttenhanger

By Les

“HS2020 – Managing health and safety at passenger-carrying miniature railways”, issued by the HSE in 2020, requires us to record functions that, hitherto, we have undertaken but have not necessarily maintained the associated paper records.

Traditionally we have either walked the site or taken a first train (member only on train) to check things. It is now a requirement for such inspections, and a proving run, prior to passenger hauling, to be recorded and signed for by person carrying out the inspection. Also, we need to record who is in charge of the GLR operations, as these comprise complex train movements relative to the RT operation.

The signing in book at Tyttenhanger has therefore been amended accordingly and the significant additions can be seen on the new format. 

Any steward or member can sign for the inspections. Senior steward or sponsor to countersign.

Also, we must now keep inspection records for all passenger carrying vehicles. There will be annual inspections, as at present, supplemented by daily visual inspections at time of

Date		Please use a new page for each days running.		Page No.
SENIOR TRACK STEWARD (Required on Public Days only)		Name:	Signature:	
Track inspections, including signal systems and fences prior to public running and events are mandatory, advisory prior to club running.				
Signatures of the inspectors confirming that the proving runs are OK or comments below. Signature				
RTR	Signature of inspector.			Noted by Senior Steward or Sponsor as applicable. Signature
GLR	Signature of inspector.			
GLR	Person in Charge of public day running.			
COMMENTS / MAINTENANCE REQUIRED / INCIDENTS REPORTED				

use. Again, we have always conducted annual inspections but not previously formalised the reports as club records.

The annual inspection criteria for RT vehicles, to be recorded on a standardised NLSME form, are taken from the check list used for many years by Brian and Ron.

The GL annual inspections and reporting form have been developed by Paul and Nick. Many thanks are due to those four members.

These club records will be kept in the lobby lectern, including those for privately owned vehicles. Daily visual inspections need not be recorded unless there is fault requiring attention (as per our current practice).

These HS 2020 requirements apply to every club in the UK and will be first point of call for our insurers should we have an incident. We are fortunate that members are aware of the need to operate safely and recognise that the world nowadays requires better record keeping than in the past.

Wheel Profile Checks for 7.25-gauge stock running on the Tyttenhanger Ground Level Railway

I thought it appropriate to put down a few notes on how, in consultation with the GLR group, we have set about revising the way in which wheel profile checks are documented for the GLR and recorded on a standardised NLSME form.

The objective is only to revise the inspection sheet and method of documenting future inspections. There is no intention to change the standards to be applied.

We are going forward with the process set out below. This is to be formally endorsed by Council at the February meeting.

We have re-started the process of wheel profile checking all 7.25-gauge locos and vehicles which are to run on the GLR. It is our intention to apply the same process to 5-inch gauge stock running on the GLR in due course.

We have adopted the guidance notes published in the Model Engineer by Dr M Baker and the dimensions published in the June 2011 NLSME news sheet.

The NLSME article gives the required minimum standards for both Standard and Narrow-Gauge wheel profiles. There is no proposal to change any of these requirements.

We will adopt the same basic protocols applied since 2011 which are;

- ALL vehicles must pass the wheel profile check before running on the GLR.
- Only locomotives and rolling stock which have passed this inspection will be approved for running on the GLR from 1st May 2022.
- Visiting Loco's will be checked but NOT recorded in the NLSME register.

There are two profile gauges available to the inspector. A vehicle must pass the inspection using one or other of these gauges.

- The 7.25-gauge society gauge. This has the Standard gauge and Narrow-Gauge wheel profiles
- The SMEE bar gauge.

We have a considerable number of inspections recorded in the blue book used previously which have been undertaken by highly competent inspectors like Derek and others since 2011. It is sensible to have a record of inspection of all vehicles on the new system. So, new inspection record will be issued for these historic inspections after a visual inspection has taken place to establish that the vehicle is in the same condition. Any vehicle not recorded previously will be subject to a full wheel profile check.

It is important to note that this inspection only covers wheel profiles. There is a separate inspection procedure for all other aspects of the vehicle condition such as brakes, suspension etc.

We have set a target to have vehicles inspected by 1st May 2022. From that date only vehicles which have been inspected, and passed, will be authorised to run on the GLR. The viability undertaking all necessary inspections by the 1st May will be reviewed at the end of March 2022.

The log book of inspections and inspection sheets will be kept at Tyttenhanger in the same file location as all other records. The owner of the inspected vehicle will be given a copy of the inspection sheet which indicates a Pass or Failure.

No vehicle will be inspected without the approval of the owner.

Paul J and Keith H are the two nominated checkers. We would like a two more nominated inspectors to volunteer if possible.

Only one inspector is required to be in attendance for a vehicle which passes the required checks. If a vehicle is found to have failed then the test will be redone with two nominated inspectors in attendance and a failure sheet completed and signed by both inspectors. A copy of the inspection sheet is on page 15.

Please contact either of the nominated inspectors if you have any questions or wish to arrange inspection of your locomotive or any other stock.

On completion of an inspection a record of inspection form will be issued to the owner of the vehicle and a copy kept within the NLSME register.

Forthcoming General Meetings

In the past our members have been as good if not better than the imported variety of speaker. So, if you know of a member who would be willing to talk for an evening or even half an evening shared with another member; then that would be excellent. Please let me know. The Programme at the moment reads thus: -

Friday February 4th. A fantastic journey to the Steam Festival from St Albans by miniature traction engine. An epic journey by miniature traction engine from St Albans to the Dorset Steam Fair. Taking three days with lots of thrills if not spills; the talk will be augmented with video recordings in sound and colour! As a **bonus** a recent adventure across the London Thames Bridges by miniature traction engine filmed by Jim. Not to be missed.

Friday March 4th Auction of Model Engineers wares.

Unable to complete that model due to lack of a die or tap or some stock metal? The answer is at HQ! That very piece may well be on sale here at HQ for your delectation. Viewing from 7.00pm Auction starts at 7.30pm everyone Welcome especially if you are interested in bidding for that mystery box containing mysterious tooling and stock metals.

Friday April 1st Work in Progress.

“What did you do during the Covid Lock Down Daddy”? Many of us must have done some tinkering around with models of steam, electric, petrol, or wind powered but not nuclear. And I dare say some will have even finished a model that has been on the stocks for yonks. And some will have made further plans to complete that model for once and for all but have been held up due to lack of something. Whatever it is please come to Head Quarters and be brave and talk about it. You will be among friends who will be very willing to give advice. Take your pick before they change their minds!

Friday May 6th The Annual General Meeting.

This is everyone’s chance to voice and vote for ideas for the future of the NLSME. But don’t all speak at once! It is your chance to vote for new Council members of the Club so it is an extremely important meeting. The Club is a friendly Club, but is one where the future must be faced and plans made for that future. Please attend and help steer the ship; which I hope is not a 200.000-ton super-tanker!

Friday June 3rd,

Queens Jubilee Holiday.

Please be reminded that our assigned parking at HQ is to the left of the site alongside and beyond the end of our building.

Any questions regarding the meeting contact, Ian

A new supply of bags of coal has been delivered to the Colney Heath site.

Anthracite Beans in 25kg bags

The size most used on our locos. £12.00 a bag.

Anthracite Grains in 20kg bags,

Suitable for 3 1/2" gauge or those with very small fire-hole doors. £10.00 a bag.

Welsh Dry Steam Coal in 25kg bags

In larger lumps, which would require breaking up to use.

Contact the Treasurer. Mike

General Meeting Friday 7th January 2022.

By OMAH Mk II.

The January General Meeting is always a curate's egg. It used to be the evening at the end of the Model Engineer Exhibition at Alley Palley when Exhibition Goers would display their purchases for a couple of farthings that no-one had seen; but there was no exhibition; so, the scribe had a blank sheet to work on; that was until our Chairman Les said that he wanted to talk to the crowd of seven about the projected toilet at Head Quarters. That was fine and the scribe could relax thinking that Les, who had previously worked in the water industry would take about an hour and a half with a break for tea and a raffle. Imagine the distress to the organiser when it was discovered that he was not going to talk about the origin of the toilet and the sewage system but for only about five minutes about the positioning of the new toilet and the position of the new kitchen! Mr Crapper will just have to wait for another day, if he can.

So, the time from eight to ten needed filling. Fortunately, the King of the Workshop Nights volunteered to take the stand with gusto. The stand was full of indescribable equipment and he talked and demonstrated firstly a MIG welding wand with, not a copper nozzle but an erroneously fitted brass one. With the copper nozzle he was able to weld miles of track to the steel sleepers but with the brass it would be curtains for the nozzle after just three sleepers. A sophisticated speed controller for large electric motors was demonstrated without a surge that would blow all the fuses in North West London. It was then time for tea and biscuits and reminisces of times past.

The tea and chocolate biscuits consumed it was Jim Mc's opportunity to show a video taken just a couple of days prior. It was reminiscent of the old cinema days when the audience could view *Gaumont British News* featuring events of the past week. There it was; Tyttenhanger on the silver screen just few days previous with trains dashing round the wrong way on the raised track and several Ground Level

trains sedately travelling their ways, often driven very skilfully by young people who knew what they were doing.

Soon it was 'cloaks and time to depart. The cars were extracted from the clutches of the well decorated and lit religious park for the seven attendees to seek another watering hole for the rest of the evening.

The General Meeting – Work in progress, on the 5th November featured projects from a number of members. And was reported on pages 12 & 13 of the December 2021 News Sheet. Unfortunately, no photos were available at the time of going to press. We can rectify this omission now with the following pictures taken that evening;

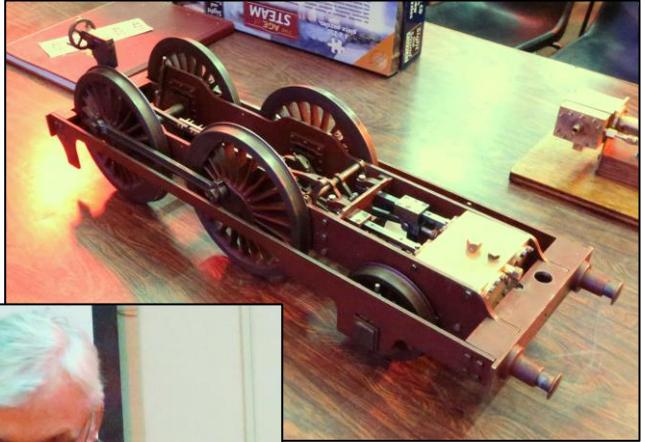
Nigel was explaining how he had completed the bogies for his class 20 loco



Jonathan with his very unusual locomotion No 1.

A very important locomotive in the history of the development of the steam locomotive.

Les explained some of the history behind his current project Petrola.



Gerald showed us his lockdown project. A horizontal steam engine which worked well at 15lbs psi.



Raised track repairs

The section between the steaming bay, behind the G1 bothy and up to the back of the station had suffered multiple track circuit failures during the latter part of 2021. As a consequence, this was affecting the signals. The cause was diagnosed as a combination of old wood sleepers which had become porous and the leaves and pine needles which had fallen onto the line also retaining water.

The result was a voltage drop between the rails which was causing the track circuit to short out. Cleaning the leaves away didn't solve the problem so the decision was taken to resleeper this section with new plastic sleepers. This task is now well advanced and as can be seen the team are working to complete the task before we start running again.



Elsewhere others have taken on the unenviable task of methodically going around the whole line tightening fastenings and replacing fishplates when

required. This is also well in hand. Once all this work has been completed to the casual observer the line won't look much different. However, all this effort is essential if we are to enjoy a trouble-free summer of running in 2022.

If you would like to help with any of the many and varied tasks which need to be completed before the summer season starts you would be most welcome. Site maintenance takes place every Thursday and Sunday and the GLR team also meet on Saturdays.

A new model railway project: Part 1

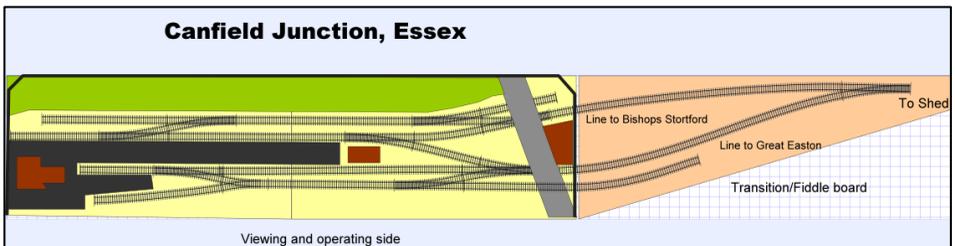
By Paul

Those who read my article on “where can I build my first layout” in the May 2021 News Sheet might recall a picture of a 00-gauge layout I built in 1978 within the top of a sideboard. Also, in the same article I showed a picture of what it referred to as a “Cameo” style of layout – one that is self-contained and is presented like a theatre stage.

Well, in my new project, I intend to build a Cameo layout incorporating the station building from my sideboard layout. The station building is based on Rayne, a station still standing alongside the closed Bishops Stortford, Dunmow and Braintree line. This was the very first branch line station I ever encountered and it has remained a favourite ever since.

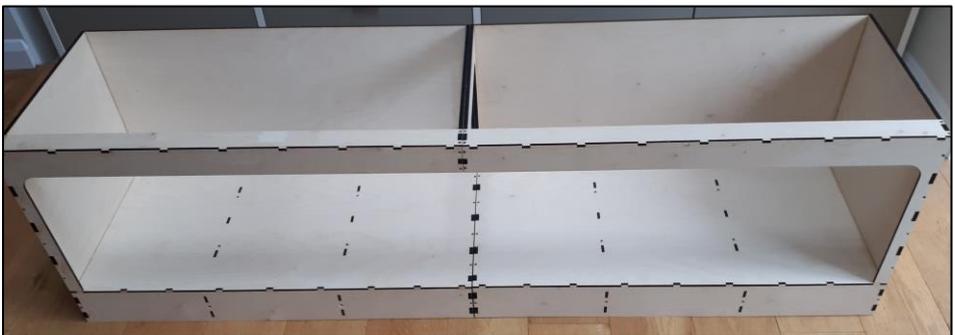
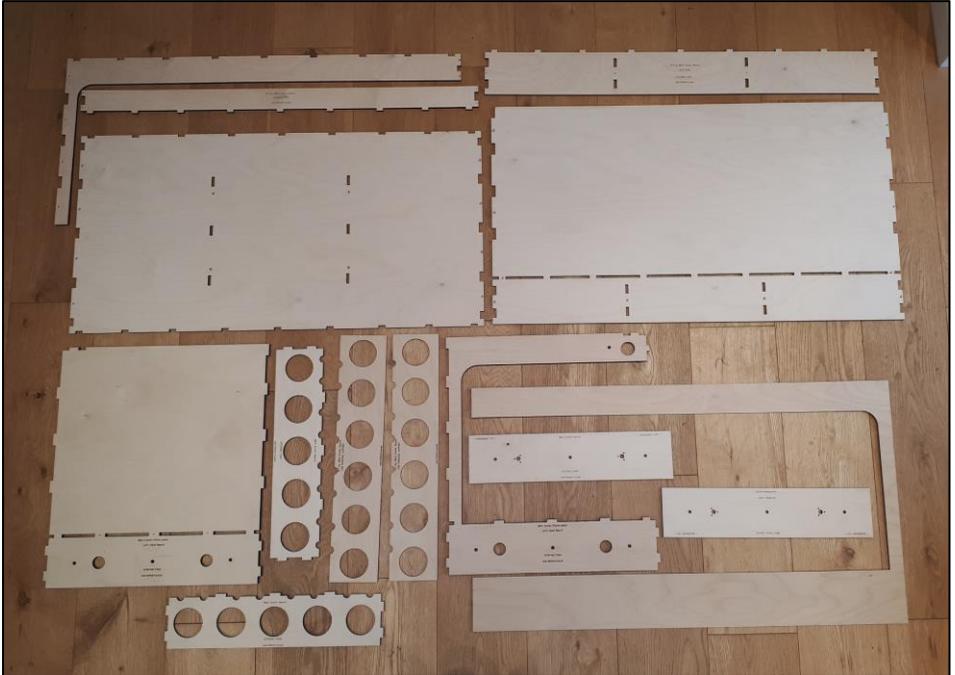
This project will be either quick or slow depending on the time I have available which is subject, as always, to family commitments and my own enthusiasm! But, however long it takes, I intend to report progress, stage by stage.

The scenic part of this new layout will be only 6 feet long constructed within two modules that bolt together, but with side extensions for marshalling trains to run on and off the visible section. The whole thing will be able to be sat on a table, worktop or trestle. On a trestle it is being designed to be an exterior extension (in good weather) to my shed based “Great Easton” layout featured in the February 2020 News Sheet. It will be in 00 gauge and controlled, through a selector switch, by either conventional DC controllers or a NCE Digital Command Control (DCC) unit enabling sound as well as action. The track will, for the most part, hand built using drawn nickel silver bullhead rail, copper clad sleepers and, quite possibly, cosmetic chairs. Most of the point-work is already built having been salvaged from previous layouts.



The track plan envisages a junction station where my fictitious line from Great Easton meets the actual, aforementioned, Bishops Stortford line at a real place called Canfield which lies just east of Takeley in Essex. The plan was drawn using “Anyrail”, a track planning tool available online.

The baseboards were procured in 2019 from a small company specialising in laser cut baseboard modules. But it was only this year that I got around to starting the layout build, aided and abetted by fellow member David. The illustrations below show the kit of parts for one of the boards and the completed modules awaiting the next stage.



NLSME. – The New Year’s Day Steam Up 2022.

By OMAH MkII.

New Year’s Day had arrived at last! The day was warm with little or no wind, not at all like the 1st of January would normally be. A number of members, their families and near relatives arrived shortly after 10am.



Some keen members were present even earlier and when the scribe arrived with his group a coach was already placed in position ready to run up the track to the Station going the ‘wrong’ way round.

Reverse running has been the enjoyable practice on New Year’s Day for a number of years now and has become a bit of a tradition. Soon *Janet the Planet* was ready to go and the driver given the ‘right away’, having first signed in on the ‘register’ and been reassured by George that the track was clear. The young crew were appraised of the dangers that could possibly be encountered on their joyous way round.

A little later Maxitrak’s little *Planet* had company going about her business the reverse way round. The big boys were out! And it was time to pull *Planet* off the track so that faster and bigger locomotives could get a good run. A Festive Feast of tea and coffee with mince pies, choc biscuits, and Jaffa Cakes was prepared. The scribe prepared the drinks and baked a number of mince pies which disappeared first. I hope that they were consumed with gusto and not used as ammunition to stun unwary rabbits just sitting about quietly minding their own business.

The teas and coffees were consumed by the guardians as well as drivers with many remarks regarding the clemency of the weather for January when on normal years, ten minutes is almost enough when that wind scours across from

Tyttenhanger not unlike the Russian Steppes. All ran smoothly on the raised track and on the Ground Level railway.

Grandchildren drove trains large and small under the strict supervision of their parents and in this shot grandparent.



At the busiest times there were at least eight steam locomotives running on the raised track and probably four locomotives of various propulsion on the Ground Level railway. But lunch beckoned and the scribes party needed to depart for Harpenden.

Needless to say, the 'Steam Up' was a good omen for the year to come and at the least the members and their families and friends made good use of the site. Let us hope our intention to open to the public will also be realised this year. I understand the popularity of this event has set the seeds for the club to set another date to allow reverse running session during the summer. Watch this space.

Martin's immaculate LMS Mogul looks an impressive sight as it waits in the station for a clear road for the next run or had Martin just nipped off for another mince pie?





Not everyone had a trouble-free day. The embarrassment of this driver requesting a push is evident in this shot. A good fire and thus steam could not be maintained which was explained later when the spark arrester was removed to reveal the blast pipe nozzle lying in the bottom of the smoke box.



Sparrow Hawk had a great run until problems with the suspension on the tender forced retirement towards the end of the morning.

Looking effortless, this Simplex on one of many circuits around the Raised track that morning.



00 Section News.

By Dudley

The section enjoyed a well-earned working break and had a good running session over the Christmas period meetings.

The main layout working projects currently being worked on are a major rewire exercise of the section's past donated Locomotive Depot layout to iron out some existing wiring teething problems.

Secondly the area of the main layout that became soaked after the roof sprang a leak has now had all the track relayed and ballasted and is fully operational again.

Also, the carriage sidings area of the main layout has had a revamp and extra scenic details added.

The only items remaining to be added are two new fully detailed signal boxes.

Another major work item is the construction of a new control panel called Binegar Junction which is being completed as a home project. The new panel will incorporate cab control, full point detection indications and eliminate three temporary sub-panels. This will bring an easier control system plus more flexibility on train movements over a large area of the main layout.

Another news item is the return this year of The London Festival of Railway Modelling on the 19/20. March 2022 at Alexandra Palace. 40 Layouts will be showcased and over 120 stands made up of traders, clubs and demonstrators.

Modelling a Christmas Scene

By Craig

I have entered a themed tree in my church's Christmas Tree Festival over the past few years, but the 2020 event was Covid-cancelled. When an offcut MDF base from B&Q was presented to me by my son and the church announced that that the 2021 Festival was going ahead ...

My previous trees were "It's not rocket science" based upon water rockets (a Pepsi bottle, some water, a cork, Schrader valve and tyre pump) - much fun with the grandchildren! And "Train of thought" - an N-gauge layout around a Christmas tree with the Grandchildren's names on the wagons.

See the connection here? Well, my inspiration this year was 5-year-old Isaac's obsession with buses, always happy to support an obsession! So, the theme became "You wait for ages, and then..." the idea was for three buses to emerge together from a tunnel to fulfil the saying that, you wait for ages, and then three buses come along together.



Much thought was given to how to make OO-gauge buses revolve: a carousel perhaps, but the purchase of a 12-volt motor, geared down to 10 rpm, further slowed using a Hornby controller (good thinking Tony!) decided it.

The motor was mounted in the centre of the board and a steel arm filed out to fit the milled shaft. Then the buses - well Isaac has literally hundreds and as I described the project, he donated three of his favourites to the cause. The realisation that I would have to drill (small) holes in them to link them together was a watershed, but eventually he agreed - as long as I repaired them, back to perfect after the festival! The front bus was attached to the revolving shaft with a

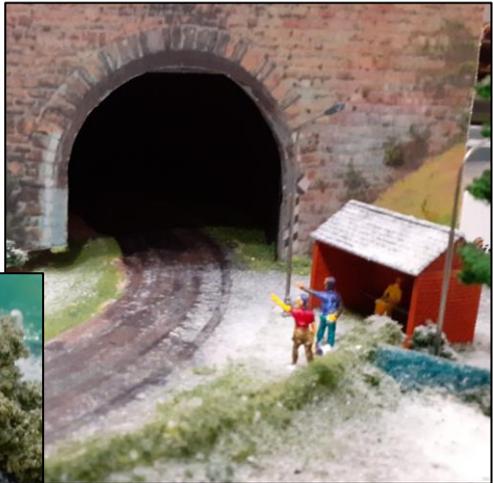
slightly longer screw that held the model together, this then tows the other two with .060" copper wire.

I soon recognised that with a shaft rotating about a centre, the central part of the layout would need to be suspended to allow it to clear. I fixed metal bars across the board on wooden pillars with a removable plywood top to allow access should any issues occur. This top was fitted with the obligatory Christmas tree in the centre and a landscape made from chicken wire and plaster-soaked bandages, sprayed green.

Hanging from the bars were some aluminium angle at the front, supporting the front scenery, constructed with "Kingspan" foam. Two railway bridge photographs were printed, stuck to thin plywood and attached to make the tunnels that the buses would travel through. the left-hand side was similarly made from foam and sprayed.

A curved hedge built at the front conceals a bright LED strip for illumination, and a set of OO-gauge street lights highlight areas at the sides where cars are assembled, one apparently coming from a small tunnel, the others in a car sales area.

The scene was complemented with OO figures, painted by my wife Julie, including; a policeman overseeing the junction; passengers hailing the buses by a bus shelter; and scouts climbing the front scene.



Various grassed areas, trees and painted scenery were added, followed by a sprinkling of "snow".

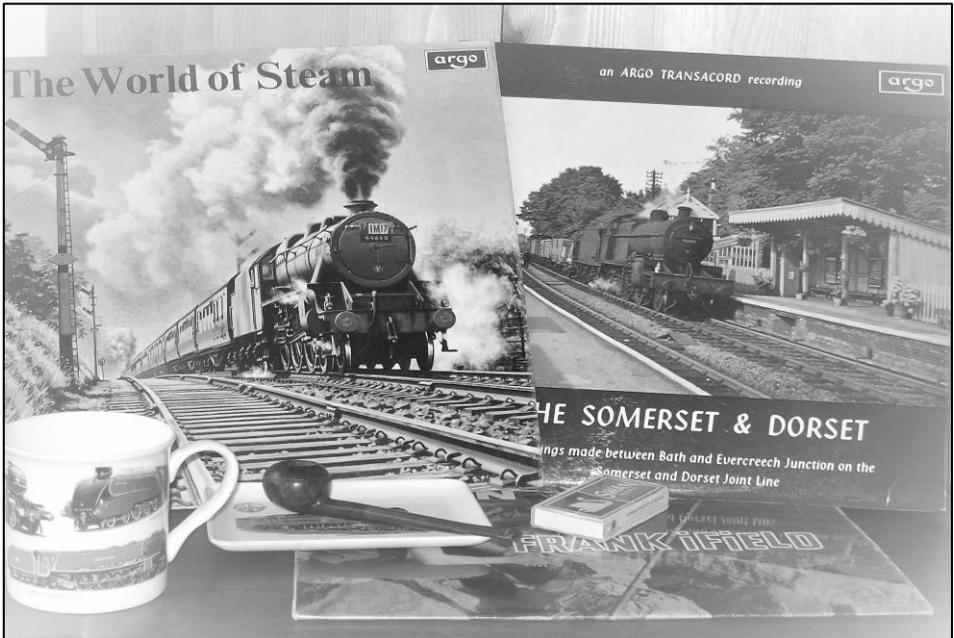
The lighting and bus controls were fitted to a left-hand side panel, proudly managed by Isaac at the Festival. We achieved runner-up in the public voting so planning next year's entry has already started!

Bookworm Writes

Question, do you have a railway line running through your house?

The other morning, I thought that we must have in ours. I was just coming- to after New Year with the lads, eyes barely open when.... the unmistakable sound of a chime whistle from an A4 pacific filled the air followed by the roaring of a train going like a bat out of hell through my owner's study (though I shouldn't make it sound too posh calling it a study, as actually it's the end of the lounge near the French windows where he has his desk and bookshelves). Awakening a bit more I realised the sound was coming from his Hi-Fi and the smoke I could smell was actually the smoke from his pipe tobacco.

There he was reclining in his comfy fireside chair, soaking up the *ambience* and re-reading his diary for 1962. As he was sitting there, I am sure I saw a wistful look in his eyes, perhaps from remembering the time when two important people entered his life, Alastair Robertson- Aikman and after reading John Gale's article in the "Observer" about him, Peter Handford.



1962 was the year he bought his first stereo LP steam record recorded by said Peter Handford, called "The Triumph of an A4 Pacific "which was to be the start of his collection of railway recordings. You see, along with his love of model engineering my owner has always had a passion for good quality audio. So, when he heard of Alastair R-Aikman a fellow hi-fi enthusiast and owner of a Company

called "Scale Model Equipment Co Ltd" (SME) manufacturer of items for the Model Engineering trade who in 1960 decided to diversify into manufacturing a quality "tone arm" for record players, you couldn't stop him buying one.

As memory serves me my owner first seriously caught the Hi-Fi bug after reading one of Gilbert Briggs books on the subject – GB was the 'Billy Graham' of Hi-Fi in the 1950s - but I think the clincher came after he attended one or two of Gilbert's demonstration concerts around 1956/59 at the Royal Festival Hall and Colston Hall where Gilbert would subject the audience to the 'blind test', "was it real or was it recorded"?

From then on, my owners' enthusiasm knew no bounds. "Hi-fi News" and "The Gramophone" magazine were purchased, read and started to become stable mates to the existing copies of Model Engineer on our bookshelves.

Yes, we have had it all in this study, from speakers in simple wooden boxes to sand filled and brick enclosures in the corners of the room, from *things* on spikes pushing through the carpet to gold plated mains plugs. Speakers have come, been tried, and gone. Not for him the outrageous invention of the audio cassette, or even the new-fangled Compact Disc.

No not even the transistor has made an appearance in this room. The Thermionic valve amp *rules* here; For my younger readers, valves came before transistors and are an *old school* electronic component in a little glass tube with bits of metal inside that glow and get hot when electricity is pushed through them. If they were still used today, it would mean a mobile phone would be the size of a 3.5inch gauge boiler and just as hot.

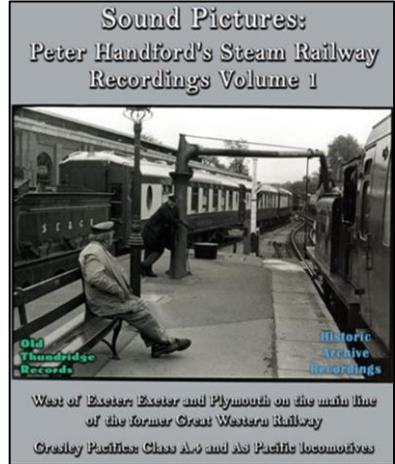
For him nothing compares with his Radford pre-amp, STA 15 valve amp and his Garrard 301 Transcription record deck fitted with its SME 3009(series 2) tone-arm, for as he says, they are all "crafted perfection".

As a consequence, this room has played host to many fine musicians over the last sixty years, among them The Ted Heath Big Band, Cleo Laine, Bert Kaempfert, not forgetting Ronnie Aldrich and his two pianos and lord knows who else. But after discovering 'Transacord' records with Peter Handford controlling the glow inside the valves and someone of the calibre of Bill Hoole at the regulator, my owner and his friends have been able to indulge in the aural pleasures of being transported all over the country by steam train - sometimes at life-like volumes of sound when Mrs Owner is out.

For my owner never happier than when enjoying a bit of Britain's industrial past, Peter Handford's railway recordings are as good as being there – you could call them the '*immersive stereo*' experience of the 1950s/60s – and all without leaving the fireside.

Take the other day for example;

We left Kings cross after breakfast stopping at Grantham (for coffee and a Rich tea biscuit- his favourite). Then onto Doncaster where for some inexplicable reason Frank Ifield played a brief visit. I must have dozed off then, for when I came to, we were on the Waverly route heading on through and across the north. After a stop for a bit lunch (accompanied by Val Doonican) we trundled off via Blea Moor and Shap, then the next I knew we were fussing around Euston station whilst afternoon tea was being taken. Fortified by tea and the last of the Christmas cake next, we rushed down the GWR from Paddington bound for Bath to visit Evercreech Junction on the Somerset and Dorset (in mono) where we spent a pleasant two sides. Acker Bilk entertained us while the pipe was re-filled with St Bruno and lit, then off back on the Southern behind a Bullied Pacific and home.



*West of Exeter Exeter and Plymouth on the main line of the former Great Western Railway
Cradley Pacific Class 44 and 45 Pacific locomotives*

Do you know some of these journeys have taken the best part of 6 albums, 2 EPs and a single to get there and back? Sometimes as a VERY special treat he may entertain a friend to the rarest of all his Transacord record collection, a record of the Reverend W Awdry himself reading his story of "EDWARD'S DAY OUT and EDWARD AND GORDON" made in 1957 (produced for Chiltern Records Ltd).

Being nearly sixty years old now I have often thought all this old gear should be in a museum, but it does keep him happy and us warm when he uses it. Then over Christmas we had his 15-year-old great nephew staying with us who would you believe it, told him that his "vinyl player is the height of cool". Well! I nearly choked half way through conjugating my verbs. Think of that, here we all are in 2022 and my owner is now the latest thing in 'Cool'! He stopped being a *dedicated follower of fashion* 60 years ago. and now *he's* back.... Next thing he'll be telling him his collection of Tom Jones LPs are fashionable....

The secret of long life

An elderly but hardy cattleman from Texas once told a young female neighbour that if she wanted to live a long life, the secret was to sprinkle a pinch of gunpowder on her oatmeal each morning.

She did this religiously and lived to the ripe old age of 103. She left behind 14 children, 30 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, five great-great-grandchildren and a 40-foot hole where the crematorium used to be.

G.L.R. News February 2022



Tyttenhanger Light Railway

First month gone I wonder where?

I am starting to write this newsletter at 4:39pm on Sunday January 16th the almost full moon is just climbing over the horizon to the east of my location so please excuse the hairy handwriting I shall be alright when the sun comes up tomorrow.

Yesterday we had an impromptu get together at the track and I promised to steam Maid Marion as part of the fun (as if I needed an excuse). Getting up at six thirty for an early start breakfast and out, I was surprised to see that the weathermen had got it right this morning. On leaving the house I was greeted by thick FOG really! I thought will the others bother? Gingerly after scraping the ice from windscreen and loading up the van the day was now getting lighter. The journey to the track was uneventful and by now the fog was beginning to lift. I unlocked the shed and pushed Maid Marian out into the cold light of day onto the turntable thinking I must be bonkers. It was then I heard the familiar clunk of the front gate my partner in crime Brian Baker had also made a special effort to get there early to help. I really can't thank you enough. As the morning progressed more helpers and players came along, the mood along with the fog lifted. It takes a good hour to get steam up from cold in MM once the tubes and ash pan have been cleaned, engine oiled, tender connected water and coaled up we were ready to go by 11am. After inspecting the track Brian took the first run. Then gently backing the lively lady into Orchard Junction station to await our first passengers. We didn't have long to wait as friends and family had now begun to arrive. The sun was even trying to poke through the gloom.

Atmospherically speaking it was a smashing day to drive a steam loco and judging by the screams of the children when going through the tunnel as I opened the bypass valve concealed on MM which



rapidly filled the tunnel with steam. A good time was had by all. Later on, I thought I would do a stint of being guard myself when my youngest son Ben wanted to drive (nice to see him rekindle his interest in steam). On entering the tunnel, he also opened the valve and to my surprise it all went pitch black! I now know what the kids were screaming at. Well worth the extra Pipework to give so much fun. We even had action on the five-inch ground level with Michael and his two most well-behaved children Elizabeth and David with their battery driven loco we hope to see you more often. (See picture page 40 Ed.)

As you can see in the picture below at the first session of 2022, we did not have a New Year party and no liquid alcohol was consumed it was all in the cake! Thanks Marian we couldn't have done it without you.



The ground level group have been very active during the last fifteen years and are now finally beginning to enjoy and reap the harvest of all their hard work. We really do have an excellent track at Colney Heath and I am so glad we as a group will have time to use and enjoy it hopefully for many years to come.

The crew are currently engaged in making some holding compounds around the track to store ballast for future track maintenance. Two have been completed and the third is to be erected at the bend just before the new land. Nigel suggested it be placed there to help stop the rabbits gaining access to our site. Shall I tell him, or will you? I'm sure this will work Nigel but I have recently seen a group of rabbits carrying a kango hammer across the site maybe they have got wind of our plans Ha-Ha.

In the workshop.

By Peter

It has been a bit cold of late so I have spent some time in the workshop (my time M/C) and have refurbished Dad's old Myford lathe. I have known this machine since I was seven. It was installed in my bedroom that also doubled as a workshop for dad "lucky old me." I do not recall my dad ever working on it but it certainly kindled my interest in engineering at an early age.



This Myford is a very early pre 1947 model ML1/2, with a centre height of 3 1/8 inches and a 19-inch-long bed. It has a purpose made heavy duty stand and chip tray with drum reverser. With a 1947 purchase price of £6-7-0 (old money) (stand and tray extra) supplied by Buck and Hickman of Euston Road. At the time pretty good value. I have now passed this on to my youngest grandson in the hope of him following in his granddad's footsteps (God forbid). His dad also seemed very interested as they are both into building and wrecking model R.C. battery cars. I wish them well.

A fond farewell is bid to David and Jeanette as they move to warmer climes. Thanks for all your endeavours in the construction of the Tyttenhanger Railway over the years We hope you have many sunny days to come sitting on the station benches at Swanage Railway Station.

Foot note; Spring is just round the corner. The first two daffs are out in the narrows!!!

Bill Thrale

By Mike

The following enquiry was submitted via the North London SME website:

"I believe my grandfather William (Bill) Thrale, who lived in St Albans, was a member of your society many years ago. His great grandson, my son, now 27, is very interested in steam and for Christmas we bought him a 'day' at a local miniature steam railway here in Dorset learning how to look after and drive the trains. He's very much looking forward to the event.

"Do you by any chance have any photographs of my grandfather's garden railway or any of his locomotives? I recall my father telling me that William's engines were bequeathed to the society but may have that wrong.

"Any information would be gratefully received and I look forward to hearing from you."

Sally Mitchell (nee Thrale)

Mike replies.....

Near neighbours of Bill Thrale and his wife, we used to live next-door-but-one in Cunningham Avenue, St Albans and, with similar interests, got to know one another quite well. Our younger daughter Barbara used to look after their cat whenever they were away.

Cunningham Avenue properties had large gardens. Those on the 'odd' side were on fairly level ground while those on the 'even' side were larger but mostly fell away quite steeply from the house. Bill lived at No.31 with a level garden making construction of a raised 3½in. gauge track a practical proposition. The track was supported on cast concrete piers and the track itself consisted of brass rail secured to wooden sleepers. An extended oval in shape, it stretched across the width of the garden and for much of its length. I regret never having had the opportunity to ride or drive a locomotive on it but know family members enjoyed rides and fellow club members drove on it.

I'm aware of two locomotives built by Bill: *Heilan Lassie* and *Petrolea*, both designed by LBSC and published as constructional series in *Model Engineer* magazine. As to their whereabouts or current owners, I regret I cannot help and, although I am certain to have photographs of Bill and *Heilan Lassie* among my vast collection, finding them will be a significant challenge - but I shall look!

At this point, I should note that Bill and I both enjoyed active membership of St Albans DMES. It was to the St Albans society that Bill bequeathed his *Lassie* as fleetingly confirmed in the following brief extract from an article about the Comrie Railroad by Bernard Lambert published in the North London *News Sheet* for December 2021:

"I was asked if I could write an article about the ex-St. Albans loco. William Thrale. On thinking a little about the subject, I soon started to think about Colin Sears who ran William Thrale with me and I decided to change the subject – William Thrale can wait for another article another day!

"Colin was a good friend of mine and was also a great contributor to the St. Albans Society and, later, to the North London Society."

It is regrettable that Bernard Lambert never got around to writing about the locomotive which members of the St Albans society re-named in honour of the man who had been such a support throughout his membership.

My early memories of St Albans society meetings were of them being held in a surprisingly large area at the back of Norman Thrale's Cafe in French Row, St Albans. Interesting talks were often given by model engineering personalities and it was at one such meeting that I first met Martin Evans, the previous editor of *Model Engineer* magazine.

In those distant days, the society had no permanent track so members with locomotives were happy to support a small group which took a portable track to events to entertain visitors and earn useful funds. Bill was responsible for the design of this very substantial portable track which weighed a ton! It was constructed in Bill's own workshop, featured 'micrometer' screw collar adjustment of the vertical supports and was set up on site using a theodolite! Bill's *Heilan Lassie* was definitely an important part of the activity.

It was Bill who I'm fairly sure was already a member of North London SME at the time, who suggested a visit to the North London track in Colney Heath where the facilities, even only recently having moved there in 1962, were impressive and led to my joining the society of which I have been a member ever since.

Track maintenance has always been a feature of running miniature railways and involves considerable effort. I recall Bill as an active contributor on working days when the first incarnation of the track was being extended in the '70s. Constructed using full size railway sleepers topped with a cement screed to provide the necessary levels, Bill was usually to be found, float in hand, putting the finishing touch to the top surface almost as if he was icing a wedding cake!

Another memorable feature of Sunday morning working parties at Colney Heath were the trays of refreshments Bill provided for the troops. We believe he ensured surplus pastries and savouries were left over in his shops at the end of Saturday afternoons which he brought to the track and were much enjoyed by the workers.

It should also be recorded that in those days, the family owned the Waterend Barn in St. Albans which was a much-appreciated venue for many social events and even a few society exhibitions.

In view of Bill's important and long-standing association with the St Albans Society, I have forwarded these notes to Roy Verden, Honorary Secretary of that society. It may be that this will lead to further recollections.

Sally Mitchell (tel:07759597345, email: sally@pmd-design.co.uk) would be pleased to have any memories of her grandfather that other North London and/or St Albans members may recall.

eBay – A warning to all

Never buy a train set on eBay late at night or after you've had a few too many drinks. And most importantly always check the cost of delivery before purchase.



G1 Section News.

Our track has been available so members have been meeting every week. So far, the most attendees have been about 50% of the Gauge 1 group. It is good to meet up but it is obvious that some of our members are still being cautious. The risk does not appear to be that great as being outside and moving about seems to work very well. Obviously, sometimes the weather conditions are not inviting, but having our own open space is good.

We would love to meet some of those faces that we have not seen for a few months.

We have to report that Eric and Howard have been in hospital while Norman is due to have further treatment. We wish them all the best.

We were able to receive a visit from a local Gauge 1 member over Christmas, hopefully he will join the Society sometime in the future. He brought along his first build loco, a Barrett Steam Models kit, which performed very well. Being in employment and with a new baby we are not sure when he will return.

This time of year, is meant to be time spent in the workshop but I have not seen much in the way of new models other than the production from our two members with 3D printers.

A brief update from Michael on the MEA 45 tonne ore wagons he is building/designing to run with his class 33 Locomotive; -

I was recently asked that being a young member whether or not Gauge 1 was expensive and my simple answer is sometimes.

Certain aspects of the hobby can be expensive, however some of these need not be. With the recent advancements in technology, it can become a hobby for all to enjoy as I shall explain.

7 weeks ago, I ordered a Bowater's Models Gauge 1 Class 33 diesel locomotive kit, which includes the body, the bogies from Fosworks and some 3D printed fittings which all cost less than £400. I looked around for some rolling stock for the 33 and found that a good rake of vehicles would cost 3 or 4 times the amount of the loco!

I made the decision to design and make my own rolling stock, specifically a MEA 45 tonne mineral wagon which are still being used around the railway network today.

Some may think that 3D printers are expensive however a relatively good quality 3D printer can cost less than £200 and a resin printer less than £350 including the ultrasonic bath and curing station. The filament/resin needed is only getting

cheaper with a 1kg spool of filament costing on average of £16 which will be enough to print 8 wagon bodies. Photopolymer resin costing an average of £30 a litre is enough to produce approximately 200 axle boxes. This means once you have the equipment set up each wagon excluding wheels can be produced at home for about £2.15 of filament or photopolymer resin.

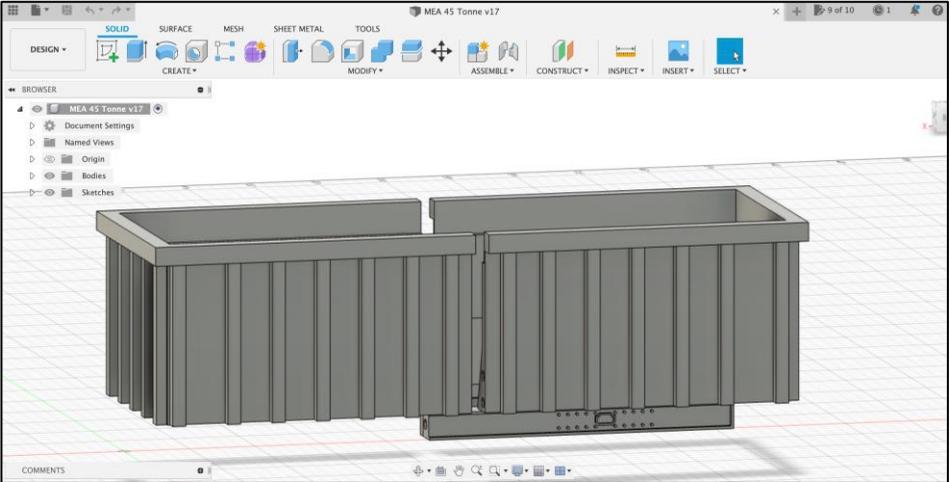


Photo 1; the body in 2 halves which has been designed to just slot together with the use of 4 x 4mm dowels.

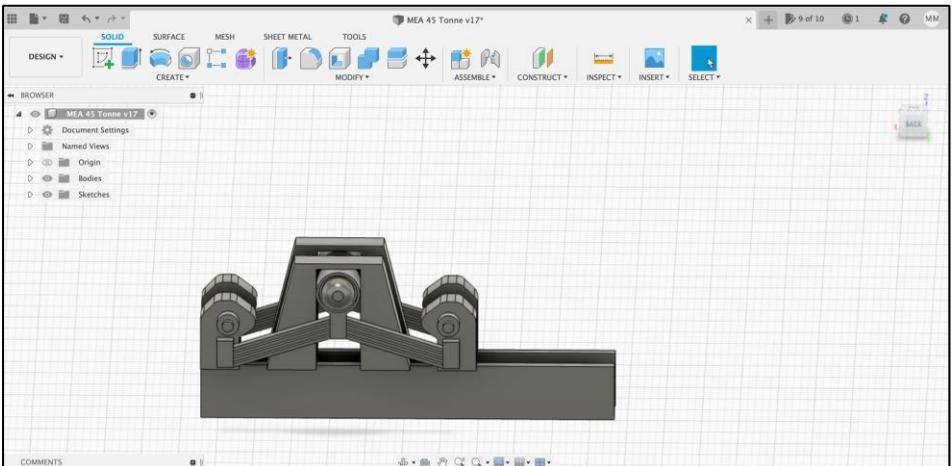


Photo 2; the axle boxes which are a simple but effective design.



Photo 3; two 3D printers on which the wagon bodies will be made.



Photo 4; my most recent investment. A resin 3D printer along with an ultrasonic bath for cleaning excess resin and a curing station for setting the resin hard. This will be mostly for the axle boxes so detail is not compromised.



Narrow Gauge Garden Railway

New year greetings to all you narrow gauge enthusiasts and welcome to the first newsletter of 2022.... Let's hope this year we can move on and enjoy club life again, with no restrictions and also be able to welcome the public back. I know they can't wait to enjoy our wonderful site and experience the joy of travelling behind one of our trains again!

This is the time of year when the focus is on the maintenance of existing infrastructure, ground work or indeed of creating new facilities at Colney Heath, like the fabulous new loo, instead of just playing trains etc. And the narrow-gauge layout is no exception to the need of some care and attention.

Some of the battens forming the track base need replacing and I shall be embarking on that soon using pre-treated timber plus a coat of preservative. To be fair they have been subjected to everything that mother nature has thrown at them for over 20 years now. So, to replace a couple of battens is pretty good going and a testament to the original design and the skill of the constructors.

The brick bridge over the track giving access needs attention too as regards to the wood posts and handrail rotting away, work will start soon on replacements. And while I'm about it some of the treads on the wood bridge inside the layout need replacing too!

But it's not been all work and no play, recently Michael ran his newly acquired steam rail car, in his own words here is the report of its debut run....

With the footfall lower over the winter months management of the Tyttenhanger Light Railway decided to invest in a Railcar. Based on availability the choice was made and a Railbus made by Locomotion was purchased.

Some work was required which was executed locally at the Works of John Shawe. The Railbus with a vertical boiler and oscillating cylinders went into service on 4th of December last year. The local



bystanders were surprised to find such a little coach instead of the regular train. But with the comfort of automated steam heating inside the coach the paying public welcomed this addition to the line.

A great report Michael, and more to add to the history of the Tyttenhanger Light Railway...whenever you want to contribute to narrow gauge news be my guest!

Take care everyone, and when the next newsletter hits your doormat hopefully spring should very much be in the air....and playing trains, sailing boats etc again will be very much the order of the day...hooray!



And finally, here is Michael's son David driving the family loco "Imposter" on the ground level recently, a contrast to Peter's "Maid Marian" I think! The very definition of "Little and Large"!



Sundial and Model Engineering Part 1

By Julian

Firstly, thank you for allowing me to join your Society. Sadly, at the present time other calls on my time reduces my regular attendance at meetings or the track.

I will start with a bit of history. 30+ years ago I used to live in East London and joined the Chingford M.E. Society spending most of my time there doing platform duties for public running. I did join the M.E. evening classes in Hackney (now closed down) taking my Mini Traction engine on the back of my motor cycle to attend classes there. Working in the area, I would go there straight from work which was ideal. I built my first boiler using the Natural gas/air forge. The inner fire box stays were done for me by an experienced welder using Oxy/Acetylene.)



Because I had blue Asbestos raining down on me and working with very poisonous gases, I decided to change jobs and moved to a new work location. It became just too difficult to get to Hackney so my part-built traction engine was confined to the loft and it did not see light of day for 25+ years. (Eventually it was sold on eBay, as not having a workshop at that time it could not be finished). Back then I was studying part time as well as working and free time was at a premium. One day I was in the college library and to my surprise found a book on “Sundial Construction and Theory by Rene Rhor” which had never been taken out of the library. (And I doubt ever since). To cut a long story short I became interested in sundials and over the years have made a few. At this time, I did not have a workshop and also had a limited number of hand tools.



My first project was a “Capuchin Dial “made on a bit of scrap aluminium plate rescued from a cover of a piece of dead equipment. I spent a Christmas with a ruler and a scribe scratching each hour line into the plate. Numbers were created by using number punches. It was pretty crude, but I had to work with what few tools I had. I am not sure where the original dial is now, but here **(Picture 1)** is a

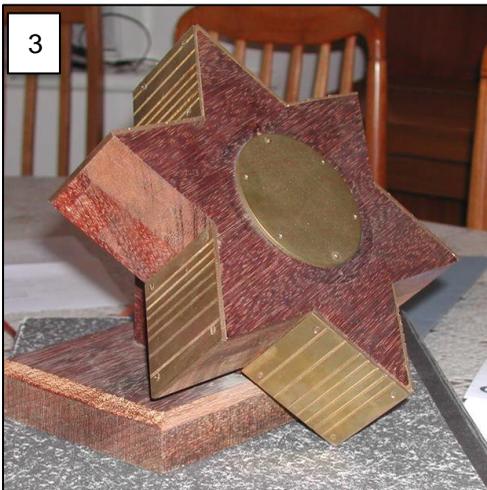
picture of another I made a few years ago This you may have seen it on the back of a stand at Alexander Palace ME show.

Over a period of time, I started to collect bits of scrap material knowing that they would be useful in the future. I was now able to grab short periods of time doing a limited number of “private jobs” in our main workshop. I had a bit of brass plate which I mounted on a rotary table on the Bridgeport Mill. Thus, I was able to mill out hour lines on the plate. A Taylor Hobson engraving machine (later scrapped!) was used to engrave the dial with a motto. This dial was mounted on a piece of old Teak bench top and this is now mounted up on the front of my house. **(Picture 2)**

To cut a long story short S.W.M.B.O. weakened and I was finally allowed to acquire some machinery and convert our garage into a small workshop.



I was reading through a book on sundial design and came across ones you can have on your grave. This can either be in the form of a simple Christian Cross or a Star of David. I decided to make a small example of the Star of David using some recycled hard wood and brass offcuts. (I may make a larger one to go on my grave). **(Picture 3)**



As the sun goes from east to west the various point of the star cast shadows on the brass plates. As the plates are quite small, I have not yet put any hour numbers on them. The central round disc was supposed to have my details engraved on it, but without the date of my death! An engineer friend of mine who worked in a particular high-tech industry volunteered to get one of his chaps

to CNC engrave it for me. Unfortunately, he was promoted to Senior Management and could no long ask for “favours” from his former colleagues on the shop floor!

To Be continued next month

And finally

A Poem by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850 – 1894)

From a Railway Carriage

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
 Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches,
 And charging along like troops in a battle,
 All through the meadows, the horses and cattle:
 All of the sights of the hill and the plain
 Fly as thick as driving rain;
 And ever again, in the wink of an eye,
 Painted stations whistle by.

RLS C. 1885

Dates for your 2022 Diary

February	
Tue 1 st Feb	Council meeting 13.00 at HQ (See note below)
Every Sunday	Working Party 9.00 – 12.30 Colney Heath
Fri 4 th Feb	A fantastic journey to the Steam Festival from St Albans by miniature traction engine by Professor Timothy Watson.
Ground Level Rly Working party at Colney Heath every Thursday & Saturday	
March	
Every Sunday	Working Party 9.00 – 12.30 Colney Heath
Tue 1 st Mar	Council meeting 14.30 at HQ (See note below)
Fri 4 th Mar	Auction - Viewing from 7.00pm Auction starts at 7.30pm everyone Welcome
Ground Level Rly Working party at Colney Heath every Thursday & Saturday	

A Non-council member, representing a section or committee, can, on request to the Secretary, attend the council meetings as an observer or to submit proposals as set out in the club's constitution. If attendance is agreed then the secretary will advise the member concerned