

The Branchline



The newsletter of the Australian Model Railway Association Inc.
Western Australian Branch Inc.

www.amra-wa-branch.asn.au

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Frans' Fatidic

On Sunday 11 November our Branch held its annual ModelRail. Trevor Burke, ModelRail Coordinator, could not attend but left us detailed instructions. A reasonable crowd, not as good as last year, but considering all the other events that were on it was a good day for our Branch.

Thanks to the volunteers who took part in running the day. Special thanks must go to the Branch members who took part in the modelling competition. All the models looked beautifully made and people used their imagination to display the models in their best settings.

Congratulations to Eddie Garforth being the overall winner and the winners for their own scale – Craig Hartmann O scale, Eddie Garforth HO/OO and Peter Webb N scale – photographs and the Judging Coordinator's report are in separate articles in this issue. This exercise was worthwhile and your Committee will have a look at implementing some more rules for next year.

The *Dymock* layout on display at Harvey Norman Belmont is attracting a lot of attention. Thanks to Bob, Terry, Steve, and Craig for displaying the layout and making sure it is constantly running. We have received some very favourable comments.

BRMA convention was held in Perth this year and our clubrooms were used for the Convention and again I would like to thank Trevor Burke and the various members who ran the layouts during their visits to the clubrooms.

Now for some other matters –

We wish Graham Bell a speedy recovery after his stay in hospital.

We've also been informed that Brendan Jackson was admitted to RPH Emergency on Saturday 17 November and has had abdominal surgery. Brendan is expected to be in hospital for several days followed by four weeks convalescence. I'm sure that all members will join with Rosemary and I in wishing Brendan a speedy recovery – see Nonni Junior's update on page 5.

Due to the Lotteries Commission losing some of our paperwork the decision on our new storeroom

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has been delayed but thanks to Ron Fryer all the paperwork is now back in their hands and hopefully we will hear before Christmas.

Our Branch has a number of surplus items that will have to be found a new home as they are not needed by our Branch anymore. I will publish a list of items in the next issue of *The Branchline* so members can opt to acquire them, otherwise they will be disposed of. The items that we no longer require have played a big part over the years and it is time to upgrade/renew them.

Rosemary and I would like to wish all our members and their families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Frans Ponjee
Branch President

Seasonal greeting

Happy holidays from a socially conscious person

To One and All, From me (“the wishor”) to you (“the wishee”). Please accept without obligation, implied or implicit, our best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, politically correct, low stress, non-addictive, gender neutral, celebration of the summer solstice holiday, practised within the most enjoyable traditions of the religious persuasion of your choice, or secular practices of your choice, with respect for the religious/secular persuasions and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions at all.

I wish you a financially successful, personally fulfilling and medically uncomplicated recognition of the onset of the generally accepted calendar year 2013 but with due respect for the calendars of choice of other cultures or sects, and having regard to the race, creed, colour, age, physical ability, religious faith, choice of computer platform or sexual preference of the wishee.

By accepting this greeting you are bound by these terms that –

- This greeting is subject to further clarification or withdrawal.
- This greeting is freely transferable provided that no alteration shall be made to the original greeting and that the proprietary rights of the wishor are acknowledged.

- This greeting implies no promise by the wishor to actually implement any of the wishes.
- This greeting may not be enforceable in certain jurisdictions and/or the restrictions herein may not be binding upon certain wishees in certain jurisdictions and is revocable at the sole discretion of the wishor.
- This greeting is warranted to perform as reasonably may be expected within the usual application of good tidings, for a period of one year or until the issuance of a subsequent holiday greeting, whichever comes first.

The wishor warrants this greeting only for the limited replacement of this wish or issuance of a new wish at the sole discretion of the wishor.

Any references in this greeting to “the Lord”, “Father Christmas,” “Our Saviour”, “Rudolph the red nosed reindeer” or any other festive figures, whether actual or fictitious, dead or alive, shall not imply any endorsement by or from them in respect of this greeting and all proprietary rights in any referenced third party names and images are hereby acknowledged.

This greeting is made under laws of the Commonwealth of Australia and the United States of America, in the English language.

Merry Christmas to all and have a Happy New Year for 2013.

Editor’s Retirement

This will be the final issue under my Editorship. Starting with the February 2013 issue Dave Hunter will start wearing the Editorial hat and wielding the so-called editorial blue pencil.

Readers will recall that in the June issue under the title **211 for 4 – 102 not out** I wrote, “As the effects of increasing antiquity will more and more become evident, in the foreseeable future the time will come when I will have to retire and pass the Editorial blue pencil and cap over to Editor No. 5.

Who will be the next Editor?? That is the question for our Branch membership – who will step up to the crease, take guard and our Newsletter into the future??”

Dave Hunter answered the question and volunteered to become Editor No. 5.

Dave and I hope that the transition will be virtually seamless as I have provided Dave with a fairly comprehensive set of handover notes and will be available, should he find it necessary, to provide him with whatever advice and assistance he may need. I know you will give Dave the support and cooperation you have given me.

It has been an incredible journey, made possible by the cooperation of our Management Committee who have supported me, given me the freedom to experiment, allowed me to introduce photographs [which are in colour in the master copy but are grey scaled for printing].

I have been supported by the regular contributors who have never failed to provide articles for publication.

Our members also have given their support, not only with their comments and suggestions but by turning up on the assembly Saturday, folding, stapling and enveloping each issue and, where needed, doing the same with the enclosures.

Barry Keens has proof-read every issue for many years and, through the wonders of the cyber world, continues to do so. Barry will continue proof-reading for Dave.

As electronic communications have improved members have been able to receive their copy of *The Branchline* electronically on the weekend of publication – this saves our Branch the cost of envelopes and postage and means that they receive their copy several days earlier than those whose copy goes by snail mail.

Starting in 2003 the staff at Wyalkatchem Telecentre have printed each issue, their cooperation has made it possible to work to a two week production period.

It has been a great privilege to be entrusted with the production of *The Branchline*. Thank you everyone for giving me the opportunity. Thank you for your support, assistance and cooperation.

Ted

From the Editorial Desk

***The Branchline* – February 2013 issue deadline.** Routine editorial material, articles, reports, programme items, etc., to me no later than 1500 Saturday 26 January.

However, if your material is ready earlier please let me have it early; it helps spread the work load, particularly if your article is handwritten or typed hard copy requiring retyping.

Note new Editor's contact details are Dave Hunter email monarodoorslammer@gmail.com

Collation, etc., will be on Saturday 9 February and will include pre-exhibition material

Please note the intended dates for *The Branchline* publication – :

| | Editorial deadline | Assembly, etc. |
|----------|---|---|
| April | Saturday 23 March | Saturday 6 April – includes pre-exhibition material |
| June | Saturday 25 May – for routine material Sat 8 June – for exhibition reports | Saturday 22 June – will include exhibition reports and AGM material |
| August | Saturday 27 July | Saturday 10 August |
| October | Saturday 21 September | Saturday 5 October – will include AGM Minutes |
| December | Saturday 16 November | Saturday 30 November |

Dave Hunter

ModelRail Report

On Sunday 11 November AMRA's WA Branch presented ModelRail 2012, our Branch's open day. This provided a great opportunity for us to promote our hobby to the public while catching up with fellow modellers and sharing our modelling and experiences.

I would like to thank all of the layout coordinators and their team members who worked hard to

ensure that the layouts were working with interesting trains running throughout the day. A special thanks to those involved with our layouts under construction who worked particularly hard to reassemble the layouts and have them operational in time for ModelRail.

ModelRail could not have been a success without the assistance of the many members who volunteered their time and skills for the day. Thank you to our expert modelling demonstrators and members who volunteered to staff the door and the refreshment stand. Many thanks to the members who spent considerable time cleaning and preparing our clubrooms beforehand and putting everything back in its proper place following ModelRail.

Congratulations to those who entered the Modelling Competition. Eddie Garforth was the overall winner. Winners in the three categories were Craig Hartmann O scale, Eddie Garforth HO/OO and Peter Webb N scale.

I hope that all members who attended enjoyed the day. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any suggestions to make ModelRail an even greater event next year. Once again thank you to all for supporting ModelRail 2012.

Trevor Burke, ModelRail Coordinator

Brendan Jackson's Hospital Stay Update

Brendan was released from hospital Wednesday 21 November and went home for some much needed TLC. Half his staples were taken out the following Monday, the other half a few days later. He is recovering rapidly but still has to take it easy – no sport or heavy lifting and definitely no school – funny, no complaint about that one.

Brendan says that he now fully understands the SAS motto: “Accept your situation and deal with it.” He certainly did that and astounded us with the courage he showed throughout his ordeal. He is now on the mend and will hopefully appear at the Clubrooms soon. Biggest enemy from now on will be boredom.

Thanks to all for their best wishes and card.

Around the Layouts

Haltwhistle. The layout ran very well during the ModelRail open day due to the junior members of our Branch who ran trains as they should be run, not too fast for passenger trains and slow for goods trains.

At the Tuesday meeting the layout was given the chance to try out the two new Blue Midland Pullman sets which Dave Edgell and Alan Porter had delivered on the Monday. There were three Blue Pullmans on the layout two six-car Midland sets and one eight-car Western Region set – it was very impressive to see.

Tom Stokes
Layout Supervisor

WesterN-Ridge. Physical progress on the N Scale *WesterN-Ridge* layout was put on hold so that the layout could be operated for ModelRail. The layout displayed reasonably well during ModelRail and its looks were enhanced by the many private trucks, cars, containers, cranes and other paraphernalia provided by Craig Napier, Peter Webb and Terry Emmerson, amongst others. Trains ran around the main lines and on some of the branch lines during the day.

Prior to ModelRail the 'gang of three' was involved in planning some alterations to the layout to enhance its value as an exhibition layout. The major change will be to allow main line access to the yard area from both directions, so that more trains can be run on the layout. There will also be some realignments to the main line tracks to establish some additional loops, again aiming to achieve an increase in the number of trains running at one time on the layout. A rough plan has been put together and as many members of the N Scale SIG as possible have been approached to 'sign off' on the proposed changes. The layout will be out of action for some time to allow these changes to be implemented, after Management Committee approval. All that then needs to occur is for members of the SIG to pitch in and get the work done so that *WesterN-Ridge* can meet its potential as an N scale operational layout.

Neill Phillips

The Valentine Run and her crew performed well at ModelRail. She teased us initially with three previously unseen electrical problems which, although not interfering with mainline running, kept our sparky busy for a while. In the morning we ran DC Australian outline, followed by Craig's DCC On3 mining and logging locos and, later in the afternoon, the DCC US trains took over. Our thanks to Alex, John, James, Alan Higgs, Tim, Garry and Craig for putting on a great show for the public.

There is much still to be done on the layout, including adding scenery to the loco service area, a modification of the yards at Kingman, constructing and installing signals and to develop timetable and/or sequential running schemes. Also, a policy for displaying the layout, addressing train running, length of trains, frocking and crew tasking needs to be developed. Rob Phelps related some thoughts on maintaining the public's interest which are worthy of further consideration by all layout coordinators and crews. I believe some of our weekend practices provide a lesser presentation than could be achieved.

One proposal for the layout is the addition of an NCE RB02 – a receiver for wireless handpieces. This facility is NCE specific [ie. can only be accessed by an NCE radio handpieces ProCabR, Cab04ER, Cab 04PR and CAB 5ER] and operates while plug-in handpieces are being used. The radio throttles are well used by other clubs.

The Committee would like to ascertain how many members have an NCE wireless handpiece and would wish to use it if this facility were available. Any members who would wish to use their wireless throttle at the clubrooms please advise either a Committee member or Alan B.

Craig Hartmann
Alan Burrough
Layout Coordinators

Literary Lines

New library acquisitions. Many thanks to the following for donations to the library – Dave Carter, Peter Cox, Fred Gladwin, Arthur Giles and Harry Howell.

Just a reminder that the library has a comprehensive collection of DVDs and VHS tapes, all available to members.

The library is open on Saturday afternoons from 1400 to 1630 for the receiving and issuing of books, magazines and videos. But come in and browse at any time.

Des
Branch Librarian

The Black Horse Hotel

During ModelRail John Muller displayed his Black Horse Hotel diorama. The diorama was part of the Modelling Competition and had to be seen to appreciate the detailed modelling involved and the automated tram which trundled across the diorama, stopping briefly in front of the Hotel. The next two paragraphs are John's scene setting description.

We can imagine that once long ago it was the coaching inn on High Street. Now beautifully restored and heritage listed it is a well-known pub renowned for its fine ales. Its three-storey building was one of the tallest in the street. Now the city has grown around it, surrounding it by the high-rise edifices of the modern age.

Look closely inside if you want to see the people in the pub on the right or playing pool in the room on the left.

A bus-load of tourists has arrived, perhaps for a pub lunch with one of the fine ales the Black Horse is famous for and, perhaps, for a tram ride after lunch down the old High Street.



Where have all the builders gone?

Geoff Baxter of Hollywood Foundry located in Garfield, Victoria posed a question on the Victorian Railways forum <http://www.victorianrailways.net/forum/> under VR modelling “Where have all the builders gone?”

There are genuine concerns in our cottage industries which have supported this hobby for so long when ready-to-run was not available.

Geoff's main business is in making mechanisms for 16.5mm gauge and 12mm gauge plus wheel pick-ups for rolling stock to enable to enable lighting to be put into carriages. Geoff points out these are labour intensive to make, which naturally reflects on the price.

Geoff says. “I have recently set up a forum to discuss modelling techniques, such as etching, 3D modelling, casting etc. The forum is at <http://www.hollywoodfoundry.com/phpbb/> The idea is to help people with their modelling but no-one seems interested, no-one seems to be building.”

I would hope that AMRA can support Geoff with his modelling technique forum and also provide support to all those little industries who have been providing support and filling the gaps for so many past years. For many of them it has become their livelihood.

Around the SIGs

British Railway Modellers Special Interest Group's September meeting was a Bring, Run and Tell night – but first –

New Acquisitions –

Alan Porter – showed his new Hornby Railroad model of a Class 9F 2–10–0 in black No. 92221, complete with a double chimney. He was like a kid with a new toy and he has the right to be as the model is excellent and the price comparatively cheap. I'm pretty sure that he got it from Hattons.

Doing Things –

Alan Porter – has spent time lately going around his layout repairing minor breakages, hopefully that it will be ready for the forthcoming BRMA Convention layout visits.

Steve Rayner – has been painting some Aussie locos and also making his ModelRail kit.

Ron Fryer – has spent most of his spare time building his ModelRail kit.

Now to the trains – first of all was OO on *Haltwhistle*.

Alan Porter – ran a bulk cement train with 26 Bachmann cement wagons and a Brake Van and after a couple of circuits changing the locomotive using the four various models of the Class 9F that he has in order to see just how each compares to the other. The locomotives were as follows along with their capability.

1. Hornby Railroad No. 92221 loco driven double chimney – **OK**
2. Hornby No. 92156 tender driven, single chimney – **FAILED!!**
3. Hornby No. 92134 tender driven, [weathered] – **OK**
4. Bachmann No. 92116 loco driven, single chimney – **OK**

He was basically testing the locomotives ability to pull the train up the Haltwhistle Incline at a slow speed.

Ron Fryer – his theme for the night was a BR[WR] Railcar theme. His trains were –

1. An Airfix 0–4–2T Class 14xx [with a Dapol Chassis] sandwiched between two auto-coaches – one in maroon and one in blood and custard.
2. Consisted of two Lima AEC Railcars [ex–GWR] one in blood and custard and one in green.
3. A BR 2-car DMU in green. A Class 118 ???
4. A BR Class 121 Bubble railcar that was specially painted to celebrate the GWR 175.

Nick Pusenjak – ran a Bachmann Derby lightweight 2–car DMU in green.

We then moved to the N scale layout for –

Steve Rayner – who ran a fitted freight with a Bachmann [Graham Farish] Class 4MT 2–6–0 [tender drive] No. 76069 pulling 18 assorted wagons plus a Brake Van. His second train was a Bachmann Standard Class 3MT 2–6–2T pulling five Mk1 suburban non–corridor maroon coaches.

Thanks to all those who supplied the trains for the evening.

Great Western Railway Modellers Special Interest Group's September meeting was a Bring, Run and Tell night. It should be an early finish as we are about 50% down due to holidays and sickness – but first for those who did turn up

–
New Acquisitions –

Ron Fryer – showed a book called *A Brief History of the Age of Steam* by Thomas Crump, published by Robinson. He bought it at a Whitford City Shopping Centre Book Sale for \$5.

Doing Things –

Ron Fryer – is building his Metcalfe kit for the ModelRail Competition.

John Brechley – is also building his Metcalfe entry for the Competition. He is also assembling two nickel silver chassis kits for the Dapol Class 45xx locomotives, as usual they are up to John's very high standards.

Steve Rayner – Surprise! Surprise! Steve is also putting together the Metcalfe kit for ModelRail.

It was now time to run our trains, first off the rank was –

John Brechley – who brought his own portable layout with him. He put the Dapol Class 45xx body onto the new nickel silver chassis that he had built, complete with a new, smaller motor and added an assorted 14 wagons [3 cattle, 5 box vans, 4 open wagons, 1 Lowfit and a brake van] and it pulled them nice and slowly round and round his layout.

Ron Fryer – had a Collett theme for his trains. His first train was a rake of six Collett coaches [2 brakes and four thirds] preceded by a Siphon H and pulled by a Hornby 4–4–0 County Class locomotive and a Bachmann 2–6–0 Class 43xx Mogul. The 4–4–0 was the Express passenger locomotive until the 1920s when it was superceded by the new 2–6–0s built and designed by Churchward but which were continued to be built by Collett. His second train was a Mainline

Collett built Class 2251 0-6-0 tender locomotive which replaced the faithful but now ageing Dean's Goods loco pulling fourteen assorted wagons and a GWR Toad Brake Van.

From *Haltwhistle* we moved to the N scale layout of *Dymock* where –

Steve Rayner – showed to us two trains. The first one was an Ixion 4-6-0 Manor Class locomotive pulling four Dapol Collett coaches [2 brakes and 2 composites]. His second train was a Dapol Class 45xx 2-6-2 Prairie locomotive pulling ten cattle wagons and a GWR Toad brake van. [*Proof-reader's note – There are interesting articles on Ixion via Google for myth and railways*].

[Note – The early night that was anticipated did not eventuate as we adjourned to the meeting room and, over a cuppa, yakked on! Ah well the thought was there!]

S Scale Special Interest Group's October and November meetings were well attended by 30 and 33 members respectively. The meetings provided a chance to see the latest projects that members are working on as well as the opportunity for an exchange of ideas and views.

The formal part of both meetings began at 2030 under the chairmanship of Graham Watson. Graham reported that Railfest had been well supported by both the members of the ARHS and the public. ModelRail was also a success as many members and visitors enjoyed the opportunity to see all the AMRA WA Branch layouts running, as well as demonstrations by a number of railway modellers. A modelling workshop for S Scalers was to be held on Sunday 18 November at our Branch clubrooms from 1000 to 1500.

The S Scale Group hopes to have layouts of *Watheroo* and *Karagullen* at the 2013 Model Railway Exhibition as well as a modelling stand and United Modellers stand, as in previous years.

Graham reported that Steve Wright's Colungetty business had been sold and that he hoped that the usual brass and white metal castings would be available in the future, albeit possibly at increased prices. Graham also spoke of Models and More which provides a service in laser cut kits. They can be reached on the Web via sales@modelsandmore.com.au.

A call was made for topic suggestions for the 2013 S Scale SIG program which is in the preparation stage. All suggestions should be emailed to Stuart Mackay by Christmas if possible. However, sufficient flexibility exists to allow for a change in the 2013 programme during the year if necessary.

John Hatch reported on his recent European trip which included Hamburg, Paris and a stopover in Singapore where he witnessed driverless trains on the Metro system. He also mentioned the \$20 three day Metro pass for Singapore which he said was extremely good value.

Ray Cooper has been scratch-building a building a week for his Yarloop layout. A recent visit to the layout was enjoyed by several members of the S Scale Group who reported that the extensive layout was progressing very well.

Kelvin Davis reported on the W irons he bought from Bill Bedford which are listed on Bill's website.

Murray Rowe showed his AY26 and AY455 coaches which he has recently assembled from Westland models kits. Neil Blinco showed his AY454 which ran on the Australind.

The topic for the October meeting was the timber industry in WA. A large number of slides provided by Graham Watson from the Rail Heritage WA collection were shown with an emphasis on the line-side railway buildings of the timber lines.

Bill Gray showed the timber jinker he scratch-built using photos of the wagon at the Museum. Stuart Mackay showed three timber line locos he has in his collection including Jardee, Kate and Kia Ora.

At the November meeting Neil Blinco showed his completed Z9 guard's van kit, in particular the brass gates which can be used on all of the platform-ended coaches. They are available from Neil if required.

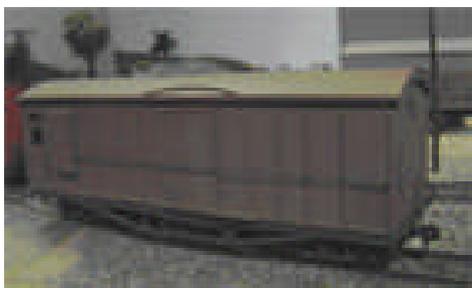
Bill Gray reported that the summer edition of the *ASnM* magazine was being drafted and would be sent out early in 2013. He proposes to have a gallery page of members' models but he has asked if members could provide a caption for their photo by return email when requested.

Gary Gray showed the MRWA NC flat wagon to which he had applied a load to overcome a problem of sagging which had occurred in the casting, soon after it had been assembled. The load is suitably weathered and really looks the part on Gary's wagon.

Greg Aitken showed two RA wagons he has recently scratch-built and a Z9 and AGS he built from kits. RA wagons were originally built in two batches in the USA and England and had distinctive Fox bogies. Richard Stallard has some drawings of the Fox bogies and is usually happy to make copies of them available to those who would like to scratch-build an RA. It may be possible to modify a Railwest R class wagon into an RA with the addition of brake wheels and fox bogies.

Graham Watson showed the much improved ACL coach kit which is being re-released by Railwest Models. The kit comes with seating and compartments which will add both detail and strength to the model. The model uses an aluminium roof in its construction. It will suit both WAGR and MRWA Modellers depending on its livery and classification.

Stuart Mackay showed the completed MRWA FA guard's van he built from his kit. The kit enables the construction of vans 62-68 with various modifications to the truss-rod. Stuart is making the kit available to all members at a modest price and hopes to see a few of them on the *Watheroo* layout at the 2013 Exhibition.



Model of MRWA FA 67 Guard's van showing the distinctive outside bracing and tongue-and-groove sides.

Joe Moir's fine photo of FA 67 in WAGR ownership



Following the general bring and show, members retired to the layout room to see some trains running on *Swan View*. The trains were provided by Bill Gray, Roger Jenkins, Graham Watson, Paul Tranter and Stuart Mackay. Of particular interest were the two M class Garret locomotives built by Roger Jenkins, scratch-built in brass sitting on heavily modified Mantua chassis. Also on show was Bill Gray's complete Australind set of coaches in the pre-1960 lettering and livery and which were exquisitely detailed.

The S Scale Special Interest Group is a very active group of AMRA modellers which meets on the second Monday of every month at 2000 in the AMRA WA Branch clubrooms in Moojebing St, Bayswater – visitors are always welcome. Contact Graham Watson on 08 9250 1084 or via email at grahamrwatson@hotmail.com or Stuart Mackay on 08 9310 3858 or mackays@iinet.net.au for general information about the S Scale Group. Bill Gray is the Editor of the *ASnM magazine* and is always grateful for contributory articles no matter how long or short. Bill can be contacted via email at: william_gray@optusnet.com.au

Contact persons for Special Interest Groups are:

| | | |
|--|-----------------|--------------|
| British Railways | Gordon Bramwell | 0432 871 197 |
| Digital Command Control | Tom Stokes | 9275 4508 |
| Great Western Railway Modellers | Roger Solly | 9444 7812 |
| Large Scale | Graham Bell | 9295 4461 |
| LNER | Steve Rayner | 9379 1147 |
| LMS Modellers | Alan Porter | 9330 1848 |
| N Scale | Neill Phillips | 9403 0924 |
| North American Railroads | Peter Scarfe | 9359 2281 |
| S Scale | Stuart Mackay | 9310 3858 |

From the Scribe's Quill

Meeting No 362 – September 2012. The major items of business dealt with at this meeting were –

- Dave Hunter has volunteered to become Editor of *The Branchline*. He will commence that duty in February 2013.
- The Committee accepted a report from the Librarian that recommends a way forward for library holdings, noting that the current space is very congested. The Committee will consider the report and make a decision in the coming months.
- The Committee agreed to a proposal for another daylight meeting, probably on a Thursday, should member demand warrant it.
- The Committee approved some works to *The Valentine Run* and *Port Eb* layouts that should improve the operations of both layouts.
- Frans Ponjee raised the future of the *Exeter St Davids* layout. Tom Stokes and Ron Fryer will make an assessment of that layout and make recommendation to the Committee.

Meeting No.. 363 – October 2012. The major items of business dealt with at this meeting were –

- Various aspects of the 2013 Exhibition were discussed. The matter that has potential to affect attendances was the RAS decision to charge for casual parking at the Showground.

- Arrangements for ModelRail were discussed, noting that the Coordinator will be absent overseas on the day. Other members of the Committee agreed to organise various matters for ModelRail.
- There has been no decision as yet by Lotterywest. Post-meeting Ron Fryer advised that the AMRA submission will go forward in November, recommended for approval by the relevant staff member. Advice of the decision should be available by mid-December.
- The Committee agreed that the Extension Manager, Ron Fryer, should be reimbursed travelling expenses over and above his usual trips to AMRA, while he monitors building progress of the extension.

The next few Management Committee meetings will be held on 20 December and 24 January 2013. Branch members are welcome to attend. Meetings usually start at 1930 and complete about 2200.

(Continued on page 16)

Monday Night Topics

Further to my request for Monday night topics I have listed some that will be discussed over the next twelve months or so. Please attend these meetings as the presenter has put a lot of effort in to make each topic both informative and beneficial. Without your attendance no one benefits.

Please refer to the programme for item and date of presentation. These are not in any particular order

- Track laying [both hand laid and Flexitrack]
- Point making
- Coach/rolling stock modification
- Danish State Railways
- Scenery – How to build and methods you can use
- Weathering – different techniques; for example airbrushing
- Sandstone Train event
- Locomotive Hauling – testing, measuring, etc

These are some topics that will be discussed, others will be added as presenters become available

If you have a topic you would like added to this list please let a Committee Member know and they will pass it on.

Craig Hartmann

Additional Playtime

Consideration is being given to having our Clubrooms open on another day during the week apart from Tuesday Daylighters Meeting, possibly a Thursday afternoon. If sufficient interest is shown then this is a possibility.

If you are interested please advise a Committee Member or email me lhar2223@bigpond.net.au

Craig Hartmann

Where we meet and when

All meetings are held in the Branch's Clubrooms at 24 Moojebing Street, BAYSWATER [opposite Paddington Street]. The Clubrooms are open as follows for programmed meetings:-

| | | |
|------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Evening meetings | - | Monday to Friday from 2000 to 2230 |
| Daytime meetings | - | Tuesday from 1000 to 1500 |
| | - | Saturday from 1330 to 1700 |

Members are invited to make a gold coin donation at each meeting to cover some of the general operating expenses of the Clubrooms and this entitles members to free hot drinks and a biscuit or two. Cool drinks are available at a modest price.

Programme

Note 1. The numbers in brackets alongside the day name indicate the housekeeping duty to be completed **before** the meeting activity starts.

Note 2. The meeting on the first Monday of each month will start at 2000 with a short briefing by one or more Management Committee Members on recent resolutions by the Management Committee plus planning for future events – community displays and exhibitions for example. This will be followed by the opportunity for Branch members to show recent model purchases and to notify other members of forthcoming railway/model railway events. The programmed Guest Speaker/Topic will start promptly at 2030.

Note 3. Information regarding contact persons, etc. for Special Interest Groups is given in the **Around the SIGs** article.

December

| | | | |
|-----------|----|-----|--|
| Saturday | 1 | [1] | The Branchline assembly General Activities |
| Monday | 3 | | Sandstone Train Event – a talk and video on this event |
| Tuesday | 4 | [2] | Daylighters Group – daytime meeting |
| Wednesday | 5 | [3] | LMS and LNER Special Interest Groups meeting – end of year Quiz/ Entertainment |
| Friday | 7 | [4] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting – General Activities |
| Saturday | 8 | [5] | General Activities |
| Monday | 10 | [6] | S Scale Special Interest Group meeting – Christmas meeting. Slides and cheer |
| Tuesday | 11 | [7] | Daylighters Group – daytime meeting Large Scale Special Interest Group meeting |
| Wednesday | 12 | [8] | Great Western Railway Modellers Special Interest Group – End of Year Quiz/ Entertainment and Cheer |

| | | | |
|-----------|----|-----|--|
| Friday | 14 | [1] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting – General Activities |
| Saturday | 15 | [2] | General Activities |
| Tuesday | 18 | [3] | Daylighters Group – daytime meeting |
| Wednesday | 19 | [4] | British Railways Special Interest Group – End of Year Quiz/ Entertainment and Cheer |
| Friday | 21 | [5] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting – General Activities S Scale Special Interest Group – bring and run a train on <i>Swan</i> <i>View layout</i> |
| Saturday | 22 | [6] | General Activities |
| Tuesday | 25 | | Christmas Day – Clubrooms Closed |
| Wednesday | 26 | | Boxing Day – Clubrooms Closed |
| Friday | 28 | [7] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting – General Activities |
| Saturday | 29 | [8] | General Activities |
| Monday | 31 | | New Year’s Eve – no meeting |

January

| | | | |
|-----------|----|-----|---|
| Tuesday | 1 | | New Years Day - Public Holiday – no meeting |
| Wednesday | 2 | [1] | LNER Special Interest Group meeting - |
| Friday | 4 | [2] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting General Activities |
| Saturday | 5 | [3] | General Activities |
| Monday | 7 | | Bring and show - What new toys do you have? |
| Tuesday | 8 | [4] | Daylighters Group – daytime meeting Large Scale Special Interest Group meeting – |
| Wednesday | 9 | | DCC Special Interest Group meeting – venue Naval Base |
| Friday | 11 | [5] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting General Activities |
| Saturday | 12 | [6] | General Activities |
| Monday | 13 | [7] | S Scale Special Interest Group meeting – Bring and show a railway item that you are brave enough to say you received for Christmas |
| Tuesday | 14 | [8] | Daylighters Group – daytime meeting |
| Friday | 18 | [1] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting General Activities |
| Saturday | 19 | [2] | General Activities |
| Tuesday | 22 | [3] | Daylighters Group – daytime meeting Large Scale Special Interest Group meeting |

| | | | |
|-----------|----|-----|--|
| Wednesday | 23 | [4] | Great Western Railway Modellers Special Interest Group meeting – Pullman and Luxury Coaching Stock on the GWR |
| Friday | 25 | [5] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting General Activities S Scale Special Interest Group – bring and run a train on <i>Swan View</i> layout |
| Saturday | 26 | [6] | General Activities |
| Tuesday | 28 | [7] | Daylighters Group – daytime meeting |
| Wednesday | 30 | [8] | British Railways Special Interest Group meeting – Locomotives of the LNER and its Constituents design built by British Railways |

February

| | | | |
|-----------|----|-----|--|
| Friday | 1 | [1] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting General Activities |
| Saturday | 2 | [2] | General Activities |
| Monday | 4 | | Decal printing |
| Tuesday | 5 | [3] | Daylighters Group – daytime meeting |
| Wednesday | 6 | [4] | LMS Special Interest Group meeting – Bring and Show new acquisitions, etc. DCC Special Interest Group meeting – venue AMRA WA Clubrooms |
| Friday | 8 | [5] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting General Activities |
| Saturday | 9 | [6] | The Branchline assembly General Activities |
| Monday | 11 | [7] | S Scale Special Interest Group meeting – Slide night – photos of members' S scale models |
| Tuesday | 12 | [8] | Daylighters Group – daytime meeting Large Scale Special Interest Group meeting |
| Friday | 17 | [1] | N Scale Special Interest Group meeting General Activities |
| Saturday | 18 | [2] | General Activities |

(Continued from page 13)

Plastimake

Mouldable plastic you can shape with your bare hands. Make strong plastic items in minutes – just add hot water! Reusable, fast, non-toxic, biodegradable and easy to use.

More information, etc. on their web site <http://www.plastimake.com/purchase>

Membership Matters

Since the last issue of *The Branchline* we welcome the following members who have joined or rejoined our Association: –

| | | |
|----------------|------------|----|
| Dave Carter | Maddington | 00 |
| Tina Spartalis | Coolbinia | |

We welcome all our new members to visit our clubrooms and understand that for some people, joining a new organisation and getting involved can be a little daunting. However, if you make yourself known to the Duty Officer at your first meeting you will be made most welcome, given a tour of our Branch facilities and be introduced to other members. We have fantastic facilities including a comprehensive library and sufficient layouts that provide the opportunity for any member to run their own trains at most meetings.

Trevor Burke
Branch Registrar

Transport DVDs

Recently a friend in Canada arranged for a Classic Cockpits DVD of a flight in the cockpit of the preserved Avro Lancaster WWII bomber based at the Canadian Air Warfare Heritage Museum at Hamilton, Ontario. As the PAL version of the DVD was not available in Canada and the DVD, plus five others of flights in other WWII aircraft, are produced by a Queensland based company [www.classiccockpits.com], a couple of emails put him in touch with The Pitstop Book Shop in Perth. Pitstop's service is enviable.

The Pitstop Bookshop is a specialist motoring bookshop at 187 St Georges Terrace, Perth. They stock over 7000 motoring book titles and 1000 motoring DVD and video titles. According to their web site The Pitstop Bookshop also stocks or has access to workshop manuals for cars, motorbikes and some trucks as well as marine engines plus an ever-increasing number of aviation books and DVDs. Their web site at www.pitstop.net.au is worth a visit.

Ted

A Few Reflections on our Hobby

by Dave Tierney

[Editor's note. Dave Tierney gave this talk to the recent BRMA Convention held in our Clubrooms. Dave and I consider the talk worth sharing with our members.]

Our hobby of railways be it modelling, studying the history of railways, travelling by train, or just looking at trains is, to say the least, all consuming, in fact it is a religion, and like all religions, it has its deities. I'll talk more about deities later.

This hobby can devour most of our free time and a lot of our hard-earned cash which should have been put to better use around the house, [just ask senior management about that and see what her opinion is.]

In what other hobby for example, do you have to learn about the role of electricity? Amps, ohms, volts etc. and now DCC, whatever that is. Unfortunately, from my perspective anyway, we need to have a working knowledge of it to enable us to wire up our layouts and repair our locos.

We also need to have the capability to build models to scale, working from plans and photographs. In my case, being clumsy, my preferred method of construction now is to open boxes from Hattons and the like.

We need to be able to construct scenery and then paint it to make it as realistic as possible. We may even have to make a field trip to the location we plan to model in order to study the area and the buildings we are going to construct to be sure what we finish up with is an accurate representation of the place.

The list of skills we require is endless and some of us never achieve a very high level.

A lot of us have had what can only be described as 'line side love affairs', no, not with young ladies but with a particular type of steam loco or, with a particular railway company. I have heard that there are some railway enthusiasts who actually worship at the shrine of Bullied and Brunel and wax lyrical about their locos, not to mention Stanier, Ivatt and Fowler.

I have also been told that there are some misguided enthusiasts who even model their locos!

Then there are other modellers, who on going to England for a holiday, or should I say a pilgrimage to see modelling perfection, get off the plane at Heathrow and head straight for the Pendon museum and marvel at the skills of Roye England.

Their next stop or stops will be at any preserved railway that has steam running, and there they will stand on the platform or at the line side and gaze fixedly at anything with smoke coming out of its chimney that moves under its own steam, pardon the pun.

Pendon is perhaps typical of the thousands of those branch lines that used to criss-cross the bucolic countryside of the British Isles. These branches, over time had become ingrained into the life and culture of the country dweller, who prior to the coming of the railways, had to walk or if they could afford it, ride a horse if they wanted to go anywhere for shopping or trading purposes. The train made it possible to go to the nearest market town, both to take produce and livestock to sell and to bring home goods they had bought.

As well, most country people used to plan their day around the train timetable, especially in the days when clocks and watches were still luxury items. After all, before the railway, there was only the church clock, and that was set on what could only be described as local time. Nothing more accurate was needed as most agricultural workers worked from dawn to dusk. Then, after the coming of the railway, each station had a clock that was set far more accurately to a standard time. So who needed a watch as if you knew the times of the trains, and as there were only a few a day, the whistle gave a good indication of the time.

I suppose from our point of view, as railway enthusiasts, these branch lines gave many modellers the inspiration required to build a simple layout in a restricted space. All that is needed to build a country station was a platform long enough for a couple of coaches and a siding or two. A small tank engine and a couple of horse boxes, plus a few cattle trucks was a good start in the rolling stock area. You could add a dock for the coal wagons where the local coalman could fill his sacks. Railway modelling at its most simple. All you need is a 4x2 baseboard and some imagination.

Now, at that time, railway companies were deriving the greater portion of their income from the vast coal and mineral traffic they carried, and didn't really know how much it cost to run the hundreds of branch lines they owned and operated. As long as the books stayed in the black and the shareholders, if they were lucky, received a dividend, they were happy. In those days they hadn't yet discovered the financial black holes that cross-subsidisation hides.

Until, of course, Dr. Beeching burst onto the scene and, like a knight in shining armour, from a taxpayers perspective, that is, analysed the primitive accounting systems still in use on British Railways at the beginning of the 1960s. After studying the cost effectiveness of the whole British Railways network, he discovered that most of the rural branch lines would never be in a position to turn in a profit.

Not enough freight, not enough passengers and with the coming of prosperity after the war, there were more affordable cars and 24,000 ex-BRS lorries on the roads after Ernest Marples de-nationalised BRS. These were all stealing traffic from rail. Never again, in his opinion, would even a famous route like the old GC main line be in a position to show a profit given its diminishing share of its once valuable mineral traffic and falling passenger numbers.

When Dr Beeching had compiled his report titled *The Reshaping of British Railways*, he submitted it to the British Railways Board who acted on it with great haste.

Now, with the benefit of hindsight, perhaps they weren't thinking too far ahead. Interestingly, Beeching has always been seen as the pariah from hell who was responsible for emasculating Britain's railway network when in fact, it was the British Railways Board that implemented his recommendations and therefore it is they that should take most of the blame, along with their masters, the government of the day.

I wonder how many of you have actually read his report, not many, I'd say. If you do get a chance to read it, I suggest you take off your rose-coloured spectacles and study the report in detail. You should find it very interesting and if you read it with an open mind, you will find that Dr. Beeching was quite a visionary when it came to predicting the future of railways.

I don't think this little talk is the right forum to dissect the report; this has already been done many times before, by far more educated people than an old fireman. However, I would go as far as to say that if any director or manager of an organisation today was presented with a report on their company's operations and finances that contained data similar to that of Dr. Beeching's report on the railways and failed to act on them, he would surely be lynched by the company shareholders at the next AGM.

Unfortunately, being railway enthusiasts, we are all so blinded by our love for Britain's railways that we have forgotten that they were built by entrepreneurs with the sole purpose of profiting from the country's requirement for an efficient transport system. To find out more about the importance of how an efficient transport system is to the very functioning of a modern society, I suggest you read the book by Schumer, *Elements of Transport*. This book is compulsory reading in any tertiary course on transport.

Railways were not, let me add, built solely for our amusement and pleasure. But they were nice to look at, weren't they? Who can ever forget the sight, the sound and the smell of a steam engine, I can't and I don't expect any of you can either. Let me now talk a bit about the religion of railways.

If for example, like me you were a GNR/LNER/BR[E] disciple, then most of you would expect me to worship at the feet of Gresley and consider Edward Thompson to be akin to Judas Escariot. After all he did rebuild No. 4470 *Great Northern* and try to do away with Gresley's conjugated valve gear, didn't he? So why was the act of rebuilding *Great Northern* by Thompson looked upon with such great anger by Gresley acolytes then and even today?

To use Richard Hardy's words [*Steam World* May 1992] "She was an average old 'tub' with nothing much to write home about at that time – a low pressure A1 rarely used on the heaviest jobs."

I wonder if it was the attitude of the contemporary railway press that promulgated this line of thought. After all, Gresley was ordained as something of a national hero after Mallard's record breaking run in 1938.

Prior to rebuilding *Great Northern*, Thompson had wanted to rebuild all of the P2s as Pacifics with three sets of valve gear. This plan was opposed by Andrew McCosh [Better known as 60003], the Chairman of the LNER Loco Committee. However, after some discussion, McCosh finally agreed to let Thompson rebuild one.

After the rebuild, and having spoken to several drivers about the performance of the converted P2, and hearing nothing but praise for it, McCosh insisted that Edward Thompson rebuild the rest. The rebuilding of *Great Northern* was next using the same principles as he rebuilt the P2s. But were Gresley's locos all that efficient and were his ideas always his alone?

His design for conjugated valve gear for 3-cylinder locos was derived from one invented by Harold Holcroft, who, as he told Colonel HCB Rogers, author of *Thompson and Peppercorn, Loco Engineers* p35, collaborated with Gresley in its ultimate design. Holcroft was invited to read a paper on 3-cylinder locos to the Institution of Locomotive Engineers in 1918.

In this paper he revealed that he had invented his version of a conjugated valve gear for 3-cylinder locos during the period in which he was a draughtsman at Swindon and, on Churchward's instructions, he patented the design in 1909.

Gresley had noted that the Holcroft valve gear was far more simple than the valve gear he had designed for his first three-cylinder 2-8-0 freight loco, No. 461, so he entered into consultation with Holcroft and, as a result of this consultation, he never again used the same system of valve gear he used on No. 461 on his later designs of 3-cylinder locos.

When Gresley gave a Centenary Year Paper to the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in 1925, it was pointed out to him that given the 1909 patent, he was not correct in claiming originality. It was said at the time, that Mr Gresley's response to this criticism was neither tactful nor correct.

The foregoing can be found @ p191 in *British Locos of the 20th Century, Volume 1 1900-1930* OS Nock and is worth studying in full.

According to Roger J Mannion in his book *The Streaks* @ p69, Holcroft's patent of 1909 had lapsed in 1913 and had been so badly drawn up that Gresley was able to exploit a loophole.

Initially, Gresley had favoured short-travel valves on his 3-cylinder locos. However, the use of these valves made the low pressure Pacifics heavy coal burners for their output.

There is also evidence to suggest that due to the success of 4079 *Pendennis Castle* in the 1925 Interchange trials against the Gresley Pacifics on the East Coast Main Line out of Kings Cross, that LNER engineers clandestinely stripped and measured the valve travel of 4079 while it was at Doncaster to see if this could be one of the reasons for the Castle's economy and ease of steaming. A few days after this clandestine act, the order was given to modify the short travel valves in 4477 to replicate those of *Pendennis Castle*.

Later that year, in July 1925, 4082, *Windsor Castle* was in Shildon for the centenary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway and this too had its valve gear stripped and measured.

I am not for one moment suggesting that this was done with Gresley's knowledge but he subsequently did order the change over from short-travel to long-travel valves on all of his Pacifics.

Details of this can be found @ p37 in *East Coast Pacifics at Work* by P N Townend.

One of the reasons for the implementation of 3-cylinder locos was to reduce hammer blow on the track and allow a heavier axle loading than would be permissible with a 2-cylinder loco with the cranks set at 90 degrees.

To this effect, Gresley set out to design a 3-cylinder 4-6-0 loco to replace the ageing B12s on the old Great Eastern lines. With a heavier weight on their driving axles, they should be able to haul longer trains at higher speeds and be less prone to slipping when starting.

However, Gresley was unable to come up with a design suitable for the axle loading restrictions on the Great Eastern lines in time to meet the heavy seasonal demand for traffic, so construction of a further ten B12s was authorised, albeit to an obsolete design.

In view of the time Doncaster was taking to complete the design for Gresley's new 4-6-0s, the Deputy Chairman of the LNER, Lord Faringdon [better known as 60034], took the design work out of Gresley's hands and entered into direct negotiations with Sir Hugh Reid, Chairman of the North British Loco Company, this was the company who had recently designed and built 50 3-cylinder *Royal Scots* for the LMS. The North British Loco Company subsequently built ten B17s for the LNER at a cost of 7280 pounds each. See @p74 *LNER 4-6-0s at Work*. Geoffrey Hughes.

In 1948, the railway researcher and writer Brian Reed conducted two interviews with Edward Thompson. His notes were never published in his lifetime but they were discovered in his collection of papers now in the archives of the National Railway Museum.

They were examined by LNER specialist Geoff Hughes and published in *Steam World* July & August 1992.

I will quote a few facts from these interviews but they are of a technical nature and may not be fully understood.

The LNER had 683 locos with conjugated valve gear at the time. A dozen sets were always under repair at Doncaster Works with another dozen sets held in the stores at Doncaster shed. Another twelve sets were always in the Darlington Works with another six or so held at Cowlairs.

According to Thompson, even Gresley had come to realise that an improvement was needed but in the end simply admitted that he could not make any better of it. Thompson added that on the cover of one report about the performance of the 600-odd locos fitted with this type of motion, he found Gresley had written "...the performance of these engines is shown to be very inferior."

The main problem with the conjugated valve gear was that the cumulative effect that wear on the 27 pin joints in the two outside sets of motion coupled with the inertia effect of the main conjugating lever, itself weighing over 2 cwt, led to over-travel of the centre valve after only 8000 to 10000 miles. This gave the Gresley 3-cylinder loco its distinctive exhaust sound which was quite unlike any other 3-cylinder loco.

If you are really interested in the Gresley/Thompson debate, I suggest you go to a library such as the one AMRA's WA Branch has and read for yourself.

While the sound of the Gresley exhaust is heaven to my ears, technically speaking, the middle cylinder was doing far more work than the two outside ones, this unfortunately led to the middle big ends frequently running hot and the loco failing.

However, let us not forget that at the time Thompson took over as CME after Gresley's death in 1941, the country was embroiled in WWII and it was crucial to the nation's defence and war effort that every loco and every item of rolling stock was available 24/7 locos that were continually failing could not be tolerated in those days.

If you care to read *Top Shed* by PN Townend, pay particular interest to Chapter 11, *Living with the Pacifics*. It will give the reader an understanding of how some of the problems with the Gresley conjugated valve gear were overcome under later operational conditions that were totally different to those experienced in wartime.

However, it should not be forgotten that from the end of the war in 1945 to the 1950s when the A4s did some of their best work, that there had been enormous improvements in lubrication and metallurgy that helped to make the Pacifics perform better than they had ever done.

While Thompson was alleged to have a personal grudge against Gresley, he did acknowledge that his boiler designs were without equal, and that his one major mistake was to build 10000.

I think that's enough of the heavy stuff so I'll tell you what being a fireman was really like.

Regardless of what I have just said about Gresley, I used to love firing on his locos, it was heaven for confirmed steam nutter. You knew that on weekends and school holidays all of the trainspotters would be looking at you when you roared past, especially if you had a namer. They were great on passenger and fitted freight trains but they weren't so hot on loose coupled trains, especially if you had to shunt a few sidings in the course of a trip. To use the upright Gresley form of reversing lever continually when you were shunting was hard work and most drivers hated it.

Drivers much preferred the old lever type reverser for shunting purposes. They were also fitted with a vacuum brake which was much slower to actuate than a live steam brake as fitted to Thompson's and many other locos.

For example, if you went on shed at Cambridge with a vacuum-braked Gresley Pacific and had to use the turntable, you could easily incur the wrath of your driver. A Pacific would only just fit on the turntable and as it was a hand powered turntable, the loco had to be set dead right within an inch or two in order to balance it so that you could push the thing around.

If you didn't judge the distance and the time that the vacuum brake would take to actuate right by giving a hand signal in time and yelling 'Whoa' the driver might have had to reverse a few times, and it was possible that a few lumps of coal would fly dangerously close to your head. However, because a steam brake applied the brakes faster, you could set the loco more easily.

The Pacifics were on the whole, great riders and easy to fire, once you got the knack of keeping the back corners filled up. The *Green Arrows* were the same but could get a bit rough.

On the subject of rough riding locos, did you ever wonder why footplatemen gave certain classes nicknames like *Jazzers*, *Ragtimers* and *Tangos*, all dances? Well it was because they were truly rough to ride on and both you and the coal that dropped off the shovel when you missed the flap, danced all over the footplate.

Some were so rough that occasionally, you would have to hang onto the back of the fireman's seat with one hand and fire with the other hand. If you have spent most of your working life driving a desk, next time you do some gardening, try using your shovel one-handed.

B17s, *Footballers* to us, were also very rough riders and when Thompson converted a few of them

into B2s, they became even rougher.

Thompson also designed the B1s, a remarkable loco if you could fire it properly but they could get rough after a few thousand miles. However, they were almost in the same class as a Castle with regards to pulling power and without the clutter of four cylinders and the inside valve gear.

If you ever read *LNER Steam* by OS Nock, have a good read of Chapter 15 and see how 61251, *Oliver Bury* performed between Exeter and Bristol pulling 490 tons in the 1948 Interchange Trials. That was one in the eye for the Greasy, Wet and Rusty, payback for the way *Pendennis Castle* showed up an LNER Pacific in the 1925 Interchange Trials. And amazingly, 61251 wasn't the best *Bongo* we had at Hitchin, in my opinion, 61097 was.

In last December's edition of *Heritage Railway* there was an article on *Tornado*, outlining some of the maintenance issues that had been found.

What was of great concern to me was the section headed 'Superhuman strength to operate'. This referred to the damper lever being hard to operate and some of the problems that this caused. It appeared from the way the paragraph was written that *Tornado* had been in operation for a time with the damper jammed shut.

This had led to the draught on the fire being so strong; it was sucking the flap into the fully open position when she was being worked hard. I would suggest that there was also a great probability of the brick arch coming down in these circumstances and the loco becoming a total failure.

The standard practice in steam days for opening a stiff damper would be to hit the bloody thing with a coal hammer. If that didn't free it, you would use the coal hammer as a lever using a lump of coal as a fulcrum and if all of that failed, get one of the fire irons down and use its 12 foot length as a lever. Brute force and ignorance solved a lot of problems on the footplate over half a century ago.

Given that the author spoke about the effect of primary and secondary air on the state of the fire, why was this situation allowed to continue? They must be using a lot better coal than we had in the 50s to be able to steam without the benefit of primary air coming under the fire bars via the damper.

Where has all of the footplate experience gone? Why haven't today's drivers and firemen on preserved lines read all of the numerous books written by ex-drivers and firemen who tell the reader how it used to be done.

Do they really believe that with the aid of their predilection for OH&S and hi-vis jackets that they know more than those of us that used to earn a quid wielding a shovel like Paganini used a bow to stroke his violin into impossible chords?

Why, when there are so many educational text books written for potential engine drivers and firemen whose ambition it is to work on the preserved lines, are the old practices being forgotten or worse still, ignored?

Let me explain. The role of the damper is to allow what is known as primary air to enter the ash pan and up through the fire bars into the fire. Secondary air is sucked in by the blast through the fire hole doors. This allows oxygen to combine with the hot gases rising above the fire bed.

By judicious use of the flap, you could control both the heat of the fire and the colour of the smoke exhausted through the chimney. When you were on the move and under steam, the damper was

never fully closed. The only time it was closed was when the driver shut off steam or you were about to enter a tunnel.

If you were a bit pushed for steam however, you could leave the damper open and have the blower hard on to keep the fire hot when coasting.

When entering a tunnel, if you had left the damper open, the back pressure caused by the exhaust hitting the tunnel roof would interrupt the passage of the exhaust through the chimney and the pressure of the air being forced through the damper by the speed of your motion could cause the fire to blow back through the fire hole door and, believe me, you don't want to experience a blow-back!

Don't forget most of the ex-GNR, LNER and BR[E] locos had a flap in the middle of the fire hole door to fire through and it was not thought of as good practice to open the main door for firing purposes. Even the *Spaceships* on the Eastern Region were fitted with a GNR pattern fire hole door. This fact was overlooked in an article on 9Fs in a recent edition of *The Branchline*. However, you would have to have fired on *Spaceships* to have known this as I cannot recall reading it anywhere.

PS. I note that the footplate crews today wear both gloves and glasses. Glasses were forbidden on the footplate in my time, and I only wore gloves on the footplate once. They disappeared just after the driver called me a pony little nancy boy.

Gresley valve gear derived from Holcroft's –

- Holcroft collaborated with Gresley on the design – *Thompson and Peppercorn* p34
- Holcroft valve gear *The Streaks* Roger J Mannion p69
- NBL design of B17s *LNER 4–6–0s at Work* Geoffrey Hughes pp73-75
- Holcroft's patent granted in 1909 – 1913.
- 1925 conference Gresley brushed of claims that he had filched the design from Holcroft. *British Locos of the 20th Century. Vol 1* OS Nock p191
- Clandestinely measuring the valve travel on 4079. P N Townend *East Coast Pacifics at Work* @ p37

I am open to criticism on this paper. However, if you do submit an article criticising the content, please supply a bibliography.

ModelRail Modelling Competition

This year was the first time that this Competition has actually been held. Your Management Committee had taken a decision earlier to try to encourage members and alike to enter the competition.

At the conclusion of this year's AGM each volunteer was allowed to pick a sealed envelope containing a Metcalfe Models card kit to construct and was allowed to develop a display as they see fit.

This appears to have been a success if the number of entrants is any indication. The judges of the Competition enjoyed the task with comments being that the workmanship was of a very high standard.

As can be seen from the results there was not much in it. This all does well in proving that some

first time card kit builders and experienced builders, given an even starting point can come out with a very good result.

Congratulations to all the entrants on their efforts and I believe that all round from the entrants, our Branch , the judges and the viewing public it was a very successful Competition.

There are a few minor things that did pop up during the Competition that will be ironed out but overall it was a very good and enjoyable idea and result from our Management Committee. So I would think that next year there will be another Competition. Get ready to participate.

The results –

The overall Competition Winner was Eddie Garforth with his 4mm scale model of semi-detached houses

The winners of the individual Scale categories were –

Craig Hartmann with his 7mm scale model of semi-detached houses
 Eddie Garforth – [see above]
 Peter Webb with his N scale model of a factory

The points awarded were –

| | |
|--|-----|
| Eddie Garforth – Semi-detached house – 4mm scale | 264 |
| Craig Hartmann – Semi-detached house – 7mm scale | 257 |
| Ted Thoday – Village school – 4mm scale | 256 |
| Ron Fryer – Terraced houses – 4mm scale | 255 |
| Kathy Price – Goods shed – 7mm scale | 252 |
| Peter Webb – Factory – N scale | 229 |
| Bob Phelps – Terraced houses – N scale | 224 |
| Stephen Rayner – Terraced houses – N scale | 223 |
| John Muller – Hotel – 4mm scale | 223 |

John Maker, Judging Coordinator



Bob Phelps N scale mode of terraced houses.
 The local Fire Brigade is attending to a fire in the left hand house



Eddie Garforth's award winning semi-detached houses model.
T
The photograph does not do justice to the detail in the gardens, particularly the vegetable patch at the rear of the house



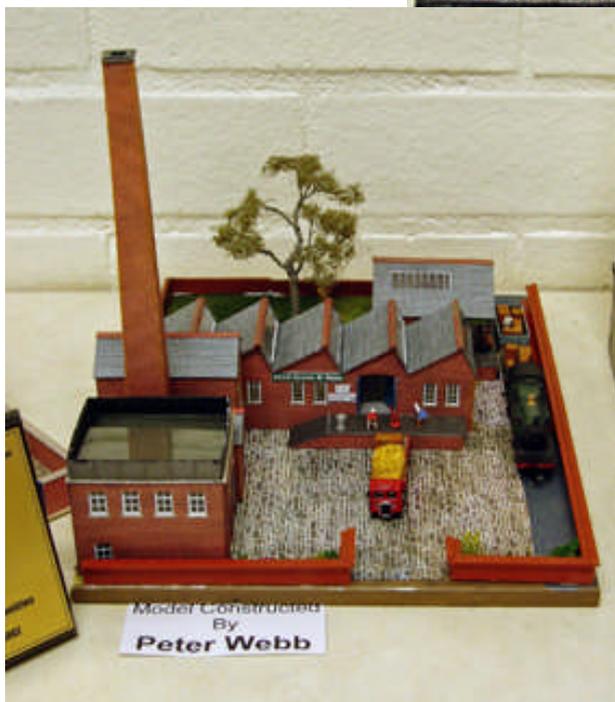
Craig Hartmann's O Scale Category winner model of semi-detached houses.
Note the typically British allotment to the left of the houses.

Ron Fryer's 4mm scale model of terraced houses.

The scene is one that could be seen in many parts of industrial Britain.

The parts as provided in the kit are for the two front doors to be at the left and right of the front, which is wrong – he should know, he lived in one of these!!

Ron corrected this error by put the doors in their correct places side by side on the centre line of the front.



Peter Webb's N Scale Category winner model of a factory depicting a typical working day's activities.



Kathy Price's 7mm scale model of a typical small factory with railway access. An oil tank wagon is being loaded at the rear of the factory.



Steve Rayner's N Scale model of terraced houses – a typical work-a-day scene in Britain



Ted Thoday's 4mm scale model of Duvalaky Primary School, with children starting to arrive for class.
The preserved Thingami Signal Box is to be an arts and crafts workshop for the community and the school.