

EDITORIAL

Hello again! Nearly a year since the last issue! Apologies, but work, etc. keep getting in the way. Now that my summer weekend S&T operating duties at our miniature railway at Bentley are over until next Easter, Saturday afternoons are available to me to get on with many things - including production of the Club's esteemed publication! Enough of this

1998 has been a busy time for UMRC, as you will see inside. Another exhibition at Uckfield, others attended with "Kennet" and "Leysdown", busy times at Bentley, etc., etc., etc.

This winter will be just as busy for us, what with the work on "Buckham Hill", "Ruffley Central", Bentley infrastructure improvements and rolling stock refurbishment - this is just the constructional activities! Behind the scenes the Committee and sub-committees are hard at work on a number of subjects, the most important being the status of UMRC, the club's risk assessment and BMR Operating Procedures revisions.

Club activities generally centre around a few regular members, but we should all be involved to some extent. There are some appeals inside this issue, so please help - its what Club life is all about.

John Pollington

DIARY OF EVENTS

Key events only,

Club meets every Monday and Thursday at HQ from 7:30-10:30pm, and 'winter works' Sundays at Bentley from 10:30am-dusk. Other events announced at Club meetings.

DECEMBER '98

29th-3rd Jan: Model Engineer Exhibition at Olympia. Turnouts from Club's portable track and our new guards vans, plus one or two Club members with their locos helping to operate the Olympian Railway (the world's longest portable railway?) around the balcony - ¼ mile long. Money raised goes to charities.

FEBRUARY '99

19-21 ModelWorld 99 - We're awaiting confirmation of details, but put the dates in your Diary. Those of you who can help with the setting-up on Thursday 18th, please contact Alex Tombling, our SAMRC Rep.

EASTER thru' SEPTEMBER

Operating days of our miniature railway at Bentley - every Saturday afternoon, Sunday and Bank Holiday, plus Wednesdays in August
Contact Geoff, John, Alex or Derek for times, Rosters & duties.

OCTOBER

16-17 Club's 16th Exhibition in the Civic Centre. Contact Adrian Colenutt for Stewarding volunteers.

16th Club Annual Dinner on the Saturday of the Exhibition weekend.
More details nearer the time.

Please Note:-

Up-to-date event diary entries are now displayed in the HQ meeting room and the Station Office at our railway at Bentley, so please make sure you take note of them at every meeting.

Bentley Winter Works 1998/99

Now that the extension is finished, and the 1998 operating season ended, it doesn't mean that we have no work to do this winter. There is a full programme of maintenance, infrastructure improvements and repairs to be done - not all of it at Bentley; some work will be done at HQ on Monday & Thursday evenings, and there are things which can be made in your own workshops. A list of the main jobs which MUST be done this winter are as follows, together with the critical completion dates as agreed by the Bentley Operating Committee in September:-

1. at Bentley

S&T underground cabling ductwork

- new cable drawpits with access covers - by end Jan'99

Rolling stock Shed

- Remove roof / build walls higher / rebuild roof - by end Nov'98
- Refurbish track / build new doors - by

end Nov'98

New locomotive line from turntable to Rolling stock Shed

- Civil engineering works, including new bridge across ditch - by end Dec'98
- Track making & laying, including new turnout - by end Feb/Mar'99

Bentley Central Station

- Raise platform slabs - by end Feb'99

Compressor/Battery/tool store in Steaming-bay area

- Cast foundations - by end Nov'98
- Build structure - by end Feb'99

Mower Shed

- build timber-framed structure - by end Dec'98

Sit-astride rolling stock

- install braking mechanisms made in members workshops - by end/Feb/

Mar'99

2. at HQ

Sit-astride rolling stock

- refurbish bodywork, including fitting new nameplates - by end Jan'99

Guards vans

- complete fitting-out and final painting - by end Dec'98

Construct new track

- for New locomotive line - by end Jan'99

Construct new turnout

- for New locomotive line - by end Jan'99

Construct new turnout

- for Glyndebourne Wood siding - by end Feb'99
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3. at your own workshops

Brake mechanisms for club rolling stock

- build parts or complete assemblies

- by end Jan/Feb'99

All of this work cannot be done by the 3, 4, or 5 regulars who usually turn up on Sundays. PLEASE help us by coming along; if you can't make it every week, once a fortnight or once a month will do! If Bentley is too cold or wet for your constitution, how about making items for us in your own workshop or come along to HQ on Monday / Thursday evenings? Just a little regular help from each 'engineering' section member will go a long way.

Thanking you in anticipation, The BMR Operating Committee

HQ News

We seem to be in a fairly secure position now, with the likelihood of our rental agreement being extended. A number of projects will need to be completed soon to help maintain the building and make conditions better for us.

The ground floor flooring needs sealing to help stop the damp and dust, the walls also need sealing and the outside doors need another coat of paint - this time in dark green to match the upstairs exterior. The underside of the roof needs sealing to stop the airborne dust & dirt coming in under the tiles; this will help reduce cold draughts in winter too. More lighting will be needed in the workbench area of the ground floor, and there are early plans being considered for bringing the outbuilding into use for toilet facilities. There may need to be one or two weekend work parties this winter, so keep your eyes and ears open for detailed announcements at clubnights.

Layout News

Ruffley Central

The Club's 16.5mm gauge layout has seen the light of day again, and for a few months was put up on the ground floor at HQ. This came about from a desire of a number of club members to see what could be done to improve it and produce some kind of facility at the clubrooms for people to run their locos and stock 'out-of-the-box', or to run-in their latest 16.5mm gauge kit. A new series of ideas grew from this trial run and the scheme most likely to be adopted is to reconstruct the layout so that it can be not only operated but exhibited in a number of guises: British-outline 00-gauge, and American-outline HO-gauge, depending upon what side of the layout is displayed. These ideas are in the early stages of development, so if you are interested in helping with the project, please come along on Monday nights to HQ over the next months.

Buckham Hill

Our new 7mm scale SR project is progressing well following its recent outing as a working demonstration at this year's exhibition. a number of locos and stock items were shown shunting about using the radio-controlled traction control system, and even a visiting loco from a trade stand was given 'running powers'. Since returning to HQ the 'grass' has sprouted all over the layout! It won't be long before the station platform is in place, the signals installed and scenery completed!

Kennet

In semi-retirement, our 7mm scale GWR layout will see minor repairs and maintenance prior to outings to a small number of exhibitions during the next 2 years.

Leysdown

The S4 model of the Isle of Sheppey branch terminus is now considered complete, but several items of stock will no doubt be built yet for its forthcoming exhibition outings.

From the Archives

Here is a selection from the handwritten "Blue Book" minutes of meetings documenting the earliest records of Uckfield Model Railway Club, which has recently come to light.

The first written record.....

Monday 30th July 1973

"Meeting commenced at 7.45pm at 'Haslemere' Grange Road, Uckfield. Present were:- Ian MacCormac, Norman Edwards, Peter Saunders, John MacCormac, Mike Wilcox and Roger Bradgate. A discussion was held on general club matters and the following points made and agreed on by all present.

1. Age limit for juniors, this is to be decided on the merit of each application received.
2. Membership fee set at £2 p.a. for adults and £1 p.a. for juniors.
3. A weekly fee payable when attending meetings of 20p, this is to apply to adults only.
4. Should the club have to cease operating for any reason a period of at least 3 months must elapse and a general meeting of all interested parties held before disposal of any of the clubs assets.
5. The layout is to be constructed with a continuous run for the benefit of those members who cannot accommodate such a layout of their own."

The first Exhibition we attended

22nd/23rd September 1973 - Exhibition at Crowborough Scout Hall

"The stand was started on the Friday night by Norman Edwards and Roger Bradgate with the following displays :-

Locos and wagons from Mike Wilcox; Locos and Rolling stock from Norman Edwards; Locos and Rolling stock from Roger Bradgate; Railway Relics from Roger Bradgate; 0-Gauge tinsplate from Norman Edwards, who spent until 3 am on Saturday morning putting these into a displayable condition - thank you Norman. When asked what his wife said when he at last got home, the reply was 'nothing, she was asleep!' On the Saturday we were reasonably busy and obtained three new prospective members (Philip Dawson, Dave Hickey and Andy Holden)."

from the Archives, (cont'd.)

First mention of clubroom at Glass Castle

Monday 10th December 1973

┌ *"Meeting commenced at 7pm, present were Pete Saunders, Norman Edwards, Roy Foster, Reg and Graham Fox, Ian and John MacCormac, Mike Wilcox, Alan Mitchell and Roger Bradgate.*

"The problem of the club room was once again raised and Roy has kindly offered the space of his pre-fab when constructed. This offer was accepted with great pleasure as it does not seem that any other places are forthcoming. Once again the rest of the evening was spent running various items and general discussions.

"The members also agreed to buy a present for Mr & Mrs MacCormac in appreciation of their putting up with our activities.

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First record of a character named Williams

Monday 7th January 1974

┌ *"The meeting commenced at 7pm, present were Pete Saunders, Keith Nock. Ian & John MacCormac, Roy Foster, Mike Wilcox, Brian Woolven, Norman Edwards, Frank & Paul Williams and Roger Bradgate.*

"The evening was spent on the starting of the ballasting, electrical titivating and general chat. The ballast does not seem to be going down very well using Norman's method, but we shall havee to wait till next week to see the results. If they are not good the club will try Roger's method which is slower and more painstaking. Some of the yearly subs have been collected and we now have quite a balance building up. It was decided to order the track for the terminal area, a box of track, points, motors from Killicks and if there is any track surplus it can be sold to members."

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(more from the archives next time.)

Remember this too? Back in 1984 an intrepid gang of Club members started work building the railway at Bentley Wildfowl Park. The top view is where Bentley Central station now stands, looking from the arrival platform (by the signalbox). Below, name the famous five. No prizes!



Answer: from l-r :- John Pollington, Peter Southern, Mike & Luke Wadley and Robin

September at the railway

Two busy weekends occur at Bentley in September, the Fire Brigade Rally and the Weald Woodfair. They are busy times for us at our miniature railway and we 'second' extra members to help the regular team with the tasks involved.

Both of these events require the use of the level crossing for public access to 'Railway Field' as it is now known, and the opening of Glyndebourne Wood station for more than just occasional setting-down of passengers. We also run a greater number of passenger-hauling trains for longer continuous periods, so relief crews are rostered. This year again Glyndebourne Wood station had more passengers than Bentley Central, proving that its construction was indeed worthwhile, and over the Weald Woodfair weekend more than 2000 passengers were carried.

We were also helped by the return of one of the 7¼" Gauge Society members who visited us last year, Wilf Helliwell, with his powerful battery-electric locomotive and sit-in vehicles. He ran his train, capable of hauling 20 passengers, all day Saturday and Sunday of the Woodfair weekend. Thanks again Wilf! We have since heard from him that he enjoyed his visit so much he will be back again next year, probably in May, this time with an American-style loco. The weather was not as dry as it was last year, as can be seen from these pictures, but we all enjoyed it as an end to the running season.



Tail Lamp

Not many articles this time, as nothing has come in from yourselves, so I have had to scratch around a bit. If you have an article of interest, or would like to relate an account of a club visit, please let me have it. I can accept data from your wordprocessors in Word-format, DOS text, Macintosh text or printed copy; so no excuses!

