

Smokebox January 2012

New Year

Welcome to our first club meeting for 2012, let me start by wishing you and your family a happy and healthy new year. We have a busy couple of months ahead of us preparing Ridgmont for its visit to the Peterborough show at the end of March. Apart from today we have just two meetings to make sure the layout looks its best and is a credit to the Bedfordshire Group.

Both Ray Butler and Roy Sterry have already done a lot of work upgrading the buildings and scenery adjacent to the bridge and beyond. There is however still some work to be done before the end of March, Ray has highlighted a number of areas which need attention. They are and in no particular order:

1. Repair to sections of fencing adjacent the station building
2. Grass scenery in various locations to be glued down
3. Tree sockets to be checked - some may require re-gluing in position
4. Signal box requires repairing
5. Bridge has some damage to it and requires minor repairs and painting

It appears that the buildings are also showing signs of wear and tear which bearing in mind they are delicate models should be handled with care. All have boxes for storage between exhibitions so the damage is more than likely due to mishandling during transport to and from exhibitions and during setting up and breakdown. During setting up and breakdown we are usually working to a tight timetable, fortunately the baseboards were built to withstand some rough handling. However can I ask everybody to remember that the scenery we add to Ridgmont for exhibitions transforms it from an ordinary model into a great model is very fragile and should be handled with great care.

We will be looking to make the above repairs during our next two meetings and would ask that we get as much help and support from club members as possible. If anyone has any other improvements they would like to see please mention them to Brian or myself.

2012 Meeting Dates

The following are the club meeting dates for 2012:

1 st January	5 th February	4 th March
1 st April	6 th May	3 rd June
1 st July	2 nd September	7 th October
4 th November	1 st December	Steam in Beds Show

Steam in Beds

I think we could safely say that Steam in Beds was a great success all round, the weather was kind to us which I am sure helped to push the visitor numbers to over 160. From the feedback I have received since from visitors and traders alike everybody had a great day. My thanks to everybody who pitched in to help on the day, particularly the ladies in the kitchen who did a great job keeping visitors, traders and members supplied throughout the day. Thanks should also go to Martin managing the members sales table and Geoff on the awards. For those of you that might have missed the presentations the Trophies were won by:

The Tim Grisdale Shield	~	Terry Lambert
The BAG Committee Shield	~	Roy Sterry
The Roger Goodall Trophy	~	Chris Pretty



National Garden Railway Show and AGM

As mentioned earlier in Smokebox we are taking Ridgmont to the Association annual show at the end of March. It is being held at the Exec Centre at the East of England Showground near Peterborough. In terms of mileage it is in fact closer to Eaton Bray than Stoneleigh by about 6 miles but I suspect it may take a few minutes longer.

The details so far are as follows:

Venue	Exec Centre East of England Showground PE2 6XE	
Date	31 March 2012	
Timetable	Load Ridgmont at Eaton Bray Drive to Exec and unload and set up Show Opens at Breakdown and Load Ridgmont at end of Show Return Ridgmont to Eaton Bray	Friday 12.30pm Friday PM 10 am on the 31 st Sunday 11.30 am (Club Running Day)

I will finalise the actual times nearer the date but in the meantime I do need to start collecting names of members willing to help with the following.

Loading Ridgmont at Eaton Bray
Unloading and setting up at Exec
Operators on the day of the Show
Breakdown and loading at the end of the show
Unloading at Eaton Bray

Finally, it's all too often the same small group of people who turn up to help, I am very grateful for their help without them it just would not happen so please let's see some of our other members lending a hand this time. So please let me have your offers of help ASAP, there will be a Form on the front table to note what tasks you are able to help with.



Exhibitions

There are a few shows coming up this month which you may be interested in.

Chiltern Model Assoc. St Albans Show on Sat 14th - Sun 15th, [Chiltern Model Railway Association - St Albans Exhibition](#)
The Alban Arena, St Albans, Hertfordshire

London Model Engineering Show at Ally Pally on 20th – 22nd January, www.londonmodelengineering.co.uk

Leamington & Warwick Model Railway Show on 21st & 22nd January, details on www.ukmodelshops.co.uk

It's worth checking the Model Shops Web Site, www.ukmodelshops.co.uk it list all up and coming event for the next 12 months.

Gas Supplies

We have a quantity of Butane Gas available, 277g Canister £3.50

Chris Pretty

The Chairman's Ramblings– he's trying to do it again.

Back when I was at school, I was useless at "composition" as they used to call it . I could never think of what to write and even if I got started, I ran out of steam pretty quickly, so my efforts didn't produce much in the way of content, or marks. Well, as I sit here pondering on what to write, I am struggling to come up with something even vaguely original – so, no change after all these years then.

Ok then, so what can I say now?

Firstly, I hope you all had a good Christmas and would like to wish you and yours, a Happy New Year.

Going all retrospective once again might just be getting a trifle boring, after all, you know pretty much what we have been up to in the last twelve months.

I would however like to take this opportunity to thank those who supported Papplewick at the BMES exhibition and the other "extra-mural" opportunities that took place during the year. And, while I am about it, thanks also to those like Ray & Roy who have been beavering away at the railway infrastructure in preparation for SIB – sometimes to the annoyance of those trying to run trains, but nevertheless a necessary task in maintaining and improving the layout.

SIB2011

Something I can look back to for a moment is the recent Steam in Beds.

I think it would not be an understatement to say that it was a cracking good day all round, both for us and our visitors. All the folk and traders that I talked to said they had had an enjoyable day, and I even had two e-mails from one of our visitors, who was extremely complimentary about both the event itself and our layout, so much so that I feel it appropriate to share with you the following extracts:

"I would just like to say what a great show you all put on last week, a great balance of layouts and excellent trade support. On arriving at 10:30 I only expected to be there for a couple of hours but finished up staying until nearly closing time, I really had a good day and I even spent more than I expected! Well done"

And the second:

"I really hope you are able to put on Steam in Beds next year, although I am very aware of all the hard work and frustrations involved. On the subject of Ridgmont, I think this one of the best scenified 16mm layouts I have seen on the circuit. So many have just a couple of buildings or some with very little scenic work at all. Ridgmont on the other hand has a great balance of well detailed buildings, many interesting scenic features (I particularly liked the cafe with all its detail) and well placed vehicles. It certainly deserves to go to Peterborough.

At this point it is both customary, and appropriate, to thank all of you who rolled your sleeves up and "mucked in" on the day, and also to the ladies of the Catering Corps who yet again did an excellent job in providing refreshments during the day. Thank You all."

Tony informs me that we had 166 paying guests through the door, which may not be a record but is pretty good, and is 65 more than the previous year. As a result we had a surplus of around seven hundred pounds to top up club funds.

I should also repeat congratulations to the winners of our revived modelling competition, namely:

Roy Sterry - The "BAG Committee Shield" for best Prototype Model,
Chris Pretty - The "Roger Goodall Trophy" for the most Novel Narrow Gauge Model
and finally,
Terry Lambert - The "Tim Grisdale Shield" for best Freelance Model,
well done gentlemen!

Now the mention by many, including our correspondent above of SIB next year brings me on to a related matter. You will, I hope, have noticed that as yet I have not made mention of the leading light and carrier of the greatest burden associated with staging SIB – that being our long suffering secretary Chris. Chris has for a number of years now borne the brunt of all the organisational aspects of putting on our "little show", an event from which we all get great enjoyment. For this I/we owe him a massive debt of gratitude and for which I thank him, wholeheartedly, on behalf of the club and its members. However, whilst not resigning (as yet) from the honorary position of Exhibition Manager, Chris has expressed his desire, and the need, for more help if he is to continue in this role (bear in mind that Chris also shoulders the responsibility of being our club's Secretary). Therefore, and in all seriousness, I make this appeal to all of you, if you can provide some assistance to lighten the load on Chris, don't hesitate but please come forward and offer your services now, otherwise there is no guarantee of a SIB2012!

OK – bleat over with (but please take it seriously).

During this new year we have the usual line up of Sunday meetings most months, and have tentatively booked the hall for December 1st for SIB 2012. In addition we have a visit with Ridgmont to the inaugural 16mm "do" at the new Peterborough venue to look forward to. Other meetings of note, Trains for Marie Curie Cancer Care, take place over both the (early)May and August bank holiday weekends on Martin Shrubshole's garden line, The Somesay Island Railway - please try and support these worthy events.

Keep your eye on our website for information on garden meets and other exhibitions of interest.

In the meantime keeeeeep steaming!

Brian