

Smokebox

May 2015

Beds Area Group Newsletter

Welcome to the May issue of Smokebox.

Eaton Downs

As reported in the April Smokebox the track and points had been ordered from Brandbright and were duly collected at the Peterborough Show. During the April meeting Brian and Pete put the first coat of Sandolin on the top of the baseboards, Brian plans to add the second coat during the May meeting.

If all goes well we should be able to start laying the track during our meeting in June, all track and point work will be Peco SM32 and G45, the radii will be as follows: the SM32 circuits will be 900mm, 1050mm and 1200mm and the G45 will be 1350mm.

Group Meetings Dates - 2015

The following dates have been booked for our 2015 meetings.

7th June 5th July August no meeting

6th September 4th October 1st November December no meeting

28th November Steam in Beds 2015

Prayle Grove

Carol has confirmed that Prayle Grove will not be at our meetings until October. If you would like to keep up to date with Prayle Groves outings, please contact Carol direct via her email: caroleast@me.com

Pitstone Heritage

The proposed visit of Ridgmont to the Heritage Park at Pitstone Green Museum has had to be cancelled. During the last open day at the Museum, we measured up all the possible buildings that could have been used to accommodate the Show but none of them had enough space. There was one possibility but it would have required a lot of work to clear out the stored farming equipment, which the museum were not prepared to do. They say they will try to organise something for next year.

National Garden Rail Show

All the arrangements for the show seemed to go according to plan; we were all set up on the Friday just leaving Ray to add the finishing touches on Saturday morning. We had a full roster of runners with every one getting in at least one run during the day, which left plenty of time to have a good look around the rest of the show. The scenic detail added by Ray did attract a good deal of comment and Ray seemed to be kept quite busy answering visitors questions.

As you may recall Martin was running the M2M sales stand this year, which by all accounts kept him and his team of Stewards very busy, giving him little chance to look around the show.

G1MRA Spring Show

As I am writing this (Monday) I am still feeling the after effects of what was a very long day on Saturday, as I am sure are the other BAGs members who supported Ridgmont during the show. Everything seemed to go according to plan Ridgmont was ready for business soon after 9.00am and as the show was not due to open until 10.30am this meant a good few runs happened before the show even opened. According to the roster, we had plenty of runners so a system was in place to ensure everyone had a fair crack of the whip, in the event we lost 4 runners at the last minute, which means we were playing catch up for most of the day. In any event everyone had plenty of opportunity to look around the show, which it has to be said did not take too long.

Bure Valley Railway

Andrew Barnes, Director & General Manager of the Bure Valley Railway, who just happens to be an Ex. member of the Beds Group has asked if we would like to take Ridgmont to their "Steam in Miniature" event on Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th September 2015.

The railway is based at Aylsham, which is about 12 miles north of Norwich; they have agreed to cover the cost of van hire and the fuel and because of its location, they will cover any reasonable overnight expenses incurred by our members.

Even though it is quite some way off Andrew would like to know if the Beds Group would like to be part of this event. I know it is some way off and we have had two other major shows to attend recently.

I currently have just 4 names who are willing to help operate Ridgmont and bearing in mind this is a 2 day event it is nowhere near enough. Unless we can field a team of at least 10/12 I will have no choice but to turn the invitation down to give the show organisers time to look for an alternative attraction.

You can find more details about the Railway and the event at:

<http://www.bvrw.co.uk/events/events.asp#models>

BMES Site

Brian tells me that BMES are planning a small loco event on the 12th July and have asked if Papplewick Green can attend again this year. I do not have any further details at present; no doubt, Brian will have more information nearer the time.

Other Future Events

Andrew Neal has asked me to mention that he will be at the following shows with St Genny's and would welcome any BAGs members who would be willing to help. If you are interested, please contact Andrew direct. Show details and dates:

Bressingham Steam Event – 8th August.

Exeter Garden Railway Show - 31st October.

John Roger's open days:

The first is on the 9th May being organised by Pete Elvy, contact Pete if you plan to go.

The second is on 23rd August organised by Roger for BAGs members, please let me know if you intend to go along.

Large Scale Show Reading

Date	Saturday 9th May
Venue	The Rivermead Centre Richfield Avenue Reading Berkshire RG1 8EQ
Opening	10 am - 4.30 pm
Entry	Adults £9.00

One Final Piece of News

John Hodges sadly passed away on his 92nd birthday earlier this month. Many of you will remember John as a regular visitor to the club with his friend Alan Pettit. John relied on Alan to bring him to the club but since Alan moved to Suffolk a number of years ago, John was unable to make the journey alone. The BAGs group will always be grateful to John for his support in the early days as it was he who single handedly built the baseboards for Ridgmont over 25 years ago and they are still going strong, a tribute to his skill as a carpenter.

Chris