



Smokebox

The Newsletter of the **Bedfordshire Area Group** of the
Association of 16mm Scale Narrow Gauge Modellers

From the Editor

This month's issue is rather overshadowed by Larry's recent passing. He was for so many years a memorable figure around the club and I know he'll be missed. John has provided an obituary which I have included in these pages even though the same will be included in May 16mm Today. I hope no-one minds the repetition. I also included a number of pictures of Larry's locos provided by some members. I've supplied these to the SMT editor as well, but don't know which he'll use or whether he'll ask for further captions, perhaps to create a montage in a future edition of SMT.

Larry funeral is at Bedford Crematorium, 104 Norse Road, Bedford, MK41 0RL on Wednesday 4th May at 16:00.

It's been a busy month. I was rostered on the W&LLR in the week before Easter, on day one as a fireman, day two as the trainer to a fireman, then on day three as a trainee driver myself. The trains were well patronised and almost all Covid restrictions have been lifted. Trackwork improvements over winter have removed all but two long-standing speed restrictions and the new loop at Sylvaen is in use. I've completed repainting and lining the Roundhouse Lilla that will be first prize in the Grand Draw to be held at the National Garden Railway Show at the Peterborough Arena on 25th June this year. I'll have it with me at the meeting on 1st May, for those who are interested, but I won't be running it, though it will by then have been tested in steam (on the wrong gauge 😊). An account of the repainting and lining will be in May SMT. I've been at Roundhouse in Doncaster for the last two days, gathering material to support an article also going into the May SMT, celebrating their 40 years in business. I also started to gather material to support an article on the development of the Darjeeling C-class pacific to be released at the National Show and delivered to its first customers at the end of October this year (not to me – I'm in batch two in February 2023). Most components of the prototype loco were ready for the paint shop, which is scheduled for next week, and Rob (the designer) assembled it sufficient for me to get an impression of the loco. It looked very impressive but sorry, no pictures at this stage.

Copy deadline for May Smokebox: Thursday 26th May 2022

Alan, **Smokebox** Editor

From the Chair

As I write my comments the sun is shining and a week of glorious spring weather has lifted spirits. I have been working in the garden in shirt sleeves, a garb difficult to remember after the winters cold and damp. The best bit is that garden running is again possible in civilised conditions, even the locomotives respond to higher temperatures, particularly meths fired Gauge 1 locomotives. Locally G1 members have held several running days but I only managed to get to one but what bliss!

Naturally my thoughts turned to running on my own little test track. Unfortunately, my "permanent" layout has become a wobbly table because nearly all the legs have rotted through at ground level. The posts used for support are actually tree stakes, purchased at too good a price it turns out! I think I will try to get timber with better treatment and then give it a good soak in preservative as well

(once it has dried out a bit). I mustn't feel too downhearted, the posts lasted 7 – 8 years and are very slim so not a lot of substance to rot before failing. The alternative is recycled plastic but costs are eye watering in comparison to timber and my lightweight construction requires about 25 posts if the track is to withstand the rough and tumble of a garden environment.



After packing everything away last meeting a bag was left unclaimed, a photo to jog memories: (there is also a well-used pump top-up bottle unclaimed for a few meetings under the stage)



Bob, Chairman

Larry Cheeseman

This appreciation of Larry's life and contribution to our hobby has been provided by John Kitchenman

I'm sad to report the passing of Larry Cheeseman on 3rd April 2022 in Bedford at the age of 87 after a period in hospital. Larry was a keen model maker and supplied the 16mm community for the past twenty-five years by building mostly robust and simple models like the diesel outline battery powered 0-4-0 'Danny' and 0-6-0 'James' models of which his output probably amounted to about 200 examples in total. Additionally, over the past 10 years he built a number of live steam models including deWinton, Shay, Darjeeling Garratt, Mayumbe Garratt, Meyer 'Monarch', and various Hunslet designs, and he undertook commission work and repairs, as well as supplying rolling stock in metal, wood, Perspex, and 3-D printed plastic.



Larry was brought up in North Wales where his father worked at Penrhyn Slate Quarry in the repair shop. Although his father was injured in WW1 losing an arm, he returned to Penrhyn and became expert in operating a lathe. Larry was immersed in quarry life and took an apprenticeship there in carpentry before joining the Army. After leaving military service he became employed in the construction industry and worked making shuttering for concrete bridges during building of the M1 motorway. His career moved on and he followed his passion for model making in wood and metal, working for Bonds (model railway supplier) and Compass House (large engineering-models supplier) before becoming self-employed and operating from his garden shed initially making ride-on models and hand wound organs, then building the smaller models mentioned above.

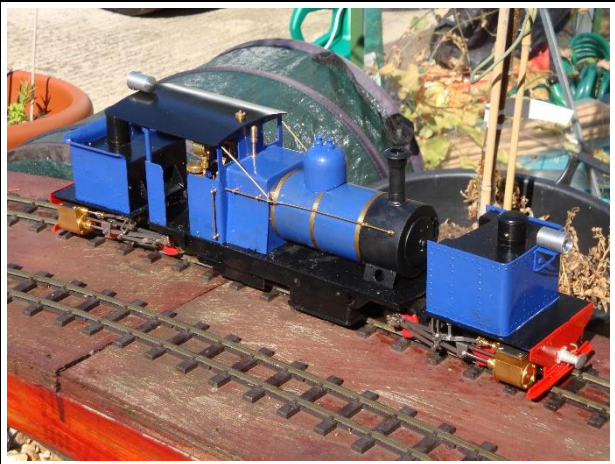
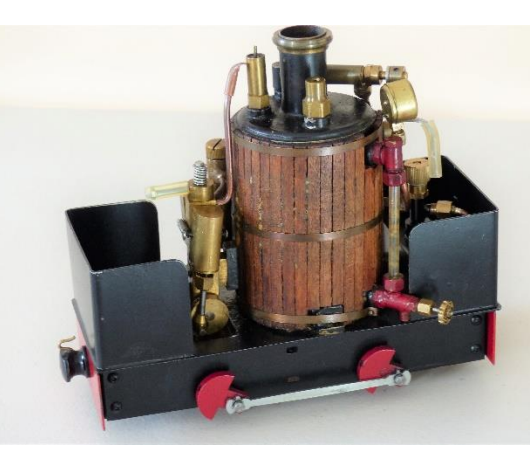
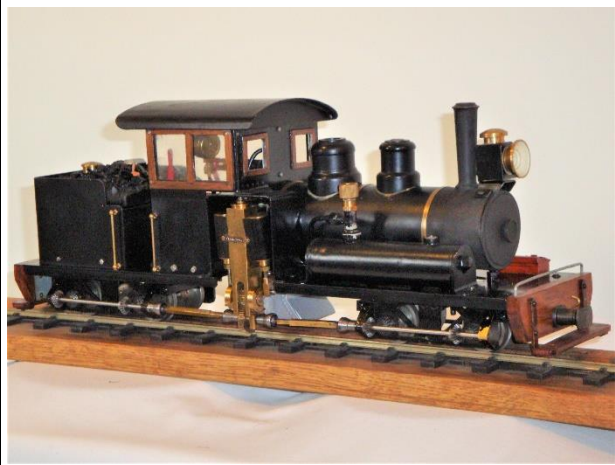
I first met Larry about 10 years ago when the secretary of the Bedfordshire Area Group received a message that he had been taken ill and as I lived close by would I like to contact his partner Sheila and pass on our good regards. After visiting him in Papworth's I brought him back to Bedford on his discharge, and then began a friendship and many a lengthy chat in his shed-workshop over cups of tea. I did some semi-scale sketch drawings for him which he used as a basis for his articulated steam model locos.

Larry was a very talented machinist, fitter and copper smith and could enthuse, amaze and infuriate at times in equal order – not unlike other notable 16 mm loco builders over the years! His main talent was to create attractively proportioned models of simple construction but often with small detail embellishments like a horn or lamp that added more to the design than the simplicity of the component. Against him was his obsession with using what came to hand, and 'cost reduction' to the point where no two models were the same and standard replacement parts an impossibility except where these were off-the-shelf bought-in items. Luckily, he did source from good suppliers like Roundhouse and Maplin, and he did source sheet steel components from laser-cut specialists, so generally his models worked well. There were some glitches encountered during his experimentation with geared oscillator engines and I can remember many a heated discussion regarding fits and clearances of O-ring seals and the right choice of material for piston rods! Also, his ever-so-slightly cavalier attitude to 'elf-and-safety' and formal pressure testing struck a chord with DIYers and his standard boiler and gas tank pressure-test was to connect to his workshop air compressor at 150 psi and immerse in water; if it didn't leak it was good-to-go!

In recent years, surprisingly, his interest turned to electronic controls and he investigated CNC machining, which led to him building two 3-axis computer-controlled routers. He used these to produce kits of parts for wood coaches. After these he moved on to 3-D printing and production of open wagons. His boundless enthusiasm, machining and boiler making talent, views on modelling, and contribution to our hobby will be much missed.

Larry's locos

Here is a selection of Larry's output. I know that there are many more and if members have a good picture for a future issue of **Smokebox**, please send it to me at smokebox@bag16mm.org.uk.



Meeting Dates

Here are all meeting dates until the end of the year. **Please note that the start time is 10.30 with close at 16.00.**

- Sunday 1st May
- Sunday 5th June
- Sunday 3rd July
- Sunday 7th August
- Sunday 4th September
- Sunday 2nd October
- Sunday 6th November
- Saturday 26th November **Steam in Beds Show**
- Sunday 4th December (to be confirmed)

Committee members

Following the AGM, the members of the BAG committee are as follows:

Bob Gamble	Chairman
Garth Bridgwood	Secretary/Treasurer
Steve Knapman	Membership
Ted Robinson	Track Manager

Steam in Beds Update

Chris Pretty has provided the following update

Ray Butler has been making good progress with organising the traders for this year's Steam in Beds. Many of our regulars will be in attendance however several of our long-standing traders have retired since our last SIB in 2019. I am pleased to report that Ray has managed to recruit traders to take their place. Written invitations have gone out this month, we should be able to confirm a full list in the June update. The change of traders has meant a re-work of the Hall and Church layout. As our regular traders have their preferred pitches the newcomers have been fitted in around them.

A start was made at our April meeting to recruit Stewards to cover the various activities needed to make the preparation and running of the show go smoothly. However, there are still many areas that need to be covered, Ray will once again be doing the rounds at our May meeting. We expect every member to do their bit by covering one or more of the vacant slots. There is something to suit everybody from selling tickets at the door, selling raffle tickets, Member to Member sales or dare I suggest a stint in the car park, there really is something to suit everyone.

We also need to make sure we have a full running roster for Ridgmont the last thing we need is nothing running. I suggest you get your name down early to avoid missing out on a run. As usual Ray will be working his magic on Ridgmont by adding all the extra scenery. Ridgmont has now been in regular use by the group for over 30 years, it is starting to look its age. Ray has plans to give it a bit of TLC by replacing some of the track ballast and spruce up some of the basic scenery. I know any help you can offer would be appreciated. I understand Ray has been working on a new feature that will have its first outing at SIB.

Chris Pretty
SIB Project Manager
c.pretty0301@btinternet.com

Other railways

Chris Pretty has submitted the following on Wags Wharf:

The Museum opened its doors on Easter Monday having been closed since October 2021.

Under the rules of the Trust, they are only allowed to open 9 times a year. The Easter Monday is normally the busiest day of the year well this Easter was no exception breaking all records. Needless to say, the Wags Wharf team were kept busy all day running the layout and answering the many questions from the eclectic mix of visitors.

After the problems we had with the Beam Engine last year I am pleased to report the overhaul it underwent during the break paid dividends, it behaved very well apart from a water leak from the Beam Engines exhaust.

By the time you read this the second Open Day will be only days away on Monday 2nd May. As always, any BAG members who fancy a day out at the Museum are always welcome. It's packed full of all manner of interesting exhibits. One thing you must not miss is of course Wags Wharf.

A quick look at their web site will give you some idea of vast range of historic items in the Museum's collection.

[The Heritage Park - Pitstone Green Museum \(pitstonemuseum.co.uk\)](http://pitstonemuseum.co.uk)

The remaining Open Days for 2022 are as follows:

- Monday 2nd May
- Sunday 29th May
- Sunday 12th June
- Sunday 10 July
- Sunday 14th August
- Monday 29th August
- Sunday 11th September
- Sunday 9th October

If any BAG member would be interested in helping to operate Wags Wharf during any of the above open dates, do please let me know.

Bob Gamble has provided this flyer on an opportunity to run on the fascinating Brambleton railway



JULY 16TH 2022

WHAG's Steam-up for 16mm Association Members at Brambleton MRC. Harpenden

The West Herts Group invite members of the
16mm Association to join them for an All-day Steam-up on
the Brambleton Model Railway Club's extensive outdoor
32mm lines in Harpenden Hertfordshire

Details from: hwilliams1tg@gmail.com

All Day

Steam-up

11.00 to 5.30pm

**On one of the
largest outdoor
32mm lines in the
land**

**Free refreshments
available all day**

**with a
complimentary**

BBQ

Entry £5

Under 16's free

**WEST HERTS GROUP
AT
BRAMBLETON MRC**

Highfield Oval
Ambrose Lane
Harpenden
Herts AL5 4BX

Sales & Wants

Please note that a table will be placed at the back of the hall for members to place any items they have for sale.

There have been no items supplied for listing this month.