



Smokebox

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

Steam in Beds – Update October 2024

This year's Steam in Beds will be on Saturday 23rd November, the planning for the show started back in March. You will notice several changes to the Traders line up this year. We have lost two of our regular Traders due to their retirement, Garden Railways Ltd and Chuffed 2 Bits. Ray our Trader Co-ordinator has managed to recruit two replacements. Rail Print who specialise in 3D printing and R C Train who have a range of electronic items for 16mm modellers. Both can be found in St Marys church, Timpdon Models will relocate to the Main Hall to replace Garden Railways Ltd. I am pleased to say we will be back to a full complement.

Price Draw

Over the years the raffle has been a good source of income for the Group. However, for the last couple of years the results have been disappointing. It was getting stale and some of the prizes donated were not up to scratch. It was decided that we needed to change our approach. This year we will have proper printed Raffle Tickets; we will also have raised the profile of the Draw by promoting it in the Main Hall with a table to display the prizes. There will be a member stationed beside the display promoting the prizes and selling the Raffle Tickets. We have also reminded Traders that the prizes donated should reflect the true cost of the space they occupy rather than items of low value. The prizes will be displayed on the table along with a ticket showing which Trader has donated the prize.

M2M Sales

Once again Member to Member Sales will be situated at the rear of the Hall to the left of the stage.

Copies of the **Sales Form** and **Rules of Selling** are separate files attached to the email used to send you this issue of **Smokebox**. If you're planning to sell anything, please make sure you **download** and **read both** of these files.

Ridgmont

You will have read in the September **Smokebox** that Ray Butler will not be able to be at Steam in Beds this year. One of the consequences of that is we won't have all the extra scenic touches Ray has made for Ridgmont.

So, we are asking members to loan items of scenery to complement the scenic items we already have for Ridgmont. Garth and I have done an audit of the Groups own items which are mainly lineside buildings, some of which have got a bit tatty over the years. Dave Thompson has kindly taken several of them for refurbishment.

Particularly we need Figures, Vehicles, Trees & Bushes plus Hanging Baskets, Luggage for the Station and if anybody has Station Lights, they would be welcome.

We are conscious that members may be wary of lending items but please be assured they will be taken care of. To facilitate the smooth handing of items on loan we suggest that you mark each item with your initials. Bob Gamble has once again offered to be Track Marshal for Ridgmont. He will be

on hand to receive loan items which he will log in a Register of items loaned and by whom which should speed up the recovery by the owners at the end of the show.

Set Up Schedule

All dates are **November**:

Friday 22 nd	Remove Ridgmont from under the stage	2:30pm – 3pm	Volunteers Needed
Friday 22 nd	Preparation of the Church	3:00 to 5pm	Volunteers Needed
Friday 22 nd	Preparation of the Hall Build Up of Ridgmont Layout	8:15 to 10:00pm	Volunteers Needed
Saturday 23 rd	Final Preparation of Hall	From 7 am	Volunteers Needed
Saturday 23 rd	Show Opens	10am	

The Track Marshal for Ridgmont will organise the running roster plus ensuring best practice is followed throughout the show.

In addition, the following Areas will also need to be covered during the show:

- Tickets Sales on the Front Desk
- Catering support in the kitchen and selling to visitors.
- Church Door checking tickets.
- Selling Raffle Tickets
- Managing the Member-to-Member Sales stand and cover during the show
- Car Park Marshal.

Cover for all the above areas is broken down into 30 minute slots. As a BAGS Member you naturally have free entry to the show in return please volunteer for as many of the above that you feel you can handle.

There will be copies of the above Rosters at our October and November meetings, please put your name down for as many as you feel you can handle.

If you have any queries with any of the above, please speak to me at the October or November meetings.

Chris Pretty, Show Manager

Membership Matters!

Firstly, a big thankyou to all those that have already renewed your membership 2024/25. For those of you yet to renew, remember we have reduced the Membership free from £40 to £25 for this year, which I hope you will agree, represents excellent value for money. We were able to do this because of your continued support of the club. Garth will be able to take your membership fee on the 6th of October. We may well have the credit card reader working again by then. Alternatively, you can pay by bank transfer using the following details:

Account Name: **Bedfordshire 16mm Modellers**
Account Number: **26041686**
Sort Code: **23-05-80**

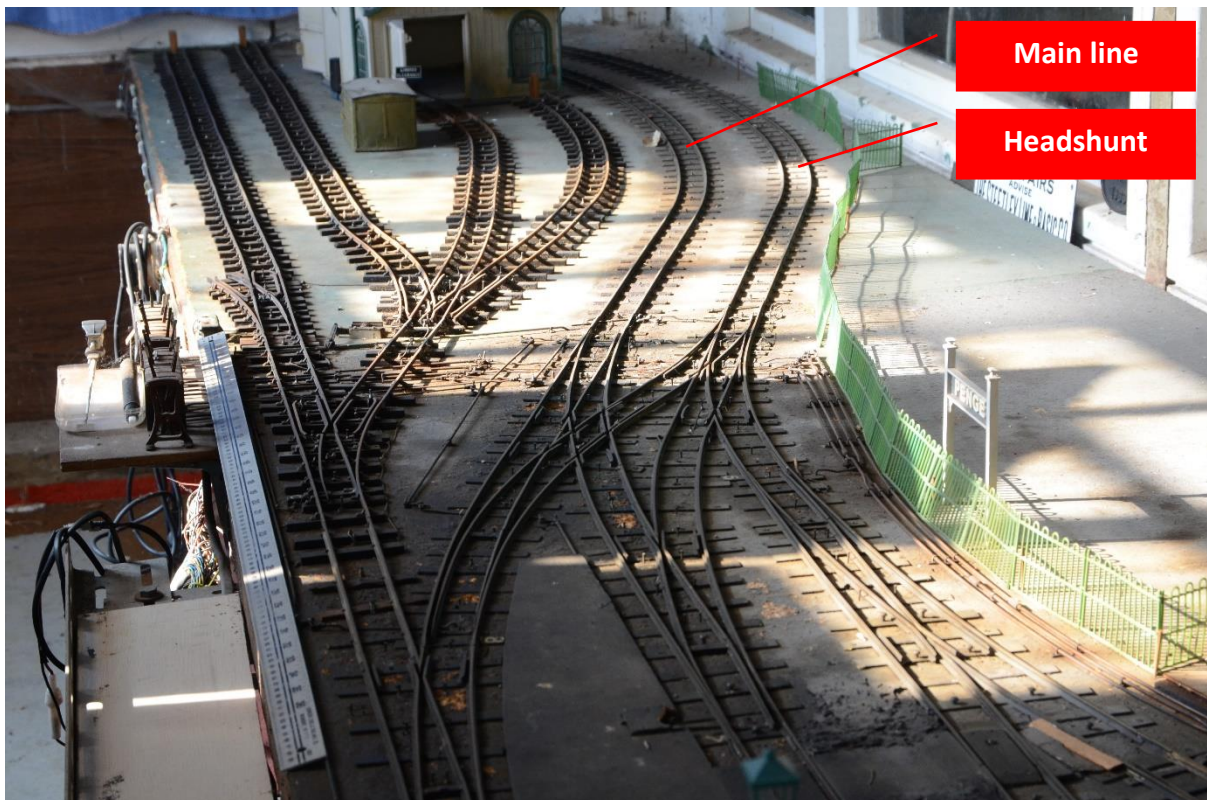
Please remember to put your name in the reference box so we know who it's from!

Unfortunately, I shall not be there as I shall be away holidaying in a windmill on Anglesey for the next meeting and hoping to take in a few of the narrow gauge railways while I'm there. I especially want to take a trip down to Coris as it holds a special memory for me from my teens. Maybe an article for a future **Smokebox**.

Mark Cresswell, Membership Secretary

From the Editor

Since August last year, I've been reselling, on behalf of his daughter, the 16mm assets of early Association member John Oliviera. A few of you have some of the items I've offered for sale and others have gone to the wider membership. John was a fine modeller, something I was somewhat aware of as he'd won a prize in MOTY long ago. Seeing some of the coaches he scratch built confirmed this (I sold them all at this year's M2M at the National Show). What I wasn't prepared for was John's layout. He had a big garden with a large, block built workshop at one end. Outside was a large raised circuit of 32mm gauge track, at waist height, connected through a wall to a terminus inside the workshop. Below is a picture of the station throat, all scratch built track using a mixture of flat bottomed brass rail and steel bullhead rail in what believe to be Bonds white metal chairs. Look closely and you'll see point rodding to the lever frame on the left. The main line is second from right, curving out of sight behind the engine shed and into the garden. The track on the far right is a head shunt, allowing a fan of carriage sidings to be shunted without fouling the main line. I think it's amazing and I feel like I've opened a window on the early days of the Association. I am so impressed with this that I intend to transplant the layout to modern portable base boards, hopefully preserving the majority of John's work. This will be a long term project so more in due course.



Copy deadline for **October 2024** issue of Smokebox: **Friday 25 October 2024**

Alan, **Smokebox** Editor

From the Chair

The September meeting coincided with a steam gala at a preserved railway so several members were distracted enough to venture away from the Beds meeting! One of those was Carol (with Graham) so we put up Eaton Downs to cater for the 45mm folk. I think the initial plan was to get Ridgmont out and try our club scenery but in the event Garth and Chris pulled out all the boxes of scenery, under the watchful eye of Ray and set the pieces up on tables for close inspection. It was apparent that the buildings were in various states of disrepair, one had collapsed altogether and others had pieces peeling off them. Luckily Dave Thompson took an interest and volunteered to take away some of the more needy buildings for repair and embellishment. A few days later a photo

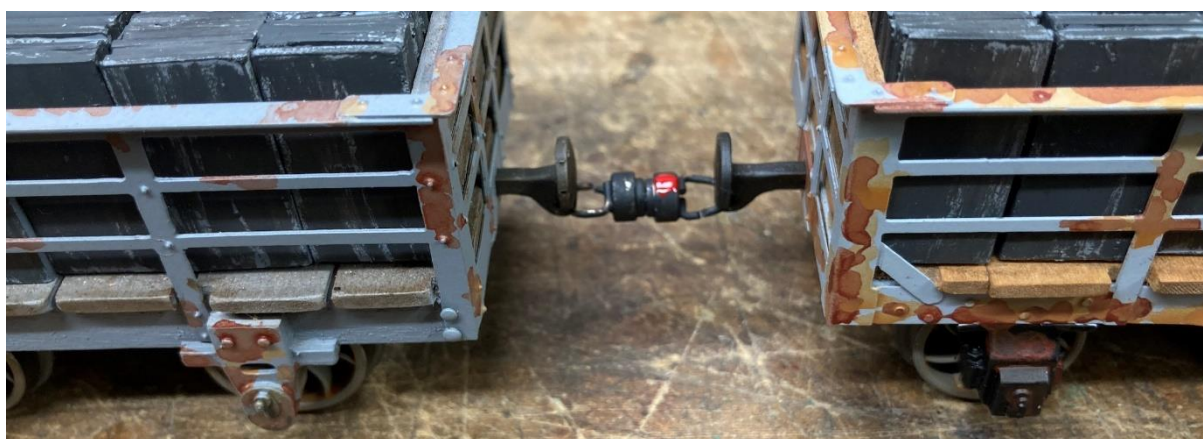
arrived showing the flat pack hut now reassembled and resplendent with additional 3D foliage *and* a door! What a transformation. Subsequently, Dave has contacted me via WhatsApp to show the work he has done on the station, again, outstanding!



At the last SIB I eventually sorted out magnetic couplings for my scale Penrhyn slate wagons. What a difference they make, no more fiddling forever trying to couple up scale hooks and chain, now they literally throw themselves at each other - or so I thought.....

Flushed with success I took a reduced rake to an EB meeting a couple of months ago only to discover some wagons had both couplings "north" and others both "south" and no means to tell which was which so reluctant attractions did take place, but at very odd angles. Another problem was that the slate wagons did not shunt properly because the couplings were rigid under shunting and did not

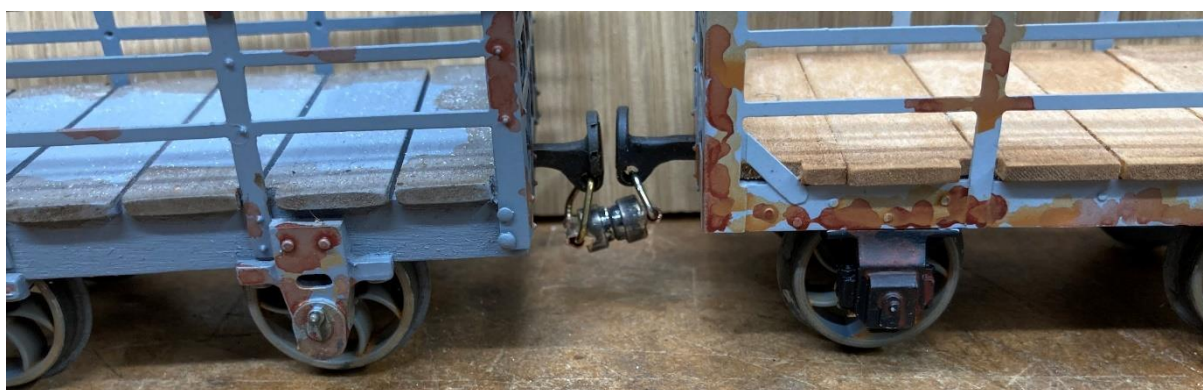
buffer up. So two problems. After much swapping and confusion I marked all one polarity with a red dot so now "red dot" to "no dot" works.



Finding myself with a few moments to spare I investigated the shunting problem and it turned out the couplings on the slate wagons were just too stiff. The photo above could be pulling or pushing. The rigid hooks behind the magnet cup are silver soldered to the cup and form a solid connection.



After much faff I hit upon a simple hinge to the link. In order to do this I machined away the soldered link and substituted a tube. The link now passes through this tube and swivels. The photo above shows the coupling in a relaxed position, it straightens under load.



The photo above shows the coupling in the shunt position, under pressure it does close right up. Needless to say it took several changes in link design and a trip to Cronus for brass rod rather than the uncompromising nickel silver I had been using for the link. But I hope I have managed an acceptable compromise - it's nothing like the real thing but it works and is easy to set up making the stock useable again. Note to myself - the photos highlight my half-finished weathering, must do something about that.....

Bob, Chairman

Meeting Dates

Here are all meeting dates until the end of 2024. We have access to the hall from 10.30 and need to have the layouts packed away and be out of the hall by 16.00.

- Sunday 6th October
- Sunday 3rd November
- Saturday 23rd November – **Steam in Beds**

Garth, Secretary

Committee members

The members of the BAG committee are as follows:

Bob Gamble	Chairman	chairman@bag16mm.org.uk
Garth Bridgwood	Secretary/Treasurer	secretary@bag16mm.org.uk
Mark Cresswell	Membership	membership@bag16mm.org.uk
Ted Robinson	Track Manager	trackmanager@bag16mm.org.uk

Modelling Matters

A small contribution from me to fill the newsletter to six pages.

I'm converting a Pearse Genesis to use a Roundhouse R/C regulator. To make room for the servo under the cab floor, I needed to move the removable batteries in that location to one of the side tanks. Fortunately there was already a plate under the driver's side tank, on which the existing on/off switch was located, so all that was needed was a holder for the 4 x AAA battery pack and a charging point, as the battery pack is inaccessible once the body is fitted. I made the holder out of an offcut of oak, cut in the bandsaw into 4mm and 3mm thick strips. I chose this material as experience has shown that it transmits heat to a much lesser extent than metal yet is more robust than plastic. It can also be machined. The picture on the left shows the L-shaped holder held onto the brass plate with round head 2mm machine screws. I used an end mill to create the recesses for the screws. The picture on the right shows the battery fitted, with a strap made from 3mm boiler band material under and around the holder, clamping the battery in place. I milled a 4mm slot under the bottom of the holder so that the latter still sat flat on the brass strip. To the right in this picture is the charging point, still to be wired up, on a bracket made from two pieces of 15mm L-shaped aluminium strip. I've also made a similar wooden holder for the receiver, which is on the fireman's site of the loco. This will keep it off the footplate and hopefully free of spilt steam oil. None of this is rocket science but might be of use to members.



Sales & Wants

A table will as usual be placed at the back of the hall for members to place any items they have for sale.

