



Newsletter

Issue 85: May 2020

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Editorial.

Earlier this I heard that Allan, our editor over many months, had been admitted to the hospice where, sadly, he passed away early this morning (1st May). At this time our thoughts are with Ruth and her daughter. Allan has been ill for well over a year which meant that he unfortunately could rarely get down to the Club but when he did, his wry sense of humour and knowledge of the railway scene was extraordinary.

I have known Allan for many years and he has helped me on many occasions with electric conundrums relating to railway layout. He was well known for dismissing the complexity generated by many of the so-called experts in the field believing that simplicity and minimum wiring was the key to successful operation. Indeed, successful operation of a layout was, to Allan, more about trains running reliably to entertain the public than about rivet counting and strict timetabling. This was ably evidenced with his rescued Hornby Duple layout where he ran his extensive collection of historic Triang stock (sometimes at breakneck speed). Having said that, Allan was not averse to some decent scenic modelling as evidenced in his fine layout, Magersfontein. Allan also had a vast collection of photographic slides going back to the 1960's from which he produced many a themed slide show for the edification and delight of club members. Allan will be sadly missed.

When I heard of Allan's admittance to the hospice, with the probability that he would not be able to produce a newsletter at this time, I decided to generate a brief one to keep our tradition going. With Allan's passing, I am therefore dedicating this edition to his memory, although I am afraid that in no way I cannot contribute anything in the way of his erudite thoughts on the current railway scene.

You may have also heard that one of our out of town members, Peter Mills, was taken to Preston infirmary seriously ill. Fortunately he is now out of intensive care. Our thoughts are also with him, and Chris, and hope for a speedy recovery.

Ian Shulver.

Events Diary.

All formal meetings and events are cancelled for the duration. However, it is intended to have a virtual club meeting via a zoom conference call each Friday evening (link to zoom and meeting number sent out a few days in advance of conference call).

There is also a WhatsApp group. If you wish to belong to this please contact John Howard.

Chairman's Report.

Good day gentlemen. It was great that a substantial number of our members managed to "meet up" via zoom on the last couple of Friday evenings. Whilst not quite as intimate as meeting face to face at the clubroom we could at least hear each other's news. It was particularly nice being in contact with our out of town members -

Peter, Richard and Malcolm. I appreciate that not all of our members have either the technology or the inclination to join in zoom (or indeed WhatsApp) but as far as I am aware everyone has access to e-mail so please do not hesitate to contact us to let us know how you are getting on in this lockdown.

We are now 33 days into the lockdown (although Heather and myself have been doing it for about a week longer) and unfortunately there seems to be no end in sight, for some of us maybe another 2-3 months -grrr!!!. We have not been totally isolated, managing to get in a daily walk and one day even getting as far as 57A to see if I could get a door key to work (I think Tony's oiling of the lock must have helped (perhaps we should do that on a regular basis). Talking of 57A, I would like to thank Tony and Barry for popping in on a regular basis to check over the building and water the plants that Derek so diligently planted.

In the digital communication from BRM (not certain how I hooked onto that) they are regurgitating some reports of layouts that they have featured in the magazine over the last couple of years or so. The latest gem was a N gauge layout called Wickwar (yes it is a real station on the Bristol to Birmingham line. Interestingly the concept of the layout was not too dissimilar to Monsal Dale - a series of 'dioramas' and although there is potential for some shunting operation in the station this was dispensed with in favour of continuous running. The electrics seem rather more complex than Monsal (see one of the photos: Allan they do not seem to believe in minimising the number wires) but does potentially make for simple operation with minimal danger of SPADS. You should be able to see the article if you copy the link below into your browser.

https://www.world-of-railways.co.uk/Model-Railways/wickwar-in-n-gauge?utm_source=Communicator&utm_medium=Email&utm_content=buttonLink107&utm_campaign=Get+Britain+Modelling+-+our+weekly+newsletter&_ccCt=pU6mDQ7m9NpnXITu86M6qMff%7eOyAdNYn7a0nJgDIG6GHTcDCYtaUdc%7eqqpRqXqVn

Ian Shulver.

Secretary's Report.

It has been for me a fairly productive April despite the lockdown as I've been able to get into the garden to work on my two garden railways, the Porthmadog and Llyn 2 foot gauge ground level line which is steam and battery operated and the waist height 3 foot gauge which is electrified and doubles as the Isle of Man Southern - and the Cripple Creek Railroad when in Colorado mode. Suffice it to say that the PW gang has been very active on both lines during the sunny weather and tasks have been undertaken which have been outstanding for many years. The P&L even acquired a shiny new red heavy freight loco which is named "Deliverance" in recognition of my survival with a severe attack of Covid 19!

I guess that others will also have been very active on their construction projects during this period and many hoards of unopened kits have been raided. We are still intending to proceed with our show next November (C-19 permitting) and I am hoping that members will be able to bring some of their products to present at the show. Traditionally we have imported a lot of layouts from outside for our show and had many of the most famous in the land on display when Tony Kuivala was organising the two day shows, but the complexity of those events meant that it was rarely possible for our own members to present a layout or to display a model. So this year I am hoping that we will be able to show off our home-grown talent from the lockdown.

As you may have heard already, two of our members are seriously ill- Peter Mills in Preston and Allan Trotter in Queenscourt. Whatever your persuasion, please keep them and their loved ones in your thoughts/energy/prayers.

I'm hoping that this may be the very last of the lockdown newsletters and that we will be able to get back to some sort of face-to-face meetings later in May. Meantime, Tony and Barry have been keeping an eye on 57a for us and Tony reports that the plants which Derek planted in March are still healthy. Hopefully we will be able to complete the garden (including an electric 45mm gauge line) soon and to enjoy some BBQs!

As I write this report, I hear that Allan passed away at 0030 this morning. I offer my condolences to Ruth for losing him at such a difficult time when lockdown is seriously impeding emotional support. The world and the hobby will be a worse place for Allan's passing. His quick wit and ironic take on life were unsurpassed and I have many memories of our trips to the smoke (First Class of course) to join the Italian Railway Society open day. On one occasion, Virgin had put in place an alcohol ban due to a football match, but we had come ready prepared with both white and red Italian wine. The other passengers in our seating bay initially looked disapproving but a couple of glasses later and they were happily joining in our conviviality. The last time I actually saw Allan was at Tony's Burns Night Supper when Allan was on fine form reading the Selkirk Grace in original Scots a memory I will treasure and captured on video.

Jim Ford.

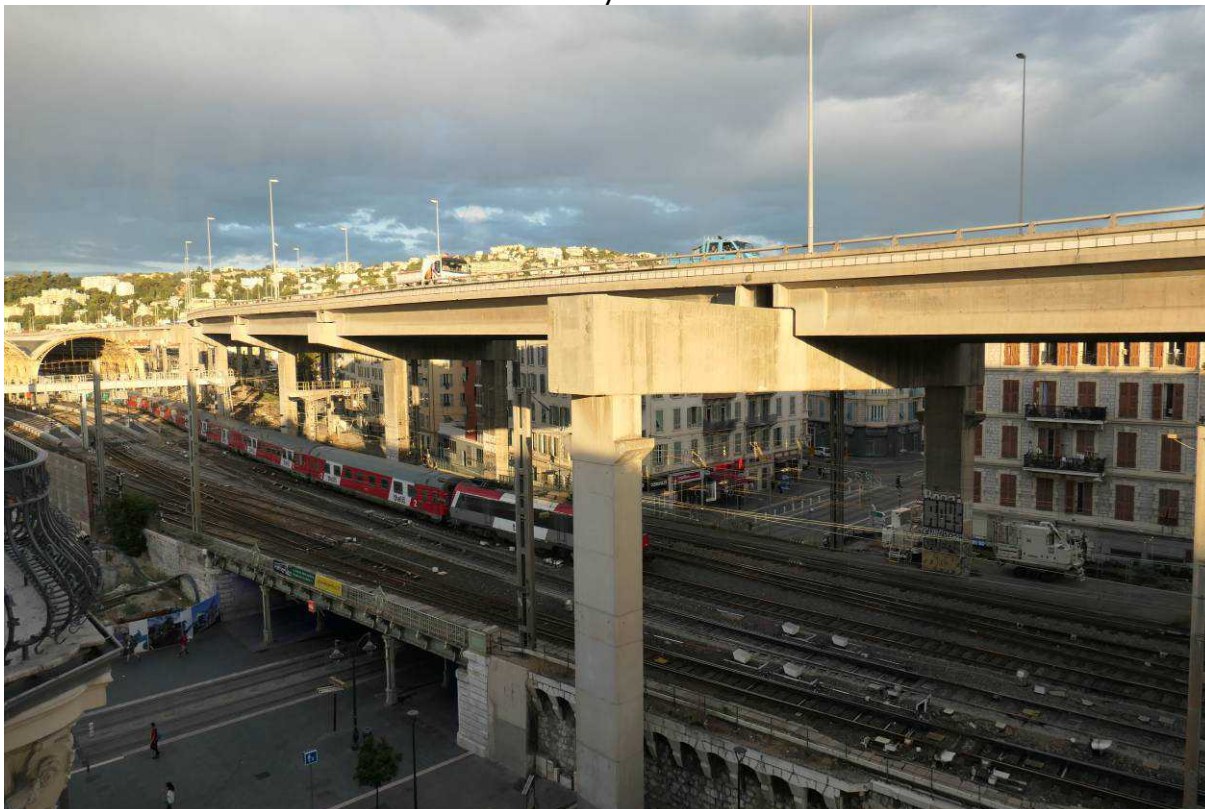
Where's Ian?

This month we do not have a "Where's Allan". Instead it is a "where's Ian" and is you have the pleasure of a double header. Answers to the Chairman – unfortunately no prizes but you may have the please of being attributed with a correct answer.

Social distancing? I assume the barriers have only just opened because it is not normally like this.



Looking out from our bedroom balcony window it was nice to see a variety of train movements at this Mediterranean holiday resort.



Members Miscellanea.

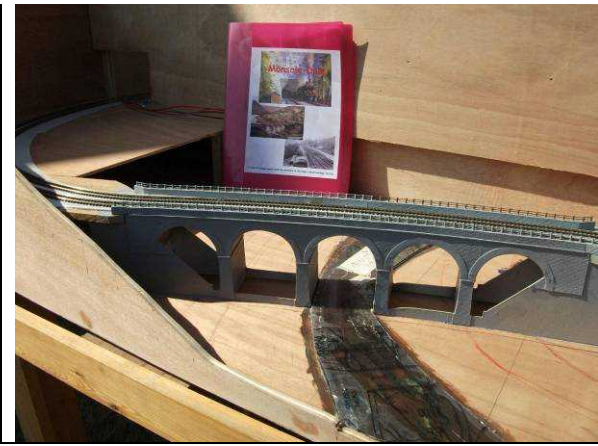
Continuing on my Ten Years Ago theme on 14th April 2010 Ian Shulver and I erected Monsal outside in garden. This would be first occasion that we had married all three boards into the one Unit. We picked a day when the weather would be good. To our great surprise it was better than we expected. The downside was that in the direct hot sunlight the tracks expanded. Having flying track was not part of the design brief. Fortunately we were not out too long. The boards married up exactly. The track ends at board joints were spot on. After we returned boards into building the expanded tracks settled back to their original configurations.

Our late friend and colleague Keith Gregory joined us. I have included images of our garden then and some from this April right up to 28th to illustrate the developments over last decade. The O gauge loop was removed for the new Shed. A 45mm layout is intended to go in area we tested Monsal on. Thanks to Richard some track has been donated and is on site. Slow progress is happening to return garden to presentability after last two years usage as overflow of materials from Network Rail's restoration.

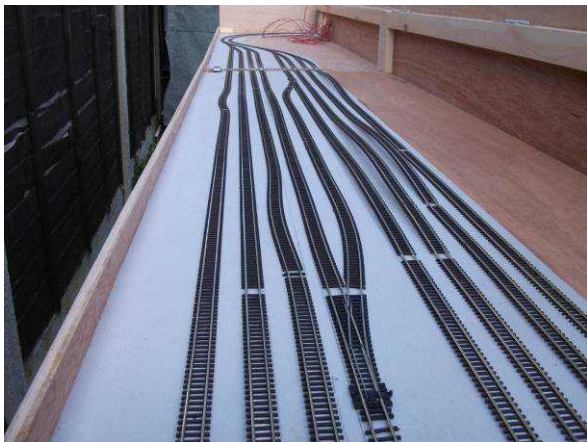
Tony Kuivala. April28th2020

Monsal Dale Viaduct sans scenery

Monsal Dale – basic track laid and ballasted. Also included is the model of the model.



Views showing effect of thermal expansion on track geometry. Only the middle board was impacted and was caused by an extra 1mm expansion on 1500mm of track constrained at either end.



Keith Gegory overseeing operations.



Original 32mm overgrown track, now lifted and to be replaced.

