

Newsletter

Issue 63: June 2018 Editor: Allan Trotter
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Editorial.

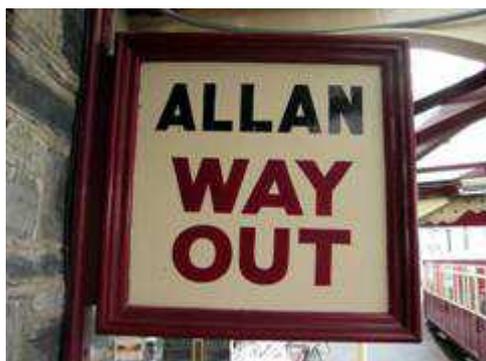
Wales on the curved and narrow.

On studying the 2018 holiday brochure as published by G-Line Coach Holidays of St. Anne's, there was one excursion that seemed ideal and that was one entitled "Wales and the Little Locos". Quite a comprehensive itinerary was proposed over the five days. This included journeys on the Llanberis Lake Railway, the Snowdon Mountain Railway, the not so little locos of the Llangollen Railway and of course the Welsh Highland and Ffestiniog Railways with the highlight of this holiday being a journey from Caernarvon to Blaenau Ffestiniog with a stop off for a liquid lunch at Spooner's bar in Portmadoc Station.

The holiday was based at the Celtic Royal Hotel in Caernarvon, thus giving an optimal base to visit all the lines on the itinerary. For someone who is supposed to be interested in travelling by train, a coach based holiday seems a bit contradictory but have you ever tried to journey between all these different locations using public transport? No, didn't think so. Even getting from Southport to Portmadoc by train is a bit of a convoluted and a very time consuming epic.

Journeying by private car may seem at first to be a bit more convenient but one thing Wales excels at is parking facilities or in reality, the exorbitant fees for their use. For example the greedy Snowdon Mountain Railway extorts charges of car £8, camper van £16 and coach £20. Now most signs in Wales are in Welsh first and then English but at car parks in Wales, the signage more often than not states **PAY HERE** in English first.

An additional convenience of coach travel with G-Line is the door to door and hotel to train transfers and also having reserved accommodation on all of the trains makes for a stress free experience which is much appreciated by ourselves and of course our fellow travellers. All in all, an excellent experience.



As an example of the dual language signage, this one is displayed at the exit from the Ffestiniog platform at Portmadoc Station.

I make no further comment but you can.

Diary of forthcoming events.

20th June 2018 Visit to Southport Model Engineers. Running session. 18:00.

Chairman's report.

It is a beautiful sunny Bank Holiday Monday (makes a change doesn't it) and here I am penning these notes instead of sunning myself in the garden.

My apologies for not having written anything last month but with being away toward the end of the month, your editor's deadline passed me by. So what news have I? Perhaps the most significant one is that it appears that Network Rail and their contractors have finally finished the renovation of the exterior of our clubroom and it looks very nice indeed. They have done a good job. There are, however, still a few issues internally to be addressed due to water ingress during the work which damaged the decor.



We held our AGM earlier in the month and it was good to see a reasonable turnout for what many people see as being an evil necessity. After the formal business, I believe we had a very positive discussion regarding the future of the club with regard to meeting. I am hoping our secretary will expand on this and how to effectively use the upstairs rooms with a "racetrack" layout suitable for two or more gauges. But perhaps the surprise of the evening came during

the refreshment break when I was given a most unexpected and welcome gift to mark the conclusion of my allotted three score and ten years, many thanks.

As you may know, I have been dabbling in 2mm fine scale for a number of years but without having really got much to show for it other than some wagons and a little bit of track. That is about to change. Previous track, and in particular the points, was not too sparking either to look at or in reliability of operation. On re-reading a book about making track, I realised that I had been making some fundamental errors in the construction between the frog VEE, the wing rails and the check rails. I had originally built the points off a template, but now have a jig which hopefully will correct these issues. More of this at a later date.

I will finish now since a coffee and biscuit in the sunshine beckons.

Jobs around the house.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of the various jobs that need to be completed around the clubrooms - I do not want to frighten you too much. If

you feel that you are able to do any of them, or even just make a start then please do. Remember "It is your Club and as they say *every little helps*".

Layouts:

Monsal Dale - Needs re-erecting in the downstairs room. Both male and female D connectors for the main power supply need to be replaced (there appears to be a problem with making contact on one of the pins). See Ian for further details.

Clairmont Old Quay – A small amount of re-wiring required on one board to prevent a short circuit. The original wiring had a link that should not be there.

The wiring on the fiddle yard sector plate still needs to be redone to simplify operation. Some diodes still have to be fitted at the ends of various siding to prevent over-run and also to assist with automatic shuttle operation. See Allan and Ian for details.

Fishy Tails - Layout need to be wired up ready for testing. See Jim.

Racetrack – A planning committee is to be formed to decide on constructional details.

Building:

Kitchen - could do with cupboards under work surface to be sorted and cleaned. "Rubbish" disposed of. Do we really need 3 toasters?

Vestibule - replace carpet. This has suffered during renovations. There is a snazzy blue carpet upstairs that can be used as a replacement.

Projector – Is to be fixed to underside of bookshelf. New 1.8m wide roller blind bought and fitted to make full use of projector facilities.

Lounge - Water damaged wall to be redecorated.

Back room - General tidying before Monsal Dale is re-erected.

Security light – A replacement lamp is required.

Garden:

Rubbish disposal - There is still a substantial amount of builders' debris about. Use strong plastic bags (old compost ones are ideal) but do not make them too heavy. Either take to the tip or leave neatly in the garden.

Vegetation - Cut down weeds and bag ready for disposal.

Barrier supports - These can be cut up into suitable lengths and either stacked on a pallet covered with plastic sheeting or in the coal house at the back of the toilet.

Toilet:

Plumbing - new sink needs plumbing in to complete.

Cleaning - brush and dust out, bleach toilet and paint door.

New shed:

Lighting – still to be completed.

Roof - Felting to be permanently fitted.

Old shed:

Clear out any junk, transfer stuff to be saved to new shed and dismantle old shed. **Ian Shulver.**

Secretary's report.

Those of you who were able to make the Annual General Meeting earlier in May will have observed the very positive spirit which flowed throughout and which had nothing to do with the liquor provided when we additionally celebrated our Chairman's achievement of the biblical three score and ten, congratulations to you Ian and here's to the next LXX years!

This month's newsletter contains an introduction from our new "Tours & Events Manager", Frank Parkinson who has volunteered, with our well-connected Tony Kuivala, to lead on the arrangement of outside and inside visits for club members. I am pleased to report that other members have also volunteered to take charge of our new programme of talks and our cinema nights, making use of our recently acquired Data Projector. It is so much better to work with volunteers rather than pressed men and especially encouraging that so many of you have come forward with a willingness to take responsibility for a part of the club's forward programme, thank you, members. Other organisers will be advising you of their plans and this includes making sure that each month's programme appears in this newsletter.

On Friday 1st June, five of us will be departing for a week on our annual sleeper trip, so attendances at the clubrooms will be reduced. Also our Chairman is away for the next couple of Fridays, so if you want to attend the club, you may find yourself on your own, with the usual suspects unavailable.

You will recall that the mortal remains of our late member Keith Gregory were cremated on 14th February and his ashes rest for the present in our hallway. It was Keith's wish that his ashes should be interred in the memorial garden on the Tallylyn Railway where he was a volunteer. I will be on holiday from late

June until the 12th July and I intend to arrange a visit to the railway after that date. Please will any members who wish to participate in this ceremony contact me and advise me of their holiday plans so I can choose a date which suits all and Keith's two daughters, Nicky and Viv. **Jim Ford.**

Treasurer's report.

No report received.

Exhibition Coordinator's report.

No report received.

Tours & Events Organiser's report.

For the benefit of those that attended and ones like myself not attending the recent AGM, Comrade Secretary Jim Ford was looking to establish several club activities through the shared responsibilities of other members. One of these roles was for a person to organise visits to outside railway related activities or events and in association with Tony Kuivala, who has background knowledge and contacts in such matters which will be most beneficial, this will be our role.

To set the ball rolling our first event will be a visit to Southport Model Engineers Club (SMEC) at Victoria Park for their Running Night on 20th June 2018, weather permitting of course. Rides commence from 18.00 onwards until late or until they chuck us off so the other kids can get a go. They have contingency plans for further running nights in July and August should the weather be poor.

I have only listed the one above event in the programme but will add more soon concentrating, for the moment, on outdoor activities for Spring and Summer time period for however long that might last. Otherwise we could include indoor non mobile layouts for later in the year. I have in mind a number of outdoor and indoor alternatives but if there are any places of particular interest please let me know. **Frank Parkinson.**

Members' contributions.

Tales of Fishy Tails.

Following on from the examples in Scotland of the opening of the Drumgelloch to Bathgate line, double track and 25Kv electric and the Edinburgh to Tweedbank line, not electric, which is a short section of the original Waverley Route that once existed between Edinburgh Waverley and Carlisle Citadel stations, Southport MRS are very proud to announce the opening of their own brand new railway, Fishy Tails (Earball èisg in Scottish Gaelic) with the first successful complete transit of the line. **Jim Ford.**

Rivarossi 1791 Automotrice ALn56 (Breda)

British diesel engines power Italian railcars.

(Information on the prototype sourced from Rivarossi leaflet 88/22379).



Starting from 1938 to 1940 some FS passenger railcars of type ALn 556 and ALn56, built by Breda, started running on the Italian lines, thus introducing an evolution in the railway traffic. ALn56 were so classified since, contrarily to ALn556 they hadn't the double heading devices under multiple unit control (two railcars driven by a single driver).

In the after war period on both these railcars many important improvements, which changed their external aspect, were applied: the shape of the buffers and couplers was changed and the applying of lateral heaters could improve the cooling of the motors. They were running on almost all the non electrified lines of the FS. A large number of these railcars were given to private railways; most belonging to the ALn56 type since on the private lines the necessity of using the two units at the same time was not so often required.

In 1981 the Compartment in Ancona equipped and put again into work the railcar type ALN56 2037 for the VII International Campaign for work security. This railcar, for the campaign for work security, was shown under demonstration in different localities. It is sheltered in the Fabriano warehouse.

For a comprehensive history of the Italian pre-war Breda railcars (ALn56 and ALn556 classes with British designed diesel motors) we recommend the book "Il tempo delle Littorini" by Marcello Cruciani, featuring facts, figures and outstanding illustrations. Published by ETR Editrice Trasporti su Rotaie, PO Box 100, 1-25087 Salò (BS) Italy. **Allan Trotter.**

Editor's note.

Please submit your copy for inclusion in the SMRS July 2018 Newsletter by Thursday the 28th of June 2018.

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