



# Newsletter

Issue 57: December 2017 Editor: Allan Trotter  
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## Editorial.

### Christmas's past and Christmas presents.

It's that time of year again when many of us start looking to enhance our model railway or train set. At one time we could visit the many department stores and observe some of the latest models in action on a manufacturer supplied demonstrator layout but alas, no more. Seldom if ever will you see model railway items on display in mainstream high street stores.



The few toy shops that remain do not generally stock model railway items. In fact the only train related toys seems to be Thomas items or push along wooden train sets. There are even fewer true hobby or model shops remaining so how are we, the prospective customers supposed to decide on our purchases?

It would appear that internet shopping is usurping the more traditional methods but buying from remote box shifters is not as gratifying as visiting your local hobby shop, examining and seeing a working demonstration of your model before purchase. Even at swapmeets and exhibitions there is little chance of seeing and handling the model out of its box before acquisition. No doubt the extravagant packaging of today makes this scenario impractical.

For the inquisitive, that's a pair of H0 scale Rivarossi ALn 668 diesel railcars.

Although there are many railway related publications and periodicals available today, it would appear that the model train hobby is in regression and what remains is fast becoming a pastime of the very affluent. Look around any swapmeet or exhibition; most of the clientele are of a mature age.

With many new locomotives now costing £150 to £200 without DCC and sound installation and a passenger carriage costing up to £65 or even £75 if DCC is fitted, this would seem to be confirmation of the situation. Why does a

passenger carriage need to be DCC fitted anyway? Is it just to turn off and on the internal lighting? A £1 switch can do that.

It appears that the younger generations are not really that interested in model railways anymore. Why is this so? One possibility is that Britain now no longer has passenger trains that we citizens can be proud of. Each new generation of train introduced is typically inferior in the capacity, the quality and spaciousness of accommodation to previous ones. The new electric and dual mode electro diesel IEP trains on the Eastern and Western routes and the controversial HS2 and HS3 trains are basically just suburban high density commuter trains only a bit faster.

So come on, this Christmas go and enjoy playing with your train set around the Christmas tree whilst Hornby and Bachmann still remain in business.

Seasons greetings and best wishes to all.

## **Diary of forthcoming events.**

### **Note change of date for the next committee meeting.**

8th Dec 2017	Committee meeting, open to all members
22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec 2017	Christmas Party, all members and friends welcome
23-24-25th Feb 2018	Monsal Dale exhibiting at Modelrail Scotland, Glasgow
24 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2018	Canadian Pacific, Southport Lecture Society, Jim Ford
10 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2018	Night Ferry, Southport Lecture Society, Allan Trotter
28 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2018	Spring Model Railway Exhibition, All Saints Church Hall

## **Chairman's report.**

This month our major event has been the Autumn family show. Whilst the numbers were down on last year we managed to just break even on admission income and catering. However, we had an excellent return from the club sales stand with unsold items down to just over one box. Most of this was down to Allan's hard work. By the way, if we are to have an equally successful sales stand at our spring show, we will need more stock, preferably higher quality items which will provide a greater return. We had four club or club member owned layouts on display which inevitably put a bit of a strain on operator availability but we managed. In addition, four visiting layouts were on display and I have to thank Keith Hick, Allan Butchart, Austin Moss and Keith Turner for contributing. Finally, I should like to thank Marilyn, James and Colin and also all those members who helped out on the day and beforehand.

In terms of the clubroom, I have to say that it is a continuing struggle to try and get Network Rail and their contractors to finish off the renovations. The most serious issues is with a downspout not having not been connected as this allows water to pour down the recently pointed wall making the walls damp and consequent damage to wallpaper. The other main concern is the temporary covering on the kitchen roof. A good wind and we might lose the

plastic sheeting. Internally, the rooms are now reasonably tidy and the fire in the lounge works very well but as yet I need to test out the one in the back room. Hopefully we can now get back to some serious armchair modelling and perhaps even some real modelling. **Ian Shulver.**

## **Secretary's report.**

Your Secretary got back from his holiday just twelve hours before the setting up phase of the family train show! We had sailed 9,500 miles from Liverpool to Mauritius over the previous 35 days but flew back in just twelve hours. On our trip we had seen all sorts of wonderful things but it was almost completely train-free with the notable exception of the truly excellent Soller Railway in Mallorca.

We managed a trip on this line which straddles the mountains in the middle of the island, but didn't manage to do the Soller Tramway which completes the journey to the port of Soller, so I will have to make do with the G scale kit for one of the cars that I picked up! Equally we didn't have time to sample the other Mallorcan railways which have been rebuilt and modernised in recent years, but the Soller line is a real treasure and its very spectacular scenery means that it is a bit like Manx Electric with mountains.

Our family train show was a success for which the Committee are grateful to those members who were able to lend a hand on the day. Although we didn't make as much as a year ago, we turned in a respectable profit, if mostly from the sales stand. This is no mean feat considering that even in our own estimate the selection of sales items was not that spectacular.

As a well-known supermarket says, every little helps and we made enough money to help to keep the club going. I was pleased to see on returning to the club room that despite the ongoing work by Network Rail, the kitchen has been fully cleaned and spruced up. For this we have John Howard to thank. Thanks John, on behalf of your fellow members!

On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December we will be holding our next Committee meeting which will again be an open one, and members may want to attend and give their feedback on our recent show.

Another date to enter in your diary is Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December when we will be holding our annual Christmas Party at our newly refreshed clubrooms. Current and past members and friends of the Club are all invited to share Christmas refreshments.

We will also be holding a short members' slide show and you are invited to submit up to a dozen images taken during 2017 which the Secretary will put into a PowerPoint presentation for viewing on the night.

Please send your slides to [drjimford@btinternet.com](mailto:drjimford@btinternet.com) **Jim Ford.**

## Treasurer's report.

No report received.

## Exhibition Co-ordinator's report.

No report received.

## Contributions from Members.

This was seen in the Daily Telegraph recently. **Ian Shulver.**

### Cocoa loco

To mark the film premiere of *Murder on the Orient Express* in London last night, Belgian chocolatier Godiva has unveiled a 10ft chocolate train. Made by Jen Lindsey-Clark, the train weighs 9st (57kg) and took 400 hours to create.



Ben Queenborough/PinPep

**Editor's note.** No doubt it would take more than 400 hours to eat the whole locomotive. Murder by chocolate? It seems a strange choice of name for this creation as Lady Godiva was a Patriot class locomotive, it looked nothing like this and anyway had no association with the Orient Express. **Allan Trotter.**

## Hornby Dublo and Hoylake Station.

Most mainstream model railway manufactures such as originally Hornby Dublo and also Tri-ang Railways and present day Hornby and Bachmann offered a full range of not only locomotives and rolling stock but also the many accessories

required for a complete model railway system. One of these accessories is station components.

Almost from the start Hornby Dublo offered a station, signal box, goods depot and engine shed and these were all originally made from wood. Later models used die cast aluminium. When Tri-ang Railways entered the scene in the 1950's, their station components were made of plastic but these models tended not to be based on any particular location.

When Tri-ang Railways went over to Super 4 track with a new geometry, new platforms were required and their 1960's station was updated to a more modern building style based on the structures at Colchester. What about Hornby Dublo though?

When Hornby Dublo introduced their two rail system in 1959 the track profile was completely different from their three rail track and this required a new range of structures. Three types of station were offered, a main line station, a suburban station and an island platform set. Also offered was a goods depot and engine shed. The engine shed was based on the London Midland Region standard design at Chester. These models were all in plastic. However the signal box and footbridge remained in cast aluminium.

The suburban station was the most distinctive being modelled in the Art Deco style. Where did the inspiration come from? Possibly from Southern Region but as the Meccano factory was in Liverpool, a nearer location would seem the more likely.

Although the Wirral line to West Kirby had been in operation for many years, the LMS Railway rebuilt Hoylake Station in 1939 in the then fashionable Art Deco styling. As pure conjecture, perhaps the Hornby Dublo model designer resided on the Wirral and passed through Hoylake on his way to work and this inspired him to include a simplified model of this style of station for the Hornby Dublo range.

If you compare the two images it would seem that there are more similarities than differences in the styling. **Allan Trotter.**



## **Making a display of oneself at the Workington exhibition.**

Like a lot of modellers, I sit around talking about model railways and doing very little. Well, after my move Up North to Dalegarth, my baseboards arrived from Southport and work has been slowly progressing on my main layout "Bridge of Kyle" based on the Kyle of Lochalsh station. Then after many years of being my faithful companion in the signal box and many other railways, we lost Syd. Well, my heart wasn't in it much for a while afterwards and the project took a back seat.

They say time is a great healer and after some months, I started to think about modelling and getting back into it as they say. About that time, I came down for our exhibition in April and I was talking to one of the operators on one of the layouts and he was showing me his laser cut baseboards. It got me thinking about doing a much smaller layout that would fit in a car or two cars and one that would not be too complicated electrically and be reasonably quick to do before going on to my main long term project.



The inspiration for this was a tribute to Syd who accompanied Chris and myself up to the Western Highlands on several occasions. The practical reason was also to get use to using the NCE DCC system that I had bought. It would be a test bed for operating the system. Well, Loch Syd started off as an end to end but myself and my neighbour Karl who was helping me soon decided to make things easier for ourselves by making it a small run round style layout.

Bearing in mind that I have been a modeller for many years and been a member of this club for nearly 30 years, this was the first time that I had actually started to achieve creating something. A sad incitement of my modelling to date!

This is my first real project that's reached a exhibition and I admit that I was a bit naive in my planning. I grossly underestimated the time it takes to do tasks in reality. If I thought it would take one hour to complete, it generally took two to three hours. Too late, mistakes made, learn from making the mistakes and try not to let it happen again. Lesson learned for next time, I won't let it happen again!

I asked our esteemed exhibition Coordinator to come up to help operate the layout with a view to offering it for our 2018 exhibition. Terry arrived and we had one or two last minute jobs to complete. See my previous comments on naivety. Well to cut a long story short we worked late into the night and we made it, Just!

We loaded the layout in the van and we set off to set up on the Saturday Morning. If you've never been to Workington model railway exhibition, I can say that it has vastly improved over the years and well worth a visit. To be fair, all the other local shows from Kendal to Maryport are a lot better too. Anyway, we set up only to find a problem with the points and one point in particular. Note to fellow members, don't rely solely on contact through the rails, these new Peco points are of very poor design. Fellow modellers came to assist and we got going just in time for the public to enter at the start time.

After all that work and all the last minute problems, I admit that I felt quite crestfallen. We survived the Saturday and to me, with very little enjoyment. However we turned up on Sunday with fresh spirit. We ironed out one or two issues and we had a successful and enjoyable day. It gave us a chance to talk through how to sort things out and how to improve the layout for the future.

Well, there is a happy end to this story, after a weekend of varied emotions; I was busy buying materials from the Squires trade stand when the award presentations started. To be honest, I wasn't really paying attention until something caught my ear, the words 'Loch Syd'. We had been awarded the Jim Harkness Shield for best scenic layout. To say that I was surprised would be a lie, I was absolutely gobsmacked. I looked across at Terry who also had a look of disbelief, well utter shock as well. It was a Loch Syd's first outing and we came home victorious. I accepted the trophy in the spirit in which it was given by the Workington Exhibition and our fellow exhibitors all applauded as we had come through so much.



A note of caution however, don't overestimate things, make sure things work and learn from your mistakes. However with friends in our club, you can succeed in your projects.

Finally, I must thank two fellow Southport Members who have always supported in me in my modelling endeavours, firstly Allan who patiently

answers my never ending questions on electrics and his advice on Loch Syd has been invaluable and secondly, Terry who came up to support me at my first exhibition and added little extra touches to make the layout stand out. Thank you both, you are good friends. So there really is a fairy tail ending.  
**Peter Mills.**

**Finally, it's nearly time to start your advent calendar, Glasgow style.**



**Cheers!**

**END**