

THE GRAIL

The newsletter of the Mid Wales
and Marches Group of the
G Scale Society

June 2019



Dedication of our memorial to Dave Dowling

At our meeting in April there was a small, but well attended, ceremony to dedicate our memorial to Dave Dowling. The memorial, in the form of a bench with an inscribed plaque, will now stand in the entrance hall to Castle Caereinion village hall. On the day, besides all the G Scalpers who attended we were also happy to be able to welcome two of Dave's friends, Tom and Dee Brady who arrived on their motorcycles.

NEXT GARDEN OPEN DAY SUNDAY 30TH JUNE, ALAN & CHRIS MILLICHAMP

The next meetings in Castle Caereinion will be held on
Saturdays, July 13th and 10th August.

In this edition

We start with some items of important news there are updates to our list of Garden Open Days, news re a Christmas Dinner, we take a small look at non-traditional Garden Railway trains, there is an article on Hi- Vis clothing. You will also have received an additional file which is a copy of the first ever edition of the GRAIL which was produced by Dave Dowling. Some of the articles have been scanned from existing copy, therefore the clarity may not be to our usual standard.

Important News Items

1. Temporary Withdrawal of Service - Castle Caereinion – Castle Caereinion circular route

The Permanent Way dept. will take possession of the track at the beginning of the next scheduled running session to attend to several track joints that are causing issues

NO trains will run until the work is completed, with the exception of permanent way maintenance specials under the direct control of the Senior Ganger, Walter Turner.

Proceedings during the first hour are likely to be interrupted by the clatter of tools, calls for cups of tea, hi-vis jackets#, some shaking of heads and a considerable amount of muttering!

N.B. There will be **NO** replacement bus service in place.

For more information on how to obtain suitable hi-vis jackets go to **pages 8 & 9**

2 State Visit

We are also expecting a visit to our next clubroom session by Eric Upton the G Scale Society Chairman who will be in the area. If you can attend please bring something to run and let us show him what a large and active group we are.

3 Rebuilding the Group Layout, a message from Mike

There is a proposal that we rebuild the baseboards for the Group's layout. The doors currently in use are deteriorating and this in conjunction with the joining method in use is causing problems.

Now for the most important part, this notice is being sent out early to enable you **all** to have enough time to think about this, to discuss it with fellow members, to refine ideas and to make sure that those who cannot attend the meeting posted below have the chance to pass their ideas to Mike Thornhill. There is an article on page 7 with further points to ponder, discuss and improve.

4 Raffle

A monthly raffle has got under way in the clubroom and is providing extra funding for our activities. There are no fancy prizes, in fact at the moment there are no prizes left at all. Can we ask you if you have anything suitable as a prize, preferably garden railway related ,although chocolate, biscuits or a bottle of wine would make a very acceptable substitute, that you would be willing to donate could you bring it with you on your next visit to the clubroom ? Thanks in anticipation.

5 Christmas Dinner

Gill Brightwell has taken on the task of organising the Christmas Dinner. An early suggestion based around Lake Bala has been investigated and ruled out due lack of suitable train services on our preferred date(7th Dec), price of meal and travelling distance for a number of members. A number of proposals within a small radius of the clubroom are currently under consideration including one as a result of a helpful suggestion by Kev Pullen.

Garden Railway Open Days

Summer 2019

All these Open Days are on Sundays unless stated otherwise.

30th June 11.30 onwards, Llandre,

28th July Mike, Iris, Steve and Jean Thornhill, 2 p.m. onwards,

18th August, from 2 pm, Llandyssil,

A note from Alan Burch re his Open Day above.

I am planning to open my (incomplete) garden railway to society members on Sunday 18th August. Members are invited to bring along any items they would like to run, but I will have DC track power only. All are welcome, light refreshments (tea and cake) will be available.

Regards

Alan Burch

Clubroom

We would like to say what an excellent turnout and a good meeting we had this June. Average attendance for the clubroom is about 25 each month and it looks like this is set to continue through the summer. There is always a good atmosphere, lots of chat, cake and tea, socialising and helpful advice for those with problems. Given that the June meeting took place in weather more suited to March we were all glad to be running trains inside in the warm and the dry.

We have had number of visitors recently in April Tom and Dee Brady, friends of Dave Dowling, arrived and in June we had the pleasure of the company of Stuart and Ann Homer from Walsall. For those who have not yet visited the clubroom or may not have been for sometime, why not come along and see what you're missing.

We would, on behalf of the Group, also like to offer a big vote of thanks to Walter for his continuing electrical maintenance that keeps our trains running and especially in anticipation of the work that will be required before our next running session.

Regards

Steve & Mike Thornhill

Dates of indoor meetings 2019/2020

<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Jul 13 th	Jan 11 th
Aug 10 th	Feb 8 th
Sep 7 th	Mar 7 th
Oct 12 th	Apr 11 th
Nov 9 th	
Dec 7 th #	

Proposed date of Group Christmas Dinner

Please note, these dates are subject to confirmation but are unlikely to change.

Pictures from June club meeting.



Non-prototypical Garden Railway Trains

There seems to be a growing interest within the Group in trains that are not necessarily accurate models of actual trains but are prototypes in their own right or representations of fictional trains. I'm thinking of Bachmann Thomas and Percy etc, Playmobil and we even occasionally see a steam powered Meccano engine.

If you are looking for information re Playmobil trains then the fount of all knowledge is our very own Walter Turner, who has a very informative website here :

<http://www.walts-playmobil-collection.me.uk/index.htm>

It may be that we even have some Rowland Emmet fans amongst us.

If you, like John Evans whose article appears below, would like to share information an any trains or rolling stock of this nature that you have or are considering getting why not share it with us here ?

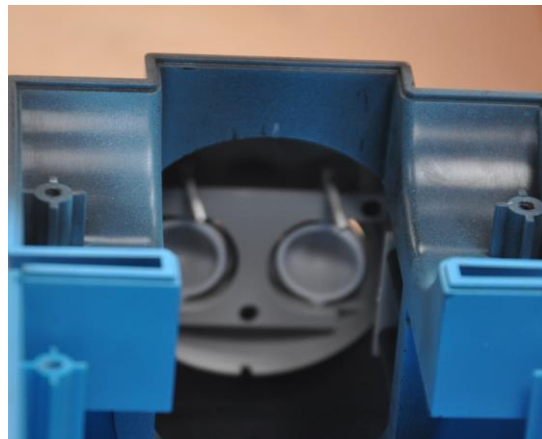
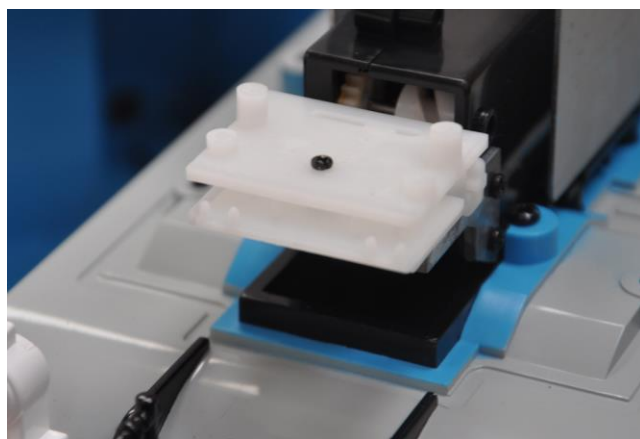
Eye mechanism for Percy and Thomas

There was a discussion in the clubroom recently about repainting 'Percy' and removing the face from the loco.

I've had to open my Thomas the Tank and can now share with you the mechanism that moves the eyes from side to side.

In front of the motor mounting there is a piece of white plastic which slides from side to side. On this piece of plastic there are two pairs of pegs. these pegs engage with pins fixed to the eye swivel. It is easy to get the top off the loco. Just unscrew the 8 screws recessed into the bottom of the frame. The top does not lift right off but has to be slid forwards so the pins on the eyes slide clear of the pins on the sliding white plastic. For me that was the easy bit, to fit the top back on the 2 eye pegs must meet up with the pairs of pins on the plastic and to get the face off, there are at least 3 screws on the inside of the face and I must say that doesn't look an easy job.

Two pics are attached for your info. The pegs on the white plastic are not too clear I'm afraid.



Hope this helps.

John Evans

Llanfair Group - Autumn 2019

Roy Crofton Mann

“Castell Caereinion” the Llanfair Group’s layout for the proposed museum & visitor centre for the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, made its first public appearance at the GSS Garden Railway Show in Nottingham on 19 May, and while a long way away from being finished (whatever that means in model railway terms) the track plan was finalised and in place and basic scenic work completed.

The biggest problem we faced was manpower as the date clashed with the W&LLR’s own AGM and several members of our working party chose to prioritise that over the Nottingham show. We had help carrying the layout into the hall from the stewards and from 16mm members manning their adjacent display stand, and between us members put together two complete rakes of goods wagons, one in GWR dark grey and the other in W&LLR light grey plus a rake of three “Pickering” coaches, plus my battery/radio “Earl” and the battery/radio “Chattenden”. Special thanks must go to Dave Hardy from the Three Counties Area Group who ran his live steam “Countess” frequently throughout the day, enabling us to keep something running at all times.

We experienced a few problems with coaches derailing (see my article on improving Pickering coaches in the forthcoming Autumn G Scale Journal)) and despite running perfectly on Saturday “The Earl” decided he did not want to run forwards, only backwards. This scuppered my idea of running round in the station every few laps and reversing direction, but we coped! We assembled the goods trains in opposite directions so we could run in both without having to rearrange the guards vans and one way or another managed to put on a reasonable show. If you were at the Mid Wales Group Meeting on the 8th you may well have seen that the coaches are now behaving and that The Earl is once again running in both directions.

Minor damage occurred during transit to two of the curved sections, necessitating a tricky repair before the next outing (at the W&LLR Gala in August/September) but first we must get back into our room at Colinette. Visitors to the last Gala will doubtless recall that the room was, shall we say, in need of refurbishment as only temporary lighting was available and there were holes in the walls – the building had been due to be demolished before the decision to open it as a visitor attraction – and this was scheduled to be done while the layout was away but so far this has not been done so the layout remains in storage in my box trailer. Hopefully sometime in the next few weeks.....

The problem with The Earl incidentally was traced to the receiver even though it was brand new and a replacement appears to have solved the problem. Whilst the loco was apart I modified the wiring so that the battery pack could be easily removed through the smoke box door. Endurance was not as good as I expected but now at least I can now keep a spare battery pack fully charged and swap them in seconds. The show must go on.

Finally, anyone with W&LLR style stock – particularly motive power – either battery/radio or live steam who would like to assist with running during the Gala (30+31 August and 1 September) would be most welcome to do so- please contact me so that I can draw up a rota. Last year at least two operators were available at all times, organised into 2 hour “shifts” and this seemed to work well.

Last year we ran anything and everything, having no “house” motive power but this year we intend to be far more selective, running only W&LLR stock plus motive power that could easily be visiting for the duration of the Gala, as the layout is now representative of the W&LLR rather than generic. Please note though that it is gauged exclusively at 45mm, but many locos are gauge adjustable and suitable coaches and goods wagons will be available to run behind visiting motive power, as happens during Gala weekends. I hope to see you there.

Rebuilding/Improving our clubroom layout

What changes or improvements would you, the members, like to see put in place to improve the usefulness, ease of use and enjoyment of our layout ?

There is no need at all for fancy computer work, a sketch on the back of an envelope with few notes of explanation, possibly followed up with a phonecall would be great.

The points below are only there to get you thinking, no decisions have been made. Feel free to expand these points, to bring up totally new ideas or just to think about why the points that are there might be unsuitable. Ideally we want to future proof the layout while reducing maintenance to a minimum.

In addition to any changes necessary to improve reliability would you like to see the baseboard type and or/support system changed further than is originally proposed to make setting up and dismantling easier ?

What should the design spec of the new baseboards be like ? How should they join together ? What track/electrical connection systems should be used ? Can we do away with track ends overhanging the edges of the boards, is this a problem ? .

Walter has some ideas about board connection and many other things on his website, start here :

http://www.walts-playmobil-collection.me.uk/new_layout.htm

(For the those receiving paper copies, I have attached a copy of the relevant part of the article.)

Larger radius curves have been suggested, an obvious advantage is the ability to run larger locos/stock. The proposal is to move away from our rectangular layout with rounded corners, similar to a playing card, towards a layout with two opposing long straights and semi-circular ends. Is this a good idea, what shape will be best for the end boards that carry the curved track?

Do we have enough sidings, are they in the right places facing the right way ? Would it be useful to have some organised so that two that could be linked to form one long siding in order to allow long trains to be setup away from the running lines ?

How much call is there to cater for digital locos ? Is there need for this ?

Is there a need for a for an additional circuit ? We have number of members who also belong to the 16mm Assoc.,. would a 32mm circuit.be popular and useful ? A more expensive version of this option would be a dual gauge circuit 32/45m

The layout currently rests on trestles, do we wish to continue using these or should we consider, using tables, possibly those already in the hall ? Many of you will already have seen Cyril's layout set up in the hall like this.

There is in the 16mm Assoc. a very successful group that work to a common modular standard for baseboards such that any baseboard within the group can be connected to any other and everything lines up. It is believed there may be one group in the G Scale Society operating like this. Should we enquire via the Journal about the standards others use ? ,It might be that we would learn from others mistakes in the process and therefore be ready if such a thing takes off in the GSS, or are we happy to keep our layout to ourselves ?

Our Treasurer is of the opinion that we have, or will have by Jan 2020, sufficient funds for the necessary materials. This is of course dependant on what we decide we want to do.

There will be a meeting to discuss all aspects of this and to agree the way forward. in the clubroom at 1.00 p.m on Saturday 12th October with a view to starting work in January.

High Visibility Vests

The LSWR (That's the Lentil Soup Works Railway) is pleased to announce all of its track side railwaymen are now fully equipped with high visibility vests.

They were quite easily made from fluorescent activity pad paper, Prit glue and a silver marker pen, all of which were readily obtained from the local Pound shop! The fluorescent pad contained 10 sheets of Red, Yellow, Orange and Green fluorescent paper which allowed a variety of coloured vests to be made.

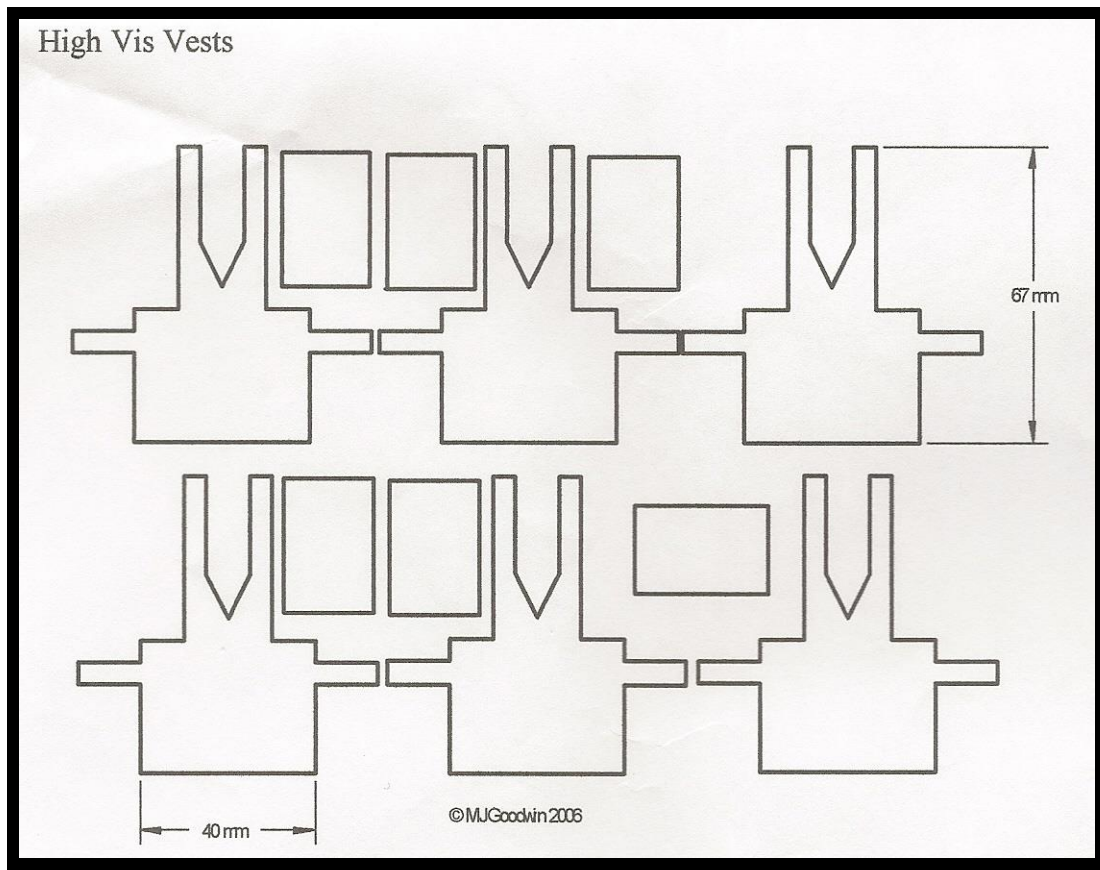
Making the vests is quite simple. Just scan the design set out on this page into your computer, adjust the size of the image to make the vest 40mm long by 67mm high when printed. (A trail print or two may be of benefit in order not to waste the fluorescent sheets). When you are satisfied with the results, print the image on the back of a sheet of fluorescent paper.

Cut round a vest front with a sharp craft knife. Measure the vest front against the selected figure and trim off any surplus, lay the vest flat and using the silver pen draw on the fluorescent side the stripes and allow to dry.

Glue the vest front to the chest of the chosen figure and when dry carefully wrap the sides and top around the figure, cut off any unwanted or surplus material and glue. When the glue has dried cut out a rectangular (back) section of a vest and trim to size. Draw on the stripes with the silver pen and allow to dry. Glue the back section over the straps on the back of the figure.

Any surplus paper can be used to make Guard's Signal flags etc.





Mike Goodwin

Website

Number of views to the website has dropped of recent times – such is the foibles of the World Wide Web! There will be changes and additions made in the next few weeks as part of the continuous updating that websites need to keep them fresh. Anything particular that you think would be of benefit that I can add?

Once again please remember that this is our website and is to promote the group and the wider hobby of railway modelling with a slant to the larger sizes. Any submissions from group members would be gratefully accepted. I really doesn't matter what you want to add to the site – I'll sort it out for you and publish it! Any ideas for additions or changes are welcome. As the summer is allegedly just around the corner how about some pictures from your garden or your visits to other gardens or exhibitions?

I can be contacted via the "contact us" page on the website or direct email to me at .

Regards, Ian. See you at CC in July.

N.B. As we have a number of new members can I suggest that they take the time to visit the website at :

Insurance

The GSS has comprehensive Public liability insurance for any event organised under the banner of the GSS provided it is advertised as part of the GSS and that at the event GSS information is clearly showing the event is held by the GSS even if the purpose is to raise money for a charity.

If anyone is attending an event organised by others, then that event organiser is responsible not the GSS.

This includes possible instances such as a GSS member's locomotive coming off your display and affecting/injuring a visitor to that event.

It must be stressed that in order to minimise risk anyone asked to exhibit should check that public liability insurance is in place before taking part.

Please note this is **NOT** contents insurance.

Previous editions of GRAIL

Please visit the website (address as Website Report) to see available editions of back copies.

Paper copies of the GRAIL and other communications

The GRAIL and other communications are available by surface mail on request. We do ask that those of you who wish to receive The Grail and other communications by surface mail please contribute to the costs of printing and postage. Please phone Mike Thornhill (details below) to discuss.

Details of our "Loose" Committee

Name	Responsibilities	Contact Details
Mike Thornhill	Group Leader	
Tony Sydenham	Treasurer Village Hall Co-Ordinator Supply milk for refreshment	
Marion Turner	Catering Supplies etc.	
Ian Payne	Webmaster	
Steve Thornhill	G Scale Society Co-Ordinator	
Hugh Brightwell	Publish the Grail & Area Report to the G Scale Society	

The Sparesman

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