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*This Month...*



# The News Sheet

**Chairman's Comments, Treasurer's Report, Forthcoming General Meetings, Latest Track Stewards' Rota, The April General Meeting, SM45 Narrow Gauge Garden Railway News, Marine News, GLR News, A visit to Elkington, Peter Precious RIP, Dates for your Diary, Society Contacts.**



## Chairman's Comments



It was gratifying that very nearly all sections were represented at the AGM. Three changes to personnel in formal positions have taken place, the incumbents, having done their bit on our behalf, wanting to let someone else have a go. Jean asked to stand down as one of our two auditors, having admirably undertaken this role for several years. Geoff B offered to step in as replacement. Derek wishes to be relieved of the "blue pencil" editorial duty he has performed so well, Keith H will be taking over as editor. (The editorship change over will be in Autumn of this year). Whilst no candidates to replace Alan as secretary were nominated prior to the AGM, I am pleased to announce that Michael T has since offered his services. He was, accordingly, unanimously co-opted into the position at the May council meeting. Thanks are due to all six for their support of NLSME.

On another matter thanks are also due to the many who helped fill the eight yard skip at Tyttenhanger. Much rubbish and junk was removed and the buildings look better for it. Let's see if we can keep them clear.

I have received comment that the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary should be marked to a greater degree than I advised last month, though I have yet to encounter a commentator prepared to organise an enhanced event! Nonetheless if there is one, or several, of you that wish to arrange a bigger celebration please feel free to contact any member of the council.

The first public running day at Tyttenhanger was a success, with more visitors than I expected so early in the season. All stewards were present and, thanks to them, management of the activities and public passed very well. The GL boys ran from Smallford Station and gained valuable experience of this operation, though it was strange to see Orchard Junction abandoned. The developing SM45 layout provided great viewing interest for those queuing for rides at the raised track station. The raised track boys did their usual sterling turn despite their being fewer passenger hauling locos than is the norm. With G1 section brewing teas for one and all the society functioned as a cohesive whole.

Lastly, our 2.5 inch gauge club steam locomotive, Dyak, passed its latest steam test and is available for use until June next year when its four yearly hydraulic test is due. Several members have recently tried their hand at driving this small locomotive, all managed a few laps of the cuckoo line and enjoyed the

challenge. I would however like to see more members using this lovely locomotive.

See you at track or HQ.

**Les B, Chairman**

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## Request for Locomotives and Drivers for Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2 – 5 pm (a non public day) we are hosting, as a charity event, Beaver Scouts from London Borough of Barnet. Beaver Scouts are ages 6 to 8 and will be accompanied by scout leaders and some parents.

Members are asked to support this event by passenger hauling on the raised and ground level tracks. Sailing on pond and running on the G1 and SM45 tracks.

The scout leaders will manage parking and undertake any other duties we ask of them. They particularly request that we give responsible tasks to their younger leaders (aged 14 to 18). I think these duties could, with on the day training/briefing, include station management, guards (maybe), cuckoo line /pond/G1 access, signal removal etc.

**Les B**

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## Helpers Needed on Sunday 23rd June for Charity Event

I am opening my garden to the public on the above date in order to raise funds for the Jubilee Sailing Trust Charity. I would appreciate some help giving train rides to children (of all ages) around my garden. The sharp curves are ideally suited to 0-4-0 electric or steam locomotives. We have successfully run a 'Sweet pea' here before. If you would like to bring your loco, or just yourself (as you can drive my 'Planet' loco), you would be made most welcome. Please ring if you would like to come along.

**Ian J**

NLSME.  
The April General Meeting.  
Brunel and the Great Western Railway.  
A presentation by Colin Gent.

An enthusiastic group of Brunel supporters gathered at Head Quarters to listen to Colin Gent talk about Brunel and the Great Western Railway and Brunel's adventures with the Atmospheric Railway in Devon.

Mention of Isambard Kingdom's father is almost compulsory because without his father's influence and guidance Isambard would not have the position in our memories that he has today.

The father of Isambard, Marc Brunel was a Frenchman and engineer extraordinary. He was a second son of a prosperous farmer. The first son was to inherit the farm and the second son (Marc) was by convention expected to go into the Church. At the Seminary Marc showed no aptitude for religion, the Mother Superior steered him towards wood work. Marc became an expert cabinetmaker and abandoning the Church was then transferred to the French Navy as a Cadet. Using his skills, he made an octant which was the forerunner of the sextant for navigation. The French Revolution occurred, and Marc found himself ashore in America where he became engineer to New York City and was a lead figure in developing the Hudson Mohawk Gap Canal.

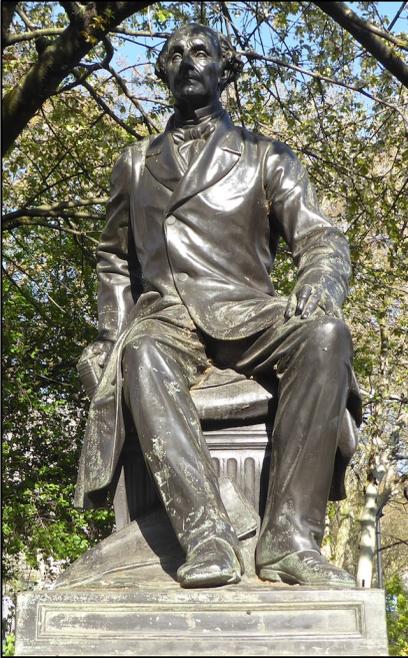
Marc came to England and kick started a revolution in automation by devising a block making machine for the Navy. The Navy needed thousands of wooden pulley blocks for their large sailing ships of the line. Parts of his machine can be seen at Chatham.

The Thames Tunnel is where Marc's son, **Isambard Kingdom Brunel** comes in. A great tunnelling shield was devised where men were able to dig away at the tunnel face, advance the shield and brick up behind it. (A distant descendant of the shield can be seen in the booking hall at Greenwich Maritime Station on the DLR.) Isambard was badly injured when there was a breakthrough of river water into the tunnel.

In 1833 Isambard was appointed to be Engineer to the **Great Western Railway**. The **GWR** was to be more than a main line to Bristol but a main line to New York! The port of Bristol was enlarged, and locks constructed ready to take Great Western's steam ships to New York.

Isambard started work at once surveying the proposed track. He travelled in a Britzska which was a forerunner of the present-day Motor Home. It contained an office, plans, surveying equipment, couch to sleep, engineering gear and was

pulled by two horses. Isambard worked night and day surveying, snatching sleep whenever he could. The Britzka was nicknamed the *Flying Hearse*. The survey started in March 1833 and was complete on time in March 1834.



Brunel in Temple Gardens in a thoughtful mode without cigar !

The Act of Parliament was eventually passed, and Isambard embarked on the greatest adventure of his life. He was simultaneously chief engineer to Clifton Bridge, Sutherland Docks, Bristol Docks and the Bristol and Gloucester Railway.

So, at thirty years of age Isambard commenced on probably the largest construction project in the World at that time. The line was to be built to **Broad Gauge** (Seven feet and a half inch), he had to devise ways of supporting the track and settled on longitudinal wooden sleepers supported every ten feet by transverse sleepers. Vertical stanchions were found to be too rigid and abandoned.

Isambard designed the magnificent terminus, Paddington Station with its

massive train shed to serve the Home counties and for Trains to Bristol. The route the line took to Bristol via Bath and north of the Marlborough Downs was to

avoid sharp slopes and was called Brunel's *Billiard Table* due to the lack of severe inclines.

Several notable engineering challenges faced Brunel on the route. The first being crossing the Brent Valley. The **Wharncliffe Viaduct** crossed the valley and is brick-built at an elevation of 66 feet, built in 1836. The viaduct was the first major structural design by I. K. Brunel, It was also the first railway viaduct to be built with hollow piers.

Maidenhead Bridge became the next engineering challenge. The Bridge was designed by Isambard. While it was being constructed, the innovative low-rise arches of the structure attracted considerable criticism and controversy surrounding their alleged lack of stability; as a result, the centring for the arches was left in place until it washed away during a heavy storm 1839, to leave the arches perfectly intact vindicating Brunel's design and today taking the heaviest



Paddington station, the spacious post broad gauge platforms below the massive train shed roof. In my youth we could drive down onto the platform to pick up passengers.

trains. It still has the largest brick-built span in the world.

**Swindon**; before Brunel got his hands on it Swindon was just an ordinary country town. It was almost the halfway point of the 113 miles journey from Paddington. A good point to change locomotives and refresh the passengers! But Brunel and Gooch transformed Swindon to be more than just a rest point. A large locomotive and wagon works was built and very high precision work carried out; no doubt under the influence of Maudsley. Housing estates were built to accommodate the workers, churches and learning institutes developed to improve the education of all. What vision the man had.

The **Box Tunnel** was the next barrier. When complete at that time it was the longest tunnel in the world. It had a gradient of one in a hundred. And rumour has it was in such a direction that the rising sun shone along it on Brunel's birthday! Never the less it was the largest civil works enterprise in the world at

that time. It cost twice the estimated sum and also cost one hundred workmen's lives. It is, of course still in use as the high speed route to Bristol.

With the Box Tunnel complete Brunel had to proceed to Bath and hence to Bristol. The works on this section were not in the same calibre as the line to Box but nevertheless challenging. The beautiful Bristol Temple Meads Station was built on arches and Bath being approached by a viaduct of 28 arches. The whole project was opened in June 1841. That is just seven years after Brunel commenced surveying the route!

Brunel did not seem to like building locomotives and his good friend **Daniel Gooch** did the deed by designing and building some exceedingly good locomotives. The locos ordered by Brunel were difficult to run and maintain, so Daniel at the age of twenty designed the Star Class which were capable of high speeds with the Iron Duke class achieving 70MPH. Although Dennis Smith alleged that the locomotive was capable and did a far higher speed but it was felt that it might scare the share holders if they knew the truth! Gooch was instrumental in identifying the site for the Swindon Works. At the trials between Broad gauge locomotives and Standard Gauge, Gooch's locomotives proved to be far superior in speed, stability and economy of coal consumption. But the die was cast and Broad Gauge disappeared.



Brunel's Paddington Hotel (now a Hilton) built to facilitate passengers waiting for boat trains ?

So ended a very informative evening the Speaker was thanked and applauded. David thanked for the teas and Peter for the raffle. The well informed group then wended their way home or other pastures.

PS. the scribe has omitted to write about the Atmospheric railways of Devon and will if the editor permits conclude later. **Ian J**



## The Narrow Gauge Garden Railway

The first public running day of the year enjoyed some lovely spring weather which enticed many people to our wonderful Colney heath site. In the spring sunshine the whole site looked fantastic, the forget-me-not was at its best and there were still enough bluebells in bloom to herald the transition into spring and of course this is entirely due to the hard work that is put in by some of our members. Thanks to all of you who put in the effort!

As for the garden railway all work is now suspended and just enjoying running trains is the order of the day, all recent track work renewal has proved useful and no gremlins have appeared, any cries of anguish and cursing are entirely due to driver error!! I have created a couple of stations located at various points round the layout to give a reason for trains to run in the first place. There is the sleepy bucolic Waterend where the most exciting thing happening is Sid the stationmaster playing with Gresley the station cat. North Mymms station is well equipped with passenger comforts in stark contrast to the minimal facilities at Castle Halt. The one thing they all have in common is a lack of fare paying passengers, which may explain the station closure notice on display at Waterend!

I'm also happy to report that the plants recently planted all seem to have settled in well and do make an attractive backdrop to passing trains. Of course a photo says a thousand words so I shall let them speak for themselves on the following pages.

Finally some of our members have American rolling stock so the garden railway on the public running day on June 2nd will be entirely stocked with good 'ol U S of A stock. This is to commemorate the "golden spike" ceremony when the East coast and West coast railroads met in Utah during May 1869 thus creating the world's first trans continental railway. There will be a mix of narrow and standard gauge stock, one thing is certain, it'll be loud! Yee-hah! report and photos next month.

John,  
Narrow Gauge Section Leader







## Marine News

We survived the first toy boat regatta of 2019, the weather turned up as booked and made for a pleasant social day. Many of the people who come do not belong to a home based club and this is one of the few times a year they all meet up making it a great place to swap and catch up on gossip. (I mean technical model marine business). We had a slight breeze which was enough for the small free sailing yachts along with mine and Steve's newly build footy's, but not enough for the larger ones.

Also a vast array of tin clockwork, put-put and steam launch's along with an underwater fish/submarine.

Even the little yellow buzzy things behaved but I think that was down to them being driven by Dave's son who proved they can co-exist on the water without wrecking everything in sight. But we did keep two lifeboats on standby. Not for the boats but to rescue Dave if he was pushed in by any other upset visitors.



Thanks to all who helped make sure the water was clear of tree debris and fit for purpose along with Steve's constant Tea supply, Brian A and Paul G ran their locos on the 5" taking visitors around the site. We all had a good day and look



forward to next time. Second Sunday in July and September. Photos by Steve and me.



**George,  
Marine  
Section  
Leader  
(Summer  
job)**



## G.L.R. News.      June 2019.

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. A day to not forget for me!

The previous evening I had been pressure testing the old girl on air and had pumped the boiler up to about seventy five pounds (sterling in old money works better) having sealed and tightened every nut and fitting I did not think for one minute she would hold up all night long. Monday morning started like any other after bringing up HWMBO a cup of tea the love of my life started to pontificate about where to go to effect the renewal of food stocks for the coming week. Yes dear, stifling a yawn, the jam's cheap at Lidl said I, simultaneously remembering last night's antics in the workshop, How long till we go shopping dear? Not hearing the answer I ran downstairs wondering has it or has it not held the pressure; lurching into the workshop there she sat in all her glory, polished brass, balloon stack, cow catcher and lantern fitted a sight for sore eyes. Not hesitating, I pulled the throttle (American) regulator (English) and with a whoosh and a crash the cow catcher acted as a sort of ram bursting majestically through the end of the shed, followed by the rest of the loco; a profound moment, not unlike the birth of my last four children but without the messy bits and cheaper, Maid Marion is alive and well and judging by her entrance we are in for a lot of fun !!



If you believe what is written above you need to go and set up camp in the middle of the cuckoo line.

By the time you receive this Newsletter the running season will be upon us and I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the crew who



First view outside on the 8th April 2019

worked relentlessly through the winter to improve and beautify our wonderful track and grounds at Tyttenhanger. I have been encouraged by the number of members who have remarked at how nice and railway like the track at Smallford now looks with its new track bed of pink granite, refurbished turntable, painted up bench, and cream fencing to boot. There are also plans afoot to smarten up the covered steaming bay, the object being to make it more user friendly by shielding us from the wind and

also again to make the area more railway like. This has come about because we have some fresh G.L. members on side now and with them has come some very good Ideas that will have the crews and hopefully club's full support.

Quiz of the month, and the question is – “what is Cookie doing in the picture on the next page?” Only printable answers please.

**The big clear up.**

It has been said to me that the chairman's job is not an easy one! All I could say to the gentleman who said that to me was “he walks around all day telling people what to do with his hands in his pockets” I must now sort of eat my words as come the day of the big clean up cometh the man, Les was right in

there, posh gloves on and a smile on his face he looked every bit the part as he began to throw many a useful item in the skip even though they hadn't been used for the last decade or more, many things went in and not much came out (maybe that was down to old Badger being down the west country) we had acquired three hydraulic car jacks, Three enamel lamp shades, an electric fan that had a built in and out water connection (any clues to that one), old battery chargers, a roadside salt box that was full of empty plastic milk cartons, a non working mortuary table, There seemed to be lots of castor wheels and frames with wheels attached, a large electrical box that had dials and switches that weighed quite a bit (that made some trusses bulge when putting it in the skip), and empty gas bottles. All good stuff and whoever gets the job of sorting that lot out will be a rich man. Members I haven't seen for years appeared on site to claim their stuff; some even phoned me to enquire if their item will still be there. A job well done, Tyttenhanger looks a little bit nicer for the effort of the usual guys and of course the guy who takes the can back, our chairman, (I think we may need another skip) as we have not looked in all the hiding places and if you have anything you think is very useful please do not bring it to the track give it to your next door neighbour or someone you don't like, anyone but not Tyttenhanger.

As ever in the skip,

Pete, G.L. Section Leader.



## Tales from the (almost) smallest room: A VISIT TO ELKINGTON NLSME 0-Gauge group

The best way to get to Elkington is, of course, by railway. After our train eases past the gas works (still under construction) and slows to a stop in the passenger platform of the terminus station, we alight, late in the afternoon, as the light starts to fade.

Leaving the station we note its architectural differences from the townscape around us – the station building squat and stone-built, like a little country station, while the town that we glimpse around us in the twilight is in the brick-built style of the south or midlands – almost as if the station were built first, and a strange town from a different area plonked down around it at a later date! Perhaps one day, we muse, the station building might be replaced with something more fitting to its surroundings.



In need of refreshment after the journey, the first building we encounter outside the station is the Bottle and Glass Inn. (The original of this establishment is now to be found in the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley, according to a well-informed correspondent who is involved with the museum's trams).

A pint or two of 0-gauge cardboard beer later, we stroll down High Road looking in the well-lit shop windows as we pass, including the fishmonger, post office, hardware shop, butcher and greengrocer. The High Road ends at the parish church, outside which the Vicar greets a young couple no doubt planning their



nuptials. Rumour has it however that the first floor bedroom window of the adjacent vicarage reveals an alternate version of reality: the Vicar enjoying an evening of pleasure with a well-endowed and compliant lady parishioner ...

=oOo=

The buildings pictured alongside this article and taken by Bill Bass came from the late Roger Elkin's garden railway which was called the Backford and Stanton Light Railway. Roger made most of the buildings and installed the electric lighting. Some buildings were made by Roger's friend, Ann, and her daughter Katy. Ann's father was, in the distant past, the vicar of St. Luke's Church, Enfield, just up the road from Roger's home. You will note that the Church on our layout is St. Luke's. Roger's garden layout was dismantled last summer.

Geoff B and Paul G made moves to acquire some of the scenery from Roger's railway. Eventually some boxes arrived in Geoff's car, and, in festive mood, we unpacked beautifully made and finished card kits of shops, houses, the church, some industrial buildings, and a railway gas works made from household items like a paint tin and some ¼" BSP pipework.

The original location of these model buildings was in a partly covered area of Roger's garden layout. After sorting through the various properties, Bill Bass evicted the remaining residents (mostly spiders) and did structural repairs like

gluing back peeling brickwork, and I checked out their lighting circuits, which seemed to glow very dimly until Geoff explained that Roger had used a 24v system rather than 12v.



A new length of board was set up to be the High Road as described above. Another new section of baseboard has been opened up in a previously unused alcove, on which Paul and Bill are currently assembling the gas works and its sidings. Hopefully this area might be the subject of a future report.



Article written by Stephen A with contributions from the rest of the Gauge 0 team. All photos by Bill Bass.

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Peter Precious. RIP.  
1928-2019.

Peter sadly died on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 92 years of age. He spent the last few months of his life being well cared for in a rest home in Hemel Hempstead and will be sadly missed.

Peter was one of seven children and had experienced the war as a school boy. When he left school, he went to work in insurance at Lloyds and did well. He enjoyed many hobbies. He appreciated photography and developed his own photographs using his mother's bathroom as a 'Dark Room'. Electronics was another hobby and he apparently built up his own television when TV came into being. He enjoyed caravanning and bought a motor home in his eighties!

Of course, model engineering became an absorbing hobby. When he settled in St. Albans he joined the North London Society of Model Engineers, originally the scribe understands as a member of the cine section, but became a time served member of the locomotive section. When a vacancy came up for a Club treasurer he applied and was approved of and became a jolly good and astute treasurer. He was treasurer for about five years.

Peter was a keen member both at the track and at head quarters but as the years passed infirmity prevented his attendance and he just kept up via the good old News Sheet.

Thank you from all of us Peter, for your service and friendship may you rest in peace.

**lan**

## Dates for your Diary

<b>JUNE</b>	<b>2019</b>
31st May, 1st & 2nd June	Fetes & Fairs at Herts Steam Rally
Sun 2nd June	Public running at Colney Heath 2pm – 5pm
Tues 4th June	Council Meeting at HQ, 8pm
Fri 7th June	General Meeting to be held at Colney Heath 7pm First Aid
Sat 8th June	David L, Birthday Party
Sun 9th June	Fetes & Fairs at Oaklands
Sat 15th June	Fetes & Fairs at Hertingfordbury
Sun 16th June	Public running at Colney Heath 2pm – 5pm
Sun 16th June	Fetes & Fairs at Marsworth
<b><i>Fri 21st June</i></b>	<b><i>Deadline for copy to Editor for July News Sheet</i></b>
Sat 22nd June	Centennial Birthday Party – Derek P
Sat 22nd June	Fetes & Fairs at Kings Langley
Sun 23rd June	Beaver Scouts visit to Colney Heath contact Les B
Sun 23rd June	Fetes & Fairs at George Spicer school, Enfield
Sun 23rd June	Charity event in Barnet help needed contact Ian J
Sat 29th June	Derek P Birthday Party
Sun 30th June	Fetes & Fairs at Larks in the Park
<b>JULY</b>	<b>2019</b>
Tues 2nd July	Council Meeting at HQ, 8pm
Fri 5th July	General Meeting to be held at Colney Heath, 7pm BBQ
Sat 6th July	Birthday Party, Sally D
Sat 6th July	Fetes & Fairs at Slip End
Sun 7th July	Public running at Colney Heath 2pm – 5pm
Wed 10th July	G1 visit by Kent group
Sat 13th July	H0 section invitation to Colney Heath
Sun 14th July	Toy Boat Regatta at CH contact George C
Tues 16th July	TSC Meeting at St. Mark's Church Centre, 8pm