

North West Area Group Newsletter

March 2018



New web site up and running

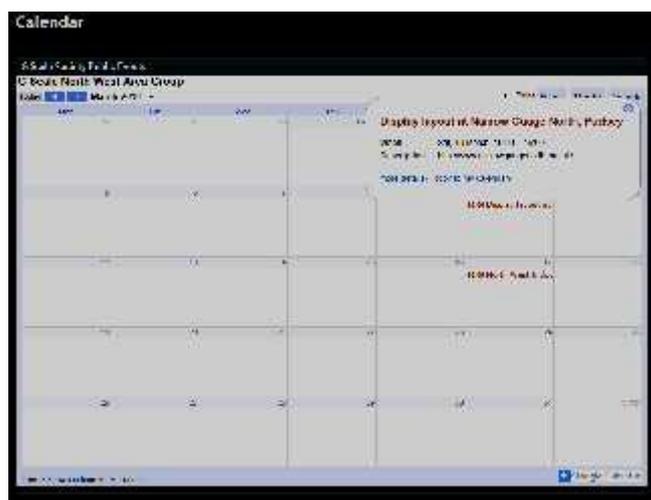
Find our new web site at:

<http://www.northwestgscale.co.uk>

The NW website is progressing *slowly* with the calendar updated for all NW events organised so far for this year. The exhibitions manager has 3 bookings for the display layout which are listed and as usual would be delighted to receive offers of assistance.

As soon as members decide on dates for their open days The Secretary will add them to the calendar but without any personal contact details. Anybody wishing to discover more will be directed to his e-mail and he will filter as appropriate.

The back file of NWAG Newsletters will appear as soon as the editor is able to re-edit them to remove all names and addresses to preserve confidentiality and ensure that no one is visited late at night by that well know lover of trains (and anything easily portable), Bill Sykes.



G-Wizz, We Broke the Record Again!

Despite freezing temperatures and much of the country affected by heavy snow and ice model railway enthusiasts and families flocked to the famous White Church in Lytham St. Annes for the 20th Annual Festive Model Railway Exhibition organised by the G-Wizz Garden Railway Display Team, which was held Saturday 9th December. This year's event was in support of the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital Cancer Ward 84.

With some exhibitors travelling from North Wales and south of Manchester there were slight changes to the planned line up. One exhibitor was still recovering from his recent operation so his place was taken by the second G-Wizz layout "Snowy Mountain". The Group displayed two Christmas layouts providing a spectacular centre piece to the show.

Children and quite a lot of adults too were enthralled by the dazzling displays and layouts from all over the North West of England and North Wales in a variety of popular scales from N gauge through to the Fylde Society of Model Engineers' 5" gauge locomotive models capable of hauling passengers.

For children of the modern age there was a fine working layout of Playmobil trains which the visitors were allowed to drive. This display was by two former Lytham residents who return to the show each year from their home in North Wales to be at the event. Trams from Lytham St. Annes were on static display to celebrate 80 years since they last ran in the town.

There was also a fine scale large tram models together with trams and there was a photo display. Two layouts were displayed by members of the Blackpool and North Fylde MRC, "Ripley's Mine" and "Two Seasons", several of whose members also belong to the North West G-Scale Group, one of whom who put on a fantastic G scale layout which kept the kids entertained.

The show also had a number of model railway traders, ensuring that local modellers were able to stock up on items for the long winter nights ahead .

With the support of a number of individual exhibitors the event was another resounding success, in spite of the lack of real trains to the Fylde Coast due to electrification works plus many road works closures and diverted buses. Thanks must go to all the traders throughout the Fylde who kindly helped to support by displaying posters for the show and the Lytham St. Annes Express for publicity prior to the event.

A team from the G-Wizz Group travelled to Manchester on the next Monday to attend a presentation of a cheque for £1024. This is a new record amount for this event , which despite the weather attracted around 400

Right:
G-Wizz Group's
'Snowy Mountain'
display



Below:
Playmobil layout



Above: G-Scale Display

Below: G-Wizz It's Christmas display



visitors to brave the cold and support this very well deserving charity.

Left: The G-Wizz team and the RMCH mascot; 13 year old leukaemia survivor with the cheque - we are happy to see her looking so well now



NWAG 2017-18 Calendar of Events

Saturday 10 th March	Group Display Layout 'Coal Mining Valley' at Narrow Gauge North, Pudsey, 10.00am - 4.00pm
Saturday 17 th March	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Saturday 21 st April	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet NWAG AGM
Sunday 13 th May 	G Rail 2018, Nottingham 10.00am - 5.00pm Details: http://gscalesociety.com/g-rail-event
Saturday 19 th May	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Saturday 19 th May & Sunday 20 th May	Group Display Layout 'Coal Mining Valley' at Manchester Bus Museum 10.00am - 4.00pm
Saturday 16 th June	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
July & August	Outdoor Meets in Members' Gardens (Details to be announced as they become available)
Saturday 15 th September	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Saturday 20 th October	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Saturday 17 th November	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Saturday 15 th December	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
<p>Notes: Our NWAG meetings are normally held on the third Saturday of the month All garden open days run from 2.00-5.00pm unless otherwise stated</p>	



G Scale NWAG 2018 AGM 12 noon Saturday 21st April



1. Group leader's welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Treasurer's report
4. Secretary's report
5. Newsletter Editor's Report
6. Election of officers
 - Group leader (Post vacant)
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
7. Election of committee
(Current members of the Committee are listed on the back page of this Newsletter)
8. A.O.B

Please do come! It has not escaped the Committee's attention that the attendance at the Meet where we have the AGM is often the lowest of the year! It doesn't last hours, only a short while as there is not often much business to discuss. (I think the record, set a few years ago, was 7 minutes!) If anyone wants to stand for the vacant post of Group Leader, please contact the Secretary, we will be delighted to hear from you.

Helping with the display layout

The exhibition manager could always do with help to run the CMV when we take it to exhibitions. Helping at a display can be fun, so why not give it a go, especially if it is somewhere near where you live. The next trip out is soon, 10th March, so why not get in touch and see if you can help?

A Grand Day Out At G-Wizz

G-wizz! Always the friendliest and most delightful of shows, it is a real privilege to be invited to take part. Also a show which was much missed last year due to the most adverse of circumstances.

This year I was able to provide a G scale layout, ably assisted by my colleague from Storth Model Railway Club. At first the auguries were not favourable. The forecast was for snow, and as I headed across the Fylde to the venue, the White Church at Lytham, there was sleet and snow on the road. I was therefore surprised and pleased to find



Left: The N gauge 'Two seasons' layout

Above: G Scale layout



that everyone else had managed the journey, some from far Wigan, North Wales and Cumbria.

As always I filled the car with far more than would ever make it out onto the layout. This was my preferred compressed figure of eight which provides a long run in a restricted space and an interest as the trains change circuit. One or two recent acquisitions were added to the scenery, notably a pub garden from a recently dismantled system and a Pola diner which arrived just in time from an online auction, complete with flashing sign. Other flashing signs remained forgotten in their boxes. Ah well, another time!

I do like to use a mix of the more accurate models with the Playmobil, especially since much of the latter fits in so well. Hence the Playmobil harbour with the fishing boats and the row of medieval cottages.

My helper brought his Galloping Goose and a gandy dancer, along with the Playmobil maintenance train. A fellow G scaler sent round a Coca Cola lorry, thankfully without the singing boxcar, and I ran a recently acquired Feldbahn loco and the diminutive Cleo, as well as a couple of conversions I had acquired in the past.



It's always fun to put in a few small dioramas and various figures from the media for folk to pick out, especially the youngsters. For those who like picking them out, and the kids are best at it, there were Spiderman, Miss Piggy and Kermit, and others, and a small gathering of meerkats. And, of course, Wallace and Grommit. Not necessarily to scale but then what actually is scale here? What was said about the lady in the red dress outside the George and Flagon I shall draw a veil over...

A good, long day and a very pleasant one, talking to old friends and new.

And then the fight to get all the gear back into the car. Always a puzzle that what arrived didn't seem to want to fit in for the return journey, even though I had been very restrained and not brought any more gear. And back home for a decent meal and a long rest. And a look forward to next year. Thank you, G-Wizz, for a great day!

Cool Running! In Blackpool rather than at Pyeongchang....



Christmas running in Blackpool but no snow, unlike the rest of the UK....

I went with a friend to the NEC exhibition last month and came home with a big Aristocraft box. It was my friend's early Christmas present to himself and as these things have to be done, we



had it running in my garden on 28th Dec. It was a cold but dry day and considering my track hasn't been cleaned in months, it ran very well!

New Wheels for Old!



When he was feeling philosophical, my ex-boss used to say that an engineer was "A person who could do for half a crown what any fool could do for a pound." He could not have been the creator of that phrase because he was not that inventive but the point is well made and it was pre decimalisation.

I was having a look through my junk box the other day and his thoughts came back to me. Like many of us who have run USA Trains diesels over the years, I have a collection of drive axles that have failed, mostly due to the plastic central gear having stripped or split.

In an "AHA" moment, I thought "I can do something creative with these". I have bought lots of cheap wagons over the years that have been fitted with plastic wheels and axles and I have converted them to metal wheels to improve their running ability. However, the cost of metal wheels and axles sometimes exceeded the price paid for the wagon and this was clearly not cost effective. Then I thought I could use the scrap axles as an alternative to buying new wheel sets.



With the judicious use of a hair dryer or hot air gun, a scrap USA Trains axle can be separated into two wheels and the brass bearings pulled off the axle.



All that is then needed is some 9/32" (7.1mm) Styrene tube cut to length and pushed over the wheels to cre-



ate a new axle/wheelset at minimum cost.

Again, the hair dryer/hot air gun is of help but be careful not to use too much heat. I have now got half a dozen of these wheel sets running on my railway and running perfectly well.

Well said boss.!

A Well-Attended January Meet

The January Meet, often poorly attended, this time saw a good crowd of folk coming with trains to run. Probably the most interesting thing was this loco, linked via Bluetooth and a redundant mobile phone card to a boom box to give sound without the expensive sound module and speakers. The result was impressive and also impressively cheap compared to a commercial sound module and speakers in the loco. I hope to have an article about this in a future issue along with one on a cheaper (well, comparatively cheaper!) system of battery conversion for locos that uses AA batteries and fits easily in most engines and allows full radio control.



High Capacity AA Rechargeable Batteries

Brought to my attention by a couple of members at the December Meet, these high capacity rechargeable AA batteries are well worth knowing about if you, like me, run battery powered locos such as the Playmobil or LGB trains.

Instead of the 2650mAh capacity, these take 4600mAh, with the result that they run for much longer. Cutting down on the need to replace batteries during running sessions, especially if there are children involved (as there are at least 3 of us that I know of), being a very good thing!

Downside? More expensive, especially if you buy them from a shop, but not unreasonable if you go on eBay, where they currently retail at about £5.60 for 4. Also they take a lot longer to recharge, so some forward planning is in order.

They also do an AAA version and there could be others, but I haven't checked on that.



G-Scale Society North West Area Group

**Secretary &
Membership Secretary**
gsnw@hotmail.co.uk

NWAG Newsletter Editor
nwageditor@gmail.com

Data Protection

All personal information has been removed from this Newsletter to comply with the national G-Scale Society policy on data protection and personal security of members



Keep your email address up to date!
If you want the email colour version of the Newsletter
then let the secretary know of changes