

The last
“Rumblings
from the
Man Cave”

see page 6



KEEPING YOU INFORMED



What have roundabouts
got to do with railways?

find out - page 11

MARCH 2017

ISSUE 44

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All article text and photographs are by the authors except for images for "The Funnies" which are drawn from the internet and are, with our apologies, original source unknown.

Should we, inadvertently, have infringed your copyright please accept our apologies, let us know and we will publish an appropriate acknowledgement and apology in the next available issue.

IT'S UP TO YOU

This Newsletter relies for its content on material supplied by its readers and no-one else. It does not 'pick up' on articles in other publications, it does not syndicate and it tries to reflect no-one's views and opinions other than those of its readers.

You can help to maintain that integrity by 'keeping in touch' let us know what you think, what you are doing with your hobby. If you have any ideas about how this Newsletter could be improved, what you like or don't like about it, then please contact the Newsletter either through "Over to You" or to the Editor direct at.....

"MMRG-NewsLetter@hotmail.com"

THE NEWSLETTER

YOUR TEAM (so far)

Editor	Mike Hebblethwaite
Research (internet trawling!)	Mike Hebblethwaite
The fun bits	Mike Hebblethwaite
	Alek Adamski

If you would like to join the team and set up a regular (or even occasional!) feature, please contact the Editor. At the moment this Newsletter is too much a "one man band"! All contributions are welcome.

CONTACT THE NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter now has its own e-mail contact address, which is :-

"MMRG-NewsLetter@hotmail.com"

We hope we will have a very full 'in-tray' each month!

Any ideas about what we should include, any contributions you may wish to make about yourself and your interests, any news, recommended hobby outlets or just a general "Hi" to fellow readers would be very welcome.

It's your Newsletter! Use it.

NEWSLETTER POLICY

This Newsletter is freely distributed to regular subscribers and is available to download through *Macclesfield Model Railway Group's* web site. Some of our information is derived from the internet and we try to acknowledge sources where ever we can. However, it is not always possible to trace original sources with the limited facilities that we have and apologise unreservedly in advance for any oversight.

As a reader/recipient of this Newsletter, you are free to distribute it amongst your friends and family, other clubs and societies to which you may belong or use any part of it to promote and further interest in railway modelling.

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With regard to commercial/for profit use of our material, we have to rely on trust - we have no way of monitoring such use. If you do intend to use our material in such a way, please ask for permission first. It is unlikely to be refused but, at the very least, an acknowledgement would be expected in return.

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING

Our policy, at present, is that this publication will carry no commercial advertising. It is a Newsletter! However, should you wish to place an "advertising article" concerning a new product, an up-grade to an existing product or a more general "of benefit/interest to railway modellers" article, please contact "The Editor" via e-mail initially. It is understood that such features do not carry the endorsement of MMRG unless specified.

AND FINALLY

This Newsletter is produced for and on behalf of Macclesfield Model Railway Group as part of their 'constitutional' obligation to promote and support the hobby of railway modelling. MMRG, under it's own rules, is obliged to pursue 'educational' opportunities within the hobby and this Newsletter is proud to play its part.

No price can be placed on the value of 'education', which is why this Newsletter is, and always will be, free.

EDITORIAL

When I retired at Christmas to a chorus of "Good luck and enjoy the rest, you've earned it!" I thought of all the time I would have to enjoy making models. In fact I'd planned to replace my old 'working hours' with what amounted to full-time model making. What do they say about the best laid plans? I very quickly discovered that what I'd settled on as 'Plan A' rapidly evolved into 'Plan B' and I still have no time to make models part-time, never mind full-time!

Of course it's not really fair of me to pass judgement just yet. It is an exceptionally busy time for the Club and I seem, along with other Club members, to be spending much of my time getting ready for the exhibition and the AGM that soon follows.

However, I am still left wondering when 'retirement' actually starts!

Enough of my woes before someone reminds me that it is all very well complaining about having no shoes 'til you meet a man with no feet!

Unfortunately, this Newsletter contains some rather sad news with the passing of Alastair Facer (see page 6), the 'surfacing' of some excellent quality, hand laid coarse scale '0' gauge track (page 5) following another bereavement and the donation of a very fine 'N' scale layout to the Club (page 11) as a result of ill health.

We don't just have sad news, of course.

We have another of Ken Ratcliff's articles reflecting on his memories of days now long gone at Diggle Junction with a great, atmospheric photo. What a wonderful sight it must have been to see two 'Jubs' "leaning into the collar" on that cold, snowy day.....and how fortunate for us that Ken had his camera handy at the time!

I can't put it off any longer! This "Luddite" is now very much a convert to the potential value of social media and its ability to spread messages to parts that other media cannot reach.

I talked recently to Colin Moores who has undertaken to manage the Club's website and social media pages (i.e. Facebook and Twitter). I was staggered by the numbers he started throwing at me, the demographics, the age groups, the gender split of enquirers and the sheer volume of people responding. I had no idea that we were able to communicate to and with so many people!

His article (see page 7) is a mere 'scratch of the surface' but does serve to show how effective these avenues of communication are.

As a result of talking to him, I have used my own Facebook page to promote our forthcoming exhibition with some 'public' posts and have been amazed by the number of people who have responded to them and not just from amongst my friends!! All I asked folk to do was 'like' and 'share' them. These posts then appear on their own Facebook pages where they can be viewed, 'liked' and 'shared' by their contacts. And so on. The potential for the

circulation of one simple post to grow exponentially is huge! I cannot think of any other form of 'advertising' that has such potential.

Perhaps you would like to take part in what is, for us, a very novel and experimental approach toward making people aware that the show is happening? If you have a Facebook account, simply look up "Macclesfieldmrg" or "Mike Hebblethwaite" and 'Like' and 'Share' any of the public posts relating to the show. These will then appear on your Facebook page for your contacts to see. We've only a few days to go, so let's see how far we can spread the word!

I guess I really don't have to tell you what a great show our exhibition is. Most of our readers 'signed up' to this Newsletter at previous shows and I know that many of you are 'serial attenders' and you've had a preview of what's coming in last month's Newsletter and there are some great layouts!

But, perhaps I've saved the 'icing on the cake' 'til last!

Our catering is well known on the exhibition circuit as being amongst the very best and beats many bigger shows hands down. This year we are aiming for it to be as good as, if not better than, ever. The same team, the same high standard and some new ideas.

What's not to like?

As if March wasn't busy enough, two weeks after the show is the Club's AGM!

For members it is the time and opportunity to assess what the Committee and Club have been doing for the past year and to make whatever changes they wish to the structure of the Club's Committee. It is for the members to decide what direction they wish the Club to take in the coming year and select the Committee that will best achieve that. It is important that members play as full a part as possible.

For non-members, it is an opportunity to offer suggestions, ideas and even advice concerning the Club and its future shape and role. It is vital that we listen to your voice, too. We have, over the course of the past year, made some changes to the Club as a result of feedback from this Newsletter's readers. You, too, have an important role to play. You can contact the Club either through this Newsletter or via the Club's website at

["www.macclesfieldmrg.org.uk"](http://www.macclesfieldmrg.org.uk)

by simply 'clicking' on the link.

That's it. Enjoy the read and, hopefully, we'll see you at the show.

DIARY DATE FOR A.G.M.

Friday 24th March

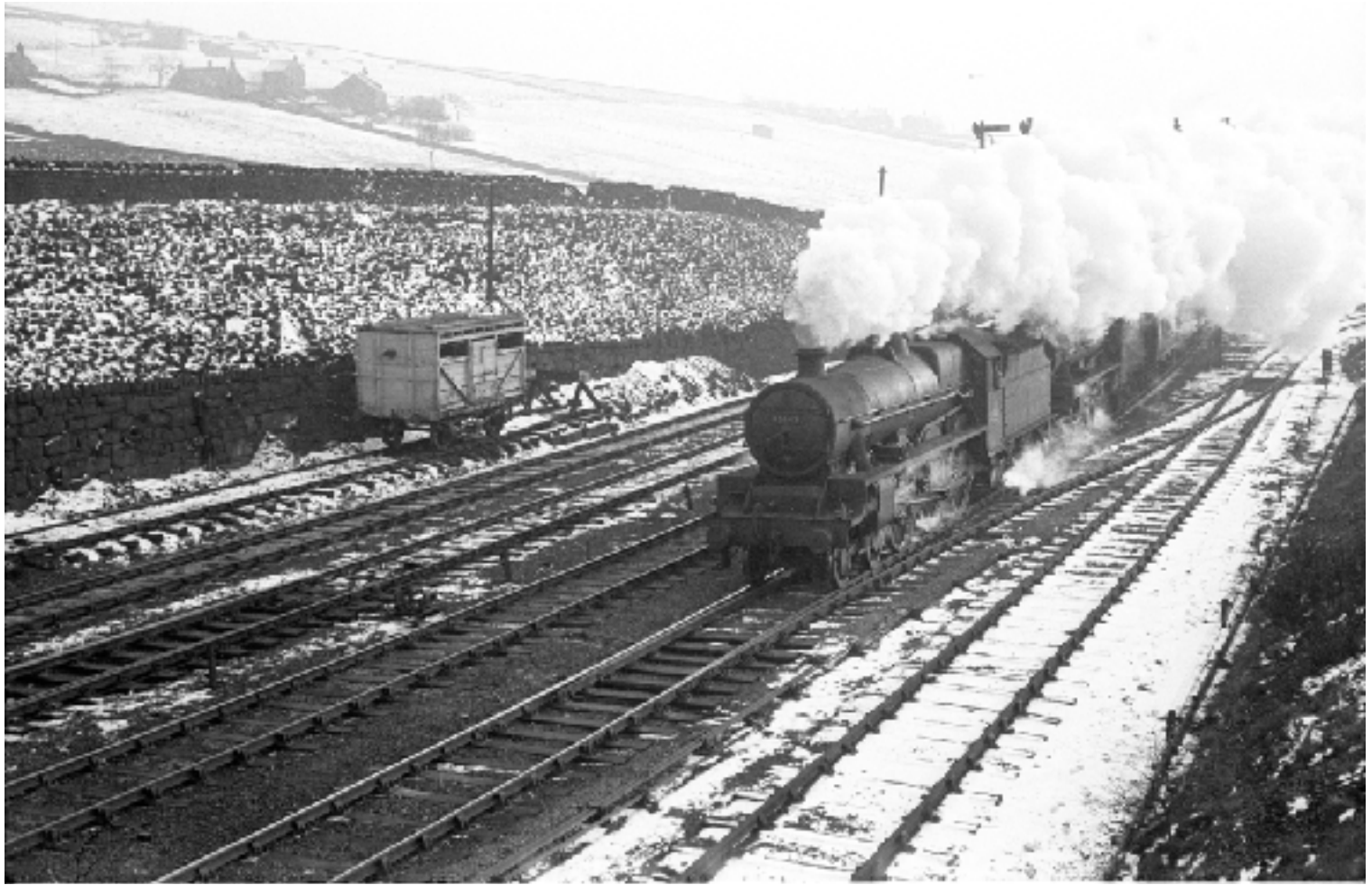
8.00pm

Clubroom

JUBILEES AT DIGGLE JUNCTION

Ken Ratcliff

Between the ages 9 and 27, my home was in Dobcross, in the Saddleworth district, east of Oldham, and just west of the Pennine watershed, or, as we might prefer to call it, Standedge Tunnel. This accounts for what may become a boring short series of railway photographs taken in that area. Our house, indeed my bedroom, looked out across to Saddleworth Viaduct, and the Micklehurst Loop beyond it, and I came to recognise most of the engine types that passed, though it was just too far away to read the engine numbers. Rebuilt Scots and rebuilt Patriots were recognisable by the impression of a sloping front given by their smoke deflectors; black fives and Jubilees were distinguishable by their very different exhausts if they were going eastwards (up the hill). A Jubilee working hard up the hill made a



wonderful roaring sound which filled the valley. Since I'm an old codger, that time meant that the trains were all steam, and even retained the LMS lettering (in the case of non-glamorous types), 'British Railways' more frequently, but most of all, certainly when I was mature enough to take photos, the lion and wheel emblem.

The photograph attached, from the mid 1950s, shows an express on the last stage of the climb to the Standedge tunnel, on the former LNWR main line from Liverpool and Manchester, to Leeds and beyond. As an express, this train would probably go on to Hull or Newcastle, with a change of motive power at Leeds. The train is hauled by two Jubilee 4-6-0s, the leading engine being 45642, Boscawen. The leading engine may have been hooked on at Manchester's Exchange Station (it was based at 26A Newton Heath), and will remain for the rest of the journey as far

as Leeds, since, after Huddersfield, the serious adverse gradients are certainly not over with. Unless the train was scheduled to stop at Dewsbury (most expresses weren't), it would almost certainly take the "Leeds New" line from Heaton Lodge Junction, where the LNW meets the L&Y line, to Leeds, thus avoiding the congestion (in those days) of the Calder Valley, and that new line was seriously hilly and sharply curved. When the railway was busy, up to the Beeching era, that difficult line between Huddersfield and Leeds, by avoiding conflict with all the freight on the L&Y around Mirfield, was the normal route; it has long since disappeared.

The train in the photo is on the double track main line which comes up the Tame Valley from Stalybridge via Greenfield, basically on the west side, until crossing the river over Saddleworth Viaduct. The layout looks like a four track job but it's not quite that, the next two well used lines to the left are those of the Micklehurst Loop, now rejoining the Original. When that loop

was created, to relieve the congestion on the original main line, a new tunnel was built through Standedge. The original tunnel was a single bore, quickly followed by another single bore, and finally a new wide tunnel was built to cater for two tracks. At this point, the Micklehurst loop lines were aligned to the original twin bores, whilst the original main went straight into the new tunnel. The train will pass Diggle junction and its yards, then Diggle Station, finally plunging into the darkness for just over 3 miles, within a couple of minutes of the shot. The Junction is simply the merging of the two routes up the hill from Stalybridge, with crossovers, but there were no diverging routes in the usual sense.

On the right of the photo is a snowy track from the down yard, going to the right to cross the adjoining Huddersfield narrow Canal and serve Dobcross Loom Works. On the far left is the headshunt of Diggle's Up Yard. The

curious vehicle parked there looks like a converted cattle truck with a low flat boarded roof, which might indicate its use as a tunnel inspection vehicle.

These two locos are both Jubilees, and both have the 3500 gallon Fowler tender. That's not too much of a problem on these Liverpool to Leeds turns. The summit of the climb from Manchester is the entrance to Standedge Tunnel, which, being level, not only provides a break for the fireman, but also offers water troughs just inside. One of the 'Jubs' can replenish there, the other down in Huddersfield Station, if necessary.

The background steam almost totally obscures the signals for the junction. These are LNWR lower quadrants, so the fact that the train is pegged correctly doesn't show – if the "off" signal for the train had been upper quadrant, its arm would be seen pointing upwards out of the steam.

45642 Boscawen was in fact the first Jubilee built, in 1934, with the number 4552. In 1935 it was decided to name the locos in the class, and as it was George V's Silver Jubilee year, that was the name to be bestowed on the class leader. However, 4552 was no longer as new and smart by then, so a newer loco, then bearing the number 5642, was chosen to bear the Silver Jubilee name and be class leader. This meant that it swapped identities with the original 4552, so our engine became 5642 instead, being named Boscawen shortly afterwards. So Boscawen in our photo is in fact the first Jubilee ever built, the new 4552 receiving a special gloss black paint job with chrome plated number, insignia, and handrails, window surrounds, and various knobs and excrescences. The jubilees were named (apart from 4552 version 2) after naval figures, ships and battles, and also after places in the British Empire.

45642 Boscawen was not actually liked by all the footplate staff. Steaming troubles gave the class a bad reputation, but were largely solved by higher superheat and other tweaks, but for some reason 45642 remained as a vague black sheep of the family, yet it remained at Newton Heath for most of its life, so some of the men there must have learned to overcome its foibles, and it was never snidely sloped off to somewhere else as soon as they could transfer it.

Finally, the photo conveys the cold of the weather up there in the hills. You can be certain that there was no snow in Manchester when the train set of from Exchange, with a banker on the rear, roared through the centre of Victoria, then bent vertically to tackle Miles Platting Bank, the banker dropping back at Miles Platting junction, the train then going onward through dismal places like Clayton Bridge and Park, then Ashton and Stalybridge and Mossley, through industrial wastelands, treeless brown heaths, in dark sooty cuttings, onward through the gloom of vast pollution from smoking chimneys, finally emerging in the opening uplands of Saddleworth, but where it was bitterly cold on days like that of the photo. The descent the other side from Marsden to Huddersfield was a balancing descent back into the murk of the Colne Valley. The footplate of those locos was probably the best place to be as well as the most exciting, but steam heated carriages could get up quite a comforting fug, though at the expense of steam-up windows. These trains always had ample seating, it seemed, being twelve or so coaches long. By making few stops, the journey times were reasonable, until the Trans-Pennine Swindon-built diesel sets appeared, but I gather that the normal train is class 158 2-car DMU these days, and that many passengers have to stand for the journey.

ATTENTION ALL COARSE 'O' GAUGERS!

Mike Hebblethwaite



Macclesfield Model Railway Club was recently contacted regarding a significant quantity of 'O' gauge (coarse) track that had, until a few months ago, been used for a live steam garden railway.

There are a number of points, including crossovers (both left and right) and double track turnouts, as well as a mix of brass and steel rail straight sections of track. Each straight section is approximately 3ft in length. All the

track work has been hand laid (with chairs) on wooden sleepers with wooden stringer supports and has been constructed to a high standard.

If you, or anyone you know, are interested in this rare opportunity to extend or even start your 'O' scale railway empire or are looking for track to run your own 'Mamod' (or similar) live steam, electric or even clockwork locos, then look no further.

Please contact me at the Newsletter address and I will forward your interest to the vendor.



FINAL REPORT FROM AL FACER'S 'MAN CAVE'

Mike Hebblethwaite



Sadly I have to report the passing of Alastair Facer, known to some as 'Big Al' (he was over 6 ft tall), who's funeral took place on Tuesday 14th February at Macclesfield crematorium. In contrast with many funerals, his was very much a celebration of his life and a time to share individual memories of him.

Our thoughts, of course, are with his family his wife Jackie, sons Matt and Rob and daughters Sarah and Faye at this very sad and difficult time.

Al was born in Llandudno in 1952 and, to the very end, maintained great pride in his Welsh heritage. Those of you who may have known him through 'Facebook' will be well aware of his support for all things Welsh - especially rugby! Any Wales v England match was always an opportunity for Al to sport the Welsh Dragon and have a humorous dig at the English and receive a few digs in return. His 'Facebook' page was always entertaining on such occasions!

The humour he showed on 'Facebook' was typical of him slightly off beat, very quick and always with a wry smile.

Al was an inveterate 'tinkerer' whether as a teenager trying to and succeeding in resurrecting motorbikes and his Lambretta that were well past their 'sell by date', or as an adult collecting broken model railway locomotives and restoring them to their former glory. Al just had to know what made things 'tick' and, having learnt that, would delight in restoring the 'tick' to things that no longer did.

Al loved diesels (this was something I forgave him for a long time ago!) and his passion for them was first ignited at Llandudno junction. They were an impressive sight rolling into the station from either direction with their boat trains (to and from Holyhead) and 'holiday specials' as well as the day to day traffic that passed through. But it wasn't just the trains that interested Al so much as the rails. Where did they come from? Where do they go? That sparked Al's interest in the railway system itself having the locos is all well and good, but it's the rails that make the system 'tick'. Al never wanted to just admire the railways, he wanted to understand them.

Although Al's time as an active Club member was all too brief, his impact was immediate and his enthusiasm infectious. He very quickly became involved in the Club's 'Macclesfield' layout and took to 'internet trawling' to gather as much historical information as he could. 'New' material regularly appeared on the photo wall behind the

layout and plans were made of where various buildings had once stood. Unfortunately, Al was never to see the fruits of his efforts, but he certainly laid some of the groundwork for others.

Al had been fighting cancer for several years before he joined the Club and continued that fight during his time as a Club member. He never once complained about his illness, the courses of chemo and radiotherapy he had to endure nor the side effects of his treatment. It was simply fact. End of.

Perhaps nothing sums up Al more than his response when he discovered that he'd put his heavy tool box on top of and flattened a row of cottages he'd been building for the 'Macclesfield' layout it was simply, "Hitler caused less damage to Macc than I did! Ah well. Back to the drawing board." It was a typically philosophical response overlaid with humour to anything that 'knocked him back'.

Those of you who have been readers of this Newsletter for some time will remember Al's 'Rumblings from the Man Cave' which were a regular monthly feature and created something of a following at the time.

Perhaps Al has now found his perfect 'Man Cave'. Who knows?

It would be good to think so.

THOSE CONFUSING COMPUTER THINGIES

Colin Moores

Around about this time last year I had a chat with Shaun about our web presence (by that I mean the Club's web site, Facebook, Twitter etc....) particularly about how much value we got for our money.

We had two web sites, one domain name and nothing else. When I looked at what we were doing, it was clear that the Club had done little work to ensure that the Macclesfieldmrg.org.uk "brand" was maintained while taking advantage of Google's free sites for showing content. If this looks like a criticism, it's not. People pay good money to have a halfway decent website and the club is made up of volunteers who seldom have time for running a web site. From personal experience I knew we could get better value.

Shaun asked me if I could come up with a solution and I obliged. We went live with the new site in September 2016 and little has changed in look since then. While we were at the Folkestone Exhibition with Purgatory Peak I created a club twitter account and in early November I bit the bullet and created a Facebook page.

What has this done for the club? Well the profile has been raised, people have three methods of getting to us on the internet. It was slow going but since we started with Facebook the webpage has also gone through the roof, in January and February we have had more page views than we had the previous year since the site went live in September. Indeed, we topped



a thousand page views in February alone and with four days to go before the month ended!

How do we get so many page views? By making sure that we keep things changing on the website and Facebook. I create short blog articles on the website and link them to Twitter and Facebook. Twitter is easy as I can post direct to Twitter when I blog with Wordpress (the platform for the website, I didn't write the code) but Facebook needs a manual post to be created. On the odd occasion, I'll post on Facebook but not on the site, the Exhibition advert is a good example of this, although I will link to it by the time you read this. But in short form, if you don't keep creating content page views then visitor numbers will slow down. It takes a little effort.

So to Facebook and Twitter. Twitter is low maintenance (currently) and I don't believe it is driving our 'presence' up that much. Facebook however is! I put up a post on Facebook and know I can rely on over 50 views (one got



as many as 1260!). Unlike page views, this is based on an individual's news feed so Facebook is really proving positive. Facebook also gives me better granularity when it comes to seeing how many people have seen a post, or where the people come from after running a paid advert for the event, the number of "25 to 34" and "35 to 44" year-old women viewing skyrocketed!

Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach	Engagement	Profile
23/02/2017 09:37	John Smith Macclesfield MRO at Macclesfield Peace Market	Photo	None	95	2	View post
23/02/2017 09:37	Colin tries to explain how a train set differs from a layout and how one can be made like the other.	Text	None	707	8	View post
09/02/2017 10:28	Macclesfield MRO's 2016 Year in Review	Image	None	215	12	View post
23/02/2017 11:08	David from Devon Ex. Board on a visit to the Macclesfield MRO	Image	None	115	7	View post

What does this mean for the club? Time will only tell. Ideally we will gain some new members where we might not have done before. We will



hopefully get more people through the door at the exhibition, too. If nothing else we will, as part of the clubs mission, promote the hobby and bring people into it where ever they may be.

In the meantime, please feel free to have a look for yourselves and let us know what you think. Simply 'click' on the following links.

www.macclesfieldmrg.org.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/macclesfieldmrg>

<https://twitter.com/MacclesfieldMRG>

Does Facebook work? I can only speak from my own experience. I recently posted a request on Facebook for people to 'LIKE' and 'SHARE' a promotion for our exhibition. So far, 37 people have done so. That means that the promotion post is on at least 38 people's Facebook page and 'Timeline'. I have no way of knowing how often, from other people's accounts, that post has been 'SHARED'

If we assume that each generation of 'sharing' receives 2 shares then the numbers are staggering 2nd generation 74, 3rd 148, 4th 296, 5th 592, 6th 1184, and so on. And that's if only 2 per 'generation' share!

This 'Luddite' is a convert! - Editor

Macclesfield Model Railway Group

supports the development of

“MegaPoint Controllers”

through the On30 Group

“See you all at the Show”

SHOW-TIME, THE FINAL ROUND-UP

Mike Hebblethwaite

How quickly the time comes round! How quickly it changes from a relatively sedate pace to a frantic rush to make sure everything is ready, in place and on time. It's all looking good but *another* final check won't hurt!

I guess that's what setting up an exhibition is all about.

I promised you last month that I would publish a list of the traders who are attending the show this year, and here it is with website details where appropriate :-

MMRG Members' Sales

'MMRG-NewsLetter@hotmail.com'

Sweets of Yesteryear

'sweetsofyesteryear@gmail.com'

Great Central Model Railways

'brian.verden@gmail.com'

Direct Train Spares

'www.directtrainspares-burnley.co.uk'

S.M.T.F.

Online Models

'www.onlinemodelsltd.co.uk'

Country Park Models

'bassmikebass@aol.com'

The Junction Box

'www.thejunctionbox.net'

Country Scenes and Trees

Bespoke Sign and Print

'thebespokeshop@yahoo.co.uk'

JP Models

'www.jpmodelrailways.co.uk'

Linda Tinker Books

'<http://lindatinkerrailwaybooks.co.uk>'

ABC Model Railways

'www.abcmodeRailways.com'

MegaPoints Controllers

'<http://megapointscontrollers.com>'

Eileen's Emporium

'www.eileensemporium.com'

Book Law Publications

'www.booklaw.co.uk'

A quick browse through the websites should give you a pretty good idea of the high quality of traders coming to the show and the variety that will be available to you.

Final Reminder

Don't forget that the Members' Secondhand Sales stand is also available to you as a Newsletter reader. Details of how you can sell your unwanted items were dealt with in detail in last month's issue.

Volunteers

Please, please, if you can offer any help at all over the course of the exhibition, we would very much like to hear from you. Setting up the show begins on Friday 10th March at 1600hrs and should be complete by 2100hrs when we adjourn to a local hostelry for a well earned pint.

Preparations to open to the public begin at 0900 hrs on both Saturday (11th) and Sunday (12th). The show closes at 1700hrs on Saturday and 1630 hrs on Sunday when dismantling and packing away begins. We should be finished at the school on Sunday at around 2000 hrs.

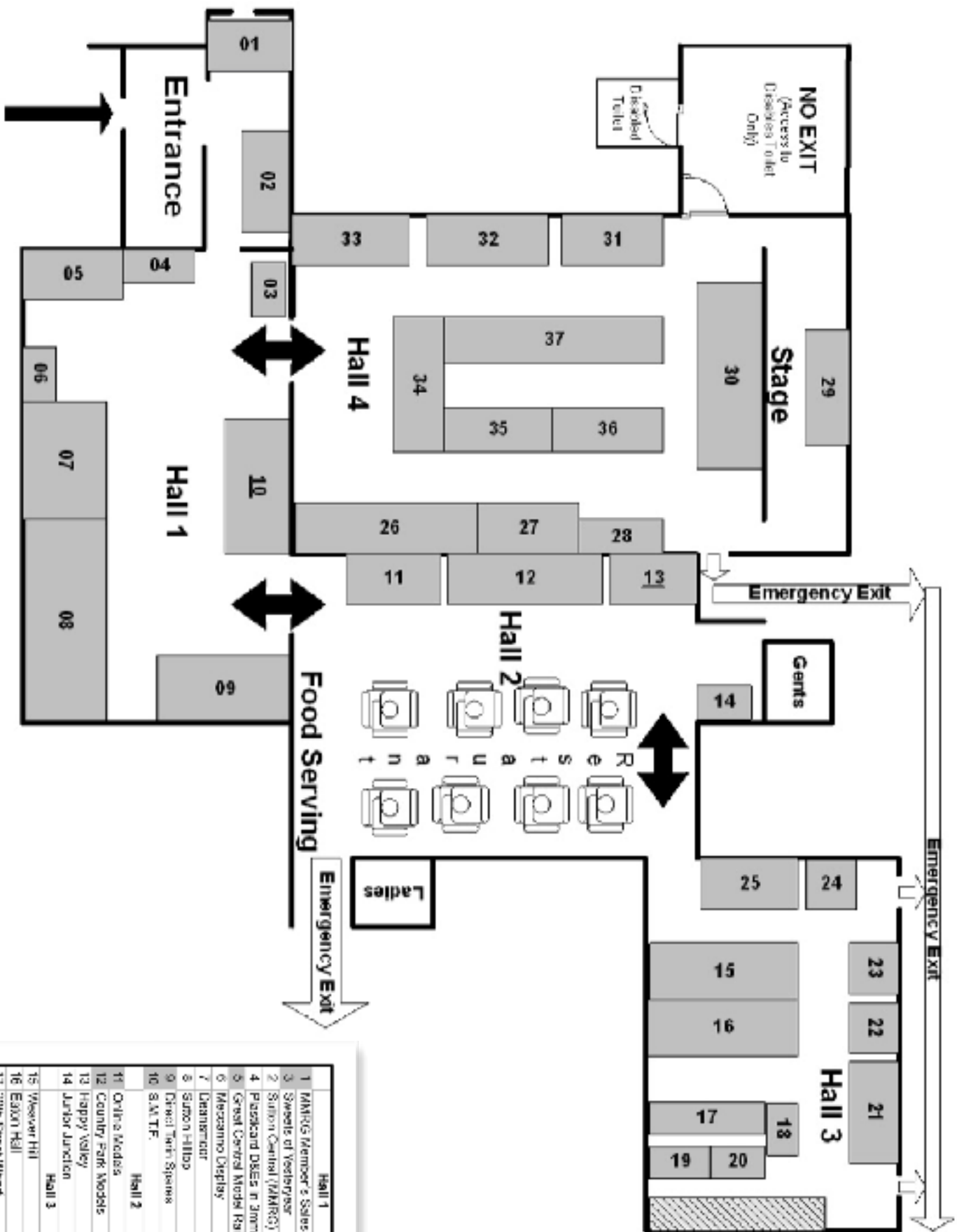
If you can help in any way, even if only for a few hours, please let me know. Your help can make all the difference. Really.

Finally

We look forward to seeing you at the show and, as you pass by the Members' stand (it's in the entrance!) and spot a ginger haired, bearded and harassed figure (that'll be me!), spare a moment to say, "Hello".

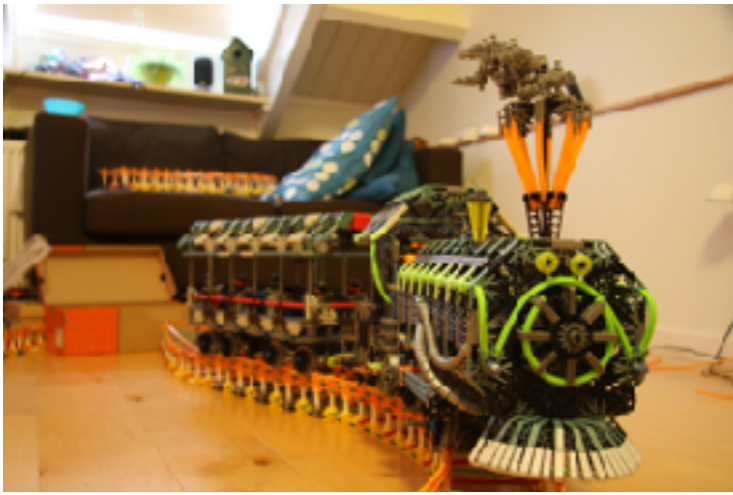
And so that you don't get lost or miss out on any of the exhibits and trade stands, you'll find a plan of the exhibition halls on the next page.

Enjoy the show.



Hall 1		Hall 3	
1	RAMRG Member's Sales	19	Beech Mount
2	Sweets of Yesterday	20	Chelstone
3	Sutton Central (RAMRG)	21	The Junction Bus
4	Puzzlecard DES in 30m	22	Country Scenes & Trees
5	Great Central Model Railways	23	Shakespeare Sign & Print
6	Mascanino Display	24	J.P. Meebles
7	Dinnerbar	25	Little Tinker Books
8	Sutton Hilltop	Hall 4	
9	Great Train Spares		
10	S.M.A.T.F.	26	Marmajure SNOF
Hall 2		27	Kipper Colley
11	Orina Models	28	Foot Whisky
12	Country Park Models	29	Sutton Road
13	Happy Valley	30	Art: Model Railways
14	Juror Junction	31	Mechanics Conventions
Hall 3		32	Emerit Emporium
15	Wesover Hill	33	Book Law Publications
16	EDDON HILL	34	China Show
17	28th Street Winat	35	Foster Street
18	Bottle Kin Lane	36	Canary
		37	Kerandian Vajuparukhali - Harwood

.....AND YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE CRAZY!

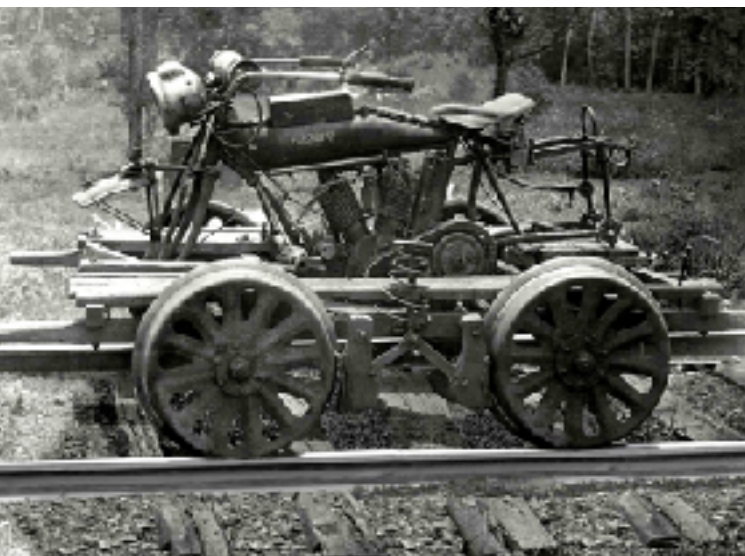


YOU WANT REALLY CRAZY?



Just check out where the smokestack is! How does that work? At least the driver should be warm!

COMBINE TWO INTERESTS? NO PROBLEM!



He liked trains, but wouldn't give up his bike. Best of both worlds?

WHAT'S THE POINT?



So you need to cram a lot of storage tracks into a small space. Maybe this is your answer. Anyone fancy building this in '009' - fully working, of course!



Looks like a tracklayer's nightmare. It's a great idea and a real space saver, but would it ever exist in reality? Maybe not.



But this did! It was often referred to as the "Daddy Longlegs Seashore Railway".

The 'railway' opened in 1896 and proved to be very popular as it trundled along the foreshore from Brighton to Rottingdean. However, new sea defences constructed in 1900 forced its premature closure. The railway was the brainchild of Magnus Volk.

A GIFT AND A PROMISE

Mike Hebblethwaite

It was shortly before Christmas that I received a phone call from David Fawkes who was seeking advice regarding his father's model railway and its future. He explained that his father, as a result of dementia, was no longer able to cope with it. However, he went on to say that it was highly detailed and represented many years of care and attention to detail with a very imaginative approach.



He said that his father, and the rest of the family, would like the model railway to go to 'a home' where it would be seen by as many people as possible.

To cut a long story short, the model railway was offered to the Macclesfield Model Railway Group.

And so it was that I and two friends, Neil Roberts and Stuart Fowler, met with Joe (David's brother) and his father to collect the model railway. To say that we were astounded by what we saw would be an understatement! This is an 'N' gauge model railway built to represent an imaginary 'transport museum' which came complete with motor museum, working fairground, a canal basin with both rowing and narrow boats, a maze (!), a working tram



line as well as the railway system itself. It is populated with approximately 60+ figures, some of whom are relaxing at the cafe whilst others are admiring the bandstand, waiting for trains, the tram and their turn in the rowing boats.



The pride taken in building this layout was obvious and the sadness of its removal was felt by all. It was a milestone in a life that no-one had any great joy in marking.

The layout itself has been very well made but was never intended to be easily transportable. All loose items were removed after their location had been photographed

and the layout was then transported to our club rooms where it has generated many complimentary comments and a lot of interest.



Work has now begun to understand the complex wiring loom and how to operate the layout. Once that has been 'sussed', thought will be given to making the layout more robust in order to cope with being moved from one location to another. The latter, of course, will enable us to fulfil the family's wish that it be seen by as many people as possible.

And our promise?

We shall be using the layout to help promote not just the Club, but railway modelling as a hobby. It will almost certainly be a feature of our own exhibition in 2018 and there is a very strong possibility that it will be offered as a feature for other exhibitions.

This is a model railway that deserves to be seen by as wide an audience as possible and is a credit to its builder.

MMRG Newsletter readers recommend :-

“WALTONS of ALTRINCHAM”

30, Stamford St, Altrincham, WA14 1EY

0161 928 5940

www.WaltonsModels.co.uk

MMRG Newsletter readers recommend :-

“S.M.T.F.” (model shop)

**Brookside Garden Centre, London Road North,
Poynton, Cheshire, SK12 1BY**

01625 850427

See you at the show

MMRG Newsletter readers recommend :-

“TRIDENT TRAINS”

**Unit 10, The Craft Arcade, Dagfields Craft Centre,
Crewe Road, Walgherton, Nantwich, Cheshire
CW5 7LG**

01270 842400

www.tridenttrains.co.uk

MMRG Newsletter readers recommend :-

“CHESHIRE MODELS”

37, Sunderland Street, Macclesfield

01625 511646

www.cheshiremods.org.uk

MMRG Newsletter readers recommend :-

“THE MODEL CENTRE”

Hill Farm, Beck Hole, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO22 5LF

01947 899125

www.themodelcentre.com

And that's the end of the March issue!

Pretty soon we'll be turning our clocks forward one hour and Spring will be arriving (and not a minute too soon, did you say?). Those lighter evenings and longer days will soon have us heading for the 'great outdoors' for a much needed 'top up' of vitamin D, the sunshine vitamin.

And speaking of sunshine and the 'great outdoors', MMRG is considering a couple of trips which readers may be interested in joining.

One is to the Severn Valley Railway with a couple of 'special tours' included and the second is to Hamburg to visit the 'Miniature Wonderland'. OK! OK! I know that particular attraction is indoors! But what of the rest of Hamburg?

Nothing definite yet, but rest assured you will amongst the first to know. Watch this space, as they say! You may even get a 'STOP PRESS' notice, so keep your eyes on your 'in box'.

It might be the end of this issue, but it's the beginning of a very busy month for the Club, what with the exhibition and all. I hope you've got Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th very visibly inked in to your diary it would be great to see you at the show. If you do come along, please say 'Hello' I won't be very far away from the Members' Secondhand stand even if I look a little 'frazzled'!

What's coming in next month's issue? I haven't got a clue! I've no articles 'in stock' so I'm relying on our readership to provide me with something I can print for you. There will, undoubtedly, be a Show Report so if you have any thoughts, comments or observations, please send them in. Photos are always appreciated.

I am often asked, at the approach of summer, where folks can go for a railway themed day out that would appeal to adults and youngsters alike and I expect I shall be getting similar requests this year.

Perhaps you could help me?

In June, I'm hoping to produce a 'Summer Special' containing just that kind of information. If you have any ideas or recommendations I would dearly love to hear them. Just a few notes and a photo or two would be great. Simply 'fire them off' to the Newsletter and I'll put them all together.

That's it.

Take good care of you and yours and enjoy your hobby.

Mike Hebblethwaite

DIARY DATE FOR A.G.M.

Friday 24th March

8.00pm

Clubroom