



Smokebox

The Newsletter of the **Bedfordshire Area Group** of the
Association of 16mm Scale Narrow Gauge Modellers

From the Editor

As I've previously explained, I'm missing the August meeting as I'm attending Geoff Lumsdon's memorial open day on his railway in Newcastle. We're coupling this up with a concert in Halifax on Friday 1st (Squeeze, still on the go) and dropping off one of Mick Blowfield's loco in Thirsk en route to Newcastle. If all these northern places are making your head spin then I apologise!



You may not be aware of this, but on the W&L, drivers are awarded their "ticket" on a per-loco basis. In my case, I've had a ticket for the Earl and Sir Drefaldwyn for some time but not for any of the diesels. This was addressed on 22nd July when I gained my ticket for the Diema, pictured above. The big difference between it and the steam locos is that the vacuum brake doesn't act on the loco, only the train, but as the loco, even when idling, is applying drive to the wheels, it needs to be braked in tandem using the air brake. This makes braking a two handed affair, straight forward when you're going forward and looking at the controls on the desk in front of you, more demanding when you're going backwards and the controls and gauges are behind you. Braking smoothly going backwards downhill takes a little practice but once you've got the knack, it's not too difficult. The other great benefit of now having a diesel passenger ticket is that if I'm out on the steam loco and I have to fail it, I can drive the Diema to recover train and passengers, vital if there's only one crew rostered on a day with only two return trips. My non-railway mates thought, maybe still think, that driving a diesel is like driving a car. Nothing could be further from reality. Still to come is getting my passenger ticket on Chattenden and when it comes into service, the bogie Taiwanese diesel with coupling rods.

Copy deadline for September 2025 issue of Smokebox: Friday 29 August 2025

Alan, **Smokebox** Editor

From the Chair

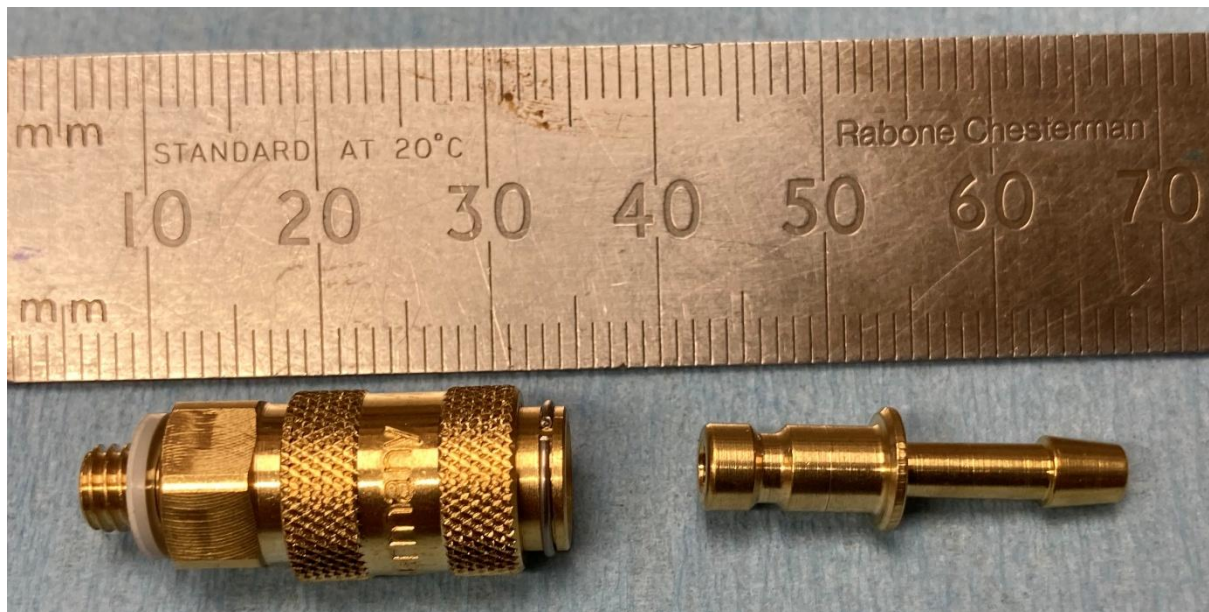
Stop Press!

I hope you all received an email regarding the 16mm Association's **National Garden Railway Show** at the NEAC Stoneleigh Park on Saturday 25th April 2026. We have been invited to show Ridgmont but we will not be able to accept or decline the invitation until we have a clear idea of the numbers of members who would hope to support the layout. Please let me or Garth know if you would like to participate. **Ed:** *I will be involved again in organising the show but have confirmed to Garth that I'll be available to help with set-up on Friday and running on Saturday.*

The July meeting was well attended and, I am pleased to say, we were treated to some unusual locomotives, one of which caused a number of comments...

Carol made a fleeting visit to see everybody, she could not stay long because she was off to visit Graham who was in hospital at the time of the meeting. John K stood in at the last moment with his portable track which was quiet initially but became busy towards the end of the meeting, Thanks John, sorry I didn't give you more warning!

John K mentioned the tendency for roundhouse to fit "Goodall" top up valves in a horizontal plane. This really requires three hands for satisfactory use - one to hold the engine against toppling over, one to hold the tube and one to pump. He has seen what are commonly called "Enot" valves which self-latch when the supply is attached and only release the supply tube when a collar is depressed. I have located a source but am unsure how they will take boiler temperatures - there is one way to find out, fit one and see how it gets on! I have one from another supplier, whose stock has run out, on my DJB coal fired loco and it is a one handed operation once the pipe is plugged in. **Ed:** *I am collaborating with Bob to test one of these valves on a Roundhouse loco which has a somewhat unsatisfactory arrangement for topping up the boiler – more hopefully in the September issue.*

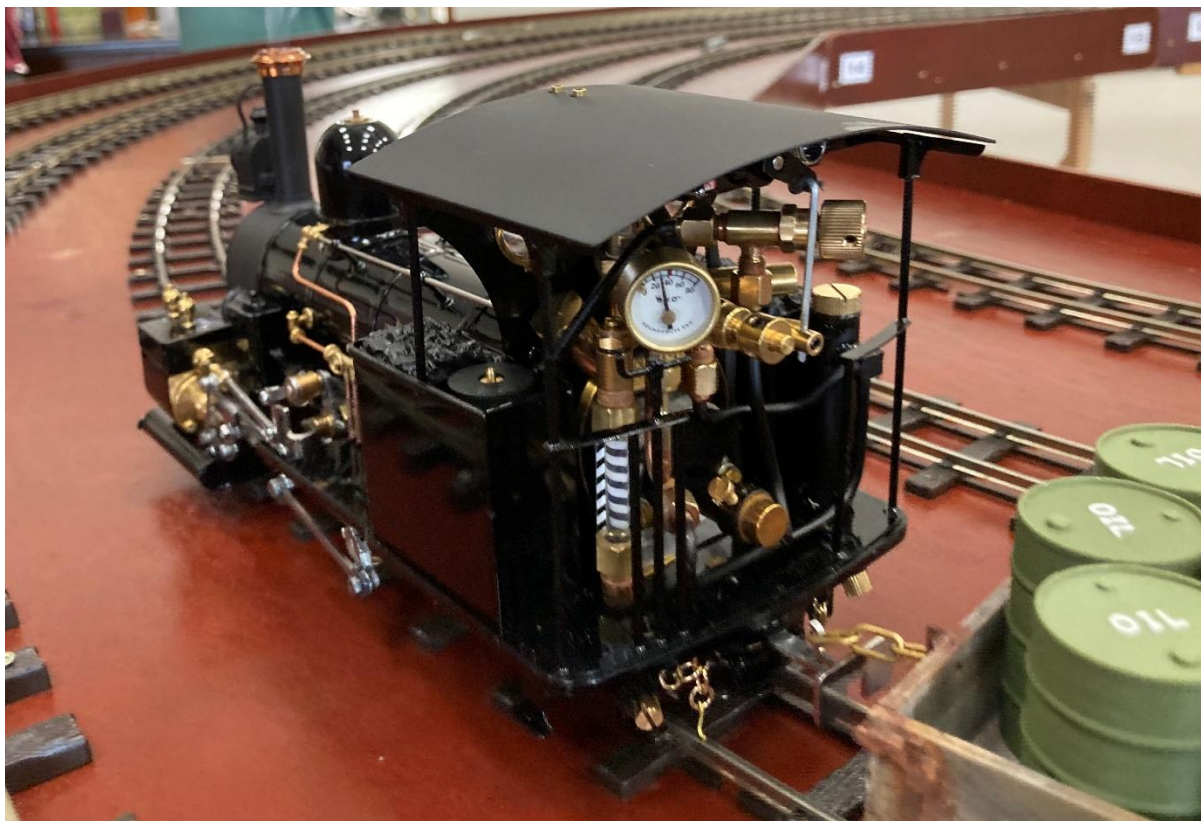


As an aside, I had to include a photo of something altogether bigger - an ex NE 63395 0-8-0 goods, seen here running around the train in Pickering station on the North York Moors Railway after returning from Whitby. We had two locos on the way back from Whitby last week. The first was an ex Southern region 4-4-0 Schools class "Repton", a 3 cylinder mainline loco with a wonderfully smooth beat. This was exchanged at Grosmont for the NE goods, 2 cylinders as was normal, but the valve setting was spot on and the sound quite distinctive compared to the Schools. As you can tell, I don't get out that much!



I hope that we will be treated to a table of goodies again at the next meeting, courtesy of Geoff Evans who is selling surplus stock with the proceeds going to the RNLI.

As usual I have picked out a couple of locomotives which caught my eye for one reason or another. I start with the delightful Darjeeling A class, very recently introduced by Roundhouse. As far as I can tell quite a few members have one on order but Dave was first to show one. My first photo shows the revised water level gauge with diagonal stripes behind and, I believe, a blow down function. Very nice and a better solution to the standard gauge but not as bomb proof no doubt. This is followed by a front view, the loco captures the original rather well.





Next we have a Brandbright assembly consisting of a rail bus, wagon (holding batteries and radio equipment and finally a rail car. Very atmospheric and a good scale speed, even so I managed to get a blurry photo, sorry Fergus. I have to confess I have not consciously come across one of these before, the set works very well together.



Finally little and large - Max ran his 18" gauge, 7/8th scale Hunslet diesel here photographed adjacent to a not that small VOR run by Martin. There were a number of comments whilst the locomotive was running. A very nice model and 7/8" scale gives scope for the finest detail. Max has provided an article on this locomotive which follows my ramblings. I hope this is the first of many more member articles!



Bob, Chairman

Meeting Dates

Here are all meeting dates until the end of 2025. We have access to the hall from 10.30 and need to have the layouts packed away and be out of the hall by 16.00.

- 3rd August
- 7th September
- 5th October
- 2nd November
- Saturday 22nd November - **Steam in Beds**

Garth, Secretary

Committee members

The members of the BAG committee are as follows:

Bob Gamble	Chairman	chairman@bag16mm.org.uk
Garth Bridgwood	Secretary/Treasurer	secretary@bag16mm.org.uk
Mark Cresswell	Membership	membership@bag16mm.org.uk
Ted Robinson	Track Manager	trackmanager@bag16mm.org.uk

Loco Profile

Hunslet Diesel Mechanical “Carnegie” of Woolwich Arsenal Railways

Some of you may have seen my model of this eighteen inch gauge loco running at a Sunday Eaton Bray session a few months ago. It is a big loco - 7/8” inch to the foot scale - running on 32mm track which is the correct gauge-to-scale ratio.



"Carnegie", at Statfold Barn

I have always been very interested in the ultra-narrow gauge and eighteen inch gauge railways. In particular, Woolwich Arsenal had a huge 18" gauge system that lingered on until the 1960s, which was just before the Arsenal closed for good. Luckily three locos survived: steam Avonside "Woolwich", diesel Hunslet "Carnegie" and a Ruston 20 h.p. diesel. "Woolwich" and "Carnegie" are now preserved at Statfold Barn, having previously been the main locos operating at Bicton Gardens in Devon for many years.

"Carnegie" (the real one) was built by Hunslet in 1954 and is an 0-4-4-0 diesel mechanical with one engine and one gear box under the bonnet from which a cardan shaft emerges from either end to the jack shaft axles at both ends of the loco. I understand that currently only one bogie is working due to gearbox issues.



"Carnegie", at Statfold Barn



My model

My model has one vertically mounted electric motor per bogie driving through steel bevel gears to one driving axle with the connecting rods providing the drive to the second driving axle. The jackshaft axles are just passengers!

The loco is all steel and brass construction apart from the bonnet which is a very sturdy and accurate resin 3D print.



Hard to tell the difference I think!

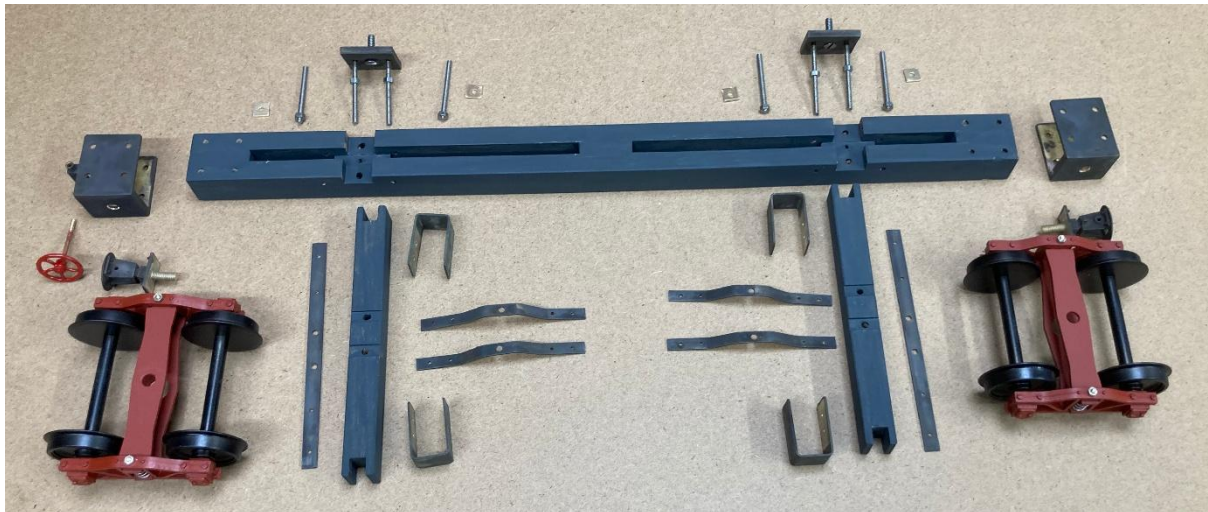
The model was built by Roger Hine of Friog models. Roger is a brilliant model engineer who has done several awkward engineering jobs for me over the years as well as building the odd loco or two. He has also built small batches of certain locos for general sale and lucky are those people who have one, or more, of these. For example, he built about half a dozen diesel 0-4-4-0 Avonside locos that operated in the two-foot gauge Natal sugar cane fields. Roger is now retired so there will probably be no more sturdily engineered models emerging from his magic shed overlooking the Cambrian mainline (with the Fairbourne railway just beyond).

Max Hampson

Modelling Matters

THE LOGGING WAGON SAGA

I hope this will be the final part of the Logging Wagon saga! Last month it was repetition, repetition. This month it is assembly, thank goodness! It is surprising how many bits are generated, to give an idea I laid out all the parts for one wagon, less nuts and bolts.



The timber components were painted with “weathered wood” by Precision Paints.

The brass and steel parts were chemically blackened. The results were a little patchy but on assembly this gave a slightly weathered/used look which I thought looked good. The strapping was held down with roundhead rivets which did look rather glaring once in place. The steel nuts and bolts were chemically blackened/blued and they looked very fine in shiny metallic blue - but not what I was after! Luckily fate took a hand - I washed the residue treatment off the steel components and forgot to dry them immediately. When I remembered them the shiny blue black had been replaced with a fine dusting of rust - excellent!

There were a few areas which needed toning down after assembly, the rivets being the most obvious but the 10 BA studs holding the end brackets also needed attention. I used “frame dirt” by Precision Paints. A dark grey/brown mixture which mimics dirty rust well. The next photo shows an untreated frame and a touched in frame:



One thing I have to watch out for is abrasion or buffing, this quickly polished my carefully contrived surfaces and spoils the look. I am considering a coat of dead matt clear varnish.

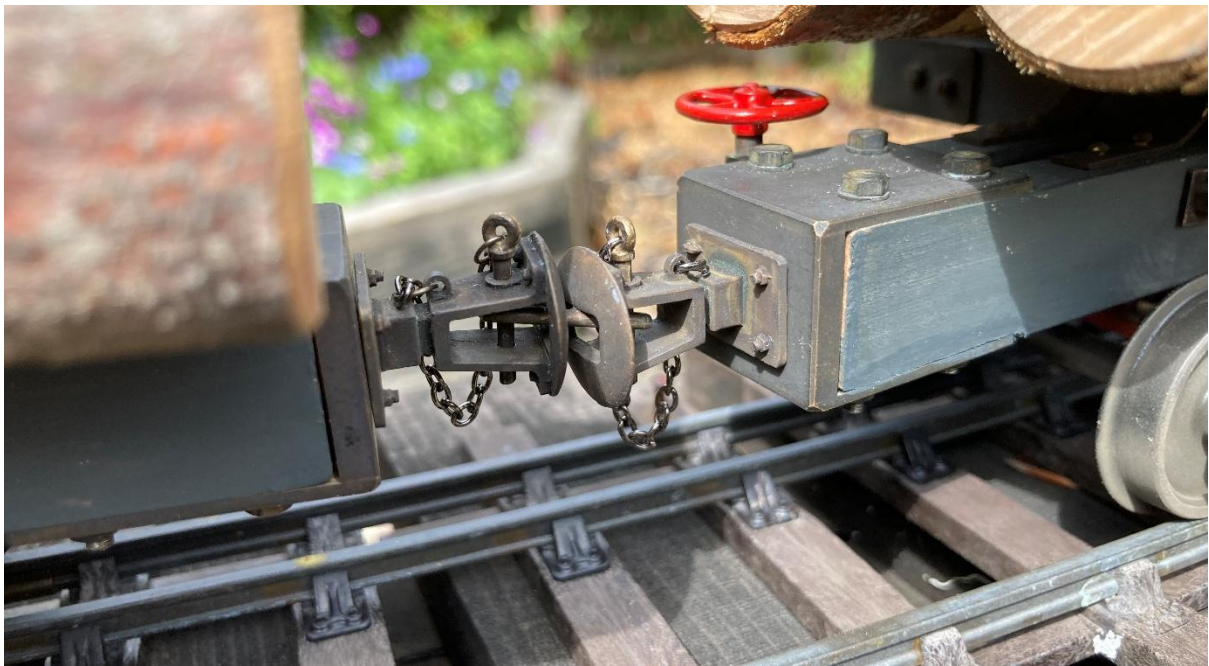
The assembled bogies were attached next and it was immediately apparent that they were just too shiny. A light airbrushing with frame Dirt soon took away the glamour!



After that it was a question of waiting for the weather to cool down so that I could assemble the the wagons with a load



And I had to include a close up of the outstanding castings supplied by Trenarren Models from their Talisman Brass range. The detail and surface finish is exquisite. The inclusion of the link coupling and pin with fine chain so it does not get lost will be a great help!



Bob G

Sales & Wants

A table will as usual be placed at the back of the hall for members to place any items they have for sale.

ROUNDHOUSE FOWLER



Garth Bridgwood is selling this loco on behalf of an Association member. As it does not fit in with his Lyton & Barnstable themed garden railway he is now offering it at **£1,175** for a quick sale (current list for a manual Fowler is £1,952). It was made in 2013 and is in very good condition and has manual control. It was fully tested recently and has documentation. It comes with wheelsets for gauge change and a sturdy wooden carry case. Garth believes a Goodall top-up valve can be fitted under the middle dome (**Editor**: true, there are two ways of doing this, contact me for further details).

Please contact Garth on 07706 370364 or at garth.g1@btinternet.com if interested.