



BETWEEN THE LINES

NEW YEAR 2025

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Here we are at the start of another year.

2025 marks the 200th anniversary of the coming of the railways for passenger use. A little more on this further on in the newsletter.

This newsletter has been composed in new software because Microsoft are withdrawing support for their Publisher software from October 2026. Reading this you might come across some quirky bits amongst the text like spaces or hieroglyphics etc while I get used to the new software.

Remember any member can contribute to the newsletter. Anything to do with railways is welcome - your layout at home, any railway trips you go on etc etc.

Colin
Editor

Club Torque



Philip Downs

Luca Cummings (junior)

Exhibition Manager

Our current exhibition manager, Craig, will be leaving the club in the within the next few months to live in pastures new, in Lincolnshire. He will continue to manage the 2025 exhibition at Roade. However the club will need a new exhibition manager for 2026 if we are to continue having an annual exhibition.

Our annual exhibition generates a very healthy income for the club, which in turn gives us the funds to finance our projects and keep our membership costs down etc.

If you are interested in taking on this role, but are not sure exactly what it entails, then please speak to Craig who will enlighten you.

Shed Roof

Many of you will probably be aware, our external storage shed has a serious leak at the back on the left hand side as you enter.

We have for now covered the shed roof externally with a tarpaulin. Subject to us getting high winds, this should stay in place until the better weather comes and we can get it fixed. We have decided when the time comes to get it remedied professionally.

Chairman's Ramblings

Dear Members,

Hoping you are all well and looking forward to another year of fun-time, playing with your model railway.

As I sit here typing this drivel on the last day of January, I am hopefully wishing, as the days get longer and longer, that we may have a good Spring and Summer to enjoy our hobby.



Craig, our current exhibition manager is due to move away from Northampton this March, and I would like to wish him well in the future, on the club's, and my behalf.

Thanks must go to him for his great organisation of the last few shows, and the great successes they have been, raising good profits to be spent on club projects.

He has kindly offered to carry on organising this year's show for us, until we hopefully get a replacement (anyone interested) in taking over.

Progress is being made slowly on both the Junior and the N gauge club layouts that are due to go to our show in July and hopefully they will be ready by showtime.

Colin has kindly repaired the N gauge test track, and it is now up and running. This year we are due to do more work on Castle Station, so hopefully it can go out to shows again in its new oval shape.

We have at present a good number of members who attend on a Thursday evening and we have recently welcomed some new members, who I wish to thank for joining us.

As you are all aware, we are having to share the hall with another user group in March, and hopefully this will proceed without any major problems.

I wanted to thank all members for keeping the hall clean and tidy and your assistance in putting out and away all the items we need to run the club. Also can I remind you all that on arrival you should tick your name off on the register and pay your £3 sub if you do not pay by standing order. I must admit, I am one of the people who forget to do this on a regular basis, so cannot be at all smug about it!!!

Just to let you know we have recently upgraded our web site NDMRC.ORG with the kind assistance of Colin, and please feel free to have a look, and give us your comments.

Les Pace
Chairman

Magnetic Couplings

by Richard Deacon

As a modeller for the past 50 years, yes the first loco I bought as an adult was in October 1975 from Eames in York Way opposite Kings Cross, more perhaps later in the year, like many modellers have been frustrated by many so called standard, variations in the hook and bar couplings dating back to Triang days . Even though they are sort of compatible, we have all been victims of differing couplings parting especially at Exhibitions in front of crowds. The other issue is the difficulty of uncoupling even using a variety of uncoupling tools, often homemade.

I have been considering other means and looked at Kadee but said no as it would be very expensive to retrofit a large fleet of locos and stock, and fiddly to fit. About 3 years ago Hornby announced magnetic couplings which looked good, if you could find them. I only found some at a Show on a oneman- band, stand. They, I think produced several different types and I bought a set that resembled vacuum pipes and are quite authentic. Again these were expensive to fit across a large stock. I have fitted them to my push pulls and auto coaches and dedicated locos.

At the MK Show in October I visited the Wagon Hill Works stand and found a selection of magnetic couplings which looked like my answer. In view of my large fleet and having taken the decision to run the stock in fixed rakes held in sidings or cassettes, I reasoned that I only need fit the couplings to locos and one at each end of each rake, thus saving on numbers.

Since then I have steadily been changing the couplings on all the locos as they have gone "through the Works" for DCC fitting, and the rakes.

Many are a simple swap with the newer NEM push fit pockets, some are the open ended push fit, beloved of Airfix and some Hornby,. We then come to the ugly large bar type adopted by Lima. These do create coupling problems next to the newer slim line couplings. At the NEC show in November I asked the Wagon Hill man how they addressed the problem. Simple, they do a variation which glues onto the Lima coupling having first cut off the horrible bar. It works although some experimentation is needed with glue types.



Examples are shown left
L-R 1 replacement for Lima bar,
2 close coupled,
2 standard
4 push in Airfix replacement

It seems all their couplings are 3D printed in quite a hard plastic which can be brittle and inflexible, - I have broken several prongs off the NEM push fit type. Heljan pockets seem a tad smaller and careful easing is needed.(recommend a bit of Vaseline) I also found that their open ended pattern don't grip the peg as tight as the original coupling and can pull out under load.

The types of coupling they produce is quite bewildering and they don't present them on the web site with a part number and you have to carefully expand the photo to make sure you have picked the right one.

Comments on You Tube aren't that complimentary to Wagon Hill or the product especially the lack of response on email for advice.

However, I do recommend them. The magnets are very strong and work well, making uncoupling much easier. Please speak to me at the Club if you would like further info or guidance,

Events 2025

So far for 2025 we have the following events booked in.

St Matthews Church—Summer Fete

5th July 2025

We have again been invited to take a layout or two plus displays, like we have done in previous years, to St Matthews Summer Fete. We need to decide what we want to take. The event is open to the public from 13:00 until 16:00.

NDMRC Model Railway Club Exhibition

19th July 2025

The venue for our club exhibition will be Roade Village Hall. More details nearer the time.

Rushden Historical Transport Society - Model Weekend

13th / 14th September 2025

We have been invited to take the Demonstration layout to this event.



As most of you will know, in 2024 I exhibited the N gauge layout Tumil St James at the St Matthews Summer Church Fete in July, at the Soar Valley Model Railway exhibition in August and at the Corby exhibition in October.

As you have seen from exhibiting club layouts at various events in the past, it takes a lot of planning. The layout size and whatever the layout gauge/scale being exhibited is, requires the same basic ground rules. For those new to the club who haven't been involved in this process yet, I thought I would share some of the trials and tribulations of exhibiting.

The basic requirements from my personal experience fall into the following categories:

1. Transport

Arrange what ever transport is needed i.e. is a car sufficient or is hiring a van required

2. Layout preparation

Full test with running trains
Repairing any damage/correcting any faults
Add any new features,
Check all electrics work (track, points, signals and any electrically operated items).

3. Assemble for loading

Check list - have a list of ALL the items you need to take which you can tick off as they are loaded into the vehicle. Not only including the layout items but also a chair to sit on, any food & drink you are taking, any tools that you might need.
Boxes marked with contents. This particularly useful if you have an assistant—especially when it comes to packing up.

4. Arrival at the venue

First job is to announce your arrival to who ever is in charge and receive what ever paperwork and ID badges etc there are for you.

Next study the space they have made available for you and hope its satisfactory. Also check a power supply is there and it is live.

A layout you build for exhibiting needs to be built robustly. Moving them about, assembling and disassembling them does not do them any good. In transit things get dropped or knocked. On top of this you have the problem at an exhibition of youngsters trying to touch the layout, and parents just letting them do it. I have responded to this by hiring my layout so hands can't reach it. We have to apply the old adage "HOURS TO MAKE, SECONDS TO BREAK". Before even setting off for the exhibition venue, it is essential you know that all you need to take will fit in your vehicle and in that vehicle how it will stacked/placed.

Another thing you have to be aware of is that on arrival at the exhibition venue you will probably have to transport the layout and all its paraphernalia some distance. For this purpose I built a customised trolley. For the basis of the trolley I used a WorkZone sack barrow from Lidl



This is the sack barrow in its unmodified state. I had to change the wheels and remove the goods carrying platform. The wheels fitted now are pneumatic which if only half inflated gives the trolley some shock absorbing qualities. Also the bigger wheels can cope better with uneven terrain. The handle is telescopic which makes it a big space saver. The wheels come off, These are held on the custom axles with R pins and large washers.



In the pictures below you can see Tumil St James and all its supporting entities have been loaded into the car. For this purpose an estate car makes life easier.



The baseboards are loaded first then everything else is packed around them. Where ever possible items are secured with bungee straps. The last thing you want is your cargo moving. The most important item is with me on the passenger front seat—my lunch!



In 1825 the Stockton and Darlington Railway was opened. This was the worlds first public railway. Initially the line connected collieries near Shildon with Darlington and Stockton in County Durham, and was officially opened on 27 September 1825. From this grew a transport system that revolutionised the transport of both freight and people. You could say that it was the internet of the nineteenth century.

I'm not going into great depth in this article about the history of our railways as there is plenty of reference material already in the public domain through the internet, books, videos etc etc.

There will be many events during 2025 commemorating this historic railway milestone.

The Northampton & District Model Railway Club has been registered with Railway 200 to help celebrate 200 years of our railways.

What is Railway 200?

Railway 200 will be a year-long nationwide partnership-led campaign to celebrate 200 years of the modern railway and inspire a new generation of young pioneering talent to choose a career in rail. It invites community, rail and other groups to get involved.

Starting in January 2025, a wide variety of activities and events are being planned to celebrate rail's remarkable past, its role today, and its importance to a sustainable future.

Born in Britain, rail quickly spread across the globe. This year, Railway 200 will showcase how the railway shaped and continues to shape national life.

As a club of people interested in railways, this is, or at least one, of our hobbies; let us help celebrate this milestone in our railway history.

As a registered club with Railway 200 we are free to use the logs and publicity material as we choose, subject to complying with Railway 200 guidelines.

If you want to know more about Railway 200 then have a look at this web site

<https://railway200.co.uk/about-railway-200/>



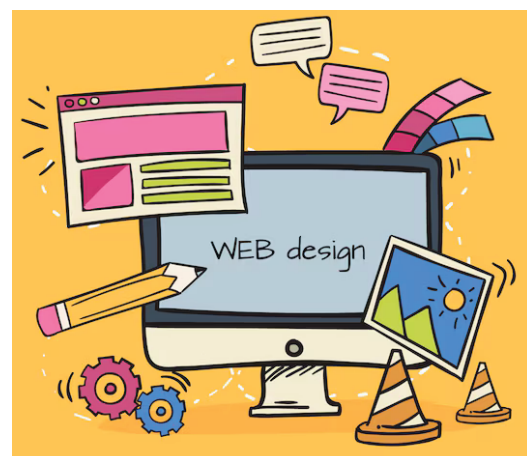
As a club how do you want to celebrate 200 years of our railways? Probably the most practical way for us is by having and organising our own events. We could have an outing to a local heritage railway, we could have a some form of social gathering in the evening with food and drink, we could have a quiz night either amongst ourselves or with another club or clubs, we can have an open day at Hardingstone. Have a think and let a committee member know of any ideas you have. It would be a shame to let this milestone go by and we do nothing.



Club Website

by Colin Tarry

Work on the clubs web site continues. I'm still working with Alan, our former webmaster, on the handover for the club to maintain the site. Unfortunately the web site handover coincided with the hosting company being taken over by GoDaddy. In fact for a while it was actually StopDaddy. The new hosting company wanted everybody's life story supported by documentation before they would let Alan create a new login to the web site hosting servers. Its been a total night mare for Alan trying to get this sorted out. Hopefully we are now getting there.



Club Uniform

If you wish to, order any items of Club Uniform then please get in touch with Colin Tarry.

In order to help you gauge (pun intended) the size of item(s) you require there is information available in the club folder. The following items are available: A price list is also in the club folder. All body clothing has the club logo on and your name. The cap only has the club logo.

Please note that a £5 deposit will be required for EACH item ordered. As these items are personalised, we are unable to give refunds or do exchanges where incorrect sizes have been ordered.

ITEM	GENDER	PRODUCT No	SIZE	PRICE
Polo shirt	Mens	R539M	S,M,L,XL,2X L	£24.00
Polo shirt	Mens	R539M	3XL, 4XL	£28.00
Polo shirt	Ladies	R539F	8,10,12,14, 16,18	£24.00
Polo shirt	Ladies	R539F	20,22	£28.00
Polo shirt	Childs	R539B	S,M,L,XL,2X L	£24.00
Sweat shirt	Unisex	R762M	S,M,L,XL,2X L	£27.00
Sweat shirt	Unisex	R762M	3XL, 4XL	£35.00
Sweat shirt	Childs	R762B	S,M,L,XL,2X L	£27.00
Fleece	Mens	R870M	S,M,L,XL,2X L	£36.00
Fleece	Mens	R870M	3XL, 4XL	£43.00
Fleece	Ladies	R870F	8,10,12,14, 16,18	£36.00
Fleece	Ladies	R870F	20,22	£43.00
Fleece	Childs	R870B	S,M,L,XL,2X L	£36.00
Cap	Unisex	BC015	One size fits all	£12.00

Club Information



Committee Members

Les Pace (Chair Person)

Richard Deacon (Secretary)

Colin Tarry (Treasurer)

Craig Dawkins (Exhibition Manager)

Michael Castledine

Cliff Simpson

Stephen Lloyd

Web site:

<https://ndmrc.org>

Email: feedback@ndmrc.org

Club Night:

Thursday

Meeting Time: 19:00—22:00

Venue:

Hardingstone Village Hall, High Street, Hardingstone,

Northampton, NN4 6DA

Secretary:

tel: 01604 890275

email: rjd156@btinternet.com

Non Committee Positions

Newsletter Editor

- Colin Tarry

email: wizzo@hymek.net

Sales Officer

- John Walker

email: pamjohn38@btinternet.com



Scan for web site

Club Membership Rates

Club membership runs from September to August or part of the calendar year, and ALL expire on the last calendar day of August, becoming due for renewal on the first of September.

Adult membership £72 per year, Junior membership £12 per year.

For adult members easy payment terms available. Please enquire.

DISCLAIMER

Any views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Northampton and District Model Railway Club, its Officials or Members unless so stated.