

# North West Area Group Newsletter

March 2019

[www.northwestgscale.co.uk](http://www.northwestgscale.co.uk)



## January 2019 Meet

Our meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January was distinguished by a visit from our chairman, seen here addressing the meeting briefly during the noon notices slot. He was particularly impressed with two things, the massive turnout (61 signed in at the door, highly unusual for January) and the fact we had a number of children for whom we had made provision (thanks as usual to Sandra). He would like to see a national junior members section but would need someone to run it. Any volunteers?

*Pictures: Peter A*



*The success of our meetings is also due to the ladies who serve the tea, biscuits and pies, seen here in the kitchen. Thanks to them and particularly to R & M who buy the pies for us to enjoy*



# G-Wizz and the Ghost of Lytham Hall by Allan J

On September the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 2018, the G-Wizz Team was invited to exhibit at the Lytham Hall Steam Fair. This spectacular venue centres on the “new” Lytham Hall which was built in the 1700s. The event was organised by the Rotary Club of Lytham.



*The magnificent frontage of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Lytham Hall*

We were fortunate to be offered a display space inside the hall itself; in fact we were in the main sitting room. Access was excellent as we could park the van just outside the hall for setting up with only a short distance to carry the layout inside. The build was done on the Friday prior to the show, giving our reduced build team plenty of time to complete the display and to test everything to ensure that all trains and features worked correctly. Security on site was good with the room being locked as we left.

On our return on Saturday morning the room was unlocked for us and we switched the system on, lights came on as did the cable cars and the water feature came to life, but the trains would not run! Our main control panel is very sophisticated and has several back up systems to cover such problems, however on this occasion even the backup controls failed, tests showed that



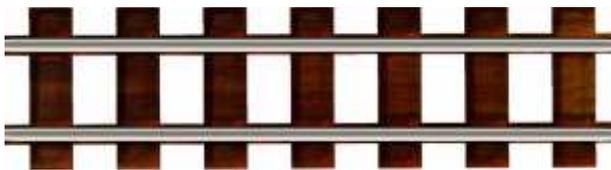
*The G-Wizz display set up in front of the sitting room fireplace*

we had lost both traction supplies, (something that just cannot happen!).

However the show must go on and a third controller was connected by-passing the control panel, and we were back in action, the visitors were unaware that operations were very much on a temporary basis and a near normal service was running for the weekend.

On arrival back home after the show the control panel was taken into the workshop and tested, all systems worked perfectly! The layout sections were also taken into the workshop and once again all worked correctly. So what went wrong at Lytham Hall? It would appear that the original owners of the Hall objected to the real railway passing through their land and spoiling the view of the river Ribble, perhaps we had offended the Ghosts of Lytham Hall by running trains inside their house, who knows! Or maybe the ghost of the American actress Lillian Lowell Clifton who died falling from a first floor window was to blame. Remember that I mentioned that the room was locked and unlocked in our presence - another strange thing happened, at our sawmill sacks had been unloaded from our steam lorry and were thrown around the yard, G-WIZZ that's spooky or what!

Sleep tight!



## G-Wizz Dates in 2019

Here is a list of G-Wizz dates for this year:

Blackpool & North Fylde MRC Open Day at Cleveleys  
February 9<sup>th</sup> 2019

Preston Model Railway Exhibition , Preston College,  
Fulwood, Preston  
March 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019

There will be other events during the year, keep a look out for announcements.



*Above:  
The sawmill  
where the  
sacks were  
unloaded!*

*Right:  
Closer view of  
part of the  
layout*



# NWAG 2019 Calendar of Events

Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> February	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> March	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup> April NWAG AGM	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet & AGM
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> May	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> May <i>National event</i>	G-Scale Society Garden Railway Show Harvey Hadden Sports Village, Nottingham
Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> June	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
July-August	Members' Summer Garden Railway Open Days
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> September	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> November	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> December	St Alban's Church Hall Indoor Meet
Notes: Our NWAG meetings are normally held on the third Saturday of the month, starting at 9.45am For G-Wizz events see advert on page 2	



## NWAG AGM: 12 noon Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2019



### Agenda

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

Nomination papers for elected officers and the committee are available from the Editor

### Group Leader

This post has been vacant ever since Ken had to resign on health grounds several years ago. I am proposing to stand as group leader provided you are willing to vote for me. I would hope to provide the group with the leadership it has lacked for a while. Like John, our secretary, I am busy man and have other responsibilities so that I cannot be at all meetings and never on a Sunday, but I would hope that, between John and myself, we can provide for long term policy and management for the group.

*Richard W*

## Victor C, 1932-2019 Tribute by Richard W



Many of you will have already heard the sad news of the death of long-standing NWAG member Victor who died, aged 86, on 22<sup>nd</sup> January. A group of us attended his funeral at Altrincham Crematorium on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February to express our sympathy for his widow Anita, who always supported him in his G-Scale modelling, and to pay tribute to his active membership of the group over the years.

Victor will be remembered by us all for his amazing two level garden railway in Mobberley with upper and lower running lines, connected by a massively engineered up and over loop up the side of the steep embankment to the top lawn in best Rocky Mountains tradition. It extended at intervals as he purchased strips of the neighbouring field to allow extensions, and for a period it even ran into a neighbour's garden. It was large, well-engineered, and good fun to visit. 12 inch to the foot trains also ran past the garden and the flight path from Manchester Airport provided a counterpoint of a continuous procession of aircraft for any stray plane spotters.

Unsurprisingly railways and trams were a lifelong passion although insurance brokerage provided his bread and butter until very recently. He was a regular attendee at the Altrincham meets along with his wife and Victor will be missed. I am sure you will all join me in extending our sympathy to his wife and family.

### Photographs:

Top: Victor (centre), in a typical pose, intently watching the trains at one of Dennis N's open days. Photo courtesy of John H

Bottom: Tony W photo showing the bottom loop of Victor's railway, giving some idea of the sheer size of the thing! The top line was at least as large and the line in the foreground is the start of the track up the embankment.



## Condolences to Ken

I am sure you will all join me in offering our sympathy to Ken, our Group President, whose wife of 62 years, Joyce, died on 24<sup>th</sup> January after a short illness. Joyce has been increasingly disabled for some years and the need to visit her in hospital when her condition worsened has kept Ken away from the Altrincham meets for several months. A group of NWAG Members went to the funeral on 14<sup>th</sup> February to show our support and sympathy with Ken and the family.

## Volunteers Needed!

## GSS Garden Railway Show 2019 →

The G-Scale Society does not run itself,  
nor do the Committee do all the work!

(Contrary to any rumours you may have heard!)

Can you help at the show in May?

If you can assist please contact:  
[eventmanager@gsscalesociety.com](mailto:eventmanager@gsscalesociety.com)

**THE GSS**  
**GARDEN RAILWAY SHOW 2019**  
Multi Scale & Gauge Layouts

**Nottingham**  
Harvey Hadden Sports Village,  
Wigman Road, Nottingham NG8 4PB  
**Sunday 19th May 2019**  
10.00am to 4.30pm  
Entry - £6.00 (members £4.00)  
accompanied children and carers free  
[www.gsscalesociety.com](http://www.gsscalesociety.com)

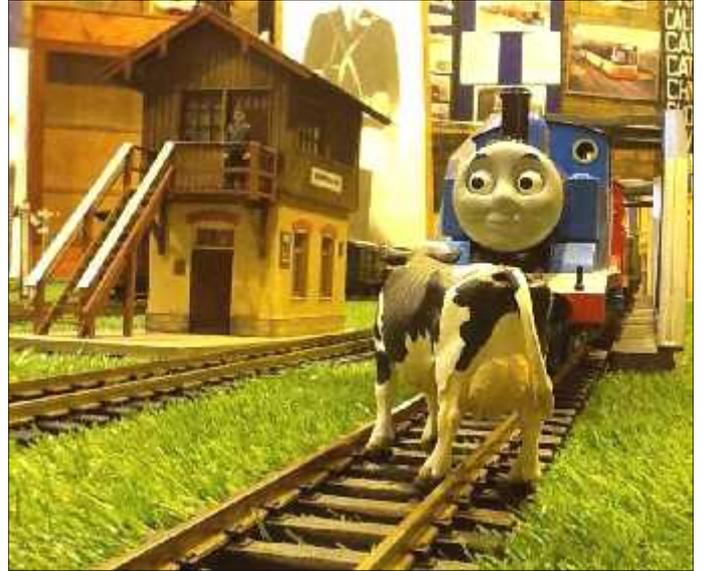
# G-Scale at the North West Museum of Road Transport

Article and pictures by David T

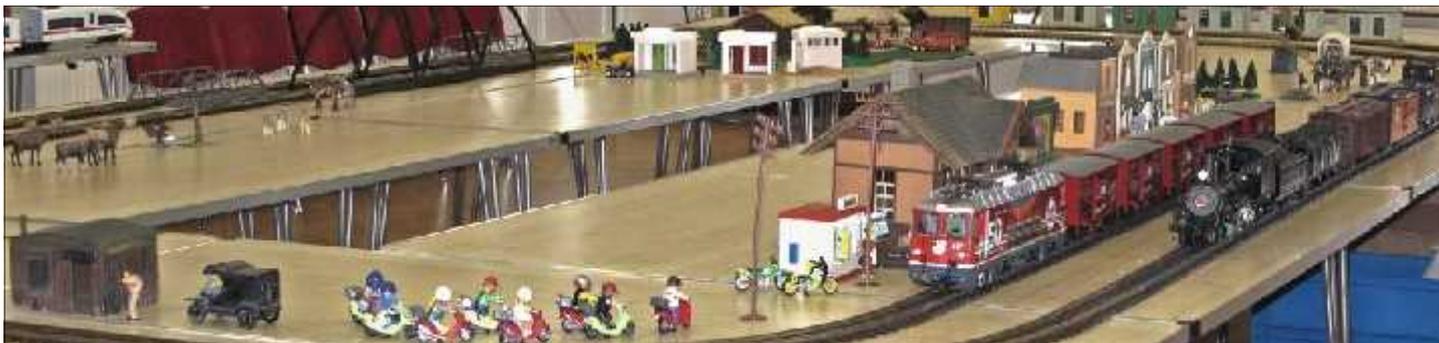
A G-Scale railway is put on display at the North West Museum of Road Transport two or (hopefully from now on) three times per year, to coincide with their Family Day in September and their Father Christmas weekend in December. We are also planning to put it on May 6th to coincide with a vintage car rally. There is a Museum admission charge of £4.25 per adult. There is limited parking opposite the Museum, with more in the town, and we are only two minutes from St. Helens Central and the town's bus station.

Assembling the layout is the easy bit, it is transporting it all there and back that takes the time! Last time, we had eleven circuits, with two of these digital. We virtually eliminate pointwork, as it reduces derailments. The locomotives work hard, sometimes virtually non-stop for seven hours. We employ a lot of double-heading with the smaller locomotives, so often have 16-17 locomotives working at once. We try to ensure that the matching of locomotives with rolling stock is reasonably realistic, but there is no attention at all paid to any wider sense of realism, and we regularly have, say, Toby Tram working alongside the Trans Europe Express. It is, after all, a fun thing.

For more information about the museum, which is open every weekend from February to December, and can be found in the old bus depot, Hall Street, St. Helens, WA10 1DU, see their website: [nwmort.co.uk](http://nwmort.co.uk)



## G-Scale at Storth Photos and article by Tony W



On a pleasant Sunday in October, Storth Model Railway Club paid host to members from the NWAG. On the Saturday night Les and I were pleased to find that between us we had enough track for a decent sized double circuit with enough over to run a shuttle service on the side tables.

We set out the track on the Saturday night, went for a pleasant meal at The Ship, and put out the scenery on the Sunday morning. I do feel that a bit of scenery makes for more interest. We had a mixture of Pola American buildings and some Playmobil around the port area. Plus a few little dioramas. Did everyone spot the rabbits? We were grateful to Mike from Carnforth Models who also provided some buildings from his excellent range of kits, as well as a substantial sales stand.

During the day there was a gratifying turnout of some 30 or so, roughly half of whom were local members and

half from the G Scale Society.

A steady selection of trains ran through the day, from the big American diesels right down to the smaller British outline and a neat little diesel drawing a mysterious shed. Also present was a wide and interesting selection of trams and railcars. Great to see such a wide range! All ran smoothly until one of my controllers got a bit hot and bothered. Fortunately we had a replacement on hand.

I think we all enjoyed ourselves. Enough to make Les and me think that we will put on another similar session, maybe some time in April.

A reminder that we are now usually running one G Scale layout at our regular bimonthly meetings, along with the heritage Hornby.

And watch this space!



Please remember that NWAG members have a standing invitation to Storth to join their meets in the village hall.

Above: NWAG & Storth MRC member Andrew J railing his train. Andrew's garden railway is well worth visiting on his annual open day—look out for the date.

Other pictures: The usual eclectic mix of trains to be found on most G-Scale layouts—no wonder our Chairman comments in the latest G-Scale Journal that we are sometimes accused of not being modellers!

## Getting the detail right! Llanfair Show 2018 by Richard W



We G-Scalers are sometimes accused by rivet-counters of not being modellers! I can see where they are coming from, by their standards I am not a modeller, but just look at the attention to detail in these pictures from the Llanfair Show last year. It's clearly not true of everyone in our corner of the hobby.

Look at the picture opposite and there is something seldom done right, even on rivet-counter railways! The white building is the Customs House at the harbour and that flag is an exact replica of the H.M Customs flag, with the cor-



rect version of the crown for the period. My other hobby is vexillology and as a member of the Flag Institute I am used to being vexed by upside down Union Jacks, US flags with the wrong number of stars, and national flags from the wrong period, e.g. a modern German flag on a pre-WW1 layout. So I was delighted by this find.

The standard of modelling at Llanfair is high, it is well worth a visit. I went for the first time this year and will certainly be going again.

Two other pictures of things that impressed me: the detail in the garage and along the foreground edge of the layout above and the superb slate built shed on the inevitable Welsh narrow-gauge slate railway. Congratulations to the builders of these layouts.



November 2018  
Altrincham  
Meet

Photos:  
Richard W



# Progress of the Rebuild of the Coal Mining Valley Display Layout

## Report by Phil S

Just to let you know where we are up to..!

There are 5 base boards for the layout that are assembled and track laid. The track plan is rather advanced making it a complex piece of work but we (Derek , Peter and myself) are somewhat tied with time. The works where it is being constructed is in the process of being taken over so we can only gain entrance for 4 to 5 hrs Saturday morning.

The station has three roads, controlled by motorised points, giving an interchange of circuits along with a head shunt. The three lines then become two leading onto the curves . The idea is to climb up to make it appear to go in different directions... However that made the gradient too steep. So putting our thinking hats on we were forced to redesign the corners, so that the in-

ner loop dropped while the outer track climbed then after the curve the tracks will be carried one above the other with a "window" for the top one coming out of a cliff face yet to done.

The plan was to launch it at the bus depot in May but we think that may be revised and the old layout used there. Llanfair may be a better bet.

Thanks to:

Keith P for donating track;

Derek C for parts and time;

Peter A for parts and time;

Oh, and me for the vision, parts and time!

If anyone has any continental looking parts that are redundant please get in touch either at a meeting or phone.

Sorry, Phil, I lost the accompanying pictures!

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## G-Wizz: 25 years on the Exhibition Circuit by Allan J

It is a pleasant coincidence that in the same year that LGB, now part of Marklin, celebrates 50 years, our G-Wizz Garden Railway Display Team celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the exhibition circuit with close on 280 appearances around the UK during that time.

The Group was formed in 1993 by the owners of the three original garden railways on the Fylde Coast of Lancashire, the railways being The Blowing Sands Light Railway, The Shonnette Railway and The Old Orchard Line. The aim of the group was and is to promote the garden railway hobby in general and G scale in particular.

Our display plan was to replace the usual practice of some G Scale track on a table with a proper garden railway, complete with grass, trees, plants and built on low "stone" walls. We also try to include at least one water feature. The first of the new displays was at Lytham St Annes in 1994 using track "lifted" from member's gardens. Following this success the Group received an offer from Richard Kohnstamm Ltd, the importers of LGB Trains at that time, for them to supply the track and control gear for the G-Wizz Group Layout. This important development removed the need for members to strip their gardens of track for each Exhibition. This arrangement continued until 2000 when new importers were appointed. Following this change new track and controls were purchased by our members and the group became fully independent again.

In December 1997 the Team ran the first of what was to become 20 annual Charity Christmas Exhibitions raising thousands of pounds for local charities ranging from Lytham RNLI and North West Air Ambulance to The Royal Manchester Children's Hospital. In 2001 the G-Wizz Team also started to stage the North West Garden Railway and Narrow Gauge Exhibition, this successful event was to run until 2012 when the hirer of the location increased the cost prohibitively.

A new development for 2003 was the introduction of a low level digital demonstration line in the centre of the



*Marklin./ LGB's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Locomotive visits G-Wizz HQ for a test run*



LGB 617 with the complete Anniversary Train

display using the LGB MTS system, giving visitors the chance to compare the digital and analogue systems. As before rolling stock is provided by team members and therefore changes depend on which operating crew is on duty. Buildings too have always been supplied by team members and have featured products from Pola, Welshpool Pottery, and Jigstones, many of the latter

custom built in concrete. As the team gets older many of the concrete items are being replaced with lighter items, some being supplied to the Group by Modeltown Resin Buildings, while the new station has been fitted with lighting by T & M Models.

The 2012 season saw the appearance of a Steam Generating plant at the sawmill and a working Cornish pumping engine, both from the Modeltown range. For the 2013 season a second cable car system was added to the display as an option.

The G-Wizz secret of success lies in the garden - because the plants are real the display is never repeated exactly the same each time and so varies with the seasons from spring right through to Christmas. We can even change the theme using trains from Switzerland, Austria, Germany, USA or even Trams! It's not unusual for a certain "friendly" engine or two to appear.

2014 was an important year for the G-Wizz Garden Railway Display Team as they celebrated 21 years on the Model Railway Exhibition Circuit, not bad for a group that started in 1993 with a display to show garden railways in a real garden setting as a one off experiment. Since then the group has exhibited all over the country.

The Team had a very busy schedule with a number of very high profile appearances, including no less than 14 at the Llanfair Garden Railway Exhibition, another at the National G Scale Society G Rail Exhibitions at Milton Keynes and Stafford, and another was an appearance at the National Railway Museum in York at the end of May for their "Big Fun With Little Trains" event. So successful was this that we returned the following year to the NRM for a week long appearance when over 35000 visitors saw the display featuring the full Garden Railway.

As the fame of the "G-Wizz brand" continues to spread around the UK and Europe attracting many followers it is good to know that as long as bookings keep on coming in the Group grows from strength to strength spreading the hobby of *Railways in the Garden* for the next generation of enthusiasts.



*G-Wizz It's Christmas, our festive exhibition raised over £12000 for many local charities, including The Royal Manchester Children's Hospital*



*Our display for Liverpool MRC was shorter than normal due to a lack of space in the hall*

Our operators (and gardeners) are always pleased to answer any questions you may have regarding the layout, gardens, plants or G scale railways in general. Visit our website [www.gwizzgroup.wordpress.com](http://www.gwizzgroup.wordpress.com) for the latest details of our group and its activities, plus where you can see us next, remember this railway is rarely the same twice! It is literally grown to order.

## January 2019 Altrincham Meet



Left: The award-winning Railcars get another outing  
Photos: Peter A

## Six years of Editorship!

This issue marks the start of my 6<sup>th</sup> year of editing the NWAG Newsletter. It was a warm summer's day and we were at a garden meet at Keith's home and I still recall the total incredulity with which John (then editor and desperate to find someone else to take over as he hadn't really the time) and Dennis (then group leader) greeted my offer. Someone had actually volunteered for a job! Once they had recovered from the shock (it took a while) they were very pleased.

I must say I enjoy it, it's the sort of job I like doing and you seem to be enjoying it. I propose to carry on, even though I will be standing as group leader at the next AGM.

At the start of this sixth year of editing I want to thank everyone who has sent in pictures and articles. It is your newsletter, I don't write it, merely edit it, and without your contributions I couldn't do anything. I would also like to thank my wife Norma for all her help proofreading, correcting grammar and generally making sure the typos are eliminated. She has to read it in detail at least three times and the results speak for themselves, a hopefully error free publication. Thank you to everyone for your help and support.



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## G-Scale Society North West Area Group

### Secretary & Membership Secretary

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