



Little Red Train

Tube & Tunnel



"Tube & Tunnel" is produced by The "Little Red Train" to promote an interest in our 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ " gauge (1/8th scale) models of a 1938 'Tube' train and "Ginny" 'Sub-surface' train.

Editor: Adrian Allum.

38 Brookside Park, Farnborough, GU14 9AZ.

01252-377647

Website: www.littleredtrain.co.uk

#19 / Spring & Summer 2008.

⊖ Tube & Tunnel ⊖ #19 / Spring & Summer 2008.



Knowing what our limits are ... this is the key to any successful organisation, and the LRT certainly keeps its feet (or wheels) on the ground. As you will read in this edition; after what seems like ages of delays, we are now preparing to work on the centre-car to bring it into service, now that our huge loan for the new traction motors and controllers has been paid off. Many people have nagged at us to bring the centre-car into service, one even offering to buy the Ginny in order to raise the necessary funds!

But we were not desperate. We wanted the LRT to prove itself first. We wanted it to prove that it is in demand and that the further work on it is worth doing. We have reached that point, now. And when we have finished that job, then there's the Ginny to bring into service. (And maybe then, I can have a look at a CO/CP set; but for the time being, let's pretend that nothing has been said (or written) about it!) Still thinking about our limits, we are not afraid to ask for help where we need it. Various jobs are being discussed with other people, who are more knowledgeable than us.

We are very keen to avoid the third-parties who think that they know everything and lecture us accordingly! We have been told things about motors, rail types, brakes, wagon stability; the list is endless ... all of which contradict the facts gained through many years of experience!

Beware; they're out there, and everywhere!

Front Cover:

Our 38TS train at Hardwick Central during the GCR's Gala Weekend last September. The time was about 23:30 when this photo was taken, and we now have a stronger desire for working headlights (digitally added to this photo)...

[Photo: A. Allum.]

Reports from Events.

On November 3rd, last year, the LRT went to a Charity event in Caversham, following a lead from the event in Henley-on-Thames earlier in the year. The small area allocated to us was quite wide, so having serviced the point, we provided a layout in the shape of a letter "Y" with the train changing direction three times during each journey ... and a point-man being appointed (pun not intended)!

On the 25th, the LRT made a return visit to Christ Church School in Virginia Water. We carried over 150 passengers, but had 10 minutes out of action due to an electrical problem; one that has recurred since!

On December 1st, the LRT returned to the Friends of Slip End Lower School for their Christmas Fayre; to give rides to and from Santa's Grotto. We were outside (as usual) and had particularly grotty weather, but still managed to carry just over 100 passengers. We had a complicated situation of selling tickets in



© M. Scrutton.



the usual manner alongside providing rides as part of the Santa ticket (for which we had to keep a count to claim at the end of the day)! We won't be doing that again!

Into 2008, and our season really starts with the May Fayre at Ottershaw, but we accept bookings, of course, with the Acton Miniature Railway. The Modelling Weekend was on March 8th & 9th, and this was also the inaugural 'run' with the AMR's own loco, the donated "Sarah Siddons," re-gauged from 7½"! The railway carried just over 1200 passengers over the two days, 457 of them on the LRT. Other trains at the railway comprised Mike Dickinson's "A" class Metropolitan Railway steam loco, a SE&CR steam loco, a GWR 14xx loco and on the Saturday only, Matt Scrutton's J70. The LRT had another power failure during the weekend, and it was decided that the plug-couplers for the hand-held unit are not good enough, and they will need to be replaced before May.



Forthcoming Events.

We have a few bookings at this point, as follows:

Ottershaw May Fayre, May 5th;

Ashford Park Primary School, June 8th;

Knowl Hill School (Pirbright), June 14th;

Friends of Slip End Lower School (Luton), June 21st;

Christ Church Infants School (Virginia water), June 22nd;

1st Hook Scouts (Surbiton), June 28th;

11th Finchley Scouts (Totteridge), July 5th;

Rotary club of Surbiton, July 19th;

Slip End Village Fayre, July 26th;

Great Cockcrow Railway, (Monday) August 25th.

Enquire or see our website for details (when available).



Ongoing Maintenance.

Friend of the LRT, Matt Scrutton has expressed a keen interest in repairing the existing bogies to the LRT! His previous experience with woodwork includes boats, and he is convinced that the bogies are not beyond repair. A full assessment will be made in the summer.

Another Friend of the LRT, Stephen Trower has designed a modification to the bogies that would reduce the risk of damage to springs and bolts in the event of a derailment! Although we will still want completely new bogies before too long, Stephen's suggestion could be taken up; but only after a full assessment of the design. Alteration to the physical structure of the bogies would be minimal.

The LRT has been plagued with electrical failures, always on the plug couplings between cars and to the Hand-held unit. 50' of 12-core 7/0.2 cable has been found in Adrian's stockpile, and together with new couplings, the train is to be rewired!



General News.

An assessment of the Centre car has taken place, and work is now in hand to bring it into service. It needs four new wheel-sets, and these have been tendered out to Paul Trotter at Camberley Engineering. The bogies have had the last of the old motors and gears removed, and matched (mostly) with axleboxes. The footboards will be "L" section on square-section cross-pieces and without timber. (The timber boards on the end cars will be replaced with similar new boards, to discourage people from standing on them!) A new seat cushion will also be made, and we will enquire with a suitably talented friend to getting this job done. Other than that, it is just the electrical wiring, a few body repairs, and it'll be ready to run. We are hoping to have it ready for the event on Bank Holiday Monday August 25th at the GCR, but we have an 'absolute latest' date of November 1st (for the AMR). Then, we'll turn our attention to the Ginny, which despite some recent rumours, is NOT for sale!

Minimum Expenses for events have been reviewed, using experience gained with running the minibus to and from events. Before we had the minibus, Adrian had use of his former employers' van, and apart from a Tax levy, this was virtually free. That has all changed now, and we have found that our costs are not covered by the amounts that we charge for taking the LRT to events. Therefore, all event organisers have been written to, so that we can explain the situation and announce what our new charges are. The event in Luton, for example, costs about £90 to do, and the event at Hook (Chessington) costs about £50. These represent increases of around 100% on our previous charges!

In order to raise the necessary revenue, we are considering raising our Fares from 2009, but to also provide a longer track so that people are still getting Value For Money.



Managing at Acton.

Jonathan Riddell has decided to step down as General Manager of the Acton Miniature Railway. Recognising Adrian's organisational skills and commitment to safety, it was deemed by the Friends of London's Transport Museum, appropriate to ask Adrian to take over as General Manager.

Every railway presents a different challenge, and although the AMR is quite small, it is no exception. The two main challenges are the funding and the location. The railway has been funded by the Friends of London's Transport Museum. Every purchase has to be agreed by the Friends, and this usually follows a meeting to discuss the needs and desires for the railway. However, the money raised through fares goes (after expenses) back to the Friends, and this is the "selling point." If the Friends will pay up, they will get a better return on their money. The location is a similar challenge, built within the grounds of the museum, the management have to be convinced that the railway is beneficial to the site, and will enhance the purpose of the museum (to sustain an interest in the historical transport of London). This is also a cause for meetings. The difficulty that this presents, is that the management work Monday to Friday, but Adrian (as a volunteer) can usually only be available at weekends instead! Nevertheless, the time "between jobs" has been useful for getting the projection of the railway agreed in principle.

The fourth Saturday (usually) in each month is a designated Work Party day upon the railway there, and work is in hand to install the signalling and erect a trackside fence.





Not quite the end (yet) of a long hard day's work!

