

Tube & Tunnel

Photo: The LRT attended the Open Weekend at Upminster Depot at the eastern end of the District line for their 50th anniversary! We took the centre-car just in case...!

(D. Bullions.)

"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.



Website: www.littleredtrain.co.uk



#22 / Autumn & Winter 2009/10.

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It's been an interesting year for the LRT, with a few new events, and so on. In this edition you can read about an event that we are definitely NOT going back to next year as well as an event where we promoted the AMR in the company of similar "Underground" trains, albeit in the slightly larger "12 inches to the foot" scale!

We did wonder how this year would go. The minibus that we use to transport the whole outfit about in, is too expensive for me to run personally, so it has now become a liability of the LRT, not just an asset! In order to make this viable, we had to put our costs up to cover the running costs of the minibus. Most of our hosts were OK with this. But we also agreed that it was time to put the fare up to £1. However, we let the event organisers choose; but our main advice is for Primary schools to remain at 50p fare.

And all in good time, we had a £350 maintenance bill for the minibus this year, and it's annual service is due!

As the season comes to a close and we're getting ready for the Santa Grotto events, we're also looking at the way forward with the LRT, in terms of maintenance of the train and track, and also development of the Ginny and other smaller projects.

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Reports from Events.

On 4th May, the LRT attended the Ottershaw May Fayre, organised by the local Scouts & Guides. We started off with a very heavy downpour, but for most of the afternoon, the weather was dry, and we broke our passenger record again, this time carrying 458. Joining the LRT we had a model of a class 73 locomotive, and for the passengers behind this loco, a carriage from the nearby Great Cockcrow Railway was borrowed.



On Saturday 27th June, we went to the 1st Hook Scouts Summer Fayre. We were charging £1 (which still made us cheaper than many of the other activities), and there was a slight drop in the number of passengers. Nevertheless, we were able to make a donation to the host at the end of the day, and our costs were covered. We were quite unfortunate in that our station (set up in the usual place) was behind a couple of small stalls, and also behind a diesel generator! We have asked for this to not happen again.



***Top:** The LRT and class 73 loco side by side at Ottershaw.*

(Photo: D. Hill.)

***Above:** Jonathan Riddell is one of our newer regular drivers, and is seen here at Hook.*

(Photo: A. Allum.)

On Sunday 28th, we went to the Summer Fun Day at St Josephs Catholic Primary School in Aldershot, very near to the directors' homes. Being a school event, we charged 50p fare, and carried almost 250 passengers, with agreeable weather throughout. It was especially nice to attend a local event (yes, despite the 'London' theme, we're based in the Farnborough / Ash Vale area), and hopefully this will lead to more - as well, of course, as a return next year!



Above: *The LRT in the grass at Totteridge!*

Right: *Hook again, this time with the station on the grassed area!*

(Photos: A. Allum.)

On 4th July, the LRT made a return visit to Totteridge for the Summer Fayre organised by Finchley Scouts. After some debate it was agreed that we would charge a 50p fare (we have charged £1 here, before), but 326 passengers is down on last year! Nevertheless, despite a little light rain for a few minutes, it was a lovely day, and a busy one. We were in our usual area, but the grass had not been cut, so a lot of track-packing had to be used as it was impossible to determine the best actual route.

The LRT attended the Open Day at Lambeth Cemetery on 12th July, for an interesting, if somewhat quiet event. The idea of a "Hearse of the Year" competition seemed a bit surreal, but it was all in good taste. However, we carried very few passengers at the event, and the team of four were not kept busy! We were provided with refreshments including lunchtime rolls, and we even got some track maintenance done! Despite the low patronage, we are likely to be invited back again next year, but to be located more visibly within the grounds, and hopefully with better all round advertising also.

On Saturday 18th July, we went to the Fun Day organised by the Rotary Club of Surbiton, at the same location as for Hook Scouts, except that with a few curves we brought the station area forward onto the grass, where it certainly got more noticed. We

charged £1, but the 182 passengers got a double ride for that, so it was certainly good value.

On Sunday 19th, we went to the Fun Day in Canons Park, near Edgware. We charged 50p and carried just over 300 passengers - in three hours. It was hard work, and we had quite a long queue for most of the afternoon. We had to put up with a little rain and strong winds, and the Gazebo got quite badly torn; but it was the cones



and cordoning that were an ongoing problem ... many of the cones have lost their sand so they're quite light, and many had to be held down with pegs!

The LRT attended a two-day event at the Friern Barnet Summer Show on August 22nd and 23rd. Unfortunately, this event was beset with problems right from the very start. It seemed that the Site Visit (essential for all new bookings) had been totally irrelevant, as we were moved to a part of the field with a very steep camber, exactly where we had said that we could NOT run. So after a threat or two we were moved to a better site, and on the Saturday, we carried a fair number of passengers, but we never actually got busy; a bit boring for a team of six! New member, Dave Bullions was 'passed out' as a qualified driver, and his contribution to the whole operation is appreciated. At the end of the Saturday, the organiser invited the public to cross our track to reach the arena, and this they did, causing much superficial damage in the process! We had been invited to leave the track down overnight, and were told that the site would be patrolled day and night by a local vigilante group with lawful powers of arrest. (Yes, laugh if you like!) Well, they were certainly invisible during the day, and we were told about a theft that had taken place during the previous (Friday) evening; so we took no chances and brought the whole outfit home!

On the Sunday, we were to move our station area slightly, to give enough room for the Dog Show. Our host (the organiser) failed to

turn up until 30 minutes before the agreed start time, and then wanted us to change the set-up; this we didn't! Then, at the 12-noon start time, we were told not to start; we had to wait until an open-air 'service' had taken place. We finally started over an hour later than agreed at the Site Visit, and carried even less passengers than on the Saturday. In fact, it was in the 20 minutes after the closing time that we were busiest, with several well loaded trips in quick succession. We will not be returning to this event next year. This is a decision that we have not had to make before, but for the host to renege on location and operating times, and to invite people to breach the right-of-way, could have had serious implications on overall safety, and thus the risks are too great.



The LRT represented the Acton Miniature Railway by taking part in the Upminster Depot Open Weekend at the end of August. This was one fantastic event, with as much laid on as possible, including guided tours under a D-stock train, all sorts of visiting rolling stock, including R-stock, Q-stock, the former L.99 steam

loco (rumoured to soon be painted back into LT livery), Sarah Siddons, the 38 Tube Stock, a depot's length of trade stands, free vintage bus rides to and from the station, and of course, a miniature railway with track. We were told that within the first two hours, more people had arrived than had been expected over the whole weekend, which is a clue to the success of the event; but unfortunately, very few of them were children (in person or at heart) and we were not kept all that busy. We brought the new centre car (expecting to be busy), but it was not needed and only used in the last hour on the Sunday for the sake of having it there! Nevertheless, a good sum of money was raised for the AMR (via the Friends' of course) and the LRT's expenses were covered. And it was a fun event.

The LRT had a day out at the Acton Miniature Railway on September 5th, for a Fun Day. The Museum Depot was closed to the public, but instead a Friends' event was taking place, and free

rides were on offer. With no children present, we were not kept busy, but six adults did travel, four of them on the LRT. But all volunteers LRT and AMR got to drive both trains and operate the signals, so yes, it was a fun event.



Forthcoming Events.

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

October 10th & 11th—AMR Family Weekend.

November 28th—Sonning Common Primary School

December 5th—Cradle Hill CP School (Seaford)!

March 13th & 14th—AMR Modelling Weekend.

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



General News.

On Sunday June 21st, Adrian and Daniel took another trip on the 1:1 scale 1938 Tube Stock, this time from Edgware to Colindale via the Kennington turning loop! As a bonus, there was an extra ride on offer, from Russell Square to Ealing Broadway, a journey which would otherwise have been ECS due to the need to return the train to the (Museum) Depot. A cab-ride was permitted along this latter journey! As we understand it, this is probably the last time that this train will be able to run along the Northern Line due to resignalling which will be incompatible with the train!



Left: The 3-car LRT at Upminster awaiting passengers.

Above: The 1:1 scale 38 tube train seen departing Ealing Broadway on route to the depot.

[Photos: A. Allum.]



AMR News.

The AMR now has its concrete platform and is awaiting a ticket office and mess room (two separate buildings). Ongoing work at the railway has centred around the fitting of track bonds for the signalling equipment and more insulating rail joiners (and tie bars) where necessary. It is hoped to have a few track circuits working in time for the October open weekend.



Above: AMR Fun-day with the LRT and class 73.

Right: Adrian making track adjustments during the event at Lambeth Cemetery.

Below: Spot the odd one out!
(Photos: D. Bullions (Centre) A. Allum (others).)

