

# Tube & Tunnel



The newsletter about the 7¼" gauge models of the 1938 'tube' stock and the "Ginny" 'sub-surface' stock, built by Fred Blois, now owned by Adrian Allum and Daniel Hill.

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**#12 / Autumn & Winter 2004.**

## ⊖ Tube & Tunnel ⊖ #12 / Autumn & Winter 2004.

It was our original intention to produce this newsletter biannually, but due to the nature of the work required to get the train running satisfactorily - and the lack of the appropriate knowledge, things are taking somewhat longer than we had planned. So, this journal is being produced one year following the previous edition. Between us, there are the electrical skills and bodywork skills; but it is the heavy mechanical engineering that the train needs, and so this is where we need to rely on outside help!

In this edition, we are looking mainly at the trains' history. But we are also bringing you up to date with the little progress that has occurred, and some news of an event...!

Also, we have some memorabilia to sell.

In case you were asking...

...The picture on the front cover to the previous edition was taken at the Scout Hut at Alton on the day of its visit there (as reported from in that edition).

### **Front Cover:**

The 1938 stock at Filching Manor, on the day of its last run. There had been some talk about a permanent track being put down here, thus ending the laborious "portable track events;" but this did not materialise. Instead, the train was stored in its trailer in the grounds here, for a number of years.

[Photo: F. Blois.]

## Progress...

...Slow!

Buying a second-hand train is like buying a second-hand car. It always needs more attention than initially realised! Nevertheless, although there is very little to show right now, a lot of background work has been going on, and we will soon be able to bring about some of the bigger effects.

90% of our attention has been turned to the gearing, and to look at the many options that are available. We have found a source for a compact gearbox with the reduction value that we need; but now we need to determine it's compatibility with the train - that is, if it will fit into the available space - and - how will it connect mechanically with the motor and the axles?

All other concerns have been put on hold, as they are modifications, not repairs; and our first task is to bring the train back into working order. As the "Mechanical" work is beyond the scope of either of us, this work will probably go out to a third party - Mechanical Engineers who may be interested in helping are invited to get in touch - please!

### We have a deadline!

The Tube Train has been booked to appear at the Open Weekend at Acton Depot (organised by London's Transport Museum) at the end of February 2005. More details of that event will be posted on our website early in 2005.

## The History...



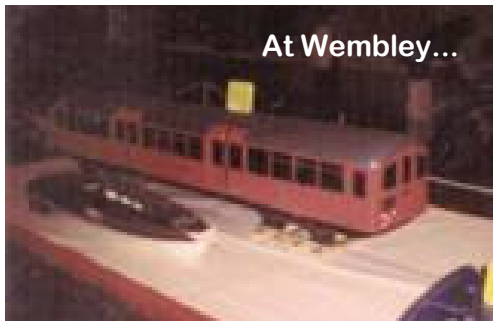
Builder Fred Blois  
& the model!

Fred Blois had built Marine models before turning his attention to a steam engine. He writes, “I purchased a part-built 1½” scale Allchin traction engine, but after spending 2½ years building the wheels, boiler and other bits and pieces, I found out, due to a persistent cough, that I’m allergic to smoke! My reason for building a traction engine had been to free myself from the need to have access to a track. But after joining the Willesden & West London S.M.E. and soon after, the Harrow & Wembley S.M.E., I was quickly subjected to the dreaded *Rail Enthusiasts’ Disease* and began to think of ways to get involved.” This was in the summer of 1982.

Having got involved with the Pinewood Miniature Railway Society, Fred decided to build an electric train, and was inspired by a journey from Neasden to Kingsbury, to build a tube train. “Not the horrid Ally stuff now in use, but a real one. A RED ONE!” Fred grew up near Kingsbury Underground station (then part of the Bakerloo line) and that was served by the 1938 Tube stock. Fred recalls, “I have always felt that the red livery gave them a friendly look, something that in my opinion, the modern stock just does not have!

It was in early 1983 that Fred started the drawings for the Tube Train, using plans supplied by the LT Museum (Covent Garden, London). These were very early plans bearing little resemblance to the 38s as he knew them. But by starting with them, and by taking measurements from the full-size exhibit in the museum, a reasonable model was constructed. Little did Fred know that he would be back to run it there one day!

Everything to do with the construction went very well. Fred was able to purchase some very cheap, very thin ply-wood for the roof and body detail. This was originally made for W.W.2 Moschetto Aircraft and still had the makers’ (1943) stamp on it. It was not until the controls were thought of, that things went wrong. However, we shall return to that.



In August 1983, Fred attended the Guildford International Traction Engine Weekend; armed with the unfinished Tube Train. It was transported on the roof of his car, and it certainly turned a few heads on its way out of London! Later, in September, the train went to the 1983 Brent Show (Roundwood Park); and then in January 1984 to the 53rd Model Engineers' Exhibition, Wembley.

It was in early 1984 that Fred purchased some (new) rail section, and with the help of a friendly building site manager, acquired the wood (scrap) for sleepers, and started building track.



At this stage it was built in dual gauge (5" & 7¼"). Later, the Harrow & Wembley club were in the process of replacing their Ally track with Steel, and Fred was able to buy enough Ally for 200'.



By August, the train was finished - but not yet running, and appeared as such at Guildford again. In November 1984, one of the cars was set up in a mock-up of a tube station at the Bracknell Railway Society's Silver Jubilee (1959-1984).

By January 1986, the 'G' class double-ended driving car was in a presentable state, and taken to the 55th Model Engineers' Exhibition, Wembley. Fred says, "It was built for 'er indoors!"

On April 12th, 1986, the Pinewood Miniature Railway Society held its official opening. This was the first time that Fred actually drove the train. Fred described it as, "A very special feeling, as anyone who has experienced it will tell you." Unfortunately, it was rather slow as the gearing was not correct (*Ah; so this is not a new problem, then? -Ed*) and the controls were not yet reliable, so the run finished a bit prematurely!



Soon after the opening of the railway at Pinewood, Fred and many other members felt obliged to relinquish their membership there, and they formed the Yateley & District Miniature Railway Society. Fred removed the rail for the 5" gauge, and this, along with more rail from Harrow and timber from the building site, gave him enough to reach 350'! It was believed to be the longest portable track in the country, complete with two points and four buffer stops.

*To be continued...*



# For Sale

As part of the acquisition of the Tube Train, there were included some items of memorabilia that we are not interested in keeping, so we are offering them for sale - and will hopefully raise a bit of cash towards the maintenance of both of the trains.

*(These prices for "Tube & Tunnel" readers only.)*

**Underground Car Maps - £10 each (Mounted).**

- ⊖ Bakerloo Line (Elephant & Castle to Stonebridge Park) ⊖
- ⊖ Bakerloo Line (Elephant & Castle to Harrow & Wealdstone) ⊖
- ⊕ ⊕ Circle/District Line ⊕ ⊕      ⊖ Northern Line ⊖
- ⊖ Piccadilly Line ⊖      ⊖ Victoria Line ⊖
- ⊖ Metropolitan Line (with zones) ⊖
- ⊖ Piccadilly Line (with zones) ⊖

**Central Area Journey Planner - £1 (Mounted).**

**Stove Enamelled Line Signs - £20 each,**  
(Or will exchange one for ⊕ District Line ⊕).

- ⊖ Northern Line ⊖
- ⊖ Central Line ⊖
- ⊖ Piccadilly Line ⊖
- ⊕ Circle Line ⊕

**Bus Memorabilia (!!) - £50 the lot; or...**

- Route Master (RM) Bonnet Number - £18
- RM Radiator Badge - £12
- RT Radiator Badge - £18
- Daimler Bonnet Badge - £12

**Available soon: "C5" and similar traction motors; T.B.A.**