



MAIDSTONE MODEL
ENGINEERING SOCIETY

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2010



THE NEWLY REPAINTED CLUB ENTERPRISE LOCOMOTIVE "JOHN WHEELER"

Merry
Christmas



WHAT THE CLUB WAS DOING 62 YEARS AGO.....

English Mechanics I believe was the forerunner to the Model Engineer and this copy was found amongst others in the Clubhouse (I think it was Bernie who brought it to my attention some months ago). So, definitely worth a reprint and its place in the Club Archives.

AUGUST 5, 1938

ENGLISH MECHANICS

325

Maidstone Model Railway And Engineering Club.

A Short Account of the Club's Successful Exhibition.

The most successful exhibition yet organised by the Maidstone Model Railway and Engineering Club was held over three days in the Hollingworth Hall, Maidstone.

Large crowds were attracted during the period of the exhibition, and competitors and visitors came from all parts of Kent and even further afield.

An excellent collection of models were on show, and visitors were unanimous in their praise of the craftsmanship of the exhibitors.

Several local tradespeople co-operated readily with the Club and had stands at the Exhibition, and a ciné show was running continuously in an adjoining room.

Competition for the cups and prizes was very keen, the judges taking two hours to arrive at their decisions.

Included in the loan models were Capt. A. P. Isard's (Tonbridge) scale signalling cannon; a record-holding model racing car owned by Mr. L. G. Tucker, of the Model Car Racing Club; a gauge "0" "Sir Morris de Cowley" coal-fired locomotive under construction, by Mr. W. W. Mills (Tunbridge Wells); and a model glider which has soared for ten minutes, made by K. Day, a member of the Mid-Kent Aviation Club, on whose stand it was shown.

There was a large number of stationary steam engines and passenger hauling locomotives on show, some of which were working off a Lacy-Hulbert compressor, loaned for the occasion. They included five or six 2½-in. "Dyaks."

The prize list was as follows:—

"Boorman" Cup for the best model entered by a member, Mr. E. J. Beer, Faversham (2½-in. "Dyak"); runner-up, Mr. R. C. Shilling, Maidstone (2½-in. L.S.W.R. 4-4-0 under construction).

"Romney" Cup for the best stationary engine, Mr. H. Smith, Snodland (one-sixth h.p. gas engine).

"Sandling" Cup for the best railway model in "00," "0" or "1" gauge, Mr. D. Rowe, Maidstone (Underground motor coach and trailer coaches); runner-up,

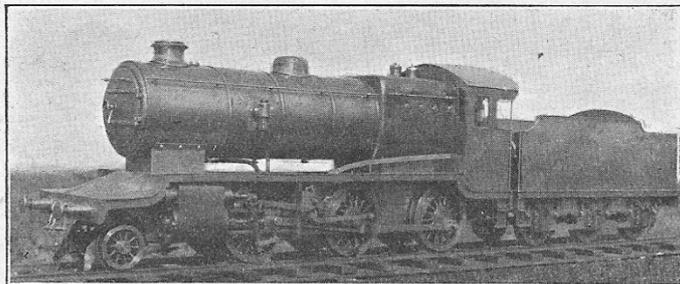
Mr. J. Elbourne, Maidstone ("0" gauge "King Arthur" loco, electric).

"Model Engineer" silver medal for the best model in the open section, Mr. A. Davies, Margate (model yacht); runners-up, Mr. H. C. Neale, Gravesend ("Dyak") and Mr. E. J. Beer, Gravesend (3½-in. gauge 4-4-2 G.N. loco.) (tie).

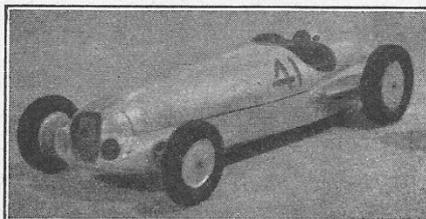
Open competition, aeroplane model, 1. Mr. P. Truscott, Canterbury (pusher type monoplane); runner-up, Mr. G.

The awards were presented on Saturday night by Mrs. E. R. Martin, wife of the president of Maidstone Rotary Club, who was introduced by the chairman of the Club, Mr. Elvy Wicks.

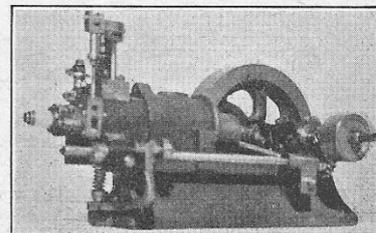
Mr. Wicks expressed thanks to members of the Rotary Club for the valuable help they had given towards making the Exhibition known and by their personal support, and he also thanked the various firms which had co-operated with the



A 2½-in. Gauge Dyak Loco. by E. J. Beer (Faversham) which Won the "Boorman" Cup for the Best Model Entered by a Member.



R. G. Tucker's Prize-Winning Model of Mercedes Racing Car.



A 1/6-h.p. Gas Engine Entered by H. Smith, Won the "Romney" Cup.

Curtis, Maidstone (petrol engined monoplane).

Special prize, H. H. Mungham, Maidstone (Meccano model heavy motor lorry).

Medals were also presented to Mr. J. Elbourne and Mr. H. E. Bonmert, last year's winners of the "Sandling" and "Boorman" cups respectively.

Club at the Exhibition. Special thanks were due, he said, to Mr. W. R. G. Hills, who had acted as Exhibition Secretary, and who had been wholly responsible for the successful organisation of the event.

Mrs. Martin, who congratulated the Club on its splendid Exhibition, was handed a "Silver Link" loco. paper weight as a memento.

M.M.E.S. 9th Sunday Lunch at Grangemoor Hotel on Sunday February 6th 2011

12-30 for 1pm as usual. Menu choices & £19-50pp (under 10s half price) to Pat Riddles by Club Night January 7th please

Starters

Fresh Homemade Cream of Vegetable Soup

or

Prawn & Waldorf Salad

In a Marie Rose Sauce

Served with Brown Bread & Butter

or

Trio of Melon

Topped with blackcurrant compote (Honeydew,
watermelon & cantaloupe melon)

or

Warm Red Onion & Goats Cheese Tartlet Served on a bed
of mixed leaves & balsamic reduction

Main Course

Roast Sirloin of Beef with Yorkshire Pudding

or

Roast Leg of Lamb

or

Slow Roasted Stuffed Loin of Pork

(The above main courses are served with
Roast Potatoes & Vegetables)

or

Smoked Haddock & Spring Onion Fish Cakes

Served with Parsley Sauce, New Potatoes &
Vegetables

or

Mixed Seasonal Vegetable, Herb & Mozzarella Lasagne
Served with Salad Garnish

or

Cold Ham with Mixed Leaf Salad, Coleslaw & New Potatoes

Sweets

Home Made Spiced Apple & Sultana Pie with Whipped Cream

or

Rocky Road Ice Cream Sundae

Chunks of chocolate brownie, vanilla ice cream, chocolate sauce, topped with whipped
cream & chocolate crunch

or

Selection of Kentish Farmhouse Ice Cream, Vanilla Pod, Strawberry, Chocolate,
Honeycomb, Rum & Raisin

or

Strawberry Pavlova

Meringue, topped with strawberry ice cream, strawberry coulis, whipped cream & curl

or

Selection of British Cheese & Biscuits with Onion Relish

Coffee or Tea

Bredgar and Wormshill Light Railway by Charles Darley

It was about 4 years ago that I first visited the delightful little 2 foot narrow gauge railway tucked away in Bredgar. It is called the Bredgar and Wormshill Light Railway, as the dividing line of the villages of Bredgar and that of Wormshill crosses through the line of the track.

It was then in May of 2010 that I was invited by the owners Bill and David Best to join their volunteers and enjoy the Thursday day of work on the line. My first job was to polish all the locos using Brasso. Now I normally only polish a few bits of tableware for dinner parties at home, so tackling one loco was something quite different, but to have 5 was a great task. Firstly, there is a lot of brass on a narrow gauge loco, but more than that, three locos are used each running Sunday which need extra polishing, and the remainder a once over.

Having become accomplished at that, the next task was more polishing, now on the showman's engine. If I thought there was a lot of brass on a loco I had another think coming, as there is maybe 4 times as much on the showman's engine. Well, it has to stand out and be displayed at a show, so hence the reason for the extensive brass cleaning. As the weather improved the next task was to do some painting. This was at the far station building, which needed a good rub down, and then a good coat – but not too much – of varnish. This took all of one day and part of a second day.



Then of course there is the track. I was introduced to the way to test the goodness of the timber sleeper by Harry (MMES club member) as it was decided that about 8 sleepers needed to be changed. Now, this is a back breaking job as the ballast that has been put there originally to stop the sleeper moving has to be dug out by hand. The existing fixing for the rail to the sleeper has to be removed, the sleeper, or what remains of it, slid out from under the track, and then the new sleeper slid in and the rail fixed down. All in all, doing one took about 3 hours even with 4 people helping out, and at the end of it one is exhausted.

Heavy track work – fun, but hard work

General maintenance on the coaches includes an annual open up of the bogies oil/grease pods, checking the level and re fixing the cover. A full day's work on the 4 coaches having two sets of bogies each.

One day I arrived and in front of me was a big pile of timber, and a big pot of paint. All of this had to be primed and left a week, then it was used to clad a trailer which was bolted to steel uprights. All the bolts had the excess of length cut off with an angle grinder leaving sharp edges. So my next job was to file all the ends to make them rounded. With that job done, it was then a rub down of the undercoat and apply red primer to the bolt head and make good anything insufficiently primed.

All of this was enjoyable as it was so different to just going out for a coffee morning as I had done previously on a Thursday – it is great being retired.

Then one day I arrived I went to start polishing as usual, and was told “No, we have a bigger job to do. You see that smoke box, well, the the returns from the steam chests have been disconnected and your job for today is to scrape the mating surfaces of the flanges ready to install new gaskets”.



Well, talk about going home dirty, I had soot everywhere, even when I had taken off my overalls and had a good wash down, even my hair was full of soot and oil. Still, the job was done and a shower soon sorted out my remaining dirtiness.

So now I was fledging into the realms of engineering but do not think that polishing stopped – no, every week some polishing is done!!!

However, one day I arrived and one of the locos had blown a gasket on a steam chest. On closer inspection it was apparent that just fitting a new gasket would not solve the problem, but the steam chest top had to be machined flat.

I learned to wear a hat whilst doing this job – when I did not have one on!!

So I was asked to unbolt the offending piece of metal and bring it to the milling machine. The job took over an hour to achieve with the machine minded by one of the two paid employees. When done I carried it back to the loco and handed it over to the “engineer,” and it was then placed on a new gasket on the steam chest and tightened down.

I was then asked to lay a fire and light it and bring the loco up to steam. Well, that is a two hour job, but as at the time we worked on until about 21:30 (this being midsummer), the job was done. The loco steamed and the gasket held and I had the chance to drive the loco a short distance.

The weeks went on and I continued to do useful things in the engineering field like re-puttying in a window and replacing a broken signalling post, until a day recently.

A loco needed to be steamed because an injector had proved troublesome on an Open Day. I was detailed to bring the loco up to steam. So the fire was laid, lit and after some two hours of stoking with wood and a little coal, the pressure was ready to make the safety valves blow. Get on the footplate Charles, I was told, you are driving. I have never taken a loco from the outside of an engine shed onto the turntable, but I was not going to say no. Reverser fully forward all but two notches, brake off, and gently open the regulator and ease the weight of the loco forward. It came to a stop at the turntable, which, at rest, has the entry rail a tad higher than the approach track rail. Now the dilemma - just open the regulator or go back a bit and then forward again, as I knew the turntable tips to allow passage onto it. I opted to open the regulator more, and thankfully the loco responded and we rolled onto the turntable – well, halfway, as the trailing wheel also hit the misalignment which I had not expected. I was concentrating on not overshooting and taking the loco and me through the buffers. Still, adopt the same procedure and the rear wheel was soon also on the turntable.

Now, all I had to do was roll the loco forward so that the turntable was in balance. With that achieved it was a case of the turntable being moved round and I took the loco up the line. Now to test the injector.

Failure, so it was all taken apart and found then that there was an accumulation of “crud” in it. Once that was removed and the injector reassembled, it worked faultlessly.

Finally, on a recent Thursday I was asked to start to disassemble a small Diesel loco – Oliver - which has just been bought by Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway. I have my small digital camera with me so I took shots of all the parts taken off to be an aid to putting it all back together again after it has been shot blasted and repainted. I have never had to loosen such large bolts before, using a 3/4” socket and a 4 foot scaffold pole to give extra leverage. Some bolts snapped as they were so rusted in, but this saved having to unbolt the bolt, as they will all, with maybe a few exceptions, not be reused on the reassembly.



Oliver

As for Open Days, they are on the first Sunday of the month from May to October. I can help out on one of the stations, assist in one or other of the signal boxes, or be a guard on the train. I can also be the Station Master at the main station, able to give an explanation as to how a loco works, or should work, explain the steam driving course, and generally answer or try to answer any question asked. Next year they would like me dressed in “Station Master” clothing as of an earlier period – now that will be a challenge!

Playing with the narrow gauge locos and trains has made me appreciate more of what goes on at the club on a Wednesday to keep our track in Mote Park going. I hope to attend the Wednesday events, in the future, more often than in recent years.



Only a beginner and he knows now not to use an adjustable wrench!!

NEVER FAR AWAY

~~PISSED~~ whoops, sorry, wrong spelling. PSSST! Ah! Yes that's better. Have you heard? The Iron Lady is stepping down as (pr)editor after so many years that to number them would give an idea of her true age, and that would conflict with her youthful appearance. No longer will she be the editorial Ogre issuing threats and menaces to her writers whilst wielding the censor's light sabre. Rumour has it that some geezer is taking on the role and I can't help thinking, or, to be honest, hoping, that the masculine influence will see the inclusion in News Letters of something akin to 'Page 3' girls, know what I mean, nudge nudge wink wink say no more. Perhaps as a parting gesture Sue might be willing to be the first M.M.E.S. model engineer pin-up. All those in favour yell phwore!

Drink, Oh! Buggah!, how do I get back to proper size text? Aaaagghhh!! All computers are female, what's the masculine for misogynist. Hang on, I'll try something else.

Drink right, got it. In my case this is well proven to be a very important accessory, when writing articles. It might well work for other aspiring contributors who are dithering or procrastinating on the brink of writing an article. Therefore possibly the dearth of articles for our newsletter suggests that there are more teetotal members than there are ~~pisshheads drunkards~~ connoisseurs of alcohol. Go on, hit the bottle, get smashed as a parrot and write an article. My last contribution in the Spring edition was, I think, very effectively influenced by drinking Gin, which induced a mild flamboyance (an almost restrained disregard for acceptable standards of propriety) but the bottle is now empty.

So what is the replacement? Guinness! This is the not so much the chosen, but more like the prescribed drink. I've had a long period of unwellness and had heard that the 'Irish Genius is good for you' (their advert from 20 years ago) so I've been giving it a trial run and have felt that it is of benefit. Placebo effect? How would I know? If it was, it would obviously render the claimed therapeutic value as questionable, but as always, I am willing to keep on ~~drinking~~ trying. Cheers!

I have a theory about drinking beer and offer the following guidelines for novice, (and excuses for hardened) boozers (ladies included)

How many pints of Beer?

The first pint wets the glass.

The second pint gives you the flavour.

The third pint quenches your thirst.

The fourth pint will bestow upon you the effect.

The fifth pint, if you're still standing - sit down or you might start spilling the stuff.

Right, have you tried that, got the glass wet? Good, lets press on.

Music The guitar thing didn't do a lot for the article last time, it was pleasant background music but it didn't stimulate the mind or help to recall memories which are so essential for this style of writing. So I'm going for music from the Hippie era, why? Well, I was recently forced to pass on my collection of Model Engineer Magazines and in browsing through them for one last time I came across a front cover showing our very own Master Model Engineer; Graham Kimber, sat behind his Wren 0-4-0 and looking very dapper in flared trousers and floral shirt with a large collar. It immediately drummed up memories of 'Flower Power', psychedelic drugs, free love and the music of that era which coincided with the start of my very own Engineering Revolution in the late 60's and early 70's, which is where I left off in the last edition. I've gone through my collection of discs relating to that period and selected about 8 hours of music, that should be enough to help me write a special Sue retirement article. Better have another glass of beer to get the flavour.

Humour Why was I giving away my M.E. mags? Loft clearance, we; me and the missus, needed the space in order to horde other clutter that is more up to date. In doing so my collection of Giles annuals surfaced but there is no way that they were going anywhere other than down the loft ladder to the living quarters where I can for the umpteenth time re-read them and recollect the events that Giles satirised in such an inoffensive way over so many years, and above all else soak up the humour of a genius.

Live to laugh to live, or Laugh to live to laugh. I really would like to be able to draw cartoons in the same way, portraying the club, the track and the members, but don't worry, I couldn't draw to save my life so nobody gets to be pictorially lampooned. Anyway there are a couple of farces to come. Have a drink to quench the thirst and read on.

Emotion in Engineering

Yes, another event that stirred the hearts of men (sorry Ladies). For this I've got to go back in time to pre-Ford days to when I were a lad at Chatham Dockyard so everyone into the TARDIS and no Dr Who jokes, please.

There is a long held belief that TARDIS stands for Time And Relative Dimension in Space. I think it is actually: Trains And Railways Destinations Include Stations (yeah!yeah! could you do better?).

Anyway, the event was the launching of a submarine, an 'O' boat; The Ojibwa which was one of three subs that we built at Chatham for the Canadians. They were named after Canadian Indian tribes, the other two being the Okanagan and the Onondaga. The Launch was a ticket only event and somehow I managed to get two tickets, one for me and one for Dad. The slipway was packed with lucky ticket holders on both sides, port and starboard, and the Royal party and dignitaries were at the bow. Obviously nobody in their right mind was going to be at the stern end, in the river, except for a tugboat with lines attached in order to control the boat once it was in the water. If someone is thinking of correcting me 'boat' is the correct designation for a submarine, not 'ship' Do you want to know why? Take me to a pub and buy me a beer to drink whilst I explain.

I can't remember who actually launched the boat but at 14:00 hours after speeches the bottle broke on the bows, wedges were driven out and she slid down the slipway to a euphoric roar, that drowned out the noise of the drag chains, from all who were assembled there on 29th Feb 1964. The roar of the crowd and the emotion charged atmosphere of the launch was an amazing experience for me. As a youngster, I had absolutely no idea whatsoever of what was to come, and neither had I ever before, up too that age, felt such a stirring and emotive sensation. Even now after so many years, reliving the event catches the breath. It could never be mimicked even with today's technology. The emotion at a launch is so esoteric; known only to those who have experienced it.

My theme of 'Never far away' falls a little short on this one. To suggest that the emotion was omnipresent may seem over the top but it is probably the most appropriate expression. I still have my ticket, to me it is a priceless keepsake and aide memoir that prompts other memories of that time.

Read on.

Memories

The story so far; see previous articles. The hobby of Model Engineering and my job as a Toolmaker did, in a very short space of time, become inextricably linked to each other. Possibly at times I was far too engrossed in applying tool room precision to all aspects of model loco building that I was in fact gilding the lily; and looking back, that attitude should have been tempered with some of Curly Lawrence's philosophy; life is too short and a couple of swipes with a file will do the job well enough, which might well have expedited the building of my 'Speedy'. But, I had set my attitude and derived much pleasure and satisfaction in achieving good engineering standards in fitting and machining. At the Tech college where I was doing my best to deal with enormous brain strain one of the lecturers had become aware of my model engineering activities and told me that he had been building a 5" gauge Q1 with a stainless steel boiler. I never got to see this loco and as it was in my final year I lost touch with Roy Gregory and I often wonder if the loco was ever finished. A couple of years ago when I was doing a welding course at my old college and having a chat with an instructor I learned that Roy had just passed away but nothing was known of the loco. Pity. Do any members know anything about Roy's Q1 loco?

Fords tool room was, to me, an educational facility as much as it was a means to earn a good wage, although the environment was somewhat removed from being a classroom.

It was a case of 'teach yourself' by paying attention to all that happened around me. Engineering was an obvious subject, but there were other topics.

History was an unexpected subject but as relevant as, Industrial Relations and working practices pertaining to the great unwashed; the hourly paid working class men on the shop floor. There seemed to be a persecution by Salaried staff who were always willing to crow about their superiority over the common man in the workplace, the hourly paid workforce. My hatred for such discrimination found fresh food at Fords to feed an abhorrence for something that started in Chatham Dockyard with a breed known as Recorders – Time keepers, did they put themselves on a pedestal above everyone else? Yes they did.

As readers will have gathered from my previous ravings, I had a hatred for Trade Union Shop Stewards, who were so very well typified, albeit humorously, by Fred Kite (Peter Sellers) in the film I'm All Right Jack. At British Leyland they had Red Robbo and at Fords we had Red Reg, both of whom were activists of comparable militancy, and letting Arthur Scargill get involved in the 'Everybody Out, We Are On Strike' culture really gave the British Motor Industry hourly paid employees an appalling reputation.

BUT, through one particular industrial history lesson I did start to understand the Unions stance. I was told that in the early days Henry Ford II would come to Dagenham to personally supervise redundancies and that he did this in a brutal manner that epitomised his aggressive management style. Apparently, or so the story goes, he would walk along the production line, get to a point and tell the plant manager 'everybody to my right is sacked'. However many years of service an employee had didn't matter. Under those circumstances employees solidarity in defence of their jobs was probably without any dissenters at all and thus gave immeasurable strength to the Unions, who in turn became a formidable force, and may well have been the foundation for the lengthy period of animosity between workers and management that I unwittingly walked into.

There was an occasion when the Unions accused the company of deliberately contriving situations that would encourage strikes in order to close down production and thereby save costs when the demand for vehicles was low. Right up to the day I left Fords I was never really sure who was the greater antagonist; Us or Them, but certainly, an Industrial Dispute was Never Far Away.

I should mention at this point the big divide between the hourly paid and monthly salaried staff at Fords, which I imagine was probably no different a situation than that at other large manufacturing industries but it was something that caused me perpetual irritation, and consequently resentment was Never Far Away.

It was the hourly paid workers (we weren't called staff) who fought the battles for better pay and went on strike without pay to get it, whilst monthly salaried staff kept working (sat on their arses) with pay, and automatically got the pay rise that the workers fought for. It seems perverse that in order to get on careerwise I would have to go over to the dark side where there were those whom I despised, and become one of them and no longer one of us, a change of allegiance: 'I'm all right Jack' or 'The working class can kiss my arse I've got the foreman's job at last' ring any bells?

There was further inducement to cross over to the dark side when taking into account the fact that an hourly paid Toolmaker with 20 years experience got paid at the same hourly rate as me the new man whereas monthly salaried staff had a pay scale with scope to get paid according to ability, experience and length of service. (Well, that was the theory anyway.) Was this the Company's way of hitting back at the seemingly forever on strike hourly paid workers? Quite likely.

1974 was, I think, the first official New Years Day Bank Holiday and was introduced due to high levels of absenteeism which really did have an adverse effect on production lines. But also, of major detriment to production was the Union controlled lines of demarcation which did not allow for enough flexibility, so that one worker could move between different areas to do different operations. It was strictly one man, one job. During the normal working day the stopping of the line and restarting for tea and lunchbreaks caused lost production which was ultimately reflected in customers waiting 6-8 weeks for their cars. Yes, I know we all need a tea break, but read on.

A bit further on into my career I was 'Minder' to an exchange student, Franke, from the German Cologne (Koln) plant, he was in fact the son of the plant manager. He was astonished by working practices on the prod line and extolled the Germans superiority, efficiency and attitude to their work, but he came across as a nice enough chap anyway. Apparently, the regime in the super efficient German workplace did not make provision for tea or lunch breaks as in the British workplace but instead a system that allowed production line workers to hand over to others whilst they had refreshments and they in turn after their break would relieve someone else ad infinitum and so everyone could do everyone's jobs and the production line didn't stop. 'Never catch on in this country' I said. Here's a laugh. Whilst Franke was staying in England, as guest of the Dagenham plant manager, there was another industry suffering with strikes and as a consequence toilet paper was not only in short supply from the suppliers but was also being nicked wholesale from Fords toilets by black marketeers. The unions demanded something be done or it was "All Out," so we were all issued with one toilet roll per person. Franke simply could not get his head around that. 'In ze fazzerland ziss would not be happenink you dumpkof Englanders'. I think he had a point; An Industrial dispute was Never Far Away.

Henry Ford is credited with many "quotes" and one of his best known was:- "Any colour you like, as long as its black." Do you know why? Contrary to popular belief it wasn't the cost of the paint but the fact that it dried quicker than other colours, thereby reducing the time that the car was in the 'manufacturing stage' and therefore available for purchase a little bit quicker.

Footnote:

Some time after I had left Chatham Dockyard, I heard that there had been a strike over pay and that workers with placards had marched to the Admirals office to protest. So, in the minds of the traditionally staid and compliant Admiralty workers there had come a point at which they felt enough is enough and that their hitherto acceptance of taking what they were given, rather than seeking what they wanted, was coming to an end. A quiet revolution.

Better have some Humour, and sit down for a drink. What's it going to be:- Hughie Robson or Dudley Dog. As I am well into the Ford thing at the moment I'll start with Hughie who was a shop floor foreman and one of the less agreeable ones, so he deserved to be preyed upon. As was the usual practice, jolly japes were carried out on the night shift where people like me had to be on the lookout all the time to either avoid being a victim or, to identify one. So, Robbie it was, not easy because he was experienced and wizened in the ways of the night shift comedians. So, the scene is a tool room with benches and machines spread out in between assembly areas where the end products (jigs, fixtures, dies etc.) were put together and dotted around were foremen's desks, usually cluttered with paperwork that hid a standard black telephone.

Right that's set the scene, the star was Hughie Robson, other key players will remain anonymous and the props; a black telephone and a tin of Stuarts Micrometer marking Blue. Now, do you know what Stuarts Micrometer marking blue is? If you don't, take me to a pub, buy me drink and I'll explain, otherwise refer to my much earlier article re: apprentice transgressors being blue-balled. Oh! Alright, I'll explain. It is a very dark blue oil based paste used to show high spots when scraping in bearings or flat surfaces for precision fitting. It is almost indelible on human skin.

It's quite predictable isn't it. Whilst Hughie was otherwise engaged someone smeared marking blue onto the earpiece of his phone. Hughie returns and by contrivance he gets a phone call, there was some chat and inspection of one of many drawings on his desk. At one point he changed the phone to his other ear; a bonus, and then Harry Foster, another foreman, ambled over and got involved in a three way conversation, he then took the phone for a while; priceless.

The conversation finished, the drawing was folded up and Hughie and Harry went about their duties not even noticing each others blue ear(s). It was standard practice in the 'Us' camp not to give the game away and just let 'Them' find out in their own time. We were pretty well adept at keeping a straight face and at lunchtime Harry and Hughie were seen in the washroom with their well soaped fingers in each others ears. Such indiscreet intimacy made tongues wag, but sadly nobody had a camera. Nothing was said about it for the rest of the night. Three ears in one shift, a triumph. Comedians were Never Far Away.

Another night shift jape that wasn't quite so jolly: Payday. Obviously the highlight of the week and looked forward to by everyone. There was a procedure: A Foreman would 'volunteer' an escort, usually a big bloke, to accompany him to the pay office window to collect a box of pay packets for his section (five sections altogether-five foremen-five heavies). Foremen were easily identified on the shop floor simply by being known personally, but around the plant it was mainly by their uniform; a dark green overall jacket with blue collar and the Ford logo embroidered on the breast pocket. Anyway, one night Gerry went with his heavy to get our pay and was told that it had already been taken. Apparently, an imposter had managed to get hold of a green jacket, recruit an accomplice, present themselves at the pay office, were given a box of 30 pay packets and then, like all bafty crastards, they scarpered. The next morning 30 of 'Us' went home without pay. We were paid the next night, but the crooks were never found, they were over £500 each better off, in cash. Crime doesn't pay? This is questionable, and possibly worth looking into.

Whilst all was going well??? With the world I was busy in my own little tool room working on Speedy as well as spreading my time out amongst other activities such as fishing for fish, and also birds. *How do you fish for birds?* Come on! You know what I mean.

If I got the opportunity I would knock up bits and pieces at work but before long this made a rod for Paul's back. Curiosity breeds interest, and two other toolmakers started muttering about their ambitions to build a model traction engine so I found myself well and truly lumbered with 'Homers' that weren't mine. I recall machining wheel hubs and rims but I don't know if a model was actually finished, or perhaps it was another situation just like my Speedy. On the subject of Homers (see one of my earlier articles) for others, the night shift regime was structured to allow modest Homer activity and my background and apprenticeship at Chatham dockyard seemed to make all the boating enthusiasts regard me as one of them and a font of knowledge on boats. Now, it's true that I did spend a bit of time "messing about on the river in long boats short boats and all sorts of" etc. We can't print any more without infringing copyrights – yes, there has recently been a case where quoting in writing more than the title or first line of a song lead to a civil action for plagiarism. I was warned of this through article writers network. How absurd. I could rattle on about that for ½ hour, but I'll spare you the agony. Anyway, It was a-maaa-zing how many replacement items had to be made for bits lost overboard. More about Pirates of the Medway next time. Anyway, the conclusion was that; A scrounger was Never Far Away. Mind you, nothing has changed, I suppose, it's just that I can now see them coming and get myself prepared:- 'I hear that you have a lathe', 'yes they are very useful, why don't you get one yourself, must dash, goodbye'

Have a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year.

Paul Rolleston.

A 'JOHNSON' BELPAIRE 4-4-0 IN GAUGE ONE by Ron Attfield



At the end of the 1800s, Johnson produced his first, more powerful, Belpaire boilered locomotive. I believe the introduction of the new and heavy corridor rolling stock was the spur to the design change. Additional water capacity was required and to provide this, he produced an 8-wheel, two bogie tender with a capacity of 4,500 gallons. When pick-up rail side water troughs were introduced, this changed to a three axle smaller unit with a capacity of 3,000 gallons.

The first eighty Class 3 locomotives used saturated steam. However in 1913, superheating was introduced and as time allowed, most if not all of these, were modified. The class was finally withdrawn from service in 1952.

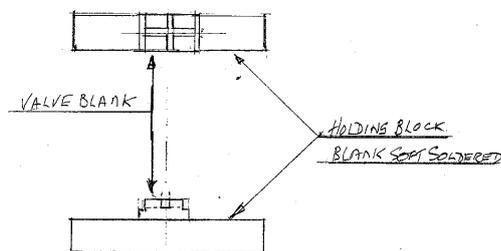
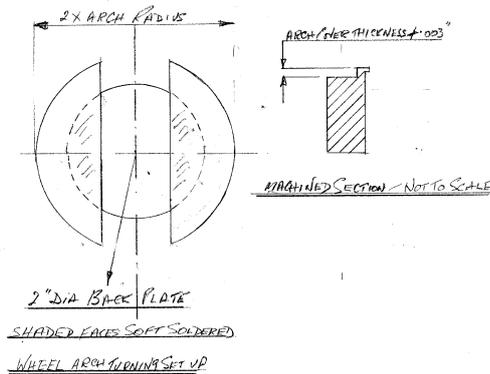
In this short article, details are given of a number of methods I have used in the making/assembly of some parts. These are given because here and elsewhere, several locos are being built by people new to Gauge One. The methods described work for me but they are not the only or the best - each to their own.

Part 1. At the time I was finishing the coal tank, I started to look around for my next project. Although not keen on Paul Forsythe drawings, he has produced plans covering an interesting range of nineteen Gauge One locomotives including the 'Johnson' Belpaire. The 8-wheel tender I found most appealing and in addition, the single cylinder and slip eccentric valve gear was simple and powerful with a $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter cylinder. This is to all intents and purposes similar to that used on the 'Project' design.

Sixteen cast iron wheel castings and a pair of frames were purchased. Although Gauge One wheels are smaller when compared to 5" gauge, the machining operations are the same and take quite a few hours to complete. All treads were turned on a spigotted arbour to ensure concentricity.

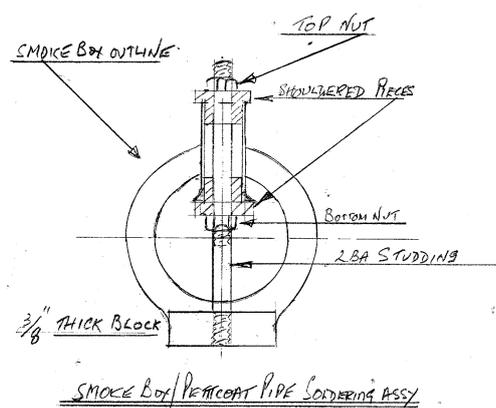
I always make a simple jig for drilling crankpin holes. The wheel spokes are cleaned up with a needle file — they soon lose their cutting edge!

Although the model boiler has the appearance of a Belpaire, it is actually a round top with the Belpaire shape cover made as a separate assembly of two pieces soldered together. The front part is 3/16" thick and machined on a rotary table. This allows a rebate to be formed for the sheet cover to be located during soldering. The two corner radii were filed by hand and high melting point soft solder was used on assembly.



WITH BLOCK HELD IN VICE ON V/MILL ALL EDGES & SLOTS WILL BE SQUARE TO EACH OTHER
NOT TO SCALE.

SLIDE VALVE FEATURE



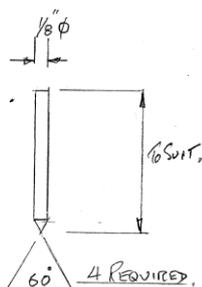
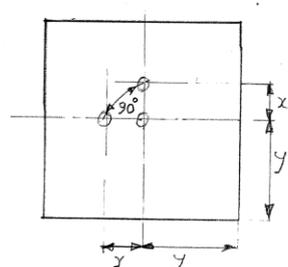
The wheel splashers need to be neat and have clean edges and to achieve this, they were machined on a faceplate (the sketch shows the machined section). Each was attached to a running board with 2 x 10 BA screws. I think it is important the slide valve is machined accurately square, thus ensuring as it traverses backwards and forwards the cylinder inlet ports are opened evenly across their width. They are only .062" x .250". A piece of phosphor bronze larger than needed was soft soldered to a 1/2" square block, as per sketch. This was held in a vice on the vertical milling machine. Using the 'x' and 'y' movements, all faces and edges will be square to each other, as also will the 1/16" wide slot for the drive nut.

Using a 1/8" dia. slotting cutter, the valve was 'parted off' by milling across and into the holding block. When unsoldered, it is finished apart for the cavity on the underside.

Some builders may consider soldering blanks to a block or back plate a waste of time. As an extreme example, when making my 'Dee' the cylinder block was soldered to a back plate. With the four positions for the pistons and valves marked out and centre drilled, the back plate was clamped to the lathe faceplate and the bores drilled and reamed. No distortion from the 4-jaw chuck jaws and the end face square to the bores. Hard soldering the petticoat pipe to the smoke box may bring problems difficult to correct unless a fixture is made to hold the parts securely. A 3/8" thick block was made a good fit between the smoke box legs. A central hole was drilled and tapped 2BA and a long piece of 2BA studding fitted. Two shouldered spacers about 1/2" diameter - drilled 3/16" with the small diameter a good fit to suit the inside of the petticoat pipe were made. The assembly of the parts to the fixture is clearly shown in the sketch.

Quartering the Driving Wheels.

Simple jigs made from two 1/8" (or thicker) plates, as per sketch, require to have their edges squared up. The size of plates need to be at least half the driving wheel diameter plus 3/4".



X = CRANK OFFSET =

Y = 1/2 WHEEL DIA + 3/4" BOTH MEASUREMENTS IDENTICAL.

ALL HOLES 1/8" REAM.

2 REQUIRED.

WHEEL QUARTERING PLATES.

With the plates held flat in a vice on the Vertical Mill table, one hole is drilled and reamed 1/8" diameter. At 90°, two further holes are drilled and reamed at the crank pin centre distance.

In addition, four 1/8" pins with one end turned to a 60° angle are required. The sketch shows the layout. The centre pin will locate in the end of the axle which will have been centre drilled during manufacture. My plates were originally made this way but I have elongated the 90° holes to accept different crank pin centres.

To illustrate the accuracy when using the elongated holes which of course are not reamed, I calculated the following: An elongated hole .126" wide will allow movement of $\pm .0005$ ". With a crank pin centre of .375", the angular error is just five seconds of arc and this to me was quite acceptable. The fit of the wheel to its axle is made a good sliding one for three quarters of the wheel width. The last quarter needs to be a tight push fit. The complete assembly is assembled on a flat surface with the edge of the jig plates in contact.

With all wheels set and fixed to the loco frames, rods may be fitted and free rotation checked. When all is satisfactory, retaining *Loctite* is applied to the outer end of the axles. The loco ran well during trials in its unpainted state. I hope when finally painted and re-assembled, it will perform equally as well. My next loco is to be a Tilbury Tank 4-4-2 with two outside cylinders using slip-eccentric gear.

Part 2

Part 1 was written two or more months ago. During the elapsed period the painting process – which I do not enjoy – has been completed.

The frames were chemically blacked and the wheels painted using Humbrol black early in the initial building. This is of help when after running the loco in its unpainted state it has to be dismantles prior to painting. The frames, cylinder and inside motion may be left untouched other than removing the buffer beams to be painted vermilion.

Most of the paint came from Precision Paints in aerosols – acid etch – undercoat – Midland Crimson Lake (Dull). The acid etch was applied sparingly and left for two or three days before one undercoat. Finally two or three coats of crimson lake.

Because I had problems in locating transfers a month or so passed before any assembly could begin. In hindsight I think this was most beneficial, allowing the paint to fully harden.

I tried using yellow line transfers for the tender and boiler bands. The tender lines were quite long and for every good one three or four would break. In desperation I wiped them off!

Talking to Martin, he suggested using Letraset self-adhesive lining. This was successful, and left for a day or so before overcoating with matt varnish. All letters, numerals and crests came from Precision Transfers.

The tender underframe – running boards – smoke box etc. were coated with PLASTI-KOTE BARBECUE BLACK. Low Tack masking tape was used where required. This is thin and has very sharp edges.

The loco in its finished state has run on the Romney track several times, pulling a rake of twelve coal wagons with no difficulty and the regulator open about 20%. I'm sure it could manage DOUBLE the number! This has been an interesting job, although I have to admit interest was lost at one time for a month or so. After giving myself "a good telling off", back I went to the workshop.

Finally, a question: Why, when you drop a 10BA screw on the floor you can't find it – yet a few days later, there it is, looking at you where you dropped it? If this doesn't happen it will have bounced and is hidden behind a box or piece of equipment you seldom ever move under the bench.

©Ron Attfield.

Note: Part 1 of this article has just been published in the latest Romney Newsletter.



MANY, MANY, MANY CONGRATULATIONS TO REG & LOUISE HOLDSTOCK WHO CELEBRATED THEIR **75TH** WEDDING ANNIVERSARY ON 27TH NOVEMBER 2010.

MERTWITT'S CYNICAL BIT

Many years ago when I was gainfully employed, an older colleague solemnly proclaimed that it was no good getting old without being cynical. He was full of wise words and kept a notebook of his favourite quips. One day in the office, the Company newsletter was circulated and within its pages was a photograph of all the managers of various departments, gathered around a sectioned model of a large compressor house. My colleague and I had been solely responsible for the construction of the model, which included the layout of the equipment and piping within it. "There you are," muttered the Sage, "accolade for the uninvolved. No mention in the text of the Designers."

Since Victorian times I believe the status of practical Engineers and Designers in this country has gradually declined and a lot of so called Engineers (i.e. those with a bit of paper claiming they are), can't put a nut and bolt together. The Government has now realised there is a shortage of Engineers (and Scientists) and they need to encourage firms to take on more apprentices. Well there's a revelation, we need people who can actually make things with their hands. I wonder what the Prime Minister is doing when he keeps saying "We must all roll up our sleeves, we are in this together." I know what we are in together, and when it hits the fan I bet his won't get dirty. And what a crap and out of date cliché that is, even the Police Officers usually wear short sleeve shirts these days.

I'm told by my grandchildren that most schools don't do much in the way of practical skills any more. So perhaps the rot starts at school, where if a classroom activity doesn't involve a keyboard and a screen, then it has little credibility. And while on the subject of schools, this week I was made aware of why teachers are somewhat unenthusiastic to arrange outside visits. So much form filling is required many weeks prior to a visit, that teachers are reluctant to participate. Somewhere in the dark depths of oblivion, groups of administrators are building up ever-increasing empires of paper chasers.

The Health and Safety Executive has probably had a lot to do with controlling our freedom to 'live dangerously', and I am somewhat lost to understand when watching open air news reporters on TV, attired in day-glow jackets and hard hats in the middle of a field. The only hazard one could imagine is a low flying seagull re-enacting the Dambuster sequence, or the TV camera exploding. At the other extreme, also on TV recently, there's been a series of programmes featuring an Architect and a professional Climber hanging on ropes a hundred feet up while admiring the masonry. The only personal protection was a crash helmet, and I wonder what good that would be when falling between a rock and a hard place. For comfort they might as well be wearing a Fred Dibnah cloth cap, but I guess on impact, a crash helmet might restrict splatter.

It's a sad fact that as we get older, we become weaker and less mobile. It appears that smaller locos, I.e. Gauge One, is gaining in popularity over the bigger stuff. The smaller models take less time to complete and are easier to move. Without young and enthusiastic (and skilful) model builders getting involved with 'our' hobby, I foresee a gradual decline in expertise as old and tired Model Engineers drop their nuts and fall off the stool while looking for them. Ultimately the few material suppliers won't have enough orders to sustain their business. This is a very pessimistic view, but without the future generations having the desire to make things with their hands, as an alternative to pushing buttons, there's a greater danger that this will evolve.

Who's convinced about the green economy? I would ban all car racing on the basis of carbon emissions and waste of fuel. I would stop the manufacture of high performance cars for the same reasons, and the advertising of ever increasing speed and acceleration achievements. Also ban certain TV motoring programmes which forever extol the virtues of cars which can corner at ever increasing velocity and complete a circuit at ever diminishing time. I am not convinced about all the modern devices which supposedly increase miles per gallon, when any mature driver knows that the best economy attachment is on the end of their right leg. As soon as anything goes wrong with any of the sophisticated bits, the first repair bill gobbles up any savings you might have while driving economically. We are assuming of course that the fault finding equipment gives a correct analysis.

I recently heard of an estimate of £700 labour for changing the clutch of a family car. Is this engineering progress, where design does not consider the likelihood of replacing what is a consumable component, without considering the accessibility of such part? There must be a demand for a basic, reliable, no frills car, bring back timing chains, leave rubber drive belts to the lawn mowers where they belong.

And who's convinced about the economics of offshore wind turbine farms? How long will it be before maintenance is required due to the effects of a salty atmosphere? Installing them in favourable conditions is one thing, repairing same in hostile weather entirely different. In a few decades when these become redundant, will we be left (or rather will our grandchildren be left) with what could look like a decaying forest of petrified trees?

I don't know why I should, but looking on the bright side, I've heard on the local news recently. That Mote Park has been awarded a considerable sum of money for improvements. Let's hope that the money is spent sensibly and if new trees are planted, due thought is given to the mature size and space needed. Six years ago I grumped about the avenue of walnut trees that are now interfering with each other. Still, as the Government is now half Liberal, probably that is allowed in a public park!

J.B.

LESSER KNOWN MURPHY'S LAWS

1. Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
2. He who laughs last, thinks slowest.
3. Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.
4. Those who live by the sword, get shot by those who don't.
5. Nothing is foolproof to a sufficiently talented fool.
6. The 50-50-90 rule: Anytime you have a 50-50 chance of getting something right, there's a 90% probability you'll get it wrong.
7. If you lined up all the cars in the world end to end, someone would be stupid enough to try to pass them, five or six at a time, on a hill, in fog.
8. If the shoe fits, get another one just like it.
9. The things that come to those who wait will be the things left by those who got there first.
10. Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he will sit in a boat all day, drinking beer.
11. Flashlight: A metal tube used to store dead batteries.
12. The shin bone is a device for finding furniture in a dark room.
13. A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well.
14. When you go to Court, you are putting yourself in the hands of 12 people who weren't smart enough to get out of jury duty.

HUMOUR FOR LOVERS OF WORDS

1. You can tune a piano, but you can't tuna fish.
2. I wondered why the cricket ball was getting bigger. Then it hit me.
3. Police were called to a day care centre where a 3-year-old was resisting a rest.
4. Did you hear about the guy whose whole left side was cut off? He's all right now.
5. To write with a broken pencil is pointless.
6. When fish are in schools, they sometimes take debate.
7. The short fortune teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
8. A thief who stole a calendar got twelve months.
9. A thief fell and broke his leg in wet cement. He became a hardened criminal.
10. When the smog lifts in Los Angeles, U.C.L.A.
11. The dead batteries were given out free of charge.
12. A dentist and a manicurist fought tooth and nail.
13. A bicycle can't stand alone; it is two tired.
14. A will is a dead giveaway.
15. Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana.
16. A backward poet writes inverse.
17. In a democracy it's your vote that counts; in feudalism, it's your Count that votes.
18. A chicken crossing the road, poultry in motion.
19. If you don't pay your exorcist you can get repossessed.
20. Show me a piano falling down a mine shaft & I'll show you A-flat miner.
21. The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine was fully recovered.
22. A grenade that fell onto a kitchen floor in France resulted in Linoleum Blownapart.
23. You are stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.
24. A calendar's days are numbered.
25. A lot of money is tainted: 'Taint yours, and 'taint mine.
26. A boiled egg is hard to beat.
27. He had a photographic memory which was never developed.
28. Those who get too big for their britches will be exposed in the end.
29. When you've seen one shopping centre, you've seen a mall.
30. When she saw her first strands of grey hair, she thought she'd dye.
31. Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead to know basis.
32. Acupuncture: A jab well done.
33. Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.

PASSPORT APPLICATION

This was an actual passport application that made a member of staff laugh so much, she copied it.

Dear Minister,

I'm in the process of renewing my passport but I am a total loss to understand or believe the hoops I am being asked to jump through. How is it that Bert Smith of T.V. Rentals Bournemouth has my address and telephone number and knows that I bought a satellite dish from them back in 1994, and yet, the Government is still asking me where I was born and on what date? How come that nice West African immigrant chappy who comes round every Thursday night with his DVD rentals van can tell me every film or video I have had out since he started his business up eleven years ago, yet you still want me to remind you of my last three jobs, two of which were with contractors working for the government? How come the TV detector van can tell if my TV is on, what channel I am watching and whether I have paid my licence or not, and yet if I win the government run lottery they have no idea I have won or where I am and will keep the bloody money to themselves if I fail to claim in good time. Do you people do this by hand?

You have my birth date on numerous files you hold on me, including the one with all the income tax forms I've filed for the past 30-odd years. It's on my health insurance card, my driver's licence, on the last four passports I've had, on all those stupid customs declaration forms I've had to fill out before being allowed off the planes and boats over the last 30 years, and all those insufferable census forms that are done every ten years and the electoral registration forms I have to complete, by law, every time our lords and masters are up for re-election. Would somebody please take note, once and for all, I was born in Maidenhead on the 4th of March 1957, my mother's name is Mary, her maiden name was Reynolds, my father's name is Robert, and I'd be absolutely astounded if that ever changed between now and the day I die! I apologise Minister. I'm obviously not myself this morning. But between you and me, I have simply had enough! You mail the application to my house, then you ask me for my address. What is going on? Do you have a gang of Neanderthals working there? Look at my damn picture. Do I look like Bin Laden? I don't want to activate the Fifth Reich for God's sake! I just want to go and park my weary backside on a sunny, sandy beach in Barbados for a couple of week's well-earned rest away from all this crap.

Well, I have to go now, because I have to go to back to Christchurch and get another copy of my birth certificate because you lost the last one. AND to the tune of sixty quid! What a racket THAT is!! Would it be so complicated to have all the services in the same spot to assist in the issuance of a new passport the same day? But nooooo, that'd be too damn easy and maybe make sense. You'd rather have us running all over the place like chickens with our heads cut off, then find some tosser to confirm that it's really me on the goddamn picture - you know... the one where we're not allowed to smile in in case we look as if we are enjoying the process! Hey, you know why we can't smile? 'Cause we're totally jacked off!

I served in the armed forces for more than 25 years including over ten years at the Ministry of Defence in London. I have had security clearances which allowed me to sit in the Cabinet Office, five seats away from the Prime Minister while he was being briefed on the first Gulf War and I have been doing volunteer work for the British Red Cross ever since I left the Services. However, I have to get someone 'important' to verify who I am - you know, someone like my doctor... who, before he got his medical degree six months ago, WAS LIVING IN PAKISTAN!

Yours Sincerely,

An Irate British Citizen.

AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE

This is to give you confidence in the Pilots and Ground Crews. Remember, it takes a college degree to fly a plane but only a high school diploma to fix one. After every flight, Qantas pilots fill out a form, called a 'Gripe Sheet' which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft. The mechanics correct the problems; document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the Gripe Sheets before the next flight. Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humour. Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by Qantas' pilots (marked with a P) and the solutions recorded (marked with an S) by maintenance engineers. By the way, Qantas is the only major airline that has never had a fatal accident for the last fifty years at least (I think!).

P: Left inside main tyre almost needs replacement.

S: Almost replaced left inside main tyre.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit.

S: Something tightened in cockpit.

P: Dead bugs on windshield.

S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent.

S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.

S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

S: That's what friction locks are for.

P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.

S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.

S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

P: Aircraft handles funny..... (I love this one!)

S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

P: Target radar hums.

S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.

P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding with a hammer.

S: Took hammer away from midget.

MOTE PARK HISTORY LESSON

View of the lake and boathouse



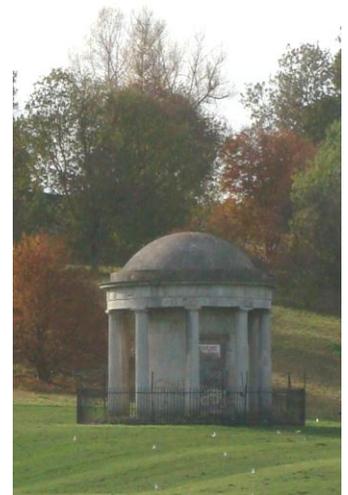
Mote Park is a large public park that has an area of 180 hectares near to Maidstone town centre. It was originally a country estate before being converted to landscaped parkland at the end of the 18th century. It became a municipal park in the 20th century. The former stately home of Mote House is within the park, set in 450 acres (1.8 km²) of garden landscape and this property now consists of 85 houses and apartments, a conversion that is almost nearing completion. Also in the park is a boating lake, a pitch and putt course,

café, children's playground, and of course, us, the miniature railway. The park has also been used by Kent County Cricket Club and the cricket ground is still there. Additions in the last thirty years include Maidstone Leisure Centre, which has swimming pools and sports facilities and where concerts and exhibitions are sometimes held.

The Park's name is derived from old English 'moot' or 'mote' meaning "a place of assembly". In the Middle Ages shire moots were held at nearby Penenden Heath, which would suggest that it may once have formed part of an administrative region in central Kent. It is believed that the area was one of the earliest deer parks in Kent. In the 13th century the "mote" lands were looked after by local landowners and in the park area is a manor described as being fortified or castellated.

The Park has its place in royal history as a possession of Elizabeth Woodville who was the daughter of Richard Woodville and who became King Edward IV's consort. It was later raided by Thomas Wyatt the Younger, who was angered by the King's marriage. Despite various attempts by King Richard III and King Henry VII, the Woodville family continued to lay claim to the land. It was Queen Elizabeth I who regained the estate for royalty until in 1690, when it passed to the Marsham family. It was this family that later became known as the Lords Romney. (It is Lord Romney's Hill you drive up to turn right into Willington Street at the traffic lights – you thought it was all the Ashford Road!). The estate was considerably improved under the ownership of the Marsham family. This included laying out the grounds in the so-called Anglo-Dutch style during the 1700s.

King George III and the prime minister William Pitt visited in 1799 to inspect around 3,000 assembled troops of the local militia, the Kent Volunteers, as an invasion of the county by Napoleon I of France was thought possible around the turn of the century. To commemorate the occasion a Doric-style temple was constructed.



Volunteers Pavilion Doric Temple, currently in need of renovation.

Between 1793 and 1800 the original Mote House was demolished and a new mansion designed by Daniel Asher Alexander was built. A lake was formed in the Park by damming the River Len at this time. Additional constructions included a boathouse, walls, internal roadways, and a bridge called the Great Bridge over the lake. The 3rd Baron Romney Charles Marsham stretched his financial resources in accomplishing all this. The family eventually gathered enough funds to expand the property to its current size. The Great Bridge was demolished and the lake itself expanded to about 30 acres.



At what could be considered the height of its opulence, in 1888 an article in the Gardener's Chronicle described Mote House as having extensive gardens with exotic plants. There were vineyards, orangeries and peach houses within the walled kitchen garden and a staff of 25 gardeners. In 1895 Marcus Samuel, the 1st Viscount Bearsted bought the estate. It had included the Mote Cricket Club since 1857, however he expanded the facility and the pavilion was built between 1908 and 1910. In 1929 the Maidstone Corporation were offered the majority of the estate which they bought off the 2nd Viscount Bearsted, Walter Samuel, for £50,000. The family still retains an interest in the park today. The House was converted into an orphanage.

Mote House

The British Armed Forces later commandeered the house and continued to use the kitchen garden. During the Second World War it was used as a headquarters and training facility. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food subsequently used the House as offices before it became a care home for the disabled (a Leonard Cheshire Care Home). The charity moved out a few years ago when it became uneconomical to continue and do necessary improvements. After lying empty for a number of years Mote House is now in the process of being redeveloped (along with its outbuildings) as retirement apartments and cottages.

The park itself was remodelled following its purchase in the 1930s and now contains a number of recreation facilities. In 1949 the miniature railway was constructed, amongst grazing sheep, cows and deer. The animals were removed in time and the track extended in 1961. The Kent County Show was held in the Park between 1946 and 1963. Much of the population was able to walk to and from the Show

which was, and still is, held during the middle of July each year (the show is now held at the County Showground at the top of Detling Hill). The English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens has Mote Park registered at Grade II. Mote House and its historic outbuildings and stables is also Grade II listed. Radio 1's Big Weekend (an annual national pop music festival) was held in the Park over 10-11 May 2008, which raised much needed money, and most recently the Council was awarded a National Lottery grant with the intention that many improvements to the Park will be made in the coming years, including walkways around the lake and renovation of the Doric Pavilion.



Written by, and pictures taken by Sue, most information provided by Maidstone Borough Council.

THE WRITTEN WORD by Edgar Playfoot

I was recently given a very useful desk pad printed with every conceivable list of printed columns, divisions and spaces for writing reminders. Described as 'Weekly Desk pad' with several headings including; **Urgent, Check List, Do This, Call Me** and others. This made me think how important the *written word* is to us all and how difficult it would be to live without it.

Most of us write shopping lists, lists of jobs to do and keep diaries. I also write notes of jobs to do on my models. For example, I usually store my Gauge One engines with water in the boiler. If for some reason I empty the boiler then I write a note to this effect and attach it to the model. I think most of us would do this.

I have a full suspension file for most of my 5" gauge locomotives containing A4 size reduction prints of the plans with the designers instructions when available, also my own construction notes and component drawings, and, in particular, assembly and disassembly details. I also make notes of any adjustments made.

I also do this for my flying models, particularly my helicopters that have very complex setting up procedures. The helicopters have specially designed A4 sheets, which contain the transmitter settings for each helicopter. These sheets travel in my transmitter case and are amended at the flying field if adjustments are made.

The adjustments for fixed wing model aircraft are not so critical, so I do not keep written settings for these. However, I would normally make a written note of anything needing attention and attach the note to the model. For some reason on one occasion I did not do this - to my cost.

One weekend I was flying my electrically powered 'Angel, a 1.5 metre span pattern ship (aerobatic). The model weighs about 6lb without the battery. The battery is a six-cell lipo of 4300 mah weighing over 1lb. The motor produces about 10lbs thrust at full throttle drawing 60amps. Flight duration is



Sebart Angel 50

about 10 minutes dependent on power use. This is my largest electric powered model aircraft, which I have only flown once before. It's a joy to fly because it flies as if it is on rails, so this is particularly reassuring as most of my models run on 'rails'. On my second flight of the day, I was doing low passes along the grass runway when I inadvertently touched the model on the grass strip. I immediately responded by jerking the throttle stick on the transmitter to full power together with up elevator. The model reared up with a loud shriek, stalled at approximately twenty feet high and nosedived into the grass runway, breaking the fuselage in two.

Later, when I told my grandson Harry what had happened, he reminded me that the motor had shrieked on a previous flight when he accompanied me. I had totally forgotten. Had I reminded myself with a note to tighten the prop shaft nut, two to three days repair time and a few quid would have been saved.

However, I have now rebuilt the model and checked out the motor and prop assembly. I have discovered that it was not a loose prop causing the power failure; it was caused by an incompatible timing issue between the Hacker brushless motor and the electronic speed controller (esc). The combination worked OK provided the throttle is advanced smoothly, which is my usual method of flying. But jerking or blipping the throttle caused the motor to shriek and stall. Yet another lesson learned! I must check out new models more thoroughly! I have now replaced the ESC with another of the same make as the motor (Hacker). I have flown the model several times since with no further problems.

At our Engineering Society there are other examples of the *written word* such as contained in boilers certificates, steaming instructions for our 'Enterprise' locomotive, track log and our own Newsletter to name just a few?

Indeed, nowadays those of us enjoying the Internet have access to unlimited knowledge and information just by typing in a few *written words* to a search engine.

Since beginning this article I have suffered another flying incident, due this time entirely to pilot error and my failure to fly to the *written word*; '**do not let your airspeed get too low**'. I was perhaps

showing off a bit, like Douglas Bader, and doing low passes with steep banked turns with my Pitts Special and must have let the airspeed get too low as the model just dropped out of the sky and spun in. No one was injured, but the airframe is a bit of a wreck. Shame, because it is a pretty model. I bought it as an IC kit intended for an internal combustion engine. I have converted it to electric, but it is rather heavy and underpowered.



Pitts Special

Flying electric one has to try and conserve battery by flying at half throttle, which reduces the amps drawn and battery drain dramatically. Biplanes have considerably more drag and need more power particularly in the turns, which on this occasion I failed to provide. Initially I was going to scrap the model, but I have 'zapped' (CA glue) it all back together ready for another flight.

NEW MEMBERS

Alexander Linkins of Ashford, brother of member John, son of member Richard and Dorothy, grandson of our vice president Ken and Joan..... a student who likes to build kits of model steam trains and planes like the Red Arrows (and he rather likes driving trains too)

and

Paul Baxter of Aylesford, who is retired and building an electric shunter.

We welcome them both into the Society.

END OF AN ERA – LOOKING BACK ON MY 30 NEWSLETTER YEARS by Sue

1981: The track was damaged when a boy took his father's car into it. It was decided to change the engine shed into a workshop with large machinery. Track signals, a bridge and a tunnel were under consideration (but never proceeded with for various reasons).

1982: Rail replacement continues.

1983: An EGM was held in October and agreement reached to raise subscriptions to £5 and fares for everyone to ten pence a ride.

1984: I was doing 4 newsletters a year – and catering officer as well (a post I held for quite a few years as I was the “obvious person” as I was the only female on the committee!). Mr & Mrs Wallis celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary and we held a buffet in their honour in the clubhouse. Sadly, Mr Wallis died later that year, in November. He had played a huge part in the club during the previous forty years or so, including making the early films of the club we have dating back to 1949. In the summer we had a wonderful hot sunny day for the Open Day, and Lionel Alexander steamed his full size launch on the lake at Mote Park, giving some members a trip. The hard standing was completed for road engines, the bridge improved and a workshop completed at the club premises. I published Roger Stagg's controversial article “The Same Old Faces”. Oh, and Tom (Parham) was born (say no more – nobody has recovered from that one yet).

1985: Some of us attended Sheppey Track Opening. Jim Ewins wrote about injectors, and pop safety valves in the newsletter. The soakaway was dug to help with drainage. The council put up fencing in the Park and gates to stop unwanted vehicle access, and keys were required for access. We held Open Days regularly each year, and went to another K&ESR dinner. The Boxing Day Run was a washout.

1986: I reprinted Richard Linkin's article from 1974 about rolling stock. The club visited Bill Hart's 5” gauge Railway at Five Oaks Green (sadly both Bill and the railway no longer exist today). One of my regular newsletter contributors, JB (John Barrow) joined the club. For this year's K&ESR dinner, half of us went in 1930s dress. In the summer, we had a Fancy Dress evening run (I was a nurse!). Graham Kimber started the construction of the first club locomotive to assist public running - Galloping Gertie.

1987: John Linkins arrives in the world & Adrian's Enterprise is completed. We lose oldest member Walter Scuse at the age of 95. Our chairman Peter Chislett gets the CBE. The year is remembered by many because of the hurricane on the night of October 15th, when many trees came down.

1988: Pat Riddles, Joy Payne & Dave Deller all joined. With Health and Safety coming more to the forefront in the hobby, we started an official Accident Book. Around the track we started putting in extra beam supports.

1989: This year being the Club's 60th anniversary, our Open Day was attended by Ted Joliffe, editor of Model Engineer, and Adrian our chairman made the cake to celebrate the occasion. We went on another K&ESR dinner, Pete Kingsford became our clerk of works (and has never really escaped since!) and there was talk of starting rides at 2-30 instead of 3pm.

1990: Ah, those were the days when I could print in advance the Traffic Controller Roster with all the names for the coming season! We went on a visit to Bredgar Railway (as it was called then, Charles!). I wrote my not too serious article How To Be The Perfect Passenger. The compressor was stolen from the coalshed during a break-in.

1991: Charlie Hayward died – he had built the club station, ticket office, and coal store in his time as a member. Galloping Gertie took to the rails, then was finished during the winter.

Some of us went to the Pontins Model Makers Week at the end of September. Andrew (Hulse) joined as a junior member. By now we were having to man the gate into the Park and I published the times someone would be there to open it for members.

1992: We had an organised trip to the Model Engineer Competition by coach. Paul Clark held a slide show. Martin wrote an article about Plasma cutting. One side of the bridge was kicked in by vandals. Martin designed the replacement bridge and it was rebuilt during the winter. We also had a coach trip to the Midlands Exhibition.

1993: Grand reopening in March of the new bridge by president Jack Payne and secretary Martin. We increased the fares to 20p. Roger (Vane - Gromit) wrote about his & Mike's (Wallace's) driving course on Sir Nigel Gresley. Laurie Lawrence sent us an article on his treatment for cancer. Martin won the Southern Federation Australia Award with his Duchess of Hamilton in September. Mrs Wallis died in November, nine years after her husband. For many years she had manned the ticket office for us on a Sunday afternoon.

1994: Jack & Joy's Golden Wedding and the club's 65th year – we held a celebration for both. Martin came second in IMLEC at Gravesend with the Duchess.

1995: An Enterprise chassis was donated to the club, built by (member) the late John Wheeler.

1996: Paul Rolleston, who is Never Far Away, joined, as did Tom as a junior member. I try to escape unsuccessfully from doing the newsletter, having been Press Officer for fifteen years.

1997: We were able to start putting a combination padlock on the gate in the Park so all our members could get in so long as someone was at the clubhouse. Our president Jack (Amos) Payne died in April. He had called me his third daughter and given me huge support as there were few women in the club.

1998: At last we all agreed to complete the Enterprise chassis donated in 1995 and Dave Deller took on the job of project co-ordinator. I entered Curly Bowl with Jack, Martin entered Superlec with the Duchess, neither of us won. John Barrow continued his mammoth task of gathering and binding Model Engineers for the Clubhouse library.

1999: The Club's 70th year and another dinner on board the K&ESR to celebrate, and a visiting clubs day. The Wednesday Members Playtime Runs started this year on the third Wednesday of each month, but in the afternoons. The roller shutters were purchased for the clubhouse windows and door to improve security. Graham starts work on the Health and Safety Risk Assessment – an ongoing document. Lionel Alexander, one of our Trustees, dies in August.

2000: We re-concrete the steaming bays in the winter. Thanks to the efforts of two dozen members and especially Dave, the club steam loco Enterprise, to be named John Wheeler, is completed. The naming ceremony by John Wheeler's widow is held in June. A couple of weeks later it's the first S.H.I.T (Sue's Holidays Including Trains) Week, in Worcestershire.

2001: The clubhouse roof is replaced, the interior redecorated, a dozen beams replaced, aided by bacon butties and hot dogs served Sunday lunchtimes. Second year of S.H.I.T week is held in Yorkshire.

2002: In January Laurie Nichols gave me a medal he had made for me for twenty years of doing the newsletter, and the Linkins family kindly gave me a bottle of wine (I'm not hinting, don't worry!). Paul Clark's team won the annual quiz – again. The clubhouse was broken into in March and the small steam crane stolen. Alternative storage for trolleys was discussed. I detailed and pictured the year's committee for everyone. John Linkins became a junior member. Martin wrote about making nameplates. The Third S.H.I.T week was in Derbyshire.

2003: First ever Sunday Club Lunch is held at the Hilton Hotel in Maidstone. Since the turn of the century it seems we've had trouble finding station staff for public running. Through the winter the bend between the station and the bridge has been redone with 18 new beams. Plans are passed by the council for the new trolley store. Fares went up to 30p per person. The fourth S.H.I.T. Week is held in South Wales. Bernie won the Southern Fed. Australia Award with his Britannia, later wins an M.E. medal and Curly Bowl. Heywood Society visited us.

2004: 75 years of the society, and the second Sunday club lunch is held to celebrate, at the Grangemoor Hotel (where we have held it annually ever since). It is our Treasurer's 70th birthday so we celebrate with cake at the AGM. It is decided spark arresters are now a necessity to prevent hot sparks from chimneys, as we had a claim from a member of the public over a burnt expensive shirt. New sidings, traverser and trolley store are all built. Five hundred feet of track is stolen in April. A KCC donation is made towards the replacement. The fifth S.H.I.T. Week is in Lancashire. We host the autumn Southern Federation Rally followed by an Open Day in September. We decide that spark arresters are necessary for passenger hauling only. Adrian, an ex chairman and my ex husband, dies from a brain tumour at the age of 52, the same age and first weekend in August that his father died over thirty-five years previously.

2005: John Winser died, Tom writes his first article about working 5" gauge headlamps. The first Family and Friends Day is held in June. Mick Starnes acquires new tables and chairs for the clubhouse. The sixth S.H.I.T. Week is back to Yorkshire. This year it's Edgar Playfoot who wins the Australia Award at the autumn Southern Federation Rally with his Princess of Wales. Member and vice president Reg and his wife Lou Holdstock celebrate 70 years of marriage.

2006: Charles rejoins us again, and Harry as a junior member. More vandalism and this time the fence is kicked in. We buy Fast Franc, the SNCF loco from late member Frank Deeprise's family. Vice president George Barlow dies. The seventh – and last for now – S.H.I.T week is in Hampshire.

2007: Over 50 of us attend the Grangemoor Sunday lunch this year. We submit plans to the council for our own toilet. Cyril Carter dies; he had been a member over 40 years and a founder of Romney in 1969. Opening of Adrian's Workshop attended by his family, who had made a donation to the club. Tom and Edgar competed in IMLEC at Llanelli. Edgar's B1 wins a gold medal at the ME Exhibition at Ascot.

2008: I pictured all 55 people at the Grangemoor Sunday lunch on the cover of the spring newsletter. It's the earliest and wettest Easter for some years. The Radio One weekend in Mote Park is a failure for the club – nobody comes near us or wants rides. Donations from members are still requested for the loo project. I and my Juliet loco Jack take part in Littlelec at Guildford. Noel Shelley does two club nights, one a talk and one summer evening a demonstration on making castings.

2009: The Club's 80th anniversary – celebrated by the usual KESR dinner and holding a visiting clubs day. Seventh annual club Sunday lunch at the Grangemoor. The Toilets are finally completed (to everyone's relief in more ways than one) and we have a celebration buffet on the first public running day, with Joy cutting the ribbon across the doorway. Peter Roots dies at the age of 75, a couple of weeks after the AGM, having been a member nearly 60 years and treasurer for nearly 50 years. Edgar takes over his post. Ron Heathcote celebrated his 90th Birthday at the Park the day after our visiting clubs day. Richard Linkins wins the Australia Award at the autumn Southern Federation Rally with his B.R. Class 2.

2010: Ron Heathcote died, at one time he had been our secretary. It is 60 years of the track in the Park, celebrated with the Mayor re-enacting the original in April and a Visiting Clubs Day.....

Sorry if I have missed any major events, I'm sure someone will put me right, I haven't listed everyone and everything, I do hope I haven't upset anyone, apologies in advance if I have, it was not intentional. I keep remembering more things, but I have to stop somewhere!

THE CLUB ENTERPRISE – 11 YEARS ON by Tom Parham

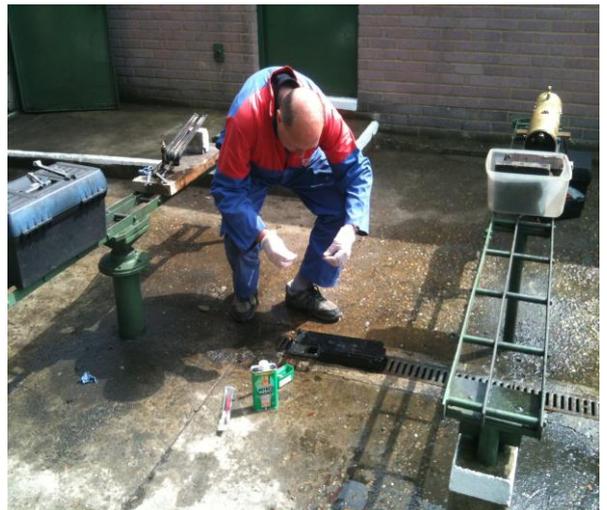
As many of you may be aware, the club Enterprise has recently undergone an extensive overhaul. This mainly began due to the lubricators not working as they should, including an oil leak on a pipe through the smoke box saddle, and necessitating the need to remove the smoke box (and therefore lift the boiler).

Whilst at the stage of having the smoke box lifted, it was decided to check the timing of the loco, since this had been noticed as being not quite right for a long time, and an on-going problem. The cylinders were tested individually using the air line, and found to be significantly out of time. It was presumed that with each cylinder being so wrong that it was only due to the fact that it is a 3 cylinder loco that it was able to run at all.

It was decided that since this was a recurring problem throughout the life of this loco, regardless of the time it may take, we should finally make the effort and time to correct the long standing issues once and for all.

Fortunately for the club, Dave Deller volunteered to co-ordinate the overhaul, and take on a lot of the work himself. After a lot of extensive investigation and experimentation, it was theorised that the problems were present in the return crank, eccentric rod, and most importantly in the centre cylinder valve bobbin. All of these were remade and experimented with by Dave, arriving at the club with a chassis that ran better and smoother than it ever had in the past.

It was clear at the early stages that an extensive overhaul to this extent is a massive undertaking for one man to tackle by himself; therefore other areas were taken on by several people. The small end bearings and pins were remade and installed by Andy Bridges during Sundays at the club. The lubricators were taken by Graham Kimber to be sorted out. The task of a fresh coat of paint was taken on by myself, and it was with great thanks that other members of the club offered to lend a hand where they were able to, and therefore were put to the task of stripping off the old paint in preparation for painting. These members were Brian Gibbons, Harry Godding, Jim Puttifer and Colin Hayman.



It had been suggested to me that having volunteered to paint the loco, I should have an input into which colour it should be painted. In accordance to the prototype, being a V3, it would only ever have been painted black, except for one exception that was painted apple green (as my own model is).

However, as a prototype it would never have carried a huge nameplate on the tank side and an etched number 1929 on the bunker, therefore it is my opinion that this constitutes a private livery, which allows us free reign as to what we do. This is where modern technology contributes greatly; I was able to find a photo taken of the loco in 1999, when it was fresh from the paint shop after its original construction, which was passed onto Luke Bridges. Using his computer skills, Luke was able to generate a number of different liveries for us to see how it could look. The colours that he generated included: wartime brown, photographic grey, royal blue and pink. On showing this to several people within the club, it was agreed that the loco would look fantastic in royal blue, therefore the GER livery was loosely followed for our locomotive.



With colours decided upon, and the paint ordered, my workshop was converted into a spray shop for the duration of the task. When the paint arrived, all of the blue was sprayed, with several coats, and the black was sprayed from an aerosol can, again with several coats. The red lining was a Letraset lining tape, which must subsequently be varnished with a few coats of varnish.

With the boiler and smoke box painted and lined these were the first parts to be reunited with the renovated chassis, giving the first indications of how the 'new' loco would look. After these, the cylinder covers, running boards, tanks and then cab roof could be reassembled. Once the lubricators were reinstalled and connected we were ready for a new steam test (the hydraulic having been completed whilst off of the frames). Before this, however, I decided to take the loco home again for a week in order to complete the paint, touching up any nicks caused by reassembly, and screw heads etc.



After a couple of weeks waiting for some good weather to make the initial appearance of the loco, it finally arrived at the Park on the August Bank Holiday Monday, where the day commenced by taking some photos in the sunlight. This was followed by the steam test.... which it passed without any troubles to note, followed by a spell of running on the track where a small steam leak was identified on the left hand side from an unknown location which would be investigated at a later date.

The loco was also steamed the following week at our night run, before the investigation took place the following Sunday.

Whilst looking for the steam leak, which was located at the steam pipe gasket into the cylinder block, it was discovered that the lubricator on the left hand side was not working either, since the drive had become disconnected. Once these had been corrected (although this did take a while), further tests were undertaken, resulting in the completion of the loco.



It was a great feeling seeing the loco being used as it was intended, with the Bridges brothers at the controls, Luke overseeing the younger Simon at the controls. We now, once again, have a fantastic looking, and beautifully running club loco that is a credit to the society, and most importantly to all those who have worked on her to achieve this fantastic situation of having such a wonderful machine as a club loco. It would be a shame to see this 'new' look spoiled; however it would be far more of a shame and disappointment if it were to not be used. This is a club loco, built, maintained and restored by club members,

for the club members. Please feel free to use the loco, either to learn to drive under the instruction of the more experienced members, or just to have a bit of fun. When you use it, please remember the hard work that has gone into it, and look after it. Most importantly HAVE FUN and ENJOY IT. Having been to many other clubs I feel that we are most fortunate to have a loco of this standard, and in this condition, to be able to call our own.



CLUB ENTERPRISE RUNNING GUIDE by Tom Parham

Starting

- Wipe paintwork clean with a soft cloth.
- Fill boiler and tanks with water
- Check all valves shut
- Oil motion (not forgetting the inside cylinder and congregated valve gear), and lubricator with oil (this may be done at any point before reaching the track)
- Light fire
- Check injectors are working at different pressures during pressure build up
- Prepare trolley, ready for when the loco is ready for you
- Test that the safety valves lift at the correct pressure
- Remember to check the running line before operating the traversers, making the effort to not hold up other locos unless necessary

Running

- The blackboard is to be put out for those interested in driving to add their name
- Ensure the water level is always in sight
- Ensure lubricators do not run out of oil
- Re-oil all around at least every hour
- **ENJOY YOURSELF**

Finishing

- Remove loco and trolley from the running line with minimal disruption to other locos
- Drop the fire into an ash tray (removing grate and ash pan making the tray available for others)
- Blow down boiler, and open tank drain valve along with cracking open all steam valves
- Open smoke box door, plug blast pipe nozzle, Hoover/blow out ash
- Sweep all flu tubes with boiler brush
- Pump some oil down blast pipe in order to preserve cylinders
- Clean motion with paraffin/oil mix
- Carefully clean paintwork
- Use airline to remove paraffin from loco (keeping the air gun a distance away from the paintwork)
- Give the loco a wipe over with an oily rag
- Ensure the running log has been filled in

Please remember

This is a club loco, and a lot of effort has gone into providing it to the club for general use. All are welcome and encouraged to have a play with it, although if you do drive, please be prepared to help to clean it at the end of the day, it would be a shame to lose the condition of the loco that we currently have. Any problems with the loco should be entered into the running log, and if possible reported to Tom Parham, or any other committee member.

SUE'S SPOT



Greetings one and all and welcome to the FINAL edition of SUE'S M.M.E.S. Newsletter, exactly thirty years after I published my first newsletter in December 1981 (what an advanced five year old I was!!!). A press-ganged, I mean, willing, volunteer has been found to take over the post from the AGM in March 2011. Hooray, did I hear you all say, or was that just me?! Andrew Hulse, bless his cotton socks (or woollen ones) will be taking over, with your agreement and all being well, and I'm sure he will make a fantastic job of it, far better than me. It's the end of an era.....

It's been quite a year (or thirty of them even) as I look back just on this year, the sixtieth of the track in Mote Park. It has been a special few months, with the re-enactment of the opening of the track back in March with the Mayor. Then we had our Visiting Clubs Day in August - maybe we'll have a rest next year, as 2009 celebrated the Club's eightieth year, so we're due to take it easy... but then again, we started extending the track in 1961, so next year it's fifty years since the club started that...

An essential event in the club calendar is our annual lunch at the Grangemoor Hotel, we have such a great time, it is for members and the loved ones they wish to bring along. This year will be our ninth. Many thanks to Pat Riddles who has made all the arrangements for the past few years - thanks Pat! As already stated, please forward your menu choices and monies/cheque so that Pat receives them by January 2011 Club Night at the latest. As you can no doubt imagine, it's quite a headache sorting out seating and menus for fifty plus people, so Pat and the Grangemoor need sufficient time to do this. If Pat or Geoff aren't around, then I or Martin can collect on Pat's behalf and pass it all on, so you can always use the post if you cannot get to the club.



Pat gets ready for it all



Following our AGM this year, the annual Family and Friends Day has now been renamed in Peter's honour The Peter Roots Family & Friends Day for perpetuity, so we can always remember our Treasurer. This year the day was held in August with Peter's family attending. They kindly had made and brought a cake to share with us all, so we had a small ceremony with Peter's sister Marion cutting the cake and I must say it was yummy and I hope they all come to next year's day (the cake is also invited!). It was, and is, a popular and successful day, and we all, including the family and friends who come along to have a go at driving a model steam locomotive, enjoyed it (I did particularly this year, but that's another story).

Pictured: Peter's sister and family with Martin and his P2, Jack in the background.

We ran in aid of Parkinson's UK charity over the August Bank Holiday weekend and raised £420 for them in donations. (Some of you may know that one of our vice presidents, Peter Chislett, is now suffering quite badly with Parkinson's Disease and cared for by his wife Wendy.) When we gave the cheque to the local branch of the organisation we asked for the funds to be used for something specific for the sufferers and their carers. They wrote and advised us that the monies went towards an autumn coach trip to the coast and lunch for members of the Maidstone branch. We also ran two weekday afternoons giving rides to the youngsters from MENCAP.

I think it is fantastic that the club members remember those less fortunate than themselves, and as a society we have done a great deal over the years for various good causes – a really special well done to those who “do their bit for others”.

We hosted a Visiting Clubs day in August, it went really well, Pat worked extremely hard on the catering, assisted on the day by the ladies in the club, the food was superb, many thanks. We ran the drinks side of the operation in the station area, and this turned out to be an excellent idea, especially for the loco drivers, who could obtain tea, coffee or a cold drink as they stopped for water, coal or a rest, without having to even move themselves from behind their locomotives. I must say, though, for the number of clubs we invited not so many came, I wonder if they all even received the invitation, and if so, were all their members told? Or do people just not want to travel any more? There were over a dozen locos visiting and quite a few people, but once upon a time there would be double the numbers.

This autumn the Club Enterprise has been overhauled as detailed in Tom's article, it's now better than ever. I must say on behalf of everyone a belated Happy Birthday to Elsie Gurr who was 95 in the middle of November and still often helps out on summer Sundays.

Time to get the tissues out (me that is!) as I wind down this, my last issue: It has been an eventful 30 years; many things stay the same, club nights, the evening runs, the visits, the maintenance, the members who are the backbone of any club, those who come, and sadly some who go, one way or another.

A fair number of my newsletters (thanks to Martin and Paul Clark) can be viewed on the club website at www.maidstonemes.co.uk .

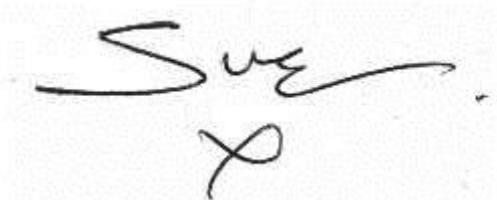
I hope I have, over the years, covered the important stuff, and what people want to know and read about. Apologies for any omissions or mistakes. More than anything, I hope you have enjoyed reading.

There would be no newsletter without those who contribute articles, they are the ones that make it what it is and my/our profound thanks to all who have provided the written words during my newsletter time. A special thank you is in order to the regular contributors, as it is particularly difficult to come up with different items each time. Over the years I have begged, bullied, bossed and beseeched for contributions to the newsletter, and many have come up trumps. In this issue, our appreciation goes to Ron Attfield, John Barrow, Charles Darley, Tom Parham, Edgar Playfoot and Paul Rolleston. Thanks to Andrew, who now personally does all the printing for us, and especially for agreeing to take over in 2011. And an extra special thank you to Himself, Martin, who has been Hon. Secretary since 1978 and always patiently assisted in the production of this newsletter (and wrongly shouldered the blame on behalf of the computer when it hasn't done what I want it to) and has done so much for the club since he was a mere lad.....

At last I have now managed to escape the mantle of newsletter responsibility from next year and therefore I might even have a glass of wine to celebrate..... what with Christmas coming as well..... what do you think?!

Finally..... yes, finally!

May I wish you all the compliments of the season and good health, peace, love, and all you desire - be it mechanical or fattening.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue', with a large, stylized flourish underneath.

DIARY DATES 2010 - 2011

2010

Friday December 3: Bits & Pieces & Fish & Chips & Cheesecake (£6pp)
Sunday December 26: Boxing Day Run

2011

Friday January 7: Bring & Buy Night & Toasted Teacakes

Friday February 4: DVD/Video/Chat & Crumpet
Sunday February 6: The Annual Sunday Lunch at the Grangemoor Hotel

Friday March 4: Annual General Meeting 7-30pm
Sunday March 27: First Public Running Day of 2011 (and British Summertime starts)

Friday April 1: Vic's Team Quiz Night
Wednesday April 20: Members Playtime Run

Friday May 6: Guest Speaker
Wednesday May 18: Members Playtime Run

Friday June 3: Evening Run & Fish & Chips & Cheesecake (£6pp)
Wednesday June 15: Members Playtime Run

Saturday 13 August: Visit to North London Club – provisional date

Friday Nights start around 7-30 at the Clubhouse, evening runs a bit earlier.
Donation minimum £1 per person for Friday evening meetings, feel free to be more generous.
Friday evening meetings are for members and associate members (their families), occasionally for members friends, and for those who intend to join the society.

The Annual Sunday Lunch is open to members and their families.

The AGM is for members only.

Wednesday Playtime Runs now start around 10-30am and generally finish early afternoons.

Events will only alter if an unforeseen situation means change is essential.

The Club's website is at www.maidstonemes.co.uk

Other Events Known about so far (not a lot) you may like to attend:

2010

10-12 December: Model Engineer Exhibition at Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher.

2011

21-23 January: London Model Engineering Exhibition at the Alexandra Palace, London.

18-20 February: Brighton Modelworld at the Brighton Centre, Brighton

4-5 June: Littlelec at Warrington & District Society

