

1929—2014 85TH
ANNIVERSARY

Maidstone Model Engineering Society

85th Anniversary Newsletter

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MMES members at the January Club dinner at the Granger Moor Hotel

Editor's Spot

Well, firstly I must apologise for the lack of a newsletter so far this year. Another case of time running away with so much to do, and so little time. What with two jobs, job hunting, and being roped into trying to start a new charity, plus a band to sing in... anyway enough of the excuses.

As all of you must surely be aware that in 2014 the Maidstone Model Engineering Society is celebrating its 85th Anniversary. It is a marvellous milestone for a club like ours, and I'd like to think we have celebrated it in style. Along with the usual club dinner held at the Grange Moor Hotel in January, in April we attended our first exhibition for many years at the Heritage Vehicle Rally at Detling. There was a fine display of member's models, and despite there not being too many visitors, an enjoyable day was had by all. There was even the offer of a couple of part built locos, a 5" Royal Scot, and a 3.5" Britannia, which myself and Tom have taken on (although don't get your hopes up about seeing them completed anytime soon).



In May, although not exactly society related itself, we celebrated the marriage of Tom to Nicola. The ceremony was held at High Rocks near Tunbridge Wells, and naturally the Spa Valley Railway had to be involved somewhere, with the bride arriving at High Rocks by steam train. I'm sure all of you will join me in congratulating Tom and Nicola and wishing them a long and happy life

together.

For this year's IMLEC held in Bournemouth, Tom represented the Society by entering Enterprise—a little more on that later...

And then we had our 85th anniversary open day, also more on that later...

By way of a further celebration, it has been decided to hold a member's dinner on the Kent and East Sussex Railway; unfortunately we were too late for this year as they are now fully booked, so technically we will be celebrating our 86th anniversary with the dinner one Saturday evening next summer. We are still awaiting details of menus and prices (to be released in September), but anybody who is interested in coming along one Saturday in summer, please let me know—you can email me at andrewmmes@hotmail.co.uk, or see me at the park. Once I have details I will notify those interested of the available dates.

Pat is once again very kindly arranging the next club dinner at the Grange Moor hotel in January, so once dates, menus and prices are available we will let you know.

That's it from me for now, I hope to see you all sometime at the park, and hope you all have a very good remainder of 2014....

Andrew

* * * * *

Mike Wallace: 2nd June 1941 – 21st June 2014



Mike driving his Speedy with Dorothy at Family & Friends Day in 2008

Mike was born in Lincolnshire. From an early age he had an inquiring mind and the patience to work things out and he was an energetic child always running everywhere. As a teenager he was a keen cyclist and once cycled from the London area to the Isle of Wight. It was this hobby – with his new racing bike – that he really returned to this last winter, after Dorothy, his wife of many years, died approximately nine months ago. He was heartbroken to lose her, missing not just her company but also her guidance. He was riding his bike when he had a heart attack that killed him.

Like more than a few of our members he was more often than not found to be tinkering in his garage, and when his son Gary was small he promised that one day he would build him a steam engine. Thirty years later he completed Speedy, and then started constructing an A4, Sir Nigel Gresley, which, sadly, he never got to finish. During his working life he formed and ran a company dealing with mechanical handling equipment. He had several other hobbies as well as steam trains, including classic car restoration and he and Dorothy restored their old Lagonda saloon, and very impressive it is too. He also ran an MGB which had just been refurbished after being caught in the Christmas floods at a Yalding garage. His latest pride and joy though was a car that he had always promised himself - an Aston Martin convertible, which he bought last year. Other highlights were driving the full size Sir Nigel Gresley, a trip on Concorde and a taxiing ride in a restored Lancaster. Music, particularly swing was a big love of his and he played clarinet and saxophone in the John Hamilton Big Band (as well as being their treasurer) and played many gigs. He also enjoyed watching rugby and cricket, both of which he had played in his younger days. Mike never liked to waste a minute of his time and he always kept busy, and he kept himself fit. He was forthright and didn't worry what others thought of him. One of his sayings was "I say what I like, and I like what I say". To his son Gary he was not just a dad but a drinking partner and a friend. He and member Roger Vane, a good friend of his, regularly came to the Park together, becoming nicknamed Wallace and Gromit! They had done traffic control duties together, and several times they ran the annual quiz night for the club. They could often be found discussing the finer points of the A4 that Mike was building.

He will be missed, but we like to think that at least he is now reunited with his beloved Dorothy.

Maidstone Model Engineering Society 85th Anniversary Open Day

2nd August 2014

From humble beginnings the Maidstone Model Engineering Society has stood the test of time, and in 2014 is celebrating its 85th Anniversary.

From the beginning of the year it was decided that we should hold an open day in the summer, and invite other model engineering clubs to visit and join us in our celebrations. The date of 2nd August was chosen and our members were duly informed. A useful date as this coincided with our Friday club night being the day before which would enable preparations for the open day.

The Friday night came, and with it a loyal band of members ready and willing to turn their hand to tidying up the site. Various teams were formed, and the Clubhouse was tidied, shelves cleared, windows cleaned, floors vacuumed, the window shutter covers scrubbed and hosed down – along with a couple of members. Weeds were dug up and strimmed from around the track and station area, the steaming bays swept, the traverser rails cleared, portable track checked and cleaned ready for displaying, and driving trolleys checked and organised ready for the Saturday. There were quite a few of us ready for their beds by the time the evening was over.



Saturday morning arrived, and it was to be an early start for many of us. Fortunately the weather was on our side for now, although the forecast was not looking too promising.

Now that the site was nice and tidy, it was time for the gazebo's to be erected, portable track to be laid out, locos to be lifted into place, the new unfinished signal gantry put up, the track walked, coal buckets filled, water towers fitted, signs out, visitors book at the ready, and



not to mention the feverish activity in the kitchen and clubhouse by the ladies preparing the wonderful refreshments for the day.

Everything was set for our first visitors, and even before the wonderful display of our own members models was in place they began to arrive. Within the display tent were 12 locos, including Peter Kingsford's Lord Nelson and River tank, Tom Parham's Speedy and Enterprise, Jack Ruler's Lucky 7 and 3.5 inch gauge American mogul, The Bridge's Polly VI, and the Clarkes O2 "Bembridge" and Butch, among others.



Also in the tent a table held Dave Deller's superb model of a Thames Barge, along with some gauge 1 models provide by Martin, Jack and Ron.

On a siding outside some of the larger locos were displayed depicting a line-up of models from the Big Four – Martin Parham's "Duchess of Hamilton", Edgar Playfoot's A1 "Tornado", Bernie White's newly completed Bullied Merchant Navy "Orient line" and David Chalk's Great Western 2-8-2 Tank. All in all a fine display by the Maidstone society.



And so to the visitors – it was unclear as to how many people would be turning up, but we were ready...

Peter Evans from Gravesend brought along his freelance 2-6-2 "Polar Express". Usually a very good performer and is taken on many club visits.



Ben Healey from Gravesend, brought along his Jubilee "Jamaica" based on Martin Evans Royal Engineer. This loco was finished a year ago, and took 25 years to build, although it was constructed at the same time as a 4-6-4 tank engine. A future IMLEC contender...?



Martin Thompson of Welling, brought along his Grange "Hayden Grange" - named after his grandson. This loco was completed 2 years ago, taking 2 and a half years to build, based on drawings by Polly. This engine works well when pulling a load.



John York of Gravesend and Tunbridge, also a fireman on the KESR visited with his Manor class "Cockington Manor". This loco was taken on as an unfinished project, with a lot of work needing to be undone, before it could be finished. The engine was completed around 2 years ago after 2 years work.

David and Pam Manger from Romney brought along their B1 "Springbok". Construction of this loco was started by Pam's dad, and after he passed away in 1994, Pam was determined to see it finished. The model was completed by Richard Down of Hythe in 2009-10.



Martin Weakes of the Sheppey club, visited with his Sweet Pea "Red Rum". This engine was completed in 1992 after taking 3 years to construct.

Paul Norrington of the Romney club, brought along his B1 "Springbok". This loco was acquired by his father around 30 years ago from a member of the Sutton club, and after sitting in the loft for about 20 years it has now been a good steamer for around 10 years.



The unusual "Galloping Goose" was brought along by Ken Mills, from the Romney club. Based on an American narrow gauge railcar. It's nice to see something a bit different.

Stuart Guy and grandson Charlie of the Canterbury society, brought along 3 locos, and with the convenience of none of them being steam, was able to run all three with ease throughout the day. There was the class 47 in Network South East colours, Charlie's Planet of Maxitrak named "Bart Simpson", and the LNER liveried 08 shunter from Compass House.



Terry Isherwood from Canvey along with Len, brought along the late Laurie Nichols's Sweet Pea. This was the last loco that Laurie was to build, completed in 2012, and has since been named "Laurie". The loco is a regular passenger hauler at the Canvey club.



Laurie Cromwell of the Welling club, brought along his 40 year old "Maid of Kent". This loco took 4 years to build, and since completion has had two boilers and many other alterations.





John Wimble, secretary of the Romney Club, brought along the club loco, Warship class “Dragon”. The Warship was built in the mid 80’s and was donated to the club 2 years ago. It has since benefited from new electrics and can now be used by any members at the club or for taking on visits.

Roland Padgham of Romney, brought along what is probably one of the oldest locos to have run at the club for some time. King Arthur class “Sir Ben”. Constructed by Bill Hart, the bottom half of the loco originated in the 1930’s, and since then has received 4 boilers, the latest of which is based on a Springbok.



John Eldred of Welling visited with his V3 2-6-2 tank “Enterprise”. Taking six years to build it was completed in 2009. A good, powerful 3 cylinder loco—if only the A1 group would build a full size version as rumoured. John has lent out the boiler templates for his loco, and so far 4 boilers have been completed using them, including that of Tom Parham’s Enterprise.

Adrian Parker from the Romney club, brought along his 0-6-2 Metre Maid “Queensland Sugar Pty No. 4”. This loco was acquired from a Canterbury member around 2005. It recently ran at the Guildford Sweet Pea rally.



The day seemed to run like clockwork. From the ladies in the clubhouse—who were probably the hardest working of all that day—came an endless supply of teas, coffees and other refreshments, while everyone else seemed to be working hard enjoying themselves. Loading and unloading was being supervised in the steaming



bays, visitors signed in, boiler certificates checked, parking supervised, coal fetched, engines prepared, notes written down, photographs taken, old friends reminiscing, everyone had something to do.



Lunch was duly served, and there was a great choice of food on offer, including a seamlessly never-ending supply of cakes and quiches supplied by Chris Giles, who had obviously been very busy the day before.

As with a lot of days when everyone is enjoying themselves, it went too quickly.

Despite there being a few engine failures, our visitors had enjoyed a good run on our track, and from quite a few people I heard comments with regards to how lucky we are to be situated in such a nice place as Mote Park. One visitor commenting that we probably have one of the nicest locations around for a club such as ours.



A busy day, but still time for some fun for the Bridges boys...

3 o'clock arrived, and it was time for the speeches and cake cutting ceremony. Tom Parham the society chairman, giving the speech, thanking those visitors for attending, and hoping they'd all had a good day, and also thanking our own members for all the hard work put in to making it such a successful day.

To much applause, and cheers of "here's to another 85 years", the cake was cut by the Society President, Geoff Riddles. The superb cake had been kindly supplied to us by Jacky Maybee (a friend of mine—Ed), taking the form of the club logo on the 8, with the engine having escaped from the centre of the logo onto the track on the number 5 (that was my interpretation of it anyway).



Sue Parham then did sterling work in rounding up all of the Maidstone members for a group shot around the cake. Unfortunately as there were so many of us, we couldn't all fit into the one shot...



Maidstone Model Engineering Society and Facebook...

As the club has experienced before when we had the unfortunate incident with some disappearing track, we have found Facebook to be a source of support from members of the general public. When we had the track stolen, the news reached over 48,500 people, and numerous comments were received from people shocked by what had happened, with offers of support and encouragement.

The Facebook page is regularly updated with news of what's on at the club along with photographs from days events. And from these updates still we receive some lovely comments from people. Questions are frequently posted asking when and if we'll be running.

The 85th anniversary has been no different, and for those of you that do not have access to Facebook on the great www, I wanted to share some of the comments we have received:

[Mark Clayton](#) Bless you good people! I loved you when I was a kid and I've recently started taking my son again who also loves you! Happy days! and may you long continue! Congratulations on 85 years!!

[Mandy A Gough](#) Congratulations! Thank you for providing this precious treasure for us all to enjoy. I went on the trains as a child, my children went on them and now, my Grandchildren are enjoying them, much fun has always been had by all and many treasured and happy memories made too. :D Well done to you all, you are a Diamond asset to Maidstone. Enjoy your well earned festivities and celebrations. :D x

[Philip Noakes](#) Many, many congratulations on 85 years. You've give my whole family many hours of pleasure over many decades. Long may you continue.

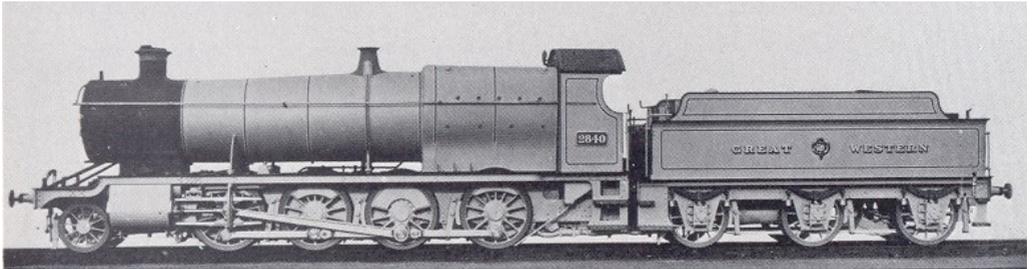
[Simon Miller & Company - Houses for Sale in Maidstone, Malling & Kent](#)
Congratulations on the anniversary everyone. Here's to another 85 years!

So far news of our 85th celebrations have reached over 1,600 people, and this is still counting...

From Martin to David

At our recent Open Day to celebrate our 85 years, our members exhibited some locos that I had never seen. One was the outstanding GWR tank loco by David Chalk which was once a regular at the club but had not visited since I joined. Whilst admiring the excellent detailed backhead, I realised that it was a type of loco that I had not come across before. I am familiar with the GWR Large Prairie and Small Prairie, but this one had too many wheels! It has a 2-8-2T arrangement and it made me go to my reference books to find out about it.

The genesis of the design started in 1905 when GWR had a need for a powerful freight engine and Churchward designed the 28XX class loco. This was a 2-8-0 configuration and was then the premier freight loco in the UK. It was so successful that examples were built right up to 1943.



Next in 1910 there was a powerful tank engine needed for short hauls of the heavy mineral trains in South Wales. Churchward used parts from his engine standardization range to produce the '4200' class loco. This was a 2-8-0T engine which was also novel for the UK at that time. He based it on the excellent 28XX chassis, but with amended wheel spacing, and used the standard boiler and side tanks from the Large Prairie locos. Because of the tight curves in Wales, the trailing wheels needed extra side play. He solved that by allowing the trailing coupling rods sideways movement, as well as the usual up and down freedom, by using spherical joints. In service these engines were rated as even stronger than the 28XX class as all the weight of the water was available for adhesion. There was also a slightly more powerful version known as the '5200' class. There were 105 of the 42XX and 90 of the 52XX



Finally in this story we come to 1934 and the time of the great depression. The South Wales coal traffic was dwindling and the large series of 4200 and 5200 locos needed to find extra fields of activity. It was decided that they needed extra coal and water capacity for other uses and some of them were rebuilt as the '7200' class. The frames were lengthened by bolting on a 4' 1" extension to accommodate a trailing pony truck, thus producing a 2-8-2T arrangement. The bunker and back water tank were both extended to give an extra 700 gallons of water and two tons of coal.



This feature is reproduced in David Chalk's 5in version with very strong 1/4in main frames plus a lighter, narrower section bolted on the rear. David used the 'Firefly' design as a starting point and enlarged the boiler as well as increasing the wheel count. The originals were renowned to be 'curve shy' and were forbidden from parts of the sidings in some yards because of the derailling. David alleviated this problem for model tracks by omitting the flanges on the third set of driving wheels. His very detailed backhead has to be seen to be believed.



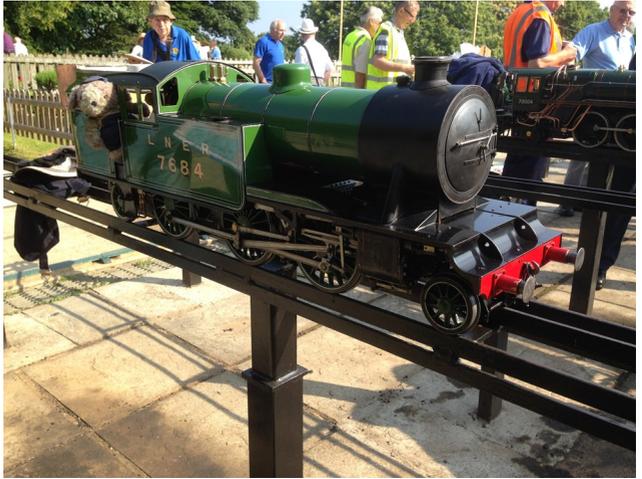
One piece of 'gossip' - in the days of the 2-8-0T locos hauling coal in Wales, the large water consumption and the narrow side tanks meant frequent water stops. Fortunately Wales was well supplied with these, but the locos earned the nickname "Water Carts".

Why did I call this article 'From Martin to David'? Well the 28XX was modeled by Martin Evans as 'Swindon' and was built by our own Martin Parham and the 72XX was produced by David, so both ends of this history can be seen in our Society.

Jack Ruler

Bournemouth IMLEC—12th-13th July

Once again Tom had entered his Enterprise in for IMLEC, this year to be held in Bournemouth. From the line up of engines entered, it was going to be a tough competition. He was placed 3rd in the running order, but due to the first entrant having car trouble, and the second entrant; a Britannia, having to postpone their run due to a fault with the dynamometer car, Tom was now first to complete their run.



A sterling effort was put in by Tom and Enterprise, which after a slightly slippery start on the tight corner at the start, ran well for the duration of the run with 10 passengers. With seemingly little effort the loco made it's way round successfully with no faults, apart from a derailed front pony truck which didn't seem to hamper it all. There was a bit of disappointment on Tom's behalf as he may have been able to get an extra lap in, in the time allowed, however, it wasn't to be.

For now, we could celebrate that fact that Tom was top of the leader-board with an





efficiency of 0.69. Sadly it wasn't to remain this way. As the weekend progressed, those that didn't have the misfortune of retiring, were overtaking Enterprise. There were some fine performances by engines large and small over both days, although there were a few occasions where the trains would end with fewer passengers than they started with.

Invariably there had to be one winner, and this turned out to be the P2 "Wolf of Badenoch" of John Cottam, with an efficiency of 2.38 hauling 20 passengers.

Despite finishing last (although we prefer to think of it as 14th out of 21 including retirees), Tom was not to put off.

With future modifications planned for Enterprise, now doubt there will be another attempt at IMEC.



B&DSME								
RUN No	DRIVER	GAUGE	LOCO	LAPS COMPLETED	PASSENGERS	COAL lbs	WORK DONE ft/lbs	EFFICIENCY %
16	JOHN COTTAM	5"	LNDR P2 2-8-2	10	20	195	504089	2.38
10	ALAN CROSSFIELD	5"	GWR SIXX LANE PRIME TANK	10	10	1125	265864	2.17
6	DAVID MAYALL	5"	GWR SPEEDY 0-6-0T	10	9	153	230611	1.74
12	KARL MIDGELEY	5"	FREELANCE 4-6-4	10	12/3	135	314030	1.48
9	LES PRITCHARD	5"	LNDR SPRINGBOK 4-6-0	8	12/3	167	242922	1.34
4	ROGER HOLLAND	5"	LNDR A4 4-6-2	9	14	2664	376244	1.30
20	KEITH TILBURY	5"	POLLY V 2-6-0	9	8	165	229093	1.27
2	CAMERON STEPHENSON	5"	BR BRITANNIA 4-6-2	11	11	300	365506	1.12
17	GEORGE WINSALL	3.5"	HUNSLET RUSSELL 2-6-2T	9	14	2-83	302704	0.98
7	JOHN WHALE	5"	SWR SAINT 4-6-0	9	9	2-0	213540	0.98
21	JAMES TILBURY	5"	JEANIE, DEANS' 2-2-2-0	10	4	159	160529	0.93
11	PAUL PAVIER	5"	SIMPLEX 0-6-0T	3	11/7	168	143962	0.79
19	DAVID SHEPHEARD	5"	POLLY III 0-6-0T	8	5	173	137156	0.73
3	TOM PARIAM	5"	ENTERPRISE 2-6-2	9	10	330	248241	0.63
1	DAVE TOMPKINS	5"	NETTA 0-8-0		12			RETIRED
5	NICK EDWARDS	5"	LNDR SPRINGBOK 4-6-0					RETIRED
8	DAVID BEALE	5"	ADAMS RADIAL TANK 4-4-2T		7			RETIRED
13	JIM WOODS	5"	PEVERIL LOM 2-4-0T		8/3			RETIRED
14	JUDITH BELLAMY	5"	LNDR BI WIDEBEESTE 4-6-0					RETIRED
15	DAVID KERRY	5"	BF 9F 2-10-0		16/3			RETIRED
18	PHIL MORTIMER	5"	BR BRITANNIA 4-6-2		10			RETIRED

So fingers crossed for third time lucky Tom.

'Goldie' by Julia Old



Over the last 5 years I have been building a half scale traction engine. During construction I sometimes took the odd part along to show the Wednesday crowd. In a light hearted way Dave Dellar decreed that's not model engineering its light engineering. The final drive gears are 18 1/2" diameter so he might have a point.

Built over a period of 5 years using castings supplied by Little Samson Models by the owner Julia Old in her home workshop. Though not modelled on any specific engine, Goldie is representative of a GMT built in the 1920's. First steamed summer 2013, without cladding and guards and finally finished December 2013 in time to take part in the London New Year's Day Parade.

Make:	Burrell
Type:	Gold Medal Tractor Double Crank Compound
Name:	'Goldie'
Completed:	December 2013
Build Time:	8,000 hours over 5 years
Casting by:	Little Samson Models
Weight:	16cwt (800Kg)
Scale:	6 inches to the foot
Working Pressure:	200psi
Bore:	2 1/4" HP, 3 3/4" LP
Stroke:	4 1/4"



*Mote Park
December 2012*

*London 2014 (New Year's
Day parade)*



A nice line up of some of our members road vehicles at the Trevithicks Industrial Dartford Celebration on 10th May

Northern Lights or those funny green lights in the sky often seen over the North Pole region

by Charles Darley

I am recently back from a cruise to Alta in the Northern part of Norway which is many miles inside the Arctic Circle.

One reason for visiting the location was to try and see the Northern Lights the beautiful green colouring of the gasses in the ionosphere.

So having gone to the right location how did I go about seeing them. I looked in the direction of the closest pole which is the northern horizon in the northern hemisphere. It is not possible to see them during daylight hours so one has to wait until dark. In the Arctic region of Norway with darkness comes the cold and what was -5C (minus 5C) in the day soon dropped to about -10C (minus 10C) or lower. Unless the ionosphere is very highly ionised the green colour cannot be seen to the naked eye but when I saw them the Lights appear as a moving grey cloud like effect which I did not recognise as the Lights until I had taken my first photo of the Lights and then it was much easier to see the effect.

So what causes the colours and patterns? The lights are not necessarily green but can be blue violet and red as well but I saw only green. The lines of magnetic force around the earth is enhanced at the poles and it is the mix of the magnetic fields and the ionisation of the gases in the ionosphere which makes the Lights appear as rippling curtains, pulsating globs, travelling pulses, or steady glows at altitudes 100 to 400 kms. The ionisation causes the illumination to occur a bit like the effect of the colour developing inside a neon tube when a current is passed through.



To be able to photograph the Lights one does need a camera which can have the shutter open for period of say 5 seconds to a couple of minutes. The camera also needs to be capable of a sensitivity of 400 ISO and preferably a wide angle lens with an f number of say f2.8, increasing the ISO above 400 only results in greater graininess in the picture.

I found that I needed an exposure of 20 seconds from the deck of the ship which was moored alongside the quay but sadly there was slight vibration from the ship's generators which run all the time. I could have gone on a trip ashore which would have stopped the vibration but as there is no certainty of seeing the Light every night I decided against that expenditure.

If there is 100% cloud cover you cannot see the Lights as the clouds are in the troposphere which is below the ionosphere.

It is amazing to think when looking at the Lights that one is seeing up through the earth's atmosphere and out towards space itself about 400kms.

Finally the Lights or Auroras tend to be more frequent and spectacular during high solar sunspot activity, which cycles over approximately eleven years.



Only in Britain - Complaints to Councils.

Don't people ever read what they have written before posting it off?

Extracts from letters of complaint written by council tenants:

1. It's the dog's mess that I find hard to swallow.
2. I want some repairs done to my cooker as it has backfired and burnt my knob off.
3. I wish to complain that my father twisted his ankle very badly when he put his foot in the hole in his back passage.
4. Their 18 year old son is continually banging his balls against my fence.
5. I wish to report that tiles are missing from the outside toilet roof.. I think it was bad wind the other day that blew them off.
6. My lavatory seat is cracked, where do I stand?
7. I am writing on behalf of my sink, which is coming away from the wall.
8. Will you please send someone to mend the garden path. My wife tripped and fell on it yesterday and now she is pregnant.
9. I request permission to remove my drawers in the kitchen.
10. 50% of the walls are damp, 50% have crumbling plaster, and 50% are just plain filthy.
11. The next door neighbour has got this huge tool that vibrates the whole house and I just can't take it anymore.
12. The toilet is blocked and we cannot bath the children until it is cleared.
13. Will you please send a man to look at my water, it is a funny colour and not fit to drink..
14. Our lavatory seat is broken in half and now is in three pieces.
15. I want to complain about the farmer across the road. Every morning at 6am his cock wakes me up and it's now getting too much for me.
16. The man next door has a large erection in the back garden, which is unsightly and dangerous.
17. Our kitchen floor is damp. We have two children and would like a third, so please send someone round to do something about it.
18. I am a single woman living in a downstairs flat and would you please do something about the noise made by the man on top of me every night.

19. Please send a man with the right tool to finish the job and satisfy my wife..
20. I have had the clerk of works down on the floor six times but I still have no satisfaction.
21. This is to let you know that our lavatory seat is broke and we can't get BBC2.
22. My bush is really overgrown round the front and my back passage has fungus growing in it.

* * * * *

What is Celibacy?

Celibacy can be a choice in life or a condition imposed by circumstances.

While attending a Marriage Weekend, my wife and I, listened to the instructor declare, 'It is essential that husbands and wives know the things that are important to each other..'

He then addressed the men:

'Can you name and describe your wife's favourite flower?'

I leaned over, touched my wife's hand gently, and whispered,

'Self-raising, isn't it?'

And thus began my life of celibacy...



Railroad tracks.

The US standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number.

Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and English expatriates designed the US railroads.

Why did the English build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did 'they' use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they had used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.



Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in England, because that's the spacing of the wheel ruts.



So who built those old rutted roads? Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe (including England) for their legions. Those roads have been used ever since.

And the ruts in the roads? Roman war chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels.



Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing. Therefore the United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is derived from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman war chariot. Bureaucracies live forever.

So the next time you are handed a specification/procedure/process and wonder 'What horse's arse came up with this?', you may be exactly right. Imperial Roman army chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the rear ends of two war horses. (Two horses' arsens.)



Now, the twist to the story:

When you see a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory in Utah



The engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains, and the SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track, as you now know, is about as wide as two horses' behinds.



So, a major Space Shuttle design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's arse. And you thought being a horse's arse wasn't important? Ancient horse's arses control almost everything...

and CURRENT Horse's Arses in Brussels and London are controlling everything else!



Thanks to Charles Darley for this funny...

23rd World Scout Jamboree

Kirara-hama, Japan by Luke Bridges



The World Scout Jamboree (WSJ) is a gathering of tens of thousands of Scouts and Guides from almost every country in the world who, for ten days live together, experience each others cultures, take part in exciting activities and have an amazing adventure.

Between 28 July and 8 August 2015, 3,500 Scouts and Guides from across the UK will be joining others from around the world in Kirara-hama, Japan for the 23rd World Scout Jamboree. The theme of the jamboree will be 'Wa' meaning harmony, unity, friendship and peace allowing a 'spirit of unity' to share others' cultures and faiths, take part in adventurous activities and grow as global citizens to tackle world issues.



Of the 3,500 scouts from the UK, 3 are going from Malling District Scouts which covers Aylesford, Ditton, East and West Malling, Mereworth and Kingshill, Snodland, Leybourne and Borough Green.

1 of these scouts is Chloe Biddis from 1st Snodland Scouts Group, and my outgoing Senior Patrol Leader as she is now 14 and moving up a section to Explorers, Scouts covers the age range 10-14 and explorers 14-18.

To get to Japan, she had to go through an application process which concluded with a selection weekend camp where those who applied were assessed on their camping skills, how they interacted with scouts they had only just met and how willing they were to try new things.

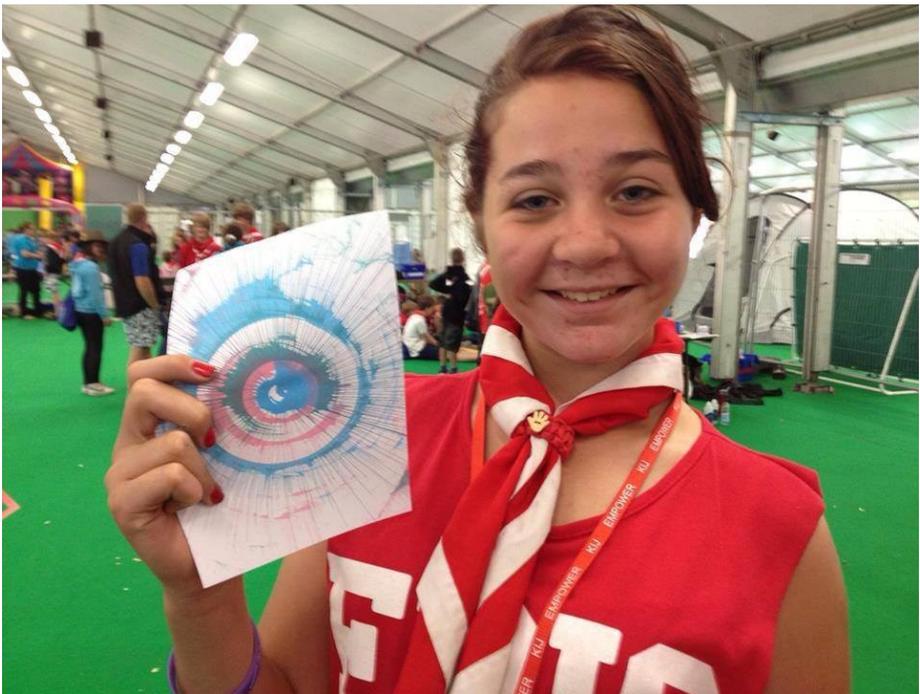
Having made it past this hurdle, the real work began of raising the amount needed to get to Japan, and to pay for her kit and uniform. The amount needed to be raised is **£3500**. Each of the participants has had to raise this £3500 each. Chloe has been bag-packing at local supermarkets along with her fellow Malling participants, they have held piggy racing night which used toy robot pigs instead of horses with £1 stakes, she has been selling WSJ badges and attending craft fairs to sell things she has made.

The total Chloe has raised so far is £3000. This is tantalizingly close to the amount needed. Whilst in Japan, they will also be staying with host families for a week and spending time in Tokyo and at Japans Disney Land.

To help her raise the final amount, on the 20th July Chloe and a few fellow Snodland Scouts were around at the railway with her collecting pot and selling her WSJ badges and had posters and info about scouts and the World Scout Jamboree.

With the help of the money collected that day, she has now exceeded the £3500 needed to get her to Japan

Your support for this is much appreciated by Chloe and myself as her Scout Leader and MMES Member.



Chloe at Kent International Jamboree 2013, Detling Showground

MMES DIARY DATES 2014

(1929 - 2014: 85 Magnificent Years for MMES)

Friday 22 August:	Club Night Extra: Andrew Hardy discusses the P2 Project and progress
Saturday 23 August:	Maidstone M.E.S. Visit to Canvey Club (tbc)
Friday 5 September:	Club Night: Evening Run & Fish 'n' Chips £6pp
Wednesday 17 September:	Members Playtime Run
Friday 3 October:	Club Night: Bit's n Pieces evening with tea and crumpets
Wednesday 15 October:	Last Members Playtime Run of the Year
Sunday 26 October:	Last Public Running Day of the Season
Friday 7 November:	Club Night: Bring and Buy with toasted teacakes
Friday 5 December:	Club Night: Video night
Friday 26 December:	Boxing Day Run
Friday 02 January:	Club Night: Natter night (just in case of any sore heads from the New Year's celebrations, thought best to keep it quiet)
Friday 06 February:	Club Night: Quiz night with Roger Vane
Friday 06 March:	Club Night: MMES AGM

Friday Nights start around 7-30pm 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.
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

Some other dates that may interest you for your diaries in 2014, please note changes from previous newsletter (not our mistakes, but actual alterations due to various club circumstances):

<i>23 -25 August:</i>	<i>Harrow & Wembley SME second summer Open Weekend for Visiting Clubs</i>
<i>6 September:</i>	<i>Birmingham National Locomotive Rally, 10am-4pm at Illshaw Heath, Birmingham</i>
<i>20 - 21 September:</i>	<i>Southern Federation Autumn Rally then Open Day at Leeds</i>
<i>16 - 19 October:</i>	<i>Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition at the WEC Leamington Spa</i>
<i>12 -14 December:</i>	<i>Model Engineer Exhibition at Sandown Park Racecourse</i>
 <i>16 – 18 January 2015: London Model Engineering Exhibition, Alexandra Palace, London.</i>	