



MAIDSTONE MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY

Winter 2015/16

Maidstone Model Engineering Society

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Peter Kingsford about to enjoy a footplate ride during the RH&DR Fish and chip run 1st August.

ELSIE MAY GURR 17 NOVEMBER 1915 – 6 DECEMBER 2015



Elsie was an Associate Member of the club since the tragic death of her beloved youngest son Adrian, a past committee member and former chairman of M.M.E.S, who had been in the club for 25 years up until his demise in 2004. Elsie decided that she wanted to support the society and was keen to attend on Sunday afternoons. This became even more important to her even though she became more infirm in recent years, and she didn't let anything stop her. While she was able, she would wash and wipe up the empty tea mugs to do her bit to help. As her health deteriorated, she would still make the walk from a car to the clubhouse, even though she had to stop and get her breath and it was a struggle for her to get up and down the step into the clubhouse. She

just liked to be amongst us, and her main job became waving to the public as they went past on the trains.

Her life was quite hard at times. She was born during the First World War in Hanwell in the London Borough of Ealing, the youngest of two girls, but never knew her mother who died when she was just a few months old. Her father remarried and moved to Kent, but their stepmother was not kind to the children from his previous marriage. Several half-sisters were born, but Elsie was only able to keep in touch with her elder sister as they did not want to know. The family was so poor that at times there was no money for shoes for her and so she was kept away from school. When the Schools Inspector called she was put in bed and he was told she was ill.

When she left school she went to work as a housekeeper, first for a couple in Chatham, and then in Loose, and it was in Loose that she met her husband Bill. He used to deliver produce from the grocer's shop in Cripple Street to her workplace and romance blossomed. They married in 1939 and lived first in Bower Lane in Maidstone, then moved to Surrey Road which was where Elsie lived for the next 66 years. It was only at the beginning of this year, after a spell in hospital, that she moved into Loose Court Care Home where she died unexpectedly from pneumonia after becoming ill just a week earlier.

To Elsie, her family was everything and she doted on her children, two boys and a girl. Tragedy struck when her husband died from a heart attack at the age of 52. A couple of weeks later her eldest son Roger continued with his plans to emigrate, and moved to Australia with his wife. Elsie was left with a young Adrian, and had to return to work to support them both. Until she retired she worked for many years at Stuarts Dry Cleaners in town. She had four grandsons, two of which were in Australia. When she was in her early seventies she took a trip to Australia to visit Roger and family, flying for the first time and alone, and took another two trips to see them in the next few years. She had three great grandchildren; one local and two in Australia.

Tragedy struck again with her youngest son Adrian being diagnosed with terminal brain cancer in 2003, only months after her son-in-law had died from a heart attack. Adrian died in 2004, ironically at the same age as her husband had, 52, and only two days after the anniversary of Bill's death.



Elsie became a familiar and popular figure at the club on Sunday afternoons, and enjoyed coming to the annual club lunches. When she reached her centenary last month, complete with card from the Queen, as well as the celebrations on the day we held a birthday lunch for her a few days afterwards at the club. It was attended by the members she knew the most. She arrived with her beloved daughter Pat, and loved every minute of it.

She hated being in a care home, her poor mobility, hated losing her hearing and most of all hated losing her sight as she was becoming virtually blind. She said she no longer wanted to live and told several people that she just wanted to go to sleep in her bed and never wake up.

Although she did not die in bed as she hoped, she did die quickly and peacefully with her former daughter-in-law by her side, exactly two weeks after the club celebrations for her.



We will miss her and hope that she is now truly at peace and reunited with her loved ones who she lost over the years and never stopped missing.

Sue Parham (nee Gurr)
December 2015.

Polly Came to Maidstone



On Saturday 26th September Maidstone hosted the Autumn Polly Rally.

The day started nice and early, about 8:00am with Maidstone members turning up to help get things ready which always takes longer than you expect. The weather was sunny and quite warm.

The signals went up, the coal and water points were set up, the track was checked and the gazebo's built, one for liquid refreshment one for seating.

With everything going along nicely my phone rang and it was the Secretary of the Polly Owners group, he rang me to say he had a very good run and was sitting at a bollard. It was only 9:00 o'clock so Luke was sent off to let him through. The big seating gazebo was still being built. Quickly one of our members was put in charge of signing people in and checking boiler certificates.

It was now 10:00 o'clock and most people had arrived. We had people from far and wide. They came from Nottingham, Derbyshire, Wales, Cambridgeshire, Southampton, Harrow & Wembley and more locally Gravesend and Sheppey.

There were 10 visiting locos and 2 from Maidstone. Unfortunately one of the visiting loco's from Southampton forgot his boiler cert so could not have a run.

People started steaming up and we had eight locos on the track. Everyone was enjoying their runs and commenting on how large the track was and how nice and smooth it is. The weather was adding to making it a very nice day. People were chatting and saying what a nice setting it is in the park.

It was now lunch time and some people came off the track whilst others took their food with them. It was at this point in the day that I got presented with a thankyou plaque for the club for hosting the event. I was told to be careful as it was made of glass. So I said thankyou and that P O G would be welcome again sometime in the future and then I quickly gave it to Pat

in case I dropped it in the club house. The track stayed quite full until early to mid-afternoon, then it was time for the Secretary of P O G to put his loco Endeavour on the track and Luke joined him with ours and slowly the rest of the locos came off and it was just the two left going round. This usually happens at the end of a rally. Luke then got a drive of Endeavour which he has wanted to for a while now and Simon took over our Polly VI. I was duty controller so just watched.

The day finally came to a close about 4:00pm with lots of thankyou's and complements on how good the facilities and track are and in a lovely location. Now it was time to put all the things away and have a clean-up and with every one helping this did not take too long.

I would like to thank all the members who helped to make this such a lovely day and it could not have happened without your help, thank you. Also not forgetting the ladies and their helpers for doing a brilliant job as usual with the catering. A BIG thankyou to you all and to all who made cakes and sent them along.



One Evening in Summer



Ken Linkins and Reg Holdstock

The picture above shows Ken Linkins and Reg Holdstock on Bob Hobb's track in the Willow Tree caravan park in West Hythe. Please note the jackets and ties, this attire was quite normal when operating model locos in those days.

The occasion was a visit of the Ashford and East Kent Model Engineering Society on the Evening of July 1st 1964. Ken is driving Bob's 3½" gauge "Lord Nelson". The Ashford Society was thriving at this time although it did not have a permanent site. They held regular workshop evenings at the Ashford North School in the winter and travelled out in the summer to various places of interest; they also operated a 3½" gauge portable track.

Bob ran this railway for many years. He had worked on the main line then on the Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway before getting a job as a stoker at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Folkestone. In those days this involved hand firing the boilers. He lived just across the RHDR track from the caravan park and had a "private" crossing. The railway was an up and down line with stations at each end representing London and Paris, the latter with a miniature Eiffel Tower. Half way along, the line passed through its own Channel Tunnel. Bob operated it for many years raising money for guide dogs for the blind; I believe he managed to pay for a total of 14 before ill health forced him to close the line. Occasionally there would be visiting locos, with some of their owners taking a holiday in a caravan.

Apart from the Lord Nelson, Bob built an 0-6-0 named "Exe", similar to a Southern Q class; the name was chosen because the letters were formed from straight lines. He also made a narrow gauge 0-6-0T.

NEVER FAR AWAY

My last article: *A Tribute to Sue the Predator*, was published yonks ago. Since then, for me some things haven't changed, whilst others have; Time is still, and no doubt always will be, in short supply.

I am older, obviously, and wiser, possibly may be absolutely no bloody chance at all.

Patience, and *tolerance*, and *affability*, that had been gradually declining and were at best teetering on the brink of total collapse, have now become personal qualities that have been consigned to the deepest and darkest tombs of deceased attributes. Worst of all I have lost my *sense of humour*. You will note that my usual whimsical flippancy has moderated.

In place of the aforementioned *qualities* I have developed profound cynicism, suspicion and vindictiveness. I have been trying to adopt an attitude of indifference towards people and things that hack me off; it doesn't seem to be working.

My freelance 0-6-0 has made no progress at all, and neither have many other projects.

My retirement aspirations have proven to be as futile as my New Year resolutions. At the age of 65 I announced to all my burdens that the rest of my life is mine so sod off. It seems that I need some training in assertiveness as I still carry many millstones.

Also, I have now realised that my retirement expectations had been seriously over ambitious. I didn't think to "*factor in*" declining levels of energy, stamina, strength and above all else; health, with the consequential increasing number of time consuming visits to doctors and hospitals.

I'm sure that I'm not alone in such circumstances, hands up all those with a similar perspective on their own Grand Scheme of Things.

Does anybody have a solution to the problem?

But, on the plus side; favourable comments from three appreciative article readers is very encouraging and heart-warming. It spurs me on to try and make it a nice round $\frac{1}{3}$ of a dozen (cynical). There is of course also the remainder of newsletter readers from whom I have never heard anything, neither praise nor criticisms, about my writings and if I ignore the generally accepted observation that we British are well known for our apathy I feel that I can justifiably deem their silence as a favourable opinion of my efforts.

Right! so much for the opening preamble. Moving on, as they say, something of railways and engineering is coming.

Now! The objective is of course to produce another episode in my long running (epic?) saga where I endeavour to illustrate that something's are 'Never Far Away'. Within the flexible parameters of this very adaptable title I have **already**, previously, described several applications' of this statement and yet most notably railways and model engineering seem to be the lesser quoted subjects when considered alongside others such

as, drink, music, humour, more drink and even emotion which have previously found a place in what I suppose are essentially 'My Memoirs and Thoughts' So, I think it's time to re-align the ratios.

I'll start with a railway journey. There can be only a few people in our circles who haven't heard of the Flam or as Norwegians call it Flamsbana which has been described as the most beautiful train journey in the world. Well, described as such by tour operators and obviously any tourist brochure is going to show an attractions at its' best and that means, in most cases, that the sun will be shining and that is certainly the case as far as whatever marketing material you look at regarding the Flam. I'll not go into any detail of the railway as that information is so readily available on the inter-web, suffice to say that it is worth looking at and certainly, thought provoking (next year's holiday?).

I'll explain the opportune circumstance's that persuaded me to buy two one way tickets (I couldn't not take Pat with me, could I) at £158 apiece which was for the journey up from Myrdal by train and return by coach.

For the second time we were cruising and having been around the British Isles for our first cruise we managed to get all the controlling factors; school holidays etc. to fall into place again, for us to cruise the Norwegian Fjords this year.

It was the dream thing and because we had such a good experience the first time we chose the same cruise line, same ship, even the same cabin. The choice of cabin the first time was for a good reason. Fred's ship the 'Braemar' had been 'stretched' that is, cut in half, pulled apart and a new amidships section inserted (and that is a good video to watch on YouTube). We figured that a cabin amidships would be good for two reasons; it would be more stable in a heavy sea and also being the new section all fitments should, and we were relying on the theory of logic here, be better than the rest of the ship ie: brand new. It worked everything was hunky dory.

In the planning and booking of cruise two I asked about excursions and particularly the Flam railway. "Sorry Sir but that trip is not on the itinerary". I was disappointed but everything else was tickety boo. I'll cut to the chase here otherwise Postie won't be able to get the Newsletter through your letter box. Second day into the cruise and Fred must have heard about my disappointment because suddenly the Flam excursion was a goer. Rock – On! Tickets were paid for, £316 but I assured Pat that it was money well spent and anyway, I was as happy as Larry. Bergen was our last port of call on the cruise where we were to get on a coach to take us to Myrdal for the start of the train journey.

Have you ever heard of the 'Buggah' factor. First thing in the morning of the day of the train trip we get a note nailed to our cabin door 'Excursion is cancelled due to lack of support' I was well dis-chuffed, what a let-down, talk about a kick in the crutch. Apparently 15 day trippers weren't enough, they wanted a coach load. So, as we had complimentary all-inclusive free drinks I hammered the booze instead starting with Prosecco Champagne for breakfast on top of full English double everything.

OK so the railway thing didn't happen but we did 'DO' Bergen instead, it's Norway's second largest city after Oslo. You want to hear all about it? Good, well I could tell you lot about our time in Bergen but I'll just mention two things. For both our cruises we were fortunate to have very nice dining companions in the forward restaurant and they had all cruised with

Fred so many times that they got to eat at the Captains Table now and again. Anyway, at breakfast Mary and Dave who had been to Bergen before insisted *"You simply must visit this shop"*. We did. It was the end of May, you know – spring, and we found ourselves in a three story, wooden, leaning in all directions with crooked staircases emporium, buying items from the one and only seasonal range it sold 364 days a year; Christmas Bric a Brac; festive broken bits of reindeer antlers and the like. I think that if I could have translated, into English, the unpronounceable name of this store it would probably have come out as Crap-u-like or Crap4you. We spent what seemed like hours looking at everything, twice, before purchasing some Crap-I-didn't-like.

Well, after that little sortie, and being laden down with gifts for in-laws, out-laws and the entire queue at the bus stop across the road, gifts that we probably won't be able to find anyway when we get to the Happy Humbug season, I was in dire need of my well overdue morning coffee. I can be quite sub-human if I don't get it. You see what I mean when I said I've lost my sense of humour; well that little trip was what did it, as also did the cup of coffee episode. Read on.

We stumbled across a Starbucks coffee shop which was an oasis and that cheered me up. Quality was assured, and the staff spoke acceptable English which was most useful since I knew no Norwegian at all. We worked our way along the queue selecting two Belgian buns and two regular Latte coffees, HOW MUCH? Nineteen bleedin' quid! Stuff me, that really tipped me over the edge that did.

Curiously, a little later and further along the main street that was overcrowded with a countless number of the ever present and ubiquitous tourist trapping Yee Oldee Giftee Rippee Offee Shoppee's (YOGROS for short), we bumped into Mary and Dave who asked "did you go to that shop? You did, oh! Good, we decided not to"

They *lived* in Hythe and overlooked the railway, SPLASH, twice, into the North Sea.

Right I think that's enough of all that ranting for now. Perhaps our esteemed editor might consider the idea of introducing special columns for future editions where members can have a bit of a shout about something that got them a bit hacked off. Maybe he would call it 'Pontificators Podium' or how about 'The Safety Valve' for letting off steam.

Waddyathink Ed? Or would that be too radical and detached from our main sphere of interest. Just a thought.

I could add so much more about the Norwegian experience, of which incidentally we got the timing right. May is the best time of year when snow is still on the mountain tops and new bright green leaves on the trees around the shores of the Fiords. Magic, and recommended.

But I think it's time now to finish the Norwegian thing, on an upbeat note. Humour needs a turn now. For the first couple of days at sea I was referred to as 'Sir' by the waiting and bar staff, all of whom were exceptionally courteous and attentive. As we had found before on cruise one, they eventually became respectfully familiar and started using first names. No problem with that, but on cruise two the phasing in of the change created an amusing situation that I could not resist taking advantage of.

The Maître d' was showing a newbie waitress how to take a drinks order in the Observatory bar and by way of demonstration asked me 'would you like a drink Sir' and then immediately realised he knew my name and called me, 'Paul'. At that point, I had a Knighthood. The new girl was in attendance for the afternoon and I was really knocking back the gin and tonics, and each time she approached me she asked 'can I get you a drink Sir Paul, another gin and tonic, and what about your wife, Lady Patricia will she have the same?' okay jah! thankyou. The drinks would arrive and each time I signed the voucher; Sir Paul Rolleston. I was up for it as they say. It was never questioned. Word was obviously going round and each time that I was increasingly addressed as Sir Paul I could detect a quietening of conversations around me and the use of whispered tones, knives and forks ceased scratching at plates and, not that I would ever claim to have a sixth sense but, I could feel people looking at me.

I thought it was appropriate compensation for the railway trip that was to be so sadly denied us and that actually disproved the title of this piece;- *Never Far Away*.

Right, moving on to the subject of drink.

A few weeks ago we hosted a dinner party for six, and guests presented a box of Thorntons posh chocs for Pat and a litre of Glenfiddich for me. So what! you might ask, well I think that I always write better (debatable I suppose), or should I say that I find it easier, when I've had a few wee drams of the Highland Nectar. I have mentioned before that I have experimented with other alcoholic stimulants and, as with all scientific experiments there has to be a conclusion; mine is that whisky is supreme. To those who agree, Cheers! An article is now being written.

Whilst on the subject it would be appropriate to acknowledge a fellow club member pointing out to me my mistake in previous articles where I have mentioned Scotch in one sentence and then spelt it Whiskey in the next. Can anybody else spot the blooper? Whisky (Scotch) with an 'e' :- Whiskey, and then referred to it as Scotch. In fact the spelling with an 'e' applies uniquely to Irish Whiskey. Obviously I am indebted to this member who shall remain anonymous, so as to protect him from accusations of extreme pedanticism (this is my new word, so I get to decide how it should be spelt), but suffice to say that his surname does imply a predilection for getting things (spelling) 'straight'.

Right! anyway, back to where I was on the more serious side of life; earning a living at Fords as a toolmaker.

No, hang on a minute, go back to whisky, and let me ask how much you would be willing to pay for a bottle of the finest whisky.

Why do I ask? Well, let me explain.

I have mentioned in the past that I have an inclination to look at life through what I call Ealing Comedy tinted glasses and I will often enjoy snippets of these wonderful films through the computer/web facility of 'You Tube'. So, what happened is this. Whilst 'browsing' items *of that ilk* (did you know that that is a Scottish title) I stumbled upon 'Whisky Galore' and further into that there was the incomparable Drinking Song, not the as in the Student Prince but a tune that is unique to the Isle of Eriskay. A Whisky drinkers

Hymn, a melodic salute to the Highland nectar, how wonderful. From my researches, I have established that the prime requirement to be able to sing it as it should be sung is; at least 40% inebriation. You got the picture? Goody! Good! Good! Okkaay, actually the point I want to get to is one of the related video links that pop up on the screen. They usually annoy me but on this occasion my attention was caught by one in particular titled 'How to drink Whisky' hmm! I thought, that is worthy of investigation, which I did.

The Master Blender at Whyte and Mackay, a Mr Patterson, was educating a single malt snob in the finesse of blended whisky's and, it also amounted to Whisky drinking instruction for the naïve but willing to learn devotee. You don't just sip it or throw it down your throat, no, there has to be a gentle, slow and disciplined appreciation of the expertly crafted liquid.

I will say no more but suggest you go there (Whyte and Mackay, You Tube) and towards the end pay attention as Mr Patterson quotes the price of one bottle, you will need a drink afterwards, I was astonished.

Anyway, back to the tool-room at Fords where, due to my time in Chatham Dockyard I was thought of as the boat Miester and was regularly pressured into making components for just about every boat owner at Fords from would be Admirals downwards to old salts and spotty seadogs. The standards of work produced varied according to customers rank from exacting, to rough and ready.

It was around this time that fords decided to introduce the 'sealed for life' concept which for the most part saw the elimination of grease nipples on prop shafts, suspension wishbone arms, bearings, steering thingy's, gear shifts and other bits. To my mind this was a retrograde step and was not in the best interests of the motorist and, although I didn't realise it at the time, it was possibly the beginning of the throwaway society insofar as motoring went. I really got myself a bee in the bonnet over that. Anyway I shouldn't have bothered so much about it since I was in due course going to find out as I went through life that it is increasingly the way it goes for consumers, and that it really had nothing to do with saving the buyer any money in the purchase price, it just maximised profit and created more work and money for the ever increasingly lucrative auto service and spare parts industry.

It seems so obvious doesn't it, it needs greasing to make it last longer, if there ain't no effin nipples you can't grease it, so you have to chuck it away and buy a new one.

Consequently the only greaseable items left on cars today are the steering wheel and gear knob. Makes for exciting driving I suppose.

Anyway, back to the tool-room and the job of producing jigs, fixtures and body panel stamping dies. The real business was making the tools that made the cars, vans etc. But there was also *Quality Control* and at the time the outside world was inclined to ridicule the idea that Fords would take this aspect of engineering seriously. There was an attitude that gave rise to nick names such as 'Dagenham Dustbin' or 'Daggers Donkey' but just the same the Q/C tools were made and very elaborate and demanding in terms of tool room skills they were.

The most puzzling thing was that after many weeks of highly skilled man hours, countless

press shop, assembly line try-outs and the odd industrial dispute, the end products would become masterpieces of engineering obscurity in that once finished they were never used; they were locked away in a store and did nothing other than gather dust.

BUT! it all made work for the working man to do, Flanders and Swann, do you remember them. Which brings me to the subject of music, which is something that is Never Far Away in my house. However, due to various limitations I haven't got around to music, or emotion, yet and I was thinking of also throwing in some Erotica as well, but I now need to rest my aching fingers and resume from this point next time.

Have a Happy Humbug! oops sorry, I mean Christmas.

Paul

Editors Spot

Well, another year has flown by and another eventful one it has been for the society. As you will have seen earlier, the news of the passing of Elsie Gurr brings a sad end to the year, especially so soon after celebrating her 100th birthday at the club. But as I'm sure she would wish, we must carry on and look forward to the future.

As you all know, we can't run the railway without you it's members, and as always we have a need for volunteers on a Sunday afternoon to man the station. It has been a struggle sometimes throughout this year to fill the positions needed, so I make my usual plea and encourage those of you that can spare an afternoon and don't have an engine to run to help out where you can and put your name down on the list in the club house. A fresh list will be issued shortly in readiness for the start of the new running season in 2016. Any help will be gratefully received.

On a brighter note, one of the highlights of the year and as part of a belated anniversary celebration, quite a number of our members took part in a fish and chip run on the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway on 1st August. With RHDR driver, fellow Maidstone member and train headboard maker Stewart Christensen at the controls of Typhoon, we enjoyed an evening journey down the line from New Romney to Dungeness where a fish and chip supper was served in the café, before heading back up to New Romney. Two lucky winners of a draw, Peter Kingsford and yours truly (not a fix I assure you) were able to enjoy a footplate ride. It certainly was an experience to be riding in the cab of Typhoon while the sun set across the other-worldly landscape of Dungeness and the Marshes. Getting to blow the whistle was the best bit!

There are a few pictures opposite of that memorable evening. Given the enjoyment and interest shown in this event, it is likely that we will arrange something similar again in the future, maybe even make it an annual event. So for those who might be interested in joining us, please let a member of the committee know.

Some members admiring Typhoon before departure from the shed at New Romney, where Stewart had been busy cleaning his charge in readiness for the special.



Almost ready for the off. Is that little Pete at the controls...?

Martin receiving the headboard from Stewart which he made especially for our run. If you haven't already spotted it, this can now be viewed in the clubhouse.



And so to bed...

Typhoon simmers in between her sisters already wrapped up for the night.

Along with various activities at the park, I took some time out to visit Wales, both north and south including the Brecon Beacons in May, and the stunning Snowdonia with my parents in September, where of course I took advantage of visiting some of the great little trains of Wales, plus a slightly bigger one on route—The Severn Valley Railway. Riding on the Brecon Mountain Railway, which some of us visited during one of Sue's S.H.I.T. weeks quite a few years ago; the Ffestiniog, Welsh Highland and the Llanberis Lake Railways, it was a great way to see some of the stunning scenery that Wales has to offer.



There would have been a sixth railway to visit in the Snowdon Mountain Railway, but given the typical weather associated with that part of the UK it would have been a wasted journey, with the mountain shrouded in cloud. Still, it's a good excuse to go back!



It was during the week in North Wales that I conquered one of my fears and went underground, paying a visit to the Sygun Copper Mine, situated near Beddgelert (one of the pretty villages along the route of the WHR). Tunnelling of this particular mine began during Roman times, so given that they had lasted this long, I managed to pluck up the courage to don my hard hat and take the 40 minute tour deep in the mountain. After admiring the stalagmite and stalactites that had formed over the years, I was certainly

glad of the light at the end of the long tunnel.

And back to Wales I went again at the end of September, along with Tom and Alex Linkins, to pay another visit to the very hospitable members of the Llanelli & District Model Engineers who were holding their annual Autumn Steam Rally. This event has grown in popularity year on year, with ever increasing numbers of visitors bringing along both road and rail steam engines, and other motorised vintage vehicles.

Maybe next year we could persuade a few of our members to come and join us...

Anyway, enough of sounding like I belong to the Welsh tourist board.



Mention of Sue' S.H.I.T. weeks (that's Sue's Holiday Including Trains in case you have not heard of this before), reminds us that there has not been a holiday for some years now. For myself I have only been on one, but thoroughly enjoyed it and have heard nothing but good things about some of the others that have taken place. The weeks usually involved staying in one part of the country and visiting clubs in the area taking along our own locos to give them a run on fresh track (or not so fresh in some cases), with a day or two to spend at your own leisure.

If there is enough interest we would like to see if S.H.I.T. weeks can be resurrected, so if you might be interested in a week away with friends and locos visiting different clubs please let Sue or other members of the committee know and we shall see if something can be arranged.

The society has once again been invited to have a stand at the Heritage Transport Show at the Kent Show Ground on Saturday 2nd April. Given the great turnout and variety at this years show of members engines and engineering projects, we hope to be able to put on a good show once again. Anyone interested in displaying their models and lending a hand on the day to set up the stands, please let a member of the committee know.

As you will have found, enclosed is a copy of the menu for the annual club lunch at the Grange Moor Hotel, which Pat Riddles has very kindly organised once again for us. This time to be held on Sunday February 21st . For those of you that wish to join us, please let Pat have your menu choices and money by the first Sunday in February (the 7th).

Also enclosed is a form for next years subscriptions, please ensure that you renew your membership by filling this out and letting Edgar Playfoot have your money by the AGM in March.

Don't forget if you have any stories you wish to share, either on an engineering topic, railway (or not) holiday related, anecdotes or any pearls of wisdom, we're always after articles to fill up the newsletters. Thanks to all those who have contributed to this edition.

It just remains for me to wish you all and your families a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and I look forward to seeing you all during 2016 (hopefully with a running Lochwood...).

Andrew



Your Club, Have Your Say!

A lot of discussion has gone on recently about trying to improve the club facilities and activities, however the opinions of all would be greatly appreciated in order for the committee to provide what you want, rather than what we think you want.

Workshop

We are currently in the process of reorganising the workshop, and would appreciate the opinion of the members as to what could go in there. It is hoped to provide equipment which is of use to most, however, not necessarily available in the average model engineers workshop. If you have any suggestions then please let any of the committee know, anything will be considered.

Committee

The idea behind a successful committee is variation and new thought processes, however, for this to happen then volunteers are required. This does not need long term commitment, since the committee is re-elected annually, then anybody taken on need only stay for a year at a time. It is an ideal situation to be able to have a vote at the AGM every year; however we often struggle to locate volunteers for the job. If you would be willing to stand for a year, or propose another willing member, then please get in touch with the committee.

Club Nights

In recent times there has been a decline in the success of club nights at the club, and for this we are unable to find an answer. As such we have decided to remove the January and February club nights from our calendar this year. Have you got any suggestions for different club nights, or how to make the existing club nights more appealing? I am sure that this is a subject that could open up all sorts of debates, but any suggestions would be gratefully received for discussion.

Tom Parham

M.M.E.S. Lunch at Grange Moor Hotel on Sunday 21st

February 2016

12.30 for 1.00pm as usual // £20.00 pp (under 10's £11.00)

Menu choices & Payment to Pat Riddles by first Sunday in February (7th)

Starters

Cocktail of Melon Balls with Mango Coulis and Blueberries

Prawn & Cucumber Salad with Wholemeal Bread & Butter

Roasted Tomato & Red Pepper Soup with a Crusty Roll

Duck & Cranberry Paté with sliced Toasted Baguette & House Chutney

Mains

Roast Lamb with Roasted Potatoes, 3 Seasonal Vegetables & Gravy

Roast Beef with Roasted Potatoes, 3 Seasonal Vegetables, Yorkshire Pudding & Gravy

Chicken & Ham Pie with New Potatoes & 3 Seasonal Vegetables

Herb Crusted Salmon on Sauté Potatoes with Hollandaise Sauce & 3 Seasonal Vegetables

Crepes Stuffed with Sauté Red Onion, Spinach and Mushrooms topped with a Cream Cheese
Sauce

Desserts

Chocolate & Baileys Profiteroles with Chocolate Sauce & Whipped Cream

Fresh Strawberries topped with Vanilla Ice Cream, Fruit Coulis & Whipped Cream

Warm Apple & Sultana Crumble with Custard

Fresh Fruit Salad

Cheese & Biscuits with House Chutney

Coffee or Tea with Mints

MMES DIARY DATES 2015/16

Saturday 26 December:	Boxing Day Run – Free Rides
Sunday 21 February:	Annual MMES lunch at the Grange Moor Hotel
Friday 4 March:	Annual General Meeting
Sunday 27 March:	First public running day of 2016 (clocks forward 1 hour the previous night)
Friday 1 April:	Club night
Saturday 2 April:	Heritage Transport Rally, Kent Showground, Detling
Wednesday 20 April:	Members Playtime Run
Friday 6 May:	Quiz night
Wednesday 18 May:	Members Playtime Run
Friday 3 June:	Evening Run and fish and chips
Wednesday 15 June:	Members Playtime Run

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 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

2016:

15-17 January: London Model Engineering Exhibition at the Alexandra Palace, London.

Please keep your eye on the noticeboard in the clubhouse for any changes or additional dates.