



# Southampton Society of Model Engineers Ltd

*Member of Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies*

## NEWS LETTER

Vol. No 178 March 2004

### Club Corner

Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> April	Passenger Hauling Starts for 2004
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup> May	Meeting
Wed 9 <sup>th</sup> June	Meeting
Sat Sun 12 <sup>th</sup> /13 <sup>th</sup> June	<u>'OPEN WEEKEND'</u>
Wed 14 <sup>th</sup> July	Meeting
Sat Sun 17 <sup>th</sup> /18 <sup>th</sup> July	Guildford Rally

The brighter among you will have noticed that as of May we have no 'arranged' monthly meetings. This is due to the lack of a Social Secretary in post, which by the time you read this will have of course been filled at the AGM!

### Other Dates that may be of interest

Isle of Wight Open Day	24/25 <sup>th</sup> April
Cardiff Welsh Loco Rally	12/13 <sup>th</sup> June
Bournemouth Open Day	13 <sup>th</sup> June
Harrow and Wembley	12/13 <sup>th</sup> June
Kinver IMLEC	10/11 <sup>th</sup> July
Guildford Rally	17/18 <sup>th</sup> July
Oxford Dreaming Spires Rally	24/25 <sup>th</sup> July

All meetings are normally held at the Royal British Legion, Manor Branch, Bullar Road, Bitterne Park, Southampton on the second Wednesday of each month at 8:00pm.

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#### Editor

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## New Years Day (Frostbite) Steam Up.

The weather started off rather dismal and I think that we were in for a rather rotten day, however it did alter and although slightly cold was quite reasonable. By ten thirty only two engines had arrived, whilst having a cup of tea and making few comments on same turned my gaze towards the car park and behold cars, trailers, vans etc. were coming from all directions a total of twelve loco's running and three static two of which were part built. 5" "Lion's" and one narrow gauge "Firefly". Even better was the number of members who turned up. It is quite a good social event to start the New Year off. The refreshments as in previous years slightly low key the idea being to keep the work to a minimum having said that it still does take quite an effort and thanks must go to Mollie for arranging the food and the usual soup, rolls, sausage rolls tea and coffee. Also to Master Chef Bill, for cooking the sausage rolls and boiling the kettle. Pamela and Julie for delivering the food and drink to the masses. Another mention must go to Mike for his sterling work as Track Marshall who I believe did most of the day without much help, something for the committee to address perhaps. Thanks to everyone who helped and to those who ran engines.

## Bits And Pieces.

During the last two or three years this event has been rather poorly supported only two or three people taking bits for others to enjoy and as you might recall I have been rather critical of members for same. I did mention this event in the last newsletter and I believe Paul Clarke was twisting, no bending a few ears on New Years Day. The result being, in my view the best Bits and Pieces evening for quite sometime. A model steam launch, a full size twin cylinder compound steam launch engine almost finished driving wheels axle boxes and springs for a 5" Q1. Five different 5" Bogies and a knurling tool. The person building this got in to a slight predicament as he wanted a knurl on the head of an adjusting screw but didn't have a knurling tool to do it with, as you can imagine from here things went a little haywire with a lot of not very helpful suggestions resulting in everyone in fits of laughter. Helping along a very light hearted and interesting event. Almost forgot the formers and cladding for a 5" GWR firebox and the last one brought out of interest was two gear shafts and gear clusters out of a Myford Super Seven gearbox which were quite bent and a lot of teeth missing resulting from hanging an air pipe and gun on the end of the lead screw getting caught in the large handwheel winding itself around the same and stopping the lead screw, something he had done without a problem

## A visit to Rugby Open Days 2003 Don Cottle

For several weeks I had been contemplating a visit to the Open Day at Rugby, which I had noticed advertised in the 7.1/4" Gauge News, & because it was a track within easy travelling distance, which so far I had not had a chance to try out. Of course older members may remember a coach trip which had been organised some years ago by Dick Dore during his a spell as our Social Secretary, when we had a good steaming session with our locos. And the late Alan Bealing took a number of photographs which I still have in my collection. Whilst there Dick arranged for the coach to take wives (and anyone else) on to Warwick Castle for several hours. However this is when the Rugby MES were at the Hillmorton Community Centre. According to my Locomotive Log-book this was on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1977. In those days they had just 3.1/2" & 5" gauge tracks, and due to redevelopment there they subsequently obtained a larger more rural new site in Olney Lane which was not very far away.

I left home in Winchester at about 8.20 and had a very easy drive up the A34 to north of Oxford which took me an hour, where I joined the M40, I then left at Banbury and crossed country by one of the three routes indicated on my computer, (mainly because I had not driven that way before!). Although the weather forecasts all indicated rather damp conditions during the days beforehand, by the weekend the forecasters had started to indicate they were not at all certain how the day would turn out, depending on which T.V. channel I was watching. Indeed one later ITV actually apologised (i.e. did a Michael Fish!). I am glad they did not deter me as the drive home instead of being in the pouring rain as indicated at one time, was spent watching a lovely sunset.

I arrived at 10.20 after a pleasant drive of 104 miles in easy traffic conditions, and on arrival I was directed to the unloading bay. Then came the problem of unloading my 7.1/4" g. locomotive. The Chairman explained that after completing the track laying they had obtained a hydraulic lift, but the 2 members who had been involved with its installation had both recently had a spell in hospital. It was hoped it would be sorted out shortly, but until then they have to improvise, although by then there were plenty of helpers. Fortunately one of these remembered who of the other visitors had a length of track suitable for me to use, and this was soon sorted. By this time around a dozen other locos. had turned up, several requiring various lengths of unloading rail, plus a few for the adjacent raised track, so there was plenty of activity, and people I knew. There were two chaps from Oxford, Peter Lawson and Mike Tandy, who I have seen at almost every event this year, and several members from Stoneleigh, plus Peter Rimmer who been in our party with his wife on a recent trip to Train Mountain, USA.

One surprise when I checked in with my boiler certificate was a member of another society who produced a 5 year certificate! He showed it to me, and it was somewhat larger than our Southern Federation ones, but contained quite a bit of information and mentioned that societies insurers on it. (I was quite envious having just a 12 monthly one!).

The track is described as having good views of the adjacent countryside, and so it proved, on the far side it was possible to see from between 3 & 6 miles depending in which direction you looked, and the track was about 1 kilometre long. It reminded me at one end as being similar to the Moors Valley (near Ringwood) as one track in a cutting was crossed by another overhead. The main station had two platforms, and a siding for laying-over in, on the other side was a nice clubhouse and facilities, and yard with turntable. All steaming bays were at ground level, with ash pits, and could take about 10-11 locomotives. On approach, or leaving the station, was access to several sidings for either their carriage shed, or for P.W. purposes. The signals were all colour light with large aspects, and installed by members with Railtrack S.& T. experience. The route had a good long gradient to climb and several downgrades, so I found it interesting to drive on, and I look forward to returning once they get their unloading problems sorted out. My friend Peter Rimmer had brought his new Midland 2P 4-4-0 for its first ever run, and it ran well all day. It was built using photographs etc. and was not to a recognised design. Later in the day it double-headed with a Stanier Class 5 and reminded me of my early days on the old Somerset and Dorset line to Bath. Other items of interest were a Stanier Class 5 4-6-0, and K1 2-6-0 plus various narrow gauge designs Hunslets (Elidir etc.) also a 1500 Class 0-6-0, (Paddington)-, plus a Warship diesel, and what appeared to be a Singapore 0-4-0 with freight wagons. Altogether about ten engines ran and I assume most except one, were visitors. The raised track had less, mainly narrow gauge Sweet Peas etc. but a 5" Class A3 'Flying Scotsman' was the most eye catching. However the day was mainly for 7.1/4" gauge locomotives, and next week they were hosting the 'LBSC' Bowl so they had more to come then. A steady uneventful drive home of about 2 hours saw me arrive home just after 7.0pm via the same route.

*I must apologise to Don for this being so late into the newsletter ED*

### What Service

This article has been 'lifted' from a magazine called the 'Best of British' a monthly magazine. The article was written by Mr Dennis Sheward

Official government figures boast that we now have economic wealth based on our service industries, as opposed to mainly manufacturing as in years past. But the question no one seems to ask is; "Where is the service that we are supposed to be enjoying?"

Looking back objectively at our general standard of living over the past three or four decades would indicate that the service aspect is somewhat an illusion.

Going back - not all that many years - to when we all had a corner shop, the customer really was king (or more likely, queen). It sounds simple, but so much was involved that assistants had a five-year apprenticeship to learn everything about the stock held, and how to serve and keep the customer happy.

Customers were provided with a chair where they could rest whilst the assistants took their order, weighed out quantities of butter and sugar and handed out samples of cheese or biscuits and other such goodies. Orders would be parcelled up and delivered by the proverbial whistling errand boy on his bike. What did the customer do? Absolutely nothing!

So, along comes the supermarket with the customer pushing a trolley, reaching up to shelves and squinting at labels. Then they have to stand in a queue at the checkout and pack their own goods in bags and boxes and lug the whole 'shebang' out to their car. As an 'improvement', some supermarkets supply hand held computers so customers can also do the calculation. What does the customer do everything!

So it goes on. Remember garages where a cheerful assistant asked you how many gallons you required and then put that amount in your tank? He would also check your tyres and oil level. Buses had conductors who helped people on and off the vehicle. Now the driver sits firmly in the cab and glares at some young mother struggling with a crying infant and a pushchair, or some elderly person not as nippy as they used to be.

There were porters on all railway stations instead of do-it-yourself unwieldy trolleys.

Leaving aside the horror stories of patients waiting on trolleys for hours in hospital A&E departments, for many years, at the start of the NHS, seeing your family doctor was an uncomplicated arrangement. Not feeling well? Take yourself round to his surgery, sit in the waiting room and he would see you and all other would-be patients, no matter how long he had to work. Now, of course, an appointment (often many days ahead) is obligatory. If you really want an urgent appointment, you must convince a receptionist that if it is not granted you are liable to expire in her waiting room there and then.

Ah, but today we have internet shopping where we can sit at home, see goods and order them for delivery. See them, yes - feel the material, closely examine the fruit for blemishes, and count how many rashers in a pack of bacon - well not really. Home delivery? Nothing new. In the past, the butcher, the baker, the milkman and the greengrocer all delivered. Also some deliveries have disappeared, such as the collection of boots and shoes for repair, and clothes for the laundry or dry cleaning. There was even a privately run library where you could choose your books while you waited. So when we consider the wonderful service we all enjoy, think hard and the phrase, 'what a Big Con' comes to mind!

## News From The Shed or how the Brit is coming along

As some of you will know the 'Brit' failed its boiler hydraulic test during the summer. The 'Brit' is fifty years old this year as far as I can ascertain. To the best of my knowledge the boiler has never been off the frames in this time. So in true 'time watch' or 'two men in a trench' style I set about the excavation of the boiler on the old girl. Having replaced the super heater return bends after I,M,L,E,C in 2000. I knew that the main steam pipes would come apart fairly easily as they had been well anointed with 'anti seize' compound on re assembly. Sure if the chimney had come off as easily. Two of the CSK screws that I had used to re fit the petticoat pipe after the super heater re build turned out to be the 'non' stainless variety that some suppliers are now selling. After carefully drilling out the heads the petticoat came away and the blower pipe was removed from the blast cap. Next the wet header bolts unscrewed very easily as they had had the 'anti seize' treatment.

Attacking the other end of the loco first of all the handrails were snapped off this may sound extreme but they were glued on with 'araldite' when I rebuilt the loco ten years ago. The 'bacon slicer' reverser was detached as was the cylinder drain cock lever. The cab was the next item to be removed I had craftily placed the transfers on the cab sides to miss the screw heads. Only two screws actually hold the cab on. With the cab removed it was time to detach most of the plumbing for safe keeping. Various parts such as the whistle valve which is screwed to the firebox wrapper were also removed as were the top feed fittings, these will be sent to the great non ferrous god for re cycling. The most shocking thing was the state of the steam manifold that if I did not know better I would swear that the threads were 1/4" X 32 and the bush in the boiler 9/32" X 32 yet it had never shown any signs of leaking or weakness at anytime during the locos time in my custody. To remove the boiler from the frames a bolt through the ash pan and three others around the smoke box have to be removed the boiler can then be extracted from the chassis. The ash pan is removed by unscrewing a series of studs and screw that also hold the cab floor and firebox cleading, once this is removed only the boiler bands stand between you and a pretty sorry looking sight. That lovely salmon pink boiler that was new fifty years ago looks as though it has seen a good few battles. After careful inspection I have decided that it is time to call on 'uncle' Merlin for moral support and guidance. After much gnashing of teeth it is decided that it's XXXX or bust and the only thing to do is attempt to put a butt strap on the outside of the barrel seam, which has split for a length of about two and a half inches and does not look great in one other area. I set to with a grinderette with a emery disc attached to clean of the what appears to be SIF bronzed joint for the entire length of the barrel this action showed up some other areas that may or may not have been sound. Next the Dremel is in action with a ball end carbide routing cutter to gouge out the old joint. Discussions with Merlin led to the new strap to be made in three sections the thought behind this is that if the strap distorts during the soldering operation any distortion will be small in smaller lengths. By soldering I of course mean silver soldering and not plumbers solder. The three sections are held in place by 1/16 rivets dropped through clearance holes and are only there to stop the pieces floating away. The next operation is of the bottom wrenching type as we have to heat the whole boiler up so as not to stress anything inside that would mean that the effort would be wasted. By say breaking a stay or melting something that is vital. The pre heat went very well and so did the soldering operation that followed. In fact we thought that we had saved the day even before the hydraulic test some days later, excepting a small weep from one of the rivets nearest the throat plate all was well after caulking this with a spot of soft solder. I still have to remake the top feeds and new cleading sheet for the barrel plus a new fountain for the firebox. To chivvy myself along a little I steamed the boiler with a Propane torch just prove to myself that it was ok. It would not be proper of myself not thank Merlin Biddlecombe for his support and help in this project which at one time I had little hope of completing. His enthusiasm his kept me going to a point were I hope to have the engine complete before the end of the 2004 season to celebrate its fiftieth year.