



# Southampton Society of Model Engineers Ltd

Member of Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies

## NEWS LETTER

Vol. No 186 March 2006

### Club Corner

Mar 8<sup>th</sup>  
April 12<sup>th</sup>  
April 15/16<sup>th</sup>  
May 10<sup>th</sup>  
June 14<sup>th</sup>

**AGM - 7:30pm.**

**Note Change of event!** - Archive video film from the track from approx 1987 on, Southampton Council event in Riverside Park (passenger hauling SAT & SUN) 'Exbury' ladies Night? – The Gardens at their best, our annual visit. Twyford water works? Not yet finalised hopefully a visit and tour.

### Other Dates of Interest

\*\*\*\*\* **Southampton Society of Model Engineers Ltd** \*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\* **OUR OPEN WEEKEND HAS BEEN** \*\*\*\*\*

**CANCELLED**

\*\*\*\*\* **April 15/16<sup>th</sup>** \*\*\*\*\*

June 17/18<sup>th</sup>  
**Jul 8/9<sup>th</sup>**  
Jul 19<sup>th</sup> Wednesday  
Oct 7/8<sup>th</sup>

Exbury Gardens (Narrow gauge in the gardens)

**Guidford Rally** - New Date to miss "Guilfest"

Play link day (mums and toddler) morning and afternoon, engines please.

Exbury Gardens (Steam in the gardens)

### Chairman

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### Club Regalia

We now have a fairly comprehensive selection of club regalia for sale to members.

Cloth badges for sewing onto overalls/driving jackets etc. £4.50

Sweat shirts. £13

Polo Shirts. £11

Stick on stickers for either inside or outside application i.e. sticky on front or back. £2

Available from Mollie Giles

## The Water Board Works

Paul Clarke

By the time you get this newsletter the pipeline works in the park should be completed and the site back to normal albeit with a little less grass. The works have gone very well up to the time of writing this, the contractors tell me they are ahead of schedule. On Wednesday 25th January the 'SAGA' group were working at the track site when the mole/ pipe cracker unit went under the track section. Don Cottle reported to me the following. "It's most strange to be standing there talking to someone, whilst big thumps come from beneath your feet and cracks appear in the ground around us. At first I thought a pile driver was working across the river, until we twigged what was happening. They were using some sort of mechanical mole. (The cracks resealed once the underground pipe was done.)". We wait to see if the track alignment has been affected or if the ground has settled back from where it came? The photos show the hydraulic pulling machine and the end of the pipe disappearing down the hole! The pipe did not dissect the track as first suspected but as illustrated did clip the corner of the 7¼".



## Clyde Puffers and `Victualling Inshore Craft`.

Don Cottle

During a recent Sunday morning at the track I became involved in a conversation with two other members about 'Clyde Puffers' which are small sea-going vessels of a traditional design (mainly steam), and have fascinated me for a long time. (You may also recall the one time T.V. comedy series featuring Captain Para Handy and his vessel the 'Vital Spark'. This was probably due to my working for a number of years for a well known ship owner, (in the Marine Aggregate industry), where there are a number of assorted craft, some with interesting histories, and in certain cases operating many miles from shore in European or Baltic waters. (Ours were all very modern by comparison with certain companies.) Interestingly, every 'Cowes Week' our company would charter a Thames Barge for corporate entertaining, an event eagerly looked forward to by certain individuals, and I was interested to see which vessel we had, when the time came. To add to this, on my annual visit to Scotland, I often come across a puffer in the region of the Crinan Canal, or another West Coast location. To maintain my Scottish shipping interest I daily check a website devoted to Caledonian MacBrayne because they operate in unusual circumstances, and are these days the largest fleet sailing under the fast diminishing British flag.

They must be interesting to work for, as the problems they encounter, sometimes make even those we used to suffer seem quite ordinary! (Another shipping interest of mine is checking the Southampton Port radar to see what is happening in the Solent area).

In fact most surviving puffers date from around the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, although a few can date from the beginning of the last century. For instance 'Basuto' at the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum in Cheshire dates from 1902, but most of the early vessels have been scrapped or sold overseas. During the last war a large number were built as Victualling Inshore Craft, and they operated all round our coasts and were known as Vic's for obvious reasons. These later builds were sometimes known by their number only. I.e. VIC 24 built 1942, (still exists), and they carried all manner of items for the military, despite its small size one even carried a salvaged aircraft during the war. Originally they were based on a traditional Scottish design which had for years traded around the Western Isles. They were built around 66' in length, and carried around 100 tons of cargo. The early Puffers also had the funnel in front of the wheelhouse, a simple 5 tube boiler, and carried 3/4 crew. Later alterations were made to the traditional design, and new vessels constructed with a length of 85' which ruled out their use on certain routes, (i.e. Caledonian Canal). The lengthening increased their cargo capacity to around 120-160 tons. These wartime alterations meant they were then quite useful for servicing warships further north, at Scarpa Flow for instance. The boilers were changed to a Cochrane multi-tube type, the funnel was moved behind the new larger wheelhouse, and a galley and improved heating added. The improvements meant its crew capacity increased to between 3/6 crew. In later years some were given diesel engines, but the wartime conditions meant that diesels were urgently required for more important vessels and it was easier to obtain steam engines for the Vic's. These small cargo vessels had the crew cabins either in the forecabin, (which contained a stove), or stern section. This left space for cargo in amidships, and the stern section bunks were mainly used by the skipper and engineer. Some only had electrical power from a shore supply when alongside, no echo sounder, or radar, but had a V.H.F. radio. A steam operated windlass catered for boat and cargo handling, plus anchor lifting. When built some only had a navigating platform, wheelhouses often were added later. They were also given Lloyds Loadline Certification.

At the turn of the last century they were designed so they could transit the Crinan Canal from the Clyde area, then head northwards, in order to avoid the lengthy and sometimes dangerous transit around the Mull of Kintyre, saving considerable mileage. This must also have been a godsend in times of heavy weather. (More later). The name puffers were given to them because being steam, and lacking condensers, the exhaust was in a series of puffs similar to a railway locomotive. However later a number of Vic's were equipped with sea water condensers & improved water circulating pumps. Around 1968 a number of their commercial activities were amalgamated under Glenlight Shipping Co. a Glasgow based ship operator. Where possible they attempted to replace the puffers with their small cargo ships. Unfortunately in 1993 the government refused an application to increase the subsidy to the Western Isles routes any further, as there were other operators doing similar work. Therefore Glenlight decided to cease that trade altogether. The commercial puffers were either laid-up or disposed of, apart from a few which were still with their longer term owners, or involved in the tourist trade. Vessels known to exist are:

'Basuto' built 1902, presently located at Ellesmere Boat Museum, Ellesmere Part, Cheshire.

'Spartan' (Vic 18) built 1942 located at Irvine, believed recently under repair, but does spend periods elsewhere. Converted to diesel in 1970.

'Advance'(VIC 24) built 1942 now believed at Plymouth. This was laid up at Husbands, Marchwood for 10 years 1970/80

'Pirbroch II' 1957 replacement for Pirbroch I built 1923 (used by White Horse Distillers Co.). Now a diesel and at Co. Galway, Eire reported in poor shape but owner hoping to restore it.

'Auld Reekie' (VIC 27) built 1942 location thought to be Crinal Canal, (active).

'VIC 32' built 1943 located at Lochgilphead, waiting for new boiler. (Has received a lottery grant for this.)

'VIC 56' built 1945 at Faversham, Kent, this vessel had a convertible oil/coal boiler. In its Admiralty days it used oil because munitions were frequently carried. When built it had an open navigating platform, the Admiralty added the wheelhouse later. Located Trinity House Berth, East India Dock, London. Apparently it has open days etc., and if you have seen 'East Enders' on T.V. you would have seen its location in the opening titles, opposite the 'Dome'. Laid-up 1975, & purchased in 1978 for preservation.

Arran Monarch', (VIC 57) built 1945 at Faversham, only the second built there. Its hull exists in Devon, possibly Bude.

'Eilean Eisdeal', (VIC 72) built 1944 at Hull. Located at Inveraray Maritime Museum, and now a diesel. (Featured as 'Vital Spark' in T.V.series.)

'C668' (VIC96), built 1945 at Thorne, near Doncaster. Operated around Essex and Kent area i.e. Sheerness Chatham and Harwich. Located at Maryport, reported may have been sold recently.

'Kyles' built 1872 as a coaster, identical to a puffer, length 83', dieselised 1953. Located at Braehead Museum, Glasgow.(Vessel had 24 owners!)

'Mary Hill' built 2004 at Ardmaleish, Bute, (as a 42' long replica), and 50h.p. diesel engine. presently located on Forth & Clyde Canal.

'Masara' Reported location is Bowling, but this one is a puzzle, I have scanned both the library, and internet. Only one brief mention of it found.

Some were sold later to Norweigan owners;

'Sundvag' (VIC 49) built 1944, re-engined 1963, lengthened to 111.5' sold to Norway 1955. Used as a coaster and for storage.

'Charlotte' (VIC 93) built 1945, dieselised 1982, sold to its new owner as coaster Length 80'. 'Hilmina' (VIC 102) built 1945, re-engined 1970, sold to new owner in 1961. Lengthened to 109' in 1962. (Believed inactive.)

'Nerma' (VIC 10) built 1942, dieselised 1953, sold in 1950 as a coaster. (At 66' shorter than above) Removed from Norweigan register 1996.

Only three Victualling Inshore Craft were actually constructed in Scotland, the rest were built in England at Northwich, -(25), Thorne-(40 nr. Doncaster), and small numbers of others at places like Faversham. With a shallow draft they could be beached for unloading, providing the bottom was suitable and there was no jetty, a derrick for lifting was attached to the mast. This meant they could be used all round our coasts, although they became famous for their Western Isles service.

My memories of Scottish inshore waters and small ships remind me of the time when I took my family on a long week-end excursion by train from London to Mallaig. Here around 300 participants joined the CalMac ferry to Armadale on Skye for a variety of excursions. It turned out to be a very rough crossing, so I asked the Mate when he came down from the bridge, the prospects for the return. (He was not very hopeful). Shortly afterwards we all dispersed to go on our various excursions, and later learnt in fact the Mallaig Ferry was stormbound for at least 12 hours due to the weather. This leaked out whilst we were on our various visits, but fortunately a British Rail representative was attached to the party, and with the organizers, booked some extra coaches to transport those who had left the trip at Armadale onward from Kyle of Lochalsh station. Meanwhile we all would travel to the mainland via the Kyleakin-Kyle of Lochalsh ferry. Unfortunately in the gale this ferry had gone aground, but we were taken there anyway, and several of the Skye based coaches dropped their passengers and drove a 52 mile round trip south to collect the other participants. By now the rain had started to pour, but as we waited by the slipway, in the distance coming up the Sound was a small ship making steady progress in the choppy waters. Because the channel was quite narrow I expected it to be a puffer coming through inside the Islands to keep out of the weather. Then out of the gloom came a small coaster of the type which had taken over the trade, its engines throbbing as it steadily plodded north through the very choppy waves.(Apart from the rain, it was fairly quiet, and I can still remember the sound of its engines to this day).

When I returned to my office on Monday morning, out of interest I checked its owners and the size of their fleet in a book we had. I have often wondered where it was bound for, and if it had to shelter, (perhaps in the Inner Sound). Although it was then in fairly sheltered water, its route may have been around Cape Wrath, and towards the North Sea where the conditions must have been very bad.

Incidentally our CalMac ferry re-floated after about ninety minutes, but that's another story! It was by now twilight, and almost three hours before we arrived at Spean Bridge. Due to the rain, and the large number of 'refugees,' a number of us took shelter in the signal box for an hour or so. There was a large fire, and the Signaller appeared to be the only person who knew what was going on. (I doubt whether that lonely station had ever seen so many passengers before, or since). While we waited for our re-routed and re-timed train, a Class 27 diesel on freight ticked away on the opposite line, also waiting to cross our train and get the 'road'.

In view of all the troubles caused by the weather, thank goodness there is now a bridge to the Island.

#### Page filler from Editor

A dietitian was once addressing a large audience in Chicago. "The material we put into our stomachs is enough to have killed most of us sitting here years ago.

"Red meat is awful. Soft drinks erode your stomach lining. Chinese food is loaded with MSG. Vegetables can be disastrous, and none of us realizes the long-term harm caused by the germs in our drinking water.

"But there is one thing that is the most dangerous of all and we all have, or will, eat it. Can anyone here tell me what food it is that causes the most grief and suffering for years after eating it?"

A 75-year-old man in the front row stood up and said, "Wedding cake."

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Derek Lampard

Some several years ago I was talking, no doubt at excessive length, to a friend in the Club about a model I was thinking about. In so doing I mentioned the name R.E.L. Maunsell, the Southern Railway's first CME and although normally I pronounced the name sounding the 'u', e.g. as in 'Mawnsell', on that occasion I said it carelessly as 'Mansell'. At which it was pointed out to me that the name was spelt with a 'u' in it and should be pronounced accordingly.

Well, this friendly reprimand got me thinking, mostly along the lines of ~~~~~ do any of us really know how it should be pronounced and how could I find out for sure. My collection of books, mostly on railway and engineering topics, does not include anything on surnames or how to pronounce them and so I had to do some hard thinking.

My first, seemingly clever, thought was – the great man had come from Ireland and had trained at the Inchicore Works of the Great Southern and Western Railway, therefore it must be an Irish name. Now I have a friend who is Irish and so I asked her how it should be pronounced but, to my surprise, she had not come across the name and so didn't know. However, she promised that on her next visit to Dublin she would ask one of her friends. This seemed pretty promising because I knew that there was a scholarly-literary background to her family and I figured such knowledge would produce the definitive answer. Well, in time the answer came all right – nobody over there could venture a guess as how to pronounce Maunsell but for sure it wasn't really an Irish name!

This left me disappointed, confused and uncertain what to do next, and to some extent I lost interest in the problem. (If in doubt do nothing!) In fact, when some time later I was at a Curly Bowl day in Stockport and found myself talking to a man who some years before had known the lady who had been Maunsell's secretary, we talked about all sorts of things except how one pronounced the Maunsell.

A year or two later, as these things happen, the whole thing was resolved quite by chance. I was looking for a picture of some locomotive or other and there in 'SR 150: a century and a half of the Southern Railway' by Thomas & Whitehouse in the chapter on 'Personalities and Characters' it says quite simply: "Maunsell (the 'u' was superfluous for purposes of pronunciation) was the archetypal example of the chief mechanical engineer ....." I have had the book since 1990, but, somehow, had never before noticed this. I felt rather stupid about this and I spent some time sulking and fiddling about in other likely books wondering whether I might find some confirmation or further explanation. My sulks cleared when I found something in 'Bulleid of the Southern' by H.A.V. Bulleid, a book I have had even longer. In chapter eight, which deals with Bulleid going to the Southern in 1937, Bulleid's son says about a press release: "I wish they had included a guide to pronunciation: Maunsell rhymes with *cancel* and Bulleid rhymes with *succeed*." So this second book confirmed the first in a very satisfactory way. After all, if the son of Maunsell's successor couldn't get it right then whoever could? But how could I have missed two such references in books that I have read several times in the past? One has to laugh, which is of course better than sulking!

There are two footnotes to this tale of sporadic research and a poor memory. Firstly, when I mentioned to my wife what had been worrying me and what the outcome was, she calmly said, "Oh, when I worked in the University there was a Dr Maunsell in the Department and his name was always pronounced 'Mansell'." I think there's a moral somewhere in that!

Secondly, more information came to light as a result of someone kindly telling me that the Oakwood Press had recently published a biography of Maunsell and suggesting that it might be of use. So I bought a copy and found that not only did the biographer, as one might have expected, deal with the pronunciation of the name, which was confirmed as above, but also with its origins. A John Maunsell, JP, a prominent solicitor living in Dublin, who had considerable contacts with the board of the GS & WR, and his seventh son was ---- Richard Edward Lloyd, born 16th April 1868.

The book explains that the name is not, as I first supposed, Irish, but that the name Maunsell (Maunsel, Mauncel) derives from the Norman-French for 'sleave of land', whatever that was. It appears that the Domesday Book records a manor named 'Maunsel' at North Newton near Bridgwater and eventually around the time of Henry II a son who inherited the estate took 'Maunsell' as the family name. Later on, in the 13th century, some of the family went to Ireland to hold a grant of land there. Then, skipping the intervening centuries, we find during the 19th century

So there we are; R.E.L. Maunsell, certainly an Irishman, but having a name with roots in Somerset, only some 14 miles from where we live. At North Newton, there is still a Maunsel House (with one l) and, as I found out later, there is on the adjacent Bridgwater and Taunton Canal a Lower Maunsel Lock. It is, for those knowledgeable about the GWR, not far from Cogload Junction.

But don't forget -- it is '*Mansell*' not '*Mawnsell*',

## Frostbite

The annual bout of New Year madness brought out the hardy souls of the home society and some visitors. Picture from Tony Partridge.



\*\*\*\*\* **Southampton Society of Model Engineers Ltd** \*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\* **OUR OPEN WEEKEND HAS BEEN** \*\*\*\*\*  
**CANCELLED**  
\*\*\*\*\* **April 15/16<sup>th</sup>** \*\*\*\*\*

By the time you read this newsletter you should have been informed of the cancellation of our Open Weekend. This has had to be cancelled due to a commitment to the Southampton City Council running an event in the Park the same weekend. We have been invited to partake in this event. We will get free publicity in the local papers. And we feel we should keep our landlords happy.

We intend running an open weekend nearer the end of the year if we can find a suitable date.

Thank you for being understanding in this matter and we hope to see you all soon.



Lion Meet 2005 at Brighouse

As a follow up to my work on a 5 inch scale model of the Lion, I attended the meeting in at Brighouse Yorkshire on the 7<sup>th</sup> August 24<sup>th</sup> 2005. There were twelve engines present, eight under steam, the rest in various states of completion. The object of the meeting was, firstly as a get together of Lion locomotives and secondly to carry out a test to establish just how much power could be developed by each model over a given period of time. Each model was permitted to pull just as many carriages and passengers as the driver requested. Of the eight model locomotives taking part all were 5 inch scale except for one 3.5 inch version. The power out put being recorded on the dynamometer borrowed for the purpose from Guildford S M E.

The test was carried out by one locomotive at a time. Each model was given one circuit of the track as a warm up and then from a standing start had to continue for a period of ten minutes after which the power outputs are recorded. The majority seem to have a problem with obtaining traction from a standing start, but once this was achieved seem to do remarkably well. Though the 3.5 inch version had great difficulties and had to withdrawn in the early stages but was given a second chance at the end of the proceedings. The whole trial period seem to take up most of the afternoon finishing around 1800 hours. As I had to leave before the final analysis, I am unable to say who the winner was.

The Lionmeet was organized by the O.L.C.O. (old locomotive committee) which exists purely to encourage others to build models of the Lion. They hold two meetings each year, one the A G M and the other the Lionmeet, which is held in various parts of the country. O.L.C.O. is able to provide details of the original for anyone wishing to build a replica.

The club track is at a very pleasant location close to Brighouse centre in the midst of private housing. The land is owned by the club; they have a 3.5 and 5 inch raised track and a 7.25 inch at ground level. Their 7.25 inch engine house could accommodate twelve locomotives. The steaming bays are under cover which are great help when the weather becomes inclement. The raised track was a continuous circuit passing through a tunnel just after leaving the station, whilst the ground level had a complex system of loops, but did not seem to impede the raised track.

The whole event was most enjoyable and I felt most welcome by the members. The weather was perfect for the meeting which made an enjoyable day. The trip north was not wasted as we were able to visit my sister in law and stay with the niece who lives close by Brighouse and also pay a visit to the Pickering Steam Rally.



Ron Blizard