

Issue No. 858

August 2023

The News Sheet

North London Society of Model Engineers



August 2023

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Front cover; -

Puffing Billy outside its shed at the Beamish open air museum which brings the history of North East England to life. Geoff visited recently and reports in his article in this issue.



Your editor is very grateful to all those who have contributed to this edition. Your efforts are much appreciated by all the members of NLSME. This News Sheet would not be possible without you.

Articles long or short on any subject which would be of interest to members of NLSME will be gratefully received for inclusion in future editions. If you don't want to put pen to paper but have a suggestion for a topic which is of interest let the editor know and we will do the rest.

Chairman's Comments

Les

The under 16 years of age drivers' event was another enjoyable day. Though less attended than last year it is, I think, an event we should run again next year. Amongst the highlights was seeing, once again, young drivers enjoying the experience and in particular of driving Tom Luxford's Toby tram, brought up from Plymouth by Bryan for the occasion.



I often think that our event days at Tyttenhanger are more enjoyable than public days. In the last month we have had four external events, three of which were local scout groups and one a hospice. Unfortunately, the Keech Hospice visit coincided with a day's rain but we hope to reschedule it for later this year. The other events, two St Albans beaver groups and one cub pack, benefited from dry and pleasant weather. Thanks are due to all members who made these such a resounding success.

Public days have been well managed (thankyou stewards) with not so many visitors that might otherwise overwhelm us. On Sunday last at time of writing many visitors were first timers and had found about us through Facebook. Personally, I do not welcome the wider reach that social media can give and wish our visitors would stop posting us on it. It is too easy for the public days to become a chore rather than a pleasure which hitherto they have been. On the contrary what I enjoyed was finding visitors from the village who had been coming to us for a generation or more and who understand and appreciate that we are a private club and not a commercial concern.

Our club owned motive power, two 5" electrics and one 7.25-inch petrol, have been showing their age of late. Considering the extensive use, they get it is remarkable that they have performed so well over many years. Both electrics have been kept in service by George and recently required more attention to the control system which had become erratic of late. Thanks George. Our trusty 7.25 loco "Alban" is now in need of significant attention, no doubt the GL boys will come up with a repair plan to return it to active service soonest.

Fetes and Fairs continue to raise funds and the slot car section held a successful race/rally weekend at HQ that contributed £230. Well done to all concerned.

See you at track or HQ.

Les

Forthcoming General Meetings 2023.

By Ian

All meetings are on Friday evening starting at 8pm.
The Programme at the moment reads thus: -

The BBQ General Meeting at Colney Heath on Friday 2nd June was a great success. BBQ and the weather behaved themselves immaculately. Food was brought by the lucky attending members and a good well-fed time was had by all.

Friday 4th August.

The last BBQ of the Year for the General Meeting squad, all Sections most welcome. The AED has not had an airing for a year and has fortunately not needed to be used. It would be prudent for us to at the **least** know where it is kept. So, while we are chewing our sausages; viewing the AED and the associated First Aid Boxes would add to our knowledge and help digestion but no choking!

Friday 1st September.

General Meeting at Headquarters in Summers Lane. Professor Tim will take time off from teaching Dental Students for a 'close up' look at Copenhagen Fields - the Model Railway Club's 2mm scale layout. This is the first meeting of the season and not to be missed.

Friday 6th October.

Work in Progress. Members, please share the challenges of your Summer's Model Engineering at this popular and entertaining meeting.

Please note, I have had the great pleasure of organising the General Meetings for a number of years; in fact, since the demise of the Locomotive Section Meetings. I would like to think that the future General Meetings are in good hands and I wonder if a small team could be formed to have the pleasant task of organising and presenting the General Meetings in the future. I'm sure that the Team will gain plenty of suitable names from both within the Club and without it who be able to give entertaining talks. And so, carry on a tradition that it seems few other clubs can sustain.

Ian.

Any questions regarding the meeting contact, Ian



NLSME – July BBQ at Colney Heath.

By Ian

The Omens were good for a successful meeting on Friday 7th July, for it was to be a Club BBQ at the Colney Heath Site. The remains of the day were warm, windless and dry. The scribe arrived with an assistant just after 17:30hrs. The BBQ devise was easily lit and was soon forming a good charcoal base. Tea was brewed and all the world was at peace; at least the Club's part of it.

The crew sat and enjoyed a cuppa. Soon other members arrived and sausages were added to the cremation pile. Others brought precooked food that only needed heating thoroughly before consuming. Locomotives electric and steam were soon moving around the raised track at goodly speeds. BBQed food was avidly consumed on tables on the Coach Platform and on benches near the Ground Level Track.

The evening went very happily and smoothly with the scribe and assistant leaving as the evening commenced to darken. The sojourn was a great success especially for the members and kin who attended the event.

For Sale

Brazing hearth
£40.00.



Wolf Grinder.
£40.00

Please contact Geoff



Treasurer's Report

By Mike



A re-run of my comments from this time last year seems to be in order. Anybody whose Post Code appeared in last month's News Sheet and who has yet to pay their dues will cease to be a member of the Society from the end of August. We are sad to lose members, but we cannot keep chasing them all year round. It seems that to keep a secret put it in the News Sheet is as a good starting point as any.

Following the turmoil last month caused by the sudden cessation of business of our News Sheet printers, we found a new company and they produced a satisfactory news sheet, but at a much higher cost. Further negotiations with them have produced a suitable set of prices for various number of pages for the next three months issues. We will be monitoring quality and delivery situation before deciding to continue with them.

All normal expenses continue, but we have yet to have the annual fire extinguisher inspections at HQ and TYT. The company concerned based in Preston seem unable to communicate in advance of their operatives trying to arrive unannounced. We await a positive date for both sites to be inspected on the same day.

At HQ the catering (tea break) arrangements changed recently and each active Section on a Wednesday now take it in turn to put the kettle on and supply the biscuits. We are congregating in the Main Hall for the mid-evening interval for a natter etc and taking the opportunity to view an interesting DVD/Video supplied by our 'hosts' for the week. We welcome more to come along.

Tytenhanger Open Sundays and special visits by local groups of Scouts etc. have been very successful, if a little damp at times for some of them!

Make the most of our facilities, they are for you all to use.

I am reminded that next year is the 80th anniversary of the creation of our Society, so we should be planning something special to commemorate this special occasion. Thinking hats on and suggestions please.

Keep safe and keep engineering.

Mike Foreman Hon Treasurer

Keech Hospice visit – 8th July

By Keith

The Keech family's day is for all the family of a child being supported by the hospice. Several members of staff from the hospice attend to supervise the event with us. The idea being to open the site for each family to bring a picnic if they wished to and spend the day enjoying what our site has to offer. It was set up so that they could drive a train around the Garden Railway layout and have as many rides around the RT or GLR as they wished. We had expected about 20 – 24 families to attend.

I must start by saying a big thank you to those who helped on the day. Despite heavy rain which started and stopped to coincide almost exactly with the event we kept on smiling through.

One train set off on the GL and got halfway round as the rain set in. They stopped in the tunnel to take shelter from the rain which it was hoped would ease off soon. It didn't and just as we were about to send out a search party they gave up and returned very wet but in good spirits. The RT had also come to a stop. Cheryl spent a lonely hour or so in the RT tunnel keeping dry.



The rain didn't stop but in a short period when it eased off a little Richard took a few passengers for a ride behind his very impressive American outline loco.

The event was planned to run from 11am to 3pm but with no prospect of the weather improving at 12.30 after discussions with Jenny from Keech we decided

to phone round and tell everyone who had not already set off not to come. Despite all this the 5 families who did arrive enjoyed their visit.



Brian takes our visitors from Keech back to the car park during a short period when the rain eased off.

At 3pm just as we had finished packing away out came the sun.

A perfect British summers day!!

We do plan to reschedule the event hopefully in September and we're currently in discussion with Keech to find a mutually convenient date.



Gauge 1 group

By Geoff

It seems High Summer is here; we have had a good number of Gauge 1'ers at our Wednesday meetings and enjoyed some lovely warm days.

I was lucky enough to have a visit to Hartlepool to see the Tall Ships this month. A very interesting to see some 32 fine ships. Some schooner rigged and others a barque. I could have done with Roy Verden to show some of the finer points.

Whilst in the area a visit was made to Beamish for the day, they have just opened the new section of the 1950's township which included a pair of community police houses complete with the local office. And a pair of council houses. It worrying that these exhibits are from my life time!

Of course, when at Beamish you have to enjoy some of the engineering aspects. On the day of my visit their loco Puffing Billy was in steam. This was a first for me, however it was not offering rides due to only one of the two brake systems was working. Later in the day this was rectified and normal service was resumed. (*Photo on front page Ed*)

Anyway, I was able to have an interesting few minutes talking to the crew about some of Puffing Billy's finer points. Most interesting was the fact that the original loco was 5ft gauge and the replica was built as standard gauge. As is always the case with locos from this period I always ask how the valve gear works. In this instance the eccentric, whilst providing drive of about 2 feet to the valve, only the very last part of the stroke moved the slide valve to close the port and opening the other port. I must do some more research into these early valve systems.

This month, 16th August, we are looking forward to the annual visit from East Anglia G1 Group to enjoy the facilities at Tyttenhanger. These visits from our friends are always interesting as they bring locos and rolling stock new to us. It would be good to see other NLSME members during the day.

Bookworm Writes – Summer Book Review

Despite the changeable weather it's that time of year again when the deck chairs should be out, the cold drinks placed on the table and the summer book needs to be selected. My owner was still making his mind up the other day as to which book was going to accompany him to his own deckchair under the shade of the big tree, when Mrs Owner came up trumps again by giving him a belated birthday present. With that his problem was solved...

Thunderbolt's Last Run – By Thomas F Young

Imagine for a moment, you have just finished watching your favourite film "The Titfield Thunderbolt" and are putting the DVD back into its case. As you sit down a warm glow lingers inside you at having just been to a lovely place and where you met some smashing people, and with those thoughts still fresh in your mind you drift effortlessly off towards a nap; settling you shut your eyes....

...'The Grass hopper' pub is thronging to the sound of excited chatter coming from its bars, the BBC has now got the cowboy film going once more on the b/w television set on the corner of the bar and at last the erstwhile characters of the film have found out who it was "*toting guns on the choo choo*". Leaving 'The Grass hopper' in the late twilight of the evening, you see the last of the smoke drifting away from the top of the chimney on Harry Hawkins steam roller as its fire finally goes dull; of the unhurried high street with its church in the centre and from where only faint candle-light can be seen coming through its stained-glass windows.... and past Mr Valentines Garden, once more, deep with the scent of roses....

You stir in your chair, only to drift back once more to find a bright new colourful day just starting in your dream.... Not quite believing this new reality even in your dream, you next find yourself sitting on the grass in the sunlit valley overlooking 'Beal's' farm and towards the water tower on the Titfield to Mallingford branch line. The railways handyman Seth is seen nearby carrying his tool bag over his shoulder, just then the train starts to appear.... you see once again the Reverend Weech at the regulator of 'Thunderbolt', Dan is also on the footplateand as it passes you catch a glimpse of Joan the barmaid from the 'Grasshopper' behind the bar in what was once Dan's home, and Mr. Valentine is taking a sip of his favourite tippie. With the train now past, you just manage to catch sight of the Squire on the platform of the 'Toad' brake van rolling his red and green flags in readiness for the next station.... something stirs in the long grass just ahead of Thunderbolt and Dan sensing he is about to miss an opportunity to acquire something off the ration, reaches for his 12-bore losing off both barrels in the direction of the disturbance as they pass..... just another day on the Titfield Mallingford branch line.....

This then is the world and characters created by T.E.B. Clarke that Thomas F Young returns us to after seventy years. You may not believe in magic loyal reader, but in this book Thomas with a wave of his pen has performed great magic, for in this new story he has lovingly, not re-created, but carried you back making you believe all the while that you never left the world of the 1953 film. Effortlessly he continues the story as the villagers are celebrating the saving of their railway after the threat of closure has been lifted.

Having done so much to keep it from closing they are now coming to realise that the saving was only the beginning and that the 'Light Railway Order' they were granted stipulates the need to maintain a regular reliable service; but will 'Thunderbolt' be up to deliver it, day after day? Dan, made homeless at the end of the film now needs a home, but was it perhaps wise to even consider putting him up at the 'Grasshopper' and what of Harry Hawkins (Sid James character), will he continue doing the right thing for the railway? With those less charitable citizens that in the past had threatened the railways existence now at 'Her Majesties Pleasure', will that be the end of their influence and might the cavalry still be needed to finally come over the hill to save the choo choo?

Bookworm Verdict

What makes this book so pleasurable aside from being amongst old friends once more, lies in Mr Young's ability to create such a continuity of story even after having introduced a couple of new characters. The reverence given to the original players by not having them behave in some way that you know would be out of character for them, is noteworthy. For surely in truth, we all want more of the same from a sequel, not to alienate its old audience for the sake of a (hypothetical) new one. Our Thomas knows his target audience and plays to them unashamedly. For your own guide, a lot of the enjoyment of this book lies as much in what is not written, as much as it does about what is. Your reviewer is of the opinion Mr Young could well have fallen into the trap of fluffing out the description of each and every setting in order to paint a period picture for the modern audience, you know the sort of thing; *'The reflected light that bounced off the bright metallic surface of the white and black enamel sign advertising 'Brylcreem' was in stark contrast to the dark brown tones of the scruffy wooden crates of 'Whites' lemonade, stacked and ready to be delivered to the village post office as Mr valentine...'* But no, Thomas knowing his audience has just let the characters get on with giving us the story in front of the same props as last time unencumbered by additional verbiage.

That said, and by way of that all-important balance, your (faithful) reviewer is the opinion that without that descriptive text the new comer to this story unless they have seen the film, may possibly be at a disadvantage to know the characters – though usefully there is a list of cast members at the front of the book - having not previously met them or the Technicolor world in which they

live. The perfect solution (in your faithful reviewer's opinion) would be for the original film story to be transcribed into a companion volume for those that prefer to see the whole story in their imagination rather than on the screen.

No lover of the film could afford not to read this book and no reader of this book could afford not to see the film. You really couldn't have a better book to enjoy on the sun-lounger or in the deckchair this summer. Should you by some unlucky chance be feeling less than on top form when you pick this book up, then I am sure by time you put it down it will have proved to be the very tonic you needed to put a happy smile back on your face.

I confidently predict that like your reviewer, it will leave you with that same warm feeling that you felt after basking in the films Technicolor sunshine and meeting those wonderful characters for the first time.

I thoroughly recommend it to you - Titfield Forever!

Thunderbolt's Last Run – Thomas F Young
Published by Thunderbolt Books - ISBN 9781912038275

Lathe for sale

I'm looking to sell it for around £400 including extra equipment & the metal table it sits on. This is negotiable.

It is a Prazimat DLZ 180 x 450. For more information or to arrange an inspection contact Huw



Slot car section rally

This section doesn't feature very often in the pages of the News Sheet. They meet regularly at HQ and in early July held a big event.



Various races were run over the weekend. One of the events was the two hour 1:24 production enduro with the winning team of Barry & Aston finishing with a margin of less than one lap!! Amongst all the other races the Genesis 1:32 race was also run. It was a fund-raising event and raised £400 in aid of the Prostate Cancer Charity.

Editor's note; They are a shy lot and the text and pictures in this article have been taken from the "Slot Cars North London" Facebook page. It's worth a look.

I know they would welcome anyone who would like to drop in and see what they are all about.

It's a fascinating hobby and miles away from the stuff we used to race with around our homes. The

speed at which these cars travel is truly amazing. I hope the pictures that follow give you some idea of what this section of the NLSME is all about.





It was a great day racing with friends and kindred spirits. Thanks to Steve and Bob and, importantly, Kate for the catering provision. Without which oldish guys would have been grumpier than usual! But we weren't and that's the main thing.



Coal, Steam Oils and Lubricating Oil for Sale

Coal: Anthracite Beans in 25kg bags

The size most used by our locos. £14.50 a bag.

Anthracite Grains in 20kg bags

Suitable for 3 1/2" gauge and small fire-hole doors. £13.00 a bag.

This coal is for private use, the Society supplies coal for locos that are used for passenger hauling on public Sundays.

Contact the Treasurer – Mike

Free to a good home

I have 4 sets of engineering drawings for;

City of Truro, 3 1/2" Gauge

King John, 5" Gauge

Rainhill, 5" Gauge

Metro 2-4-0 Tank,

I also have drawings for a Stuart Turner 2-cylinder Launch engine.

If wanted please collect they're free!

Contact Keith

OO Section Lytton Station Re-modelling Project

By Geoff & Dudley

Hands up all those of you who did not read our report in the May 2023 issue of the News Sheet – shame on you!



As promised, I am today (13/07/2023) submitting a new report to give you all an update on the redevelopment of Lytton Station, which forms part of the main club OO layout at HQ.

Following completion of the site clearance, work to relay the running lines and point work commenced without any undue delay. This involved laying approximately 9 yards of new track, 3 new sets of points and re-setting 2 existing points. Electrical connections were made to provide power and tested initially with a class 25 diesel loco with suitable trains. All appeared to work OK, but the real test was to come the following week when the track was run using a number of kit-built locos and coaches. Much to our surprise and joy, everything worked OK. However, it did become apparent that on the Down main line, on the other side of the room, the track had again buckled and caused a further derailment. The fault location has been marked for repairs to be undertaken once the bulk of Lytton station work has been undertaken and some normality has been returned to our room (in other words, as & when I can get easy access to that area of the layout!)

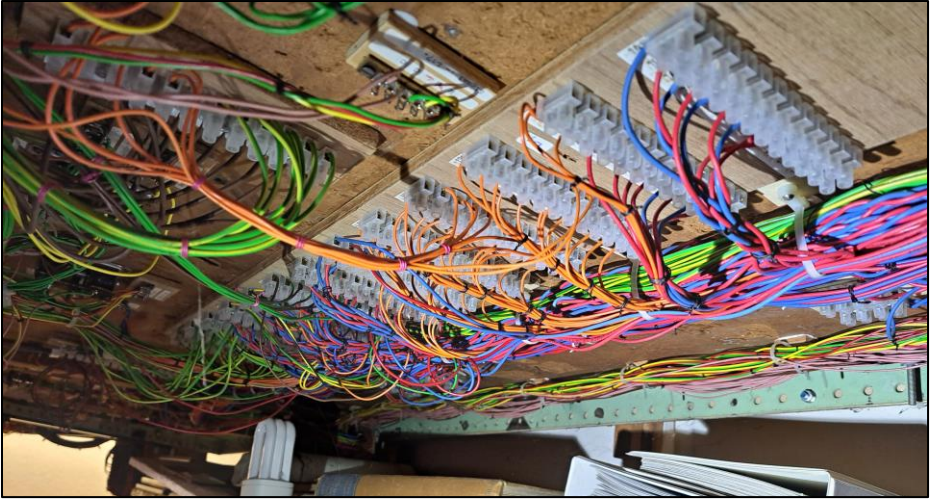
With track testing completed, ballasting of the track has been undertaken and the foundations for the new platforms installed. Jonathan has undertaken a mammoth task of constructing a new retaining wall to go behind the station; this being built in sections at home. In addition, new buildings have been completed for the platforms, footbridge and street level ticket office, these being made by myself, likewise at home. Note - when looking at the photos of these buildings,

please ignore the respective supports, as these were only used to enable us to get a perspective of what the station will be like when completed.



With this work being undertaken above baseboard level, our resident electrician has been beavering away underneath, re-organising the complex spiders web of wires. With the removal of numerous track sidings, this has resulted in the withdrawal of 12-point motors, 13 track feed and 6 colour light signals. In addition, the re-aligned and new points have had replacement point motors

installed and wired. Our thanks to Dudley for this arduous task undertaken in some cramped conditions.



As can be seen in this photo the alterations to reduce the tracks and points on the Lytton Station baseboard the below decks complex wiring looms have required extensive modification. Completion of the electrical work is now on hold, pending completion of the above baseboard works, as new signals need to be installed and wired.

Work is now to start on the actual platforms and, when done, the platform buildings and footbridge can be correctly located and the road way to support the street level ticket office erected at the right height. Plans for the replacement road bridge have been completed and this is now under construction at home. This will be made so that it can be removed for future track maintenance work if required.

Readers may recall or be aware that the OO room has suffered from a leaking roof with rain water dripping onto part of the layout. Roof repairs have now been completed and, following several recent downpours of heavy rainfall, all now appears to be watertight. The leak did unfortunately cause some minor damage to the baseboard, resulting in the timbers swelling right under a number of points in the marshalling yard. In conjunction with the work being done on Lytton Station, work is also being undertaken to repair this damage.

G.L.R. News.

By Peter

Tyttenhanger Light Railway News.

What a busy time the Tyttenhanger crew have had during July, under sixteen drivers' day, two public running days, Beavers visit, Keech day, and a visit from the local Cubs group.

The Tyttenhanger crew managed to supply drivers and guards to all these events and on the second public running day in July braved the rain when triple heading was required as wheel slip became a small problem!!! Sterling work crew and thanks on behalf of the club.

I only attended one event (Keech) and fired up Maid Marion early just before the rain set in! Unfortunately, I managed to set the fire in the ash pan having forgot to put the fire bars in (I think I have arrived) this did not seem to make any difference to the fire or performance of MM other than an embarrassing moment explaining to my apprentice Billy who must have forgotten too.



Late in the day a few of our Keech visitors managed a ride behind MM when the rain stopped.

Despite the weather we all had a good day and because of the inclement weather we have arranged another date to do it all again sometime in September. Sincere thanks to all who helped this is what it is all about.

The Tyttenhanger Railway has been attracting new interest of late and standards slipped a little last time public running, so a timely reminder to all newcomers' drivers, guards, and club members that HI-Vis vests must be worn trackside around the G.L. on public running days. The aspirations of the G.L. crew have and always are to provide the safest of rides possible. With no signals operational at this time the upmost care must be taken, with this in mind I will be asking Council to consider the use of radios being made mandatory for all GL train crews on public running days.

Alban is now approximately fifteen years old and has done sterling work throughout its life (passenger pulling, and early days worked construction trains during the building of the GL new land). The engine now has a number of significant issues. The repairs required are currently being assessed. Until such time as this engine is repaired in is out of use and must not be used.

As ever in the muck Pete.

Hydraulic & Steam tests

Some 40 plus years of construction has finally led to the first hydraulic and steam test for a very happy club member Roger. The locomotive didn't quite get all the paperwork but a short list of minor things to do will soon allow this lovely engine to get the necessary certificates.

Well done Roger for reaching this milestone.

We all are looking forward to seeing it to run at Colney Heath in the very near future.



We don't know what we need to know

By Dennis Holmes – Worthing & District SME

Editor's note; With permission from the author and Worthing & District SME

I have just finished watching Tipping Point on the television and it has inspired me to put a few words down about how different people and different generations view the world into which they have been delivered.

Tipping point, if you haven't seen it, is a simple game where, when questions of different complexity are given, if answered correctly, the contestant can put a disc into the top of the machine with the aim of pushing £50 discs out at the bottom level.



This is the same as the moving penny arcade game as I am sure most of you played at the seaside in your younger years.

On this particular occasion, there was a young person, (gender doesn't matter), probably in their early twenties and the question went thus. "Give the name of a British wartime leader whose initials were W.C." The first one of the four contestants to press the button has the opportunity to answer the question. This young individual (I might say they looked bright, sounded intelligent, sensible and nicely dressed), gave the answer William Churchill. So, 50% right, but still entirely the wrong answer.

I know this is a long introduction to my thoughts but it does sum up some of the experiences I had as a secondary school teacher of Design Technology, just before I retired.

As older folk, it is extraordinarily easy for us to forget that knowledge, information, technique, skills and other attributes of life are not automatically bred into the new young person, the next generation, but have to be taught carefully and with sensitivity so that the student, on acquisition of this knowledge, has a broader, but more importantly, a useful perspective of the knowledge acquired.

With the removal of skills from the National Curriculum, note, I didn't say any particular subject, students are now primarily concerned with factual knowledge. This will allow a student to achieve their G3CSE and everyone will be happy. The student has the qualification and the school ticks the box marked success.

A major problem is, if the smallest bit in that chain of knowledge style of teaching is missing, the greater mastery of the subject appears very fragile and indeed very odd to witness. This brings me to examples I have personally experienced.

Now, before I start, I must explain that all the individuals that were involved here were nice folk, of different ages, trying to do the best job they could. No messing about was involved and were thinking and being engaged and constructive.

The first occasion I wish to recall for you is the time when I had three sixteen olds who had asked me, at lunch time, to show them a little woodwork, and perhaps I could show them how to cut a small joint. This used to be a normal classroom activity at one time but now is in the past. In this school the tools were still all there so I said "see you at lunchtime" and we met after morning lessons

I began by showing them all the tools involved, explained everything to be done, then in front of them cut and chiselled out a simple halving joint. The three students were on a table to my right. I had some pre-cut wood, so, two pieces each, "go on, take your time and see how you get on!" After a short time, I looked up and was pleased to see that one student was very carefully lining up their Tennon Saw in preparation to cut on a correctly marked out piece of wood.



Then, with the two others watching on and a concentrated look on his face he lifted the Tennon Saw directly above his head and with as much force as he could muster brought the saw down three or four times onto the piece of wood in a chopping action before I could get my senses together to scream across the room "What do you think yer doing". They stopped immediately. I had six wideopen eyes and three open mouths. It was in that split second that I realised that they were not mucking about. I felt the need to apologise for shouting and they were all right about it, however, it soon become apparent that they simply didn't know what a saw was! Amazing, but true, in the sixteen years each that these students were alive, not one of them had any knowledge of the operation of a saw. The only "Tool" operation, method or technique known for this sort of tool, they thought, was a chopping motion. At the end, I held up a Tennon Saw directly in front of their eyes showing the



little hooky teeth which when pushed forward with a pushy forward motion, cuts the wood. They didn't know this, had never used a junior hack saw, had never come across this sort of thing – ever. It's not their fault!

If we don't as a nation teach skills in schools or in their own families, how on earth can we expect young people to learn? However, this really is only the tip of the iceberg. It is not only the young that are susceptible to this lack of a fuller knowledge.

A friend asked me to do repairs on their house and amongst other items to sort out was the simple task of putting a hook on the back of a bedroom door, which my friend apparently was unable to do. On enquiry as to what the problem was, it became apparent that my friend had been trying to use an electric drill that their brother had kindly given to them as a birthday present on moving into this nice new house.

This was the tool of choice, present from brother, will solve all problems, nice and expensive; will do the business – no problem. This was the thinking involved. I will now explain exactly what was happening.

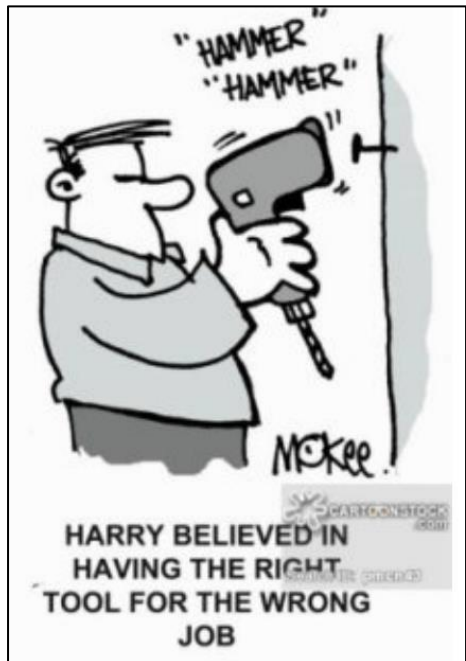
Job, - fix hook, - tool, - ah! New electric drill - Push button on drill - Drill works, Vrummm, nice wizzy sound -

Touch drill chuck when whizzing on hook when in contact with door - Hook falls on floor.

This story is a serious observation of how, when the basic ABC of a practical life in the modern world is not taught. The student of life can only run with knowledge acquired up to that point

This has nothing whatsoever to do with intelligence but to do with fundamental knowledge omitted by schools from the portfolio of life skills. The other angle to all this, which is interesting to think about, is that the brother hadn't supplied any drill bits. This was the thinking. The electric drill is the best tool, the electric drill will do the job, I will buy the posh one, my family deserve the best, they will like this for their nice new house.

All are excellent sentiments we can all agree but these are based on the modern concept that the tool/equipment will resolve the problem. It is not expected any



concession is given to the skills of a person behind the tool having to contribute to the successful conclusion of the project.

Whilst students are required simply to acquire knowledge in a vertical form and to acquire more and more information to obtain higher and higher qualifications, we will have people with holes in their knowledge that will be increasingly a problem the older they get or more senior they become in later life.



I have taught students of thirteen years of age who didn't know what a pair of scissors were and as a department we were all instructed to wear goggles to use them. Sixteen-year-olds that absolutely had no idea or even concept of what a screwdriver was. I have stopped students of fourteen years of age using ring spanners and marking gauges as hammers, and witnessed a whole school department that had every single chisel intentionally blunted/rounded off by order of senior management as it was considered dangerous to have all these sharp dangerous things in a school.

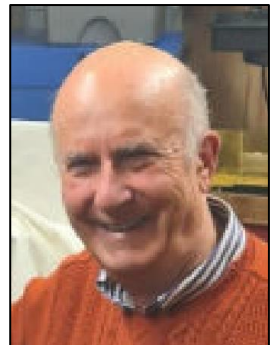
The final example I will recall for you is when I was briefly out of the room for a moment at the start of a lesson and on returning the noise was amazing and I choked in horror as to what was to be seen. One of the teaching assistants had "started the lesson". None of the current work had been retrieved from their boxes and "starting work" had entailed every student just grabbing any tool in sight and bashing it as hard as they could on a work bench.

Now just think about this, all these students were NOT mucking about. After talking to them I discovered that they thought making things needed tools and workshops and so that creating noise and hitting stuff was what was required. As they were young and had no experience of either, they genuinely thought they were doing a grand job. The worst thing about all this was that the teaching assistant naturally thought the same!!!!

This does show how long this malaise has been in the system. While we go down the route of total reliance on the machine/tool to do the task, the interface of input from the individual on the outcome diminishes. Skill, if only the knowledge that skill is required at a point when a tool should be used is always going to be a vital ingredient to modern life. The absence of this leads to partial knowledge and incomplete function.

Well, I'm just glad that William Churchill won the Second World War for us.

Dennis Holmes Worthing & District SME



My model boat collection – Part 10

By Roy

Just before I joined the society, I used to bring my granddaughter to the public running days and she loved the freedom to run around, riding the trains and we even played with my model boats. She got to drive several of my boats as she quickly became adept with the radio control. She is over 21 now so those days are long gone.

I asked her if she would like her own sailing boat which she said she would, well it was nearly finished and you can't promise a 6-year-old something too far in the future can you? I had decided in part to copy a published plan. I changed the sail plan to suit the vane steering. I had to fabricate a keel, the original plan suggested an aluminium one, but I had other ideas. I repurposed a Boxwood ruler of the 3-foot kind, which you may remember, was very stiff. I cut two lengths and glued them edge to edge and sanded to an aerofoil section with a made-up lead weight. Very effective and cheap.



Many years ago, well 60 actually, I had made my version of a vane steering which was just a small gear and a large one, an elastic band and a balsa vane. As it worked quite well, I made another one, but smaller. The sails want to head up into wind but the vane when set fore and aft will not let it happen, and when beating to windward she goes a treat. Of course, this sort of boat might not suit too many members as there is a lot of running around the pond involved!

A small fishing boat.

Going back to my late teens there was the Anglian Trawler. She is a Hobbys kit all balsa with that wonder of wonders the Mighty Midget Motor driving her. The kit was complete right down to the cast pieces of lead with each piece sized to fit in one particular space. Now I made a model of her in 1957 and she, as an example of the time, looked good. But over the years the model vanished, I

had just gone to work for the Queen, I came back after 4 years and I do not remember what happened to her. Anyway 20+ years ago we were offered some model boats and the Anglian Trawler was included. But not being RC, she was unwanted by anybody, it was a nicely made model in its own little box.

She stayed in the box for a few years until I told our granddaughter about the little fishing boat. And her being about 6 or 7 then requested it in pink and mauve! My model boat brain started to cry a little, but I compromised with a bit of mauve and a refit. The motor drive band was a difficult size but by chance I found they were used to hold bunches of spring onions together. I very soon got banned from eating spring onions at home, so I enlisted our next-door neighbour who would save them for me. If you keep elastic bands in an airtight and lightproof container they last for years.

She runs on a Nicad battery, I bought several at a St. Albans club auction as they were old movie camera batteries 6 volts 1.2Ah, they were old, even then. However, the inside dimensions of the trawler were an exact fit, so I soldered up a couple of them to Tamiya connectors. You can see the insides all laid out.



The batteries still take a charge, even now, and run the little fishing boat for hours. Years ago, mighty midgets used to be in use in servo systems before we all went over to proportional systems.

I thought about upgrading the little fishing trawler to radio control but it was not easy without damaging the superstructure so I left her in her original state. This was generally approved of by Susie as she is just checking her over for originality.

Over the years I have accumulated a lot of electric motors. Most were originally sold for model boat installation and I started collecting them about 40+ years back. I have 7 old style biscuit tins full of motors which I raid regularly to find a motor to breathe a bit of life into an old model boat.



I was recently given an old Meccano electric motor an E120 with original paperwork, but no box. I traced it to 1940 and after a couple of clean ups, it suddenly burst into life, so I am always a happy home for unwanted electric motors.

A good run

Richard seemed very happy with his Jinty on a test run following a successful steam test in July.



Horizontal Mill for Sale / donation to NLSME funds

This horizontal mill and also the drawer full of cutting tools is for sale or by donation to NLSME funds. Some tools are still in protective wrapping. The tools and arbours etc are probably worth a good deal more than the mill. I have no idea of the makers name, there is a knotted loop rope logo cast into the column. The machine is belt driven by a single-phase electric motor - it seems to have three cutting speeds. the cross-feed table works well

I am happy to pass the mill and tooling on to any member who will remove it from my workshop here in Elstree.



It came in, many years back, on a porter's sack barrow, and will need two bodies to handle it and lift it on to a tailboard or into a large estate car.

It would be nice to think that the "lucky" new owner would want to make some sort of reasonable donation to Club Funds.

Members are welcome to contact Graham to arrange to view.

TRACK STEWARDS ROTA 2023

6 August 2023

Owen – Senior Steward

1. Paul
2. Roy
3. Paul
4. Roy
5. David
6. Robin
7. Alan
8. Mark
9. James
- 10.

Ground Level Despatcher
Steve

3 September 2023

Martin – Senior Steward

1. Roger
2. Brian
3. David
4. John
5. Steven
6. Grahame
7. Gordon
8. Malcolm
9. John
10. Michael

Ground Level Despatcher
Steve

20 August 2023

Michael – Senior Steward

1. Roy
2. Alan
3. Waz
4. Graham
5. Mike
6. Peter
7. Jack
8. Dave
9. Nigel
- 10.

Ground Level Despatcher
Steve Coffill

17 September 2023

Les – Senior Steward

1. John
2. Gerald
3. Bill
4. Daniel
5. John
6. James
7. Robbie
8. Daniel
9. Rob
10. Dudley

Ground Level Despatcher
Steve

The full rota for all public running days until October was published in the April edition page 36

Club Dates for your 2023 Diary

Every Thursday; A mix of RT & GLR Loco running when track is available, working groups, and general conversation	
Every Saturday Ground Level Rly at Colney Heath	
Every Sunday; A mix of RT Loco running when track is available, working groups, and general conversation	
August	
Tue 1 st Aug	Council Meeting at Colney Heath 13.00
Sat 5 th Aug	Brean group visit – Sponsor George
Sun 6 th Aug	Public Running 2pm – 5pm
Sat 12 th Aug	Gravesend club visit – Sponsor Nigel
Wed 16 th Aug	East Anglia G1 Group visit – Sponsor Geoff
Sun 20 th Aug	Public Running 2pm – 5pm
Sat 26 th Aug	Fareham, Chelmsford and Chingford visit Sponsors Les & Mike
September	
Sun 3 rd Sept	Public Running 2pm – 5pm
Tue 5 th Sept	Council Meeting
Wed 6 th Sept	Swiss Gauge 1 visit (Wednesday)
Sat 9 th Sept	3 ½ inch gauge running day
Sun 10 th Sept	Toy boat regatta – Sponsor George
Sun 10 th Sept	St Marks Church visit – Sponsor Les
Sun 17 th Sept	Public Running 2pm – 5pm
Sat 23 rd Sept	Keech Hospice visit 1pm to 5pm – Keith (Date & times yet to be confirmed)
Advance notice of other events in 2023	
If you know of an event not listed above, contact the Secretary to ensure it is added to the club calendar and also tell the news sheet editor	

A Non-council member, representing a section or committee, can, on request to the Secretary, attend council meetings as an observer or to submit proposals as set out in the club's constitution. If attendance is agreed the secretary will advise the member concerned.

Please notify our secretary of all meetings and other Society events for inclusion in the Society Calendar. Approval for special events still rests with Council