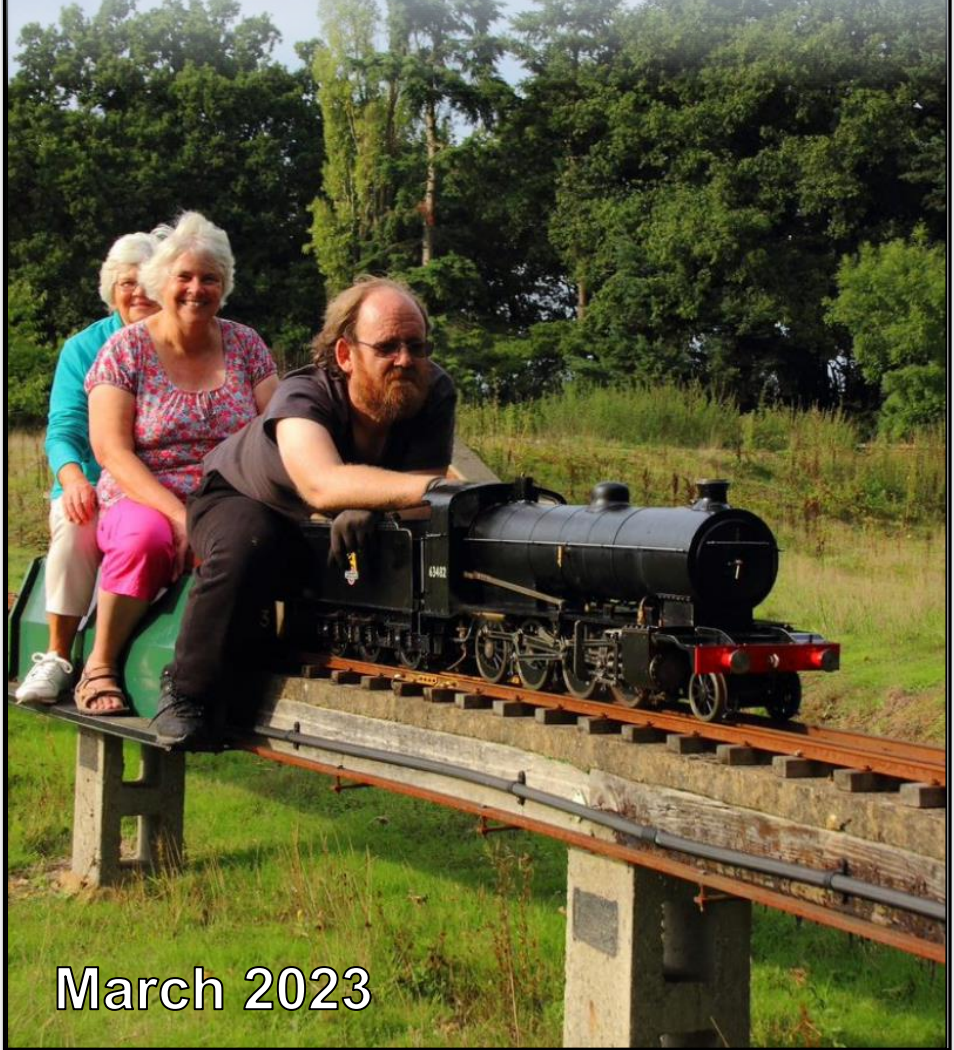


Issue No. 853

March 2023

The News Sheet

North London Society of Model Engineers



March 2023

You can see this News Sheet in
colour by visiting our web site at www.nlsme.co.uk

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Front cover photo; -

This month we have the final part of what has become known as the Lazarus project which took a non-working green engine through an extensive rebuild to the great locomotive it is today. This picture shows Jonathan enjoying the fruits of his labours on a sunny day last summer soon after the work had been completed. By the way that is his happy face, honest.



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.

A Letter to the editor on a subject of interest or commentry on what you may have read in this news sheet is always welcome.

Chairman's Comments

Les

Earlier this month representative of London Borough of Barnet asked if we intend to renew the lease on HQ. The answer was of course, yes. There will now be a visit by LBB to HQ, no doubt to inspect the premises leading to a discussion of the renewal terms. Naturally we will be pointing out the derelict state of the building when we took it over. Mike and I will meet with them once they advise a date and will keep you informed. Meanwhile at HQ the slot car section held a successful race weekend raising another £225 for club funds.



Over the next few weeks, the raised track will be out of use for replacement of the main support timbers, old railway sleepers, in one or two locations identified by annual inspection of the entire track. Knowing the energy put into this by the small team that do the work the track will be back in use within a couple of weeks, weather permitting of course. Winter work parties continue at Tyttenhanger throughout March. If anyone is not sure what to do, they can consult the list displayed in the coach, and can always assist Nigel and his team clearing leaves and generally looking after the grounds.

This year the day that would, by recent tradition, be our first for public running, coincides with the Coronation of our new King. Accordingly, Council have decided to make that Sunday, 7th May, another members and families only day. Rather like last year but without sandwiches! Hope as many of you as possible come along, anytime from 2pm, and feel free to bring own picnics etc. Tea and coffee will be available from the coach.

HS2020 requires a designated person be responsible for operations on public running days, in our cub this is the Senior Steward. (For event days the designated person is the event Sponsor). I am pleased to announce that we have two new recruits to the Senior Steward Rota, step forward Michael, and Derek. Both will be given the training and necessary familiarisation of the role during this year but in meantime I thank them on behalf of us all. Thanks also to Paul and Mike, both previous Senior Stewards who have stood down. Since we cannot open for the designated public running days without Senior Stewards, I trust Michael and Derek will have the support of all members.

I can advise we now have a NLSME What's App group. It has been on trial for a few weeks and looks to be a very useful and informative addition to club communications. John has kindly agreed to be administrator so contact John, details on back page, with your mobile number and join in. One request, keep posts to club and modelling matters. It is tempting to forward jokes etc. but

inevitably they don't amuse everyone, clog up the postings and discredit the whole purpose of having a What's App group related to club activities.

Finally, we have lots to look forward to at Tyttenhanger and HQ in 2023. I look forward to seeing you all at one or both.

Ron

By Mike

Sadly, I was advised by Ron's wife that he had passed away on Saturday 18th February after a short illness. Ron joined the Society on the 18th July 1978 and was an active member, frequently visiting Tyttenhanger with his family.

He acted as Society Treasurer from 1985 to 1988. Jim and myself enjoyed our visits to his house in Enfield during our annual audit of the Society books.

He was an active modeller in his beautiful well-appointed workshop adjoining their kitchen. A tap on the glass was all that was required to get his attention! He had built a steam engine, but he was very much into making brass clocks, which he would bring along to Work in Progress meetings and explain all the intricacies of them.



with George Case at HQ

Sadly, his mental faculties began to fail in recent years, resulting in him going into a care home in Edinburgh, near to his daughter Sandra. Shortly after, Rita followed north to live with Sandra and in 2021 various NLSME members took on the sad task of dismantling his workshop and arranging one of our special auctions to pass on the numerous machines and tools to other model engineers.

When talking to Rita, she again expressed her gratitude for the help we gave her at that difficult time and how much they had all enjoyed the years at Tyttenhanger. Our thoughts are with Rita and all Ron's family.

Rest in peace, Ron.

Treasurer's Report

By Mike

At our last Council meeting in February, a long discussion occurred regarding an increase in subscriptions. This resulted in a majority decision to increase the basic subscription rate by 10% for Full and Senior members, subject to members approval at the March General Meeting.



However, this decision would in all probability have failed as we could not be certain of the meeting having a quorum and therefore the increase could not be included in the subscription renewal forms due to be sent out with the April News Sheet.

To avoid this problem occurring again, an alternative proposal will be discussed at the March Council meeting, whereby any subscription increase, if adopted, would be based on the RPI index for December 2023 and presented at the February 2024 general meeting for approval, thereby giving us time to implement such an increase.

Financially, we can weather the storm of inflation, but it would be far better in future to amend the subscription rate at regular intervals rather than a five-year gap as last time. The only bug-bear to frequent changes is that those members paying their subs by Standing Order must ensure that they amend their payments each time there is a change. We still have three members still paying at the old 2017 rate, who I will be contacting.

Regarding the insurance claim for the break-in at Tyttenhanger, we are still awaiting a response from the Walker Midgley and Travellers Insurance. The latter company took over the Southern Fed Insurance scheme a few years ago from RSA and regrettably their attention to their client's needs is in my opinion somewhat lacking.

I am in the process of dealing with the policy renewal for the 1st April and I'm awaiting responses from a number of Section Leaders as to any changes required to their sums insured.

Narrow Gauge Garden Railway

By John

Spring greetings narrow gauge fans. With a winter timetable still being run on the narrow-gauge garden railway (i.e., not much running at all!) I thought this month I might have another of my occasional looks at a real narrow-gauge railway. And this one was the country's first railway to be preserved as a heritage railway, The Talylyn railway.



The railway is now a world heritage site, as part of the slate landscape of north west Wales, its history going back to the mid 1800's. The first major slate quarry above the town of Tywyn on the coast was at Bryn Eglwys and was opened in 1830, initially slate was brought to the coast for transhipment by pack horses to a river wharf then finally loaded

onto sea going vessels, a very tortuous and slow method. Ironically it was the American civil war of 1861 which saw a change and improvement in the slate quarry industry. Cotton mill owners in the North West saw their imports of cotton cut off so looked for a chance to diversify. One such mill owner William McConnell saw the opportunity and so leased the quarry in 1864 and immediately started to build a railway from the quarry to Tywyn where a standard gauge railway had now been built thus allowing easy forward shipment. James Spooner was the engineer and built the relatively straight 7-mile line to the unusual gauge of 2'3". The line was also designed to have a



passenger service as well as slate conveyance from the beginning and by 1866 the line was ready for its first official inspection. It was found there was insufficient clearance through bridges etc. to overcome this all-passenger coach doors were permanently closed on one side and the track slewed through the bridge thus giving adequate clearance, this clever dodge exists to this day.

The line was steam powered from its beginning by 2 locomotives Talylyn an 0-4-2 ST and Dolgoch an 0-4-0 WT and remarkably both are still running to this day, though triggers broom springs to mind!

The line proved to be very successful in its early days with a great slate demand and the passenger side of the railway soon became a popular tourist attraction, however by the late 1800's slate demand had slumped and it slid into decline. Finally with the lease



due to run out in 1910 the line was closed and the quarry equipment sold off. As the line and quarry were of local importance for employment and because of the distressed situation the locals found themselves in, the local MP Henry Haydn Jones bought the quarry and line for £5000 and reopened it. Although it survived it never made a profit through the rest of its working life. After the first world war it enjoyed a renaissance with increased slate demand and an increase in tourist journeys and so it continued for many years until 1950 when the now Sir Haydn Jones died and with him it was thought the line would die too. The quarry had closed in 1946 and the tourist trade had dried up. Incidentally the Talylyn was one of the few operational railways which were not included in the 1948 nationalisation plan, it seems it was just forgotten about!

During the summer of 1950 with the railway closing in the October Tom Rolt the well-known author and canal enthusiast had a letter published in a Birmingham newspaper laying out a plan to rescue the line and asking for any other interested parties to contact him. He received a positive response and a preservation society was formed, the world's first such venture. The following February the line was transferred to their ownership by Sir Haydn's executors and incredibly the line was reopened in May 1951, albeit a shortened journey and with a well-worn out Dolgoch as the only working loco. Fortunately, the nearby Corris railway had recently closed and so 2 more locos were purchased and renamed Sir Haydn and Edward Thomas, incidentally the Corris also used the unusual 2'3" gauge. and so over 70 years after its revival the line continues

to be a major tourist attraction. Its story inspired the much-loved Ealing comedy “the Titfield thunderbolt” and a BBC live outside broadcast in 1957 brought a massive increase in passenger numbers for many years, of course like most heritage railways it has seen its fair share of ups and downs. But over the years it has improved its facilities, increased and improved the rolling stock and has a wide variety of motive power and so continues to be one of the “Great Little Trains of Wales”

I hope you have enjoyed this very brief history of a fascinating little railway, and as ever I hope you continue to enjoy your hobby!

First Signs of Spring

The front page of the February edition showed a very snowy scene at Tyttenhanger. But all is now changing with the first signs of spring beginning to appear all around the site as can be seen in these pictures sent I by John. Thanks to the grounds maintenance



team for all the hard work over the year to keep the site always looking good. Next month we will feature some other aspects of the site maintenance activities.

Please come and join in on Thursday, Saturday or Sunday each week. As the saying goes “every little helps”

Gauge 1 news

Geoff

Nothing really to report this month but successful and enjoyable use of the Gauge 1 Facility at Colney Heath during February can be best described by the pictures below.



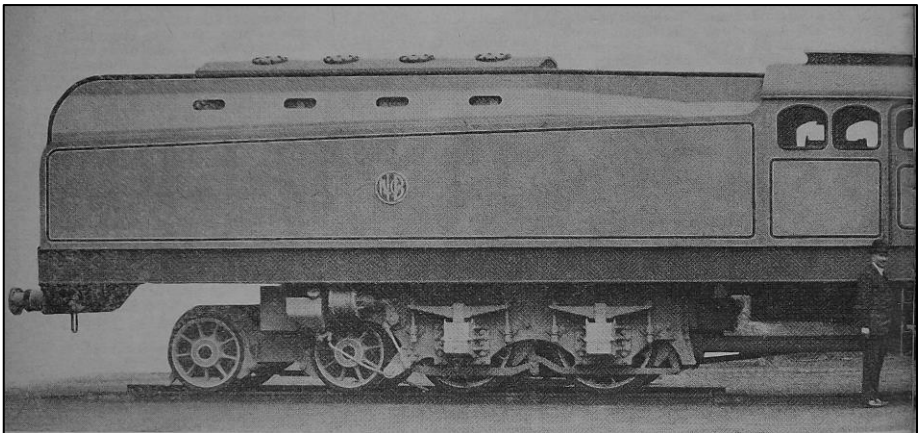
Bookworm Writes

“Don’t send it yet!” A voice called to me the other day just as I was about to send this month’s copy to our Worthy Editor. The voice came from one of our younger brainiest bookworms two shelves below. In no time at all a very excited trainee bookworm appeared and rushed up to me saying, *“I read your copy for last month about ‘Bulleids’ Leader’ engines. You were of course going to tell your readers this month that the idea of building a single unit steam engine, capable of being driven in either direction, had already been tried 24 years earlier, weren’t you”....* There’s one in every group and he’s in ours... The ones that aren’t so much asking you but telling you what you should do....

Having though listened to his tale, and as it is the responsibility of us older bookworms to encourage the youngsters, especially the ones that have opted to go down the ‘heritage’ route and have not just dashed off to become ‘digital bookworms’ (foolish in my opinion), I followed him back to his current location inside Volume 125 to investigate further. Now as much as it does rather stick in the throat for me to admit it, he did have something.....

Upon reflection then, I can see it was possibly unfair of me to present Mr. Bulleid last month as being a bit of a ‘one off’ in trying something so radically different in steam engine design...*“where was my balance?”* I asked myself. So to address this failing on my part I am going to make amends this month by giving full credit to our young (bright?) bookworm by presenting to you **His own** piece of research (if only to keep him quiet) - After all, I remember when I was but a youngster and the ‘wise ones’ then (and much more dusty in those days) gave me my first article to get my teeth into.....followed by the thrill of getting my own shelf, all to myself .. Anyway, the exciting thing about being a bookworm is that you are never quite sure from which direction your next meal will come.

The Reid –Macleod Geared Turbine Condensing Locomotive.

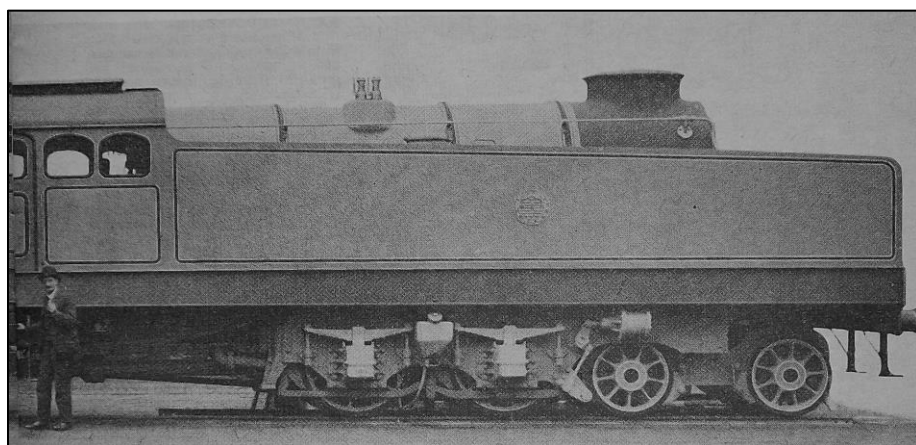


Had you been a train loving visitor to the British Empire Exhibition (I have relatives who went) at Wembley in 1924, then upon seeing this loco on display you could have been forgiven for thinking you had been transported to another time.

Under British patents 167803 & 178881 the North British Locomotive Co. Ltd attempted to provide the railways with a steam locomotive that they hoped would be more reliable and less complicated. They hoped to achieve this by using steam turbines to drive power bogies, which having less overall friction throughout the power train would require less fuel to run. By also using condensing apparatus to re-use the water from the exhaust steam they hoped to reduce water consumption and reduce heating time, making the overall unit more efficient.

More reliable then by using already established turbine technology, comprising of two self-contained units – one high pressure, one low pressure – these units formed power blocks – like a diesel engine assembly which presumably could be replaced like for like in the event of problems, reducing time off the road and improving availability. Less complicated as by using these units, and having no cylinders, it allowed the drive to be transmitted directly through sets of gears; and not through a multi-linked valve gear as was standard steam practice at the time.

It is not immediately apparent from our research whether the intention was to build an engine that was capable of being driven in either direction; however, the symmetrical layout of the tanks and bunkers does suggest so. Also, the cab on the N.B. engine was placed centrally, being described as roomy (4 windows and a door in length!). This refinement would at least have provided a high degree of protection from the elements and given space for the heat on the footplate to disperse – a serious defect on Bulleid's 'Leader'. All of that said, the



actual driving position was apparently fixed to look out along the length of the condenser unit, and as the unit itself had been designed to make use of the incoming flow of air as it progressed forward, does rather suggest it would have been less effective if it had trailed the direction of travel. Bulleid on the other hand had designed his 'Leader' to be capable of being driven in either direction without the need to turn the engine around, by providing a driving cab at each end.

Interestingly both the North British and Bulleids 'Leader' locos used oil bath lubrication for the drive system. But unlike Bulleid's loco it is not recorded how successful the oil seals were on the NB engine, a weakness that was to be the source of many problems for Bulleid later.

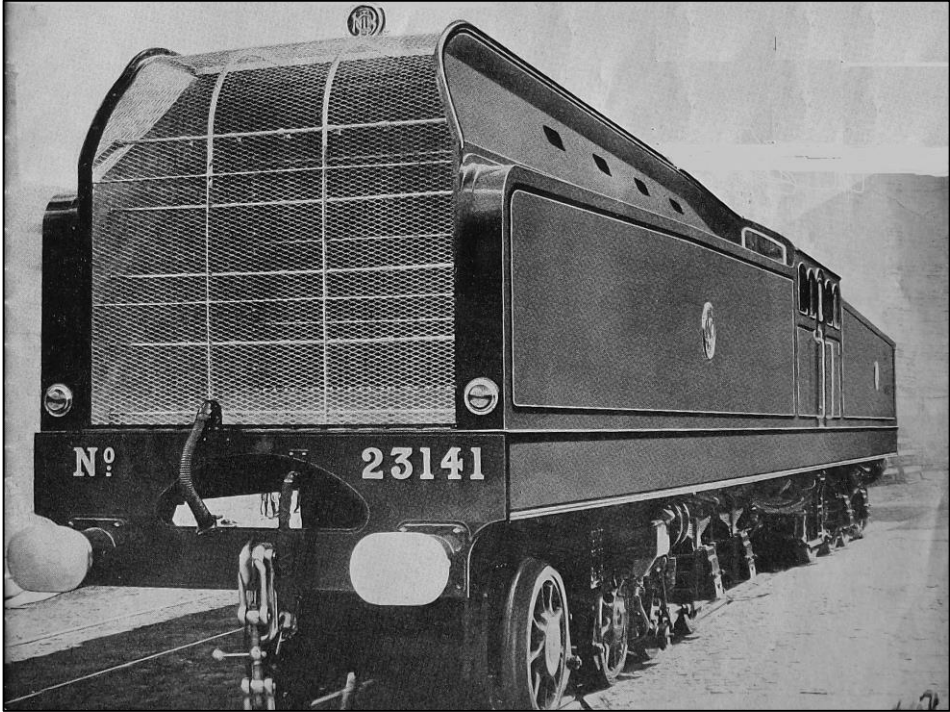
The fact that the North British Company via Sir Hugh Reid and James Macleod had filed for at least two patents connected with this specially designed loco, suggests they had faith in the system. But as modern history has little to say about steam turbine locomotives and this engine in particular, I think we have to assume that they all had some serious shortcomings that could not be resolved at that time.

The L.M.S resurrected the idea of using steam turbines once more in the 1930s with their 'Turbomotive' driven this time by Metropolitan Vickers units. This loco however was not a new design as was the case with the Reid –Macleod engine, as it used a modified Stanier "Princess Royal" class of conventional design – that is a tender at one end and a chimney at the other - but without cylinders or Walschaerts valve gear. This loco did fair better as it survived for nearly 15years on and off before finally being modified and converted to a conventional cylindered engine in the early 1950s. The use of steam turbines on British railways locomotives whilst seeming to be an obvious evolution of power doesn't seem to have been a success in practice.

The GWR spearheaded (?) the **next** generation of turbines (pre-nationalisation) with their experimental 'Gas Turbine' engine No. 18,000 (which actually didn't arrive until after nationalisation), but even this new approach doesn't appear to have worked out either. Metropolitan- Vickers had one last shot in the 1950s with their own engine but thereafter it all appears to have been dropped.

By the late 1950s gas turbine propulsion was no doubt becoming more of a proven technology for use on rail as other countries did take it up, at least in some part. For Britain though the decision not to continue was probably as much to do with economics and the circumstances prevailing at the time, and the wish not to lose sight of the long-term goal of wide-scale electrification across the country. But then that's a whole new chapter.....

Source: Reid – Macleod ME Dec 14 1961 p717 / Inspiration: The Wonder Book of Trains (bless him)



Photos: North British Locomotive Co.

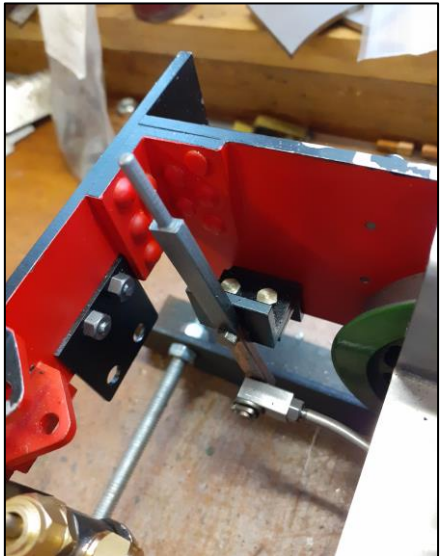
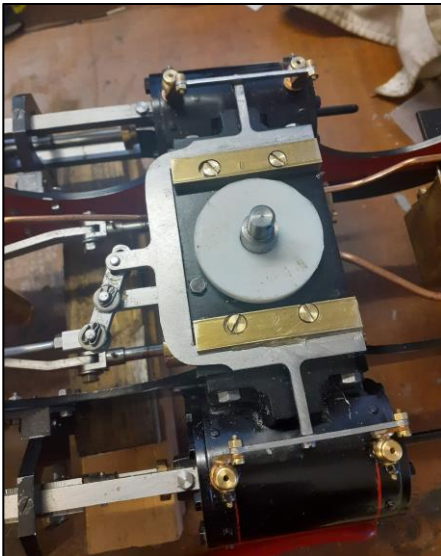
Drain Cock Operating Mechanism

By Martin

I needed a method of operating the drains cocks on the 3.5"-gauge Maisie I'm building, LBSC makes no mention of it in his "Words and Music" book which I've been using for the loco build.

A common method of operating the drain cocks is via a cross shaft over the top of the bogie bolster but space is limited here on Maisie as the cylinders are relatively large and the steam chests fill the area between the frames. A quick trawl of the internet gave me an idea, someone suggested a plate fitted between the bogie bolster on the frame and the leading bogie which could operate the drain cocks via a suitable linkage from the footplate. After a bit of careful measure of the loco I set about drawing up the plate and the connecting links for the drain cocks in CAD. When I was happy with these, I sent the CAD files for laser cutting.

My idea was to have two fixed brass strips attached to the underside of the bogie bolster with a groove milled on the outer faces to take the plate and allow it to slide back and forth to move connecting links for the drain cocks. This plate is connected to the operating lever on the footplate via a rod and slotted crank. After a bit of fettling, I got a nice smooth action of the mechanism, very satisfying. See picture of the underside of the loco brass strips, plate, operating mechanism and drain cocks. Also picture of lever at the footplate



February General Meeting - The LBSC Archive.

OMAH Mk 2.

It is difficult to know where to start with a summary of Geoff's excellent description and presentation of the LBSC Archive. Geoff told the attentive group that the LBSC Archive held by the society was large and contained many pencil plans of LBSC locomotives as well as a vast selection of his letters to publishers and other persons connected with the Model Engineering World.

Geoff started at the beginning; to which I hear you cry 'well why wouldn't you!'. Curly's birth certificate is the beginning. Born September 22 1883, LBSC is given the name of William Morris Benjamin which was quickly changed to William Morris Methieson due, Geoff suspects to an anti-Jewish attitude at the time. Later his name changed to Curly, Dolly; with Curly and LBSC sticking the longest. Far ahead in 1902 he changed his name yet again to Lillian Lawrence.

Name changing may seem strange to Club members today but the scribe remembers in times gone by that many patients changed or exchanged their first names. So that the name on the registration card was not that which the person was known by.

Curly enjoyed steam locomotives from an early age and constructed models from tinsplate (tin cans). He was largely self-taught and eventually became extremely proficient. Curly drove trams, underground trains and was an engine cleaner. He progressed to firing locomotives but the archive does not record him driving steam locomotives but did spend several years in the employment of the LBSC Railway. He adopted 'LBSC' as his pen-name for his publications.

In 1908 Curly married Sarah Munt to be known as Mabel Lawrence. You would think that getting married was a turning point in LBSC's life but his turning point was the *Battle of the Boilers* in 1922. Curly did not suffer fools gladly and definitely did not like criticism by fellow model engineers. His opponent in



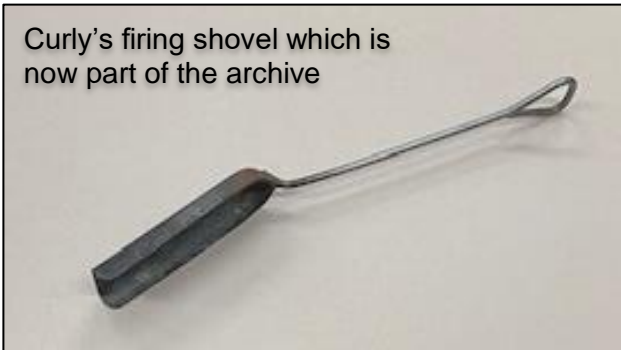
the Battle was the famous professional model engineer Henry Greenly who, incidentally is probably a good subject of an article in this esteemed journal. Curly seemed to hate Greenly who insisted that Bassett Lowke's spirit fired locomotives could not be bettered for pulling power. Curly proved that to be entirely wrong with his 2 ½" *Ayesha* winning very easily with its coal fired tubed boiler. It did not do much for the relationship between Greenly and quite understandably they still disliked one another.

A life changing spin-off from the contest was that Curly was offered the occupation of serializing the build of *Ayesha* for the *Model Engineer*. This was his 'turning point' and he merged into the writing career as a significant and well received serialist journalist of model steam locomotive construction.



Nevil Shute's book *Trustee from the Toolroom* describes a character who is modelled on Curly. The Trustee writes for the model press each week and ends up in the

Curly's firing shovel which is now part of the archive



Pacific navigating to redeem valuables an abandoned yacht. A good read for all model engineers if they have not read it already and really is worth a second read.

Curly seemed to fall out with many publishers and there were numerous letters

in the archive endorsing that opinion. During his time with *Model Engineer* Curly wrote several thousand articles and published numerous books. He designed well over 160 locomotives from '0' gauge to five-inch gauge.

During the 'tea break' which did not happen due to the scribe forgetting the tea, the raffle was drawn but, the group did have the opportunity to see some of Curly original pencil plans for locomotives which the group considered to be a special privilege.

Curly carried on writing articles until 1967. Which was not bad considering that he started in 1923! Shortly after his last article Curly died so ending a

wonderfully unique life and a long career of model engineering and model engineering journalism.

The Club is very fortunate to have the LBSC archive which has been viewed by several prominent folk from prominent museums. The scribe regrets that he did not enter the vast world of model engineering until after Curly's demise; this was not the case with the more senior members of the Club in attendance who could reminisce regarding events where they had met Curly and visited his Polar Route.

Geoff was greatly thanked for his talk and of course for the supervision and care of the LBSC Archive. The satisfied group were wished a safe journey home; so, ending a very informative and fulfilled evening.

Postscript

As can be seen in this picture Curly was also at one time a motor omnibus driver.

The society has recently been given two items of interest which belonged to LBSC. The firing shovel shown on the previous page and depicted below the Drivers Coupon issued to staff allowing free rides on the company's buses and trams.

The 2/- reward for it's return if found gives us some idea of what a typical fair might have been when it was issued.



Forthcoming General Meetings 2023.

By Ian

In the past our members have been as good if not better than the imported variety of speaker. If you, or you know of a member who would be willing to talk for an evening or even half an evening shared with another member; then that would be excellent. Please let me know. All meetings are on Friday evening starting at 8pm.

The Programme at the moment reads thus: -

March 3rd. Work in Progress. This is always a grand meeting because members bring along work that they have started, in the middle of, or have completed. Please bring something no matter how small to help make the evening go with a swing.

April 7th Interesting Equipment. A new venture for the vice chairman and the Club. Most members will have a piece of equipment that they find very useful and which may be unique. Even if it is not unique, please bring it along and show us but please no Steam Rollers with tarmac diggers please.

May 5th. The Annual General Meeting. This is the most important meeting of the Club Year. It is the members opportunity to help run the Club and be part of it. Old codgers may be wishing to stand down and new folk wishing to be voted into places where they can help steer the Club on a different course or just support the club on its travels through the year. Please attend if only to observe the progress the Club has made in the past year. (*The day before the Coronation*)

June 2nd. A pleasant evening at Colney Heath. Hopefully we will all be grumbling about *Flaming June*. So, bring something to eat, a locomotive to steam if you have one, or a boat to sail or just relax and watch the activities of the others. There are BBQs at Colney so it should all go off well but not into the sky to join a Chinese Balloon. It would be wise to start a little earlier so that we are not caught out in the dark.

July 7th. General Meeting at Tyttenhanger with all sections involved. Bring your own BBQ.

August 4th. General Meeting at Tyttenhanger for all sections with an accent on First Aid and to give the AED an airing.

September 1st. Professor Tim talks about building a steam traction engine his own way. But without gold fillings.

Any questions regarding the meeting contact, Ian



G.L.R. News

February – March 2023.

By Peter

According to an old gardening book I refer to now and again (Practical Gardening and food production 1954) February is fill dyke! Black or white month and March will be erratic, and as an ounce of March dust is worth a King's ransom. The Tyttenhanger crew seem too have had a good start to the year already. All I seem to remember is that it has been very cold and dry these last few weeks, but not cold enough to stiffen the enthusiasm of the Gantry build crew.



Two of the crew have been unwell with an unshakable coughs and colds. We wish them a speedy recovery I am told shovelling ballast is a great cure for that sort of ailment. Paul and Mike, you have first refusal on the ballast truck remedy.

As the weather has been so dry the crew have managed to make up the base plates for our new gantry and concreted them in place. We used the gantry structure to locate the base plates while the cement went off. The plan was to fix the gantry with base plates in position. Then, after lunch when the muck had gone off a bit unbolt the structure and lift it off the plates that were now starting to set. Unfortunately, being Model engineers, someone did not allow enough clearance on the stud holes. As a consequence, the tight fit caused the plates to move when we attempted to lift the gantry off the bases!



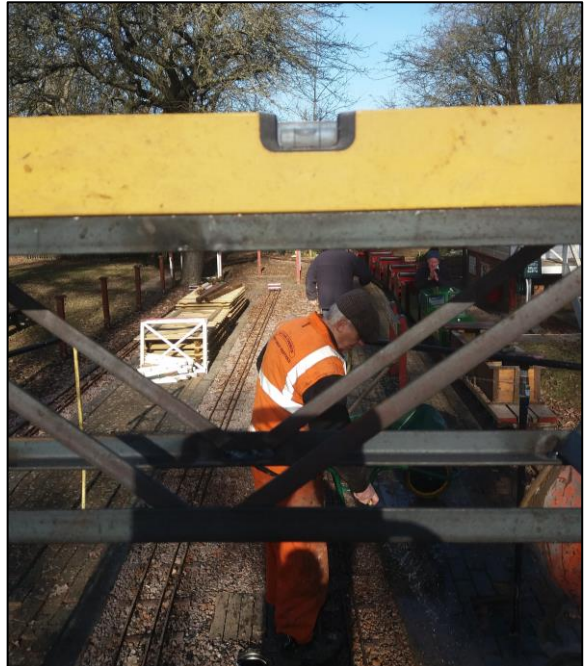
Not to be thwarted we left the uprights in place re-levelled the structure shoring the uprights in situ!

In the ensuing discussion by all present it was agreed unanimously that as Paul and Mike were both

unwell and not on site they could be blamed for the tight holes. Phew got out of that one all right eh! boys.

The uprights will be removed again for finishing and painting when the muck has gone off (technical term).

Now that the days are getting warmer and longer we are looking forward to playing trains once again, I have been asked if the Tyttenhanger crew are available for the Mencap run (nearly snapped the askers hand off) of course we are, we will need help on this one it is one of those times when you can give a little back to people not so lucky as you and me, so if you are interested please come along, The details will be printed nearer the date as and when. I also have two birthday parties booked both being members parties, my own and the lovely Guy's 104 years young and still modelling.



Looking to be a busy season already, bring it on!

Thanks to big John for changing the engine in my leaf blower, the track can now be seen once again, that boy knows his stuff when it comes to IC engines.

Thanks also to Brian for help when Ernie my grandson came up this week on the 17th with his friends. Both Brian and I had a restful pleasant day bathed in a warm February sun occasionally giving rides and to make the day even better Ernie had his first drive of Alban under strict supervision.

Stopping the train to replace the token and performing really well he made me very proud. Perhaps a new junior member in the making?

Congratulations to our newly appointed apprentice senior stewards Mike and Derek. You are stepping into some big boots that have been vacated by the affable Mikel and Paul (cheques in the post). Thanks for your time and effort gentlemen. If Mike and Derek have any last request or rites before the start of the new running season, please let the ground level crew know and we will see that they are carried out to your upmost posthumous satisfaction, it was nice knowing you lad's!

Tyttenhanger light Railway Maintenance.

Still, plenty to do on ballasting and levelling of the track. The section from Smallford to Henley Halt is in need of some attention much of which is laid on concrete slab and is heaving. This will be rectified by banking the track on each side. We also hope it will help to deter the rabbits. Maintaining a good track level has proven to be difficult where the track is laid on concrete. To restore a reasonable track level will require thin plastic packings to be placed under the sleepers and then backfilling with fine ballast.

If and when we get some young new blood to do the heavy work, I would consider removing the concrete base to this section (from entrance gate to HH) relaying with ballast. Our experience gained over the past or so years has demonstrated that track on ballast is so much easier to maintain than on concrete. Anyone up for a bit of concrete breaking?

Annual checks to club carriages and private stock will start soon. If you intend to passenger haul on our track this inspection is required.

Derek and Tim are currently re-painting the bridge over the G.L. track to the little boy's room. It is looking fantastic in a matching green to the coach well done lads.

Fettling and titivating of the gantry is nearly done and it is hoped to get some undercoat on soon to help protect the metal from the elements, George has made some signal lamps for the crew to approve of, and we just may get it working for the start of play season, till then happy hobbies and keep your hand on your halfpennies.

As ever in the muck Pete

It seemed a good idea at the time!

Part 5 of a “Lazarus Project” for 5” gauge

By Paul



After a false start in 2021, with those dodgy cylinders seizing up, 2022 arrived to host a series of successful trial, private and public runs.

Jonathan re-equipped the loco with brand new cylinders and the loco's second set of trial runs proved successful, albeit with niggly things such as leaking oil feed pipes, recalcitrant injectors and uneven axle loading. As all loco owners will know, such things only show up when locos are in steam despite the best “pre-flight” preparation.

I will admit to being slightly apprehensive when I first took the controls. Given no two locos perform the same, I admit to being a little paranoid about either losing the fire at the furthest reaches of the track, forgetting that the injector is still running or, worse still, finding that the water feed has failed, or I have, and I can't see the meniscus of water in the sight glass! But happily, none of the above applied. At least, at first. But perseverance is all and both Jonathan and I have learned the idiosyncrasies of the loco and have enjoyed some successful runs in 2022 both with and without passengers.

I am not a good diary keeper but suffice to say my first passenger run was on a private visit with my family and the first public debut was by Jonathan at the St Marks Church visit in September. I followed up with a good run on a late Sunday public day.

Every run was simply a joy for me and a “mental note to fix during the winter...” entry into Jonathan's head. These include a new Grate (the first one has burned through indication a need to alter the air intake arrangements, a change to the water feeds to the two injectors and a second tweak to the weight distribution across the driving axles to improve adhesion.

So, what have I learned? Well, I guess I now know why steam locos are always referred to in the female gender. I will leave you, dear reader to interpret that.

Hopefully you will see the loco in action in the coming season. Maybe even have a drive. Meanwhile I must publicly record my grateful thanks to both Jonathan and Mike for their steadfast support and work on this project.

This concludes this tale. I will let the pictures on the front page and below tell their own story.



My model boat collection – Part 4.

My oldest model yacht.

By Roy

I called her Condor, but it was so long ago I can't remember why! She first took to the water in 1975 nearly half a century back. I came across the hull lines in a Yachting Monthly magazine a couple of years before that, I was looking for a scale sailing yacht to build and this seemed just the thing. The lines were a half a page and I had to draw them up to full size which was to be 27 inches loa. (Length over-all). This came out to a nice 1: 12 scale of one inch to the foot.



Hot news!!! If you fancy building a similar model yacht look no further than the January 2023 edition of Model Boats magazine where a very similar model yacht by the same designer is a free plan with full building information.

I had been in frequent contact with Ray Wood the designer of the model and a sister ship to Wild Duck. We both have an interest in these yachts intended for building at home and anyone who wants further info go on the Eventide's web site. There you will also find my model yacht, where the designated name is Goosander.

Back to 1975; I calculated the displacement at this scale to be nearly 3lbs not nearly enough to have a stable yacht in a good wind. I 'adjusted' the lines down about 3/8ths. And increased the bulkhead widths by and 1/8th of an inch and this would give me another couple of pounds displacement without detracting from the general lines which I found appealing. The next stage is 'fairing up', this is to make sure the hull lines are smooth and no sudden changes. I had chosen a very difficult set of lines as this a double chine hull and it did take some time.

Eventually it looked OK and I had a set of 'off sets' to cut the bulkheads from, these were scroll sawed from 1/8th. ply and the single part keel from 3/8ths ply.

With some careful notching I assembled all into a 3-dimensional skeleton. I do not like extended keels on scale models and in this case, I had made the existing keel a few inches deeper and put lead either side to use as the ballast weight. It was a guess but it worked.

Now I was a deckie-learner at this stage and I should have attached the bulkheads to a building board to ensure squareness, but like many ignorant first timers, it all came out square with the chine angles having longerons or stringers at each chine corner. I do recall that attaching the six planks to the hull side was done on a Sunday. I know it was a Sunday as back then all the shops were shut no Internet of course so whatever I had by me would have to do!

I had a single sheet of 1/16th. ply 36 x 12 inches. It became clear that there may not be enough planking wood. So out with the brown paper and 3 templates were made and they were jiggled around to create 2 copies of each. (In those days we all kept back the brown paper and string for parcels).

There really were just a few splinters of wood left after cutting the 6 planks out. But they did the job and all was glued and held in place with rubber bands and clamps waiting until the next time. Back to the family, the children were then 7 and 9 and demanded attention, which I was happy to give, then work on Monday.

Radio control was fitted from the start and I had 6 channel Micron receivers and these come in kit form and are excellent, and still in use today. I was on the now obscure 27Mhzt FM band, I needed the extra channels as there was a motor drive and as then there was no adequate sail servo available at this size, so I had 2 servos for the sails one for the jib and the other on the main and of course the rudder servo.

I wanted to have some authenticity to this model and went to some lengths to construct a mast, vertically in 2 halves with a luff groove for the main to sit in. Not a good idea! The sail material just would not fold over enough to make the sail an aerodynamic shape and this mast did not last long. I went for the tried and trusted method and made a streamlined section mast with a fine wire at the back of it (jack wire) and the main hangs on this line, works a treat! The mast was painted with a simulated aluminium paint, quite dull, but when dry it polished up to look like metal and is quite effective.

New sails were made and they have stood the test of time. I also wanted to fit stanchions. Now stanchions on sailing yachts, whatever length hull, are all the same height, a crew member has to stand comfortably astride them so for size check your inside leg measurement! However, at that time only Bassett-Lowke in Holborn sold them, I enquired and was quoted £1 each!!!! That is about £10 in today's money. So no-way Jose.

I was attending an evening metalwork class at the time and I had noticed an odd-looking bit of gear bolted to the floor and on enquiry I was told it was for

drawing rod into smaller diameters, just the ticket. I had a 2-foot length of aluminium rod of somewhat greater diameter and I progressively drew the metal down to a bit under an eighth diameter. By now the rod was at least 6 feet long so no problem with numbers of stanchions needed.

The model you see now in the photos is the 3rd. re-fit. This 3rd. re-fit came about as I fancied exhibiting the model at the Model Engineering exhibition and this would give me a free entry ticket. I had by now sailed on similar full-size yachts and was keen to include some prototype detail including lifebelts. I had made up an accompanying booklet to show what she was and I was very surprised to receive a Bronze Medal for her at the 1989 exhibition.

Then summer 2022 I brought some of the RC up to date mainly for connectors and a single sail servo but the Rx was one of three I made in the mid-1980's.

Stern and safety gear, the lifebelts can be removed and have beacon lights attached. the side winches are for hauling in the sails. Modern ones have a 2-speed gearbox and reversing handle direction gives a lower gear ratio. You can just see the propellor.



Mast support shrouds, showing the whipping around wire join as per full size, doing it again I would use white shrink wrap tube, much easier. The cowl vents are in a housing with a discontinuous route to the cabin to stop sea water coming in, they can be rotated to suit wind direction. Note hand winches on mast for hauling up the sails, it is heavy work!

Bow and pulpit detail with Danforth anchor stowed at point of bow, takes all the knocks that way. Back from that is the Samson post used for emergency towing, also fairleads and cleats.



View into stern area the string should all be in sheet bags hanging on cabin rear. They are there for static display. The duck boards come up for cleaning.

White hatch houses the gas bottles for cooking, not in this model though!

The handrails were carved from a single piece of wood, there were many breakages.

TRACK STEWARDS ROTA FOR 2023

In the December issue of the News Sheet, I wrote that it was my intention to issue a draft Track Stewards Rota for 2023 in either the February or March News Sheet. Originally, I had hopes of getting this into the February News Sheet but after starting the rota it soon became obvious that this wasn't going to be possible. With an overall reduction in membership, country membership, advancing years and the Gauge 1 Group looking after the Sunday tea duties the ideal arrangement of Senior Track Steward to organise the day plus 10 track stewards just couldn't be met. As it is you will notice on the rota your allocated date may have had to be changed from last year and apart from three dates, we will have the minimum number of 9 track stewards required to operate a public running day. One way forward was to ask a number of members to do more than one duty this year but to do so, at the present point in time, might be looked upon as being a bit unfair.

Rather conveniently our new King has chosen the 6th May as being the date of his coronation so at the recent Council meeting it was agreed that the normal first running day of Sunday 7th May will be a Society Members and their family and friends only running day. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided (volunteers please form an orderly queue at the kitchen door in the carriage) and it is hoped members and their families and friends will bring picnics along to enjoy our site.

Next year when we, hopefully, get back to our usual beginning of May to late October running season we may well need to revisit the matter of the custom and practice of members doing a single track or tea steward duty each year. An expanding and younger membership increase will alleviate the potential problem for more than one duty so please get the word out that we are a friendly society who welcome new members. Some societies have requirements placed upon them of very regular running for a variety of reasons so a single duty per season may be looked upon by them as getting off lightly!

The rota for 2023 can be found in this edition of the News Sheet. As usual, apart from the first Sunday in May, we will be open for public running on the first and third Sundays each month until the 15th October between 2.00pm and 5.00pm.

Please make every effort to attend on the date you are allocated. You are reminded that being a member of the North London Society of Model Engineers does require you to commit to do at least one rota duty when you join or re-join each year (confirmed on your membership form). If, however, you are unable to perform the duty on the date shown on the rota **it is your responsibility** to arrange a swap with another member and to advise the two Senior Stewards of the change. A phone call or email allows the Senior Steward to plan for the number of stewards who will be there. If a swap has been arranged, I would

also appreciate being notified by the individual or Senior Steward concerned so that I can update the rota which will be regularly published in the News Sheet from May onwards.

Our public running days provide a lot of pleasure to parents and children who come along to our site at Colney Heath. After a number of lean financial years and rising costs the income from the public, the Fetes and Fairs Section, as well as the subscriptions we pay, go towards improving and/or maintaining our facilities not only at the track but also at Headquarters.

Nigel (On behalf of the Council) March 2023

21 May 2023

First Public Running session 2023

Peter – Senior Steward

1. Malcolm
2. Roger
3. George
4. Steve
5. Dave
6. Chris
7. Mike
8. Cheryl
9. Richard
- 10.

Ground Level Despatcher
Steve



4 June 2023

Ian Johnston – Senior Steward

1. Gerald
2. Howard
3. David
4. Michael
5. Alan
6. Simon
7. John
8. Peter
9. Marcin
- 10.

Ground Level Despatcher
Steve

18 June 2023

Chris – Senior Steward

1. Stephen
2. John
3. Peter
4. Ian
5. Keith
6. Julian
7. Steve
8. Rob
9. Thomas
- 10.

Ground Level Despatcher
Steve

Mystery Object – Correction *(February 2023 page 29)*

Your editorial “team” wish to apologise for a number of errors published in last month’s article. These were not found until shortly after the February News Sheet had been printed. The correct version of this article can be found on the NLSME web site February News Sheet. A link to all past editions can be found at the bottom of the front page of this publication.

Harrogate Model Engineering Exhibition 2023

Friday 10th and Saturday 11th March – 10.00 am till 5.00 pm

Adult Ticket £15 on the day Advance tickets £12
(Includes one under 16 free).

Family Ticket £30 on the day Advance tickets £25 (2 adults and 3 under 16's).

Adult Two Day Ticket £25 on the day
Advance tickets £20

Yorkshire Event Centre

Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate, Yorkshire HG2 8NZ

Car parking is available close to the hall

A London Routemaster Bus will be operating a courtesy service from Harrogate Railway Station.

St Albans and District Model Engineering Society

Annual Day Out Sunday 25th June 2023

Fawley Steam Railway and Museum

By Coach: Tickets £35 including coach and museum admission

NLSME members and friends are welcome to join us.

Fawley Steam Railway and Museum was established in the 1960's by the late Sir William McAlpine on his estate near Henley on Thames in Berkshire. The Steam Railway is standard gauge.

The museum and railway are open on a limited number of days each year and is not open to the general public. Admission is only open by invitation.

St Albans Model Engineering Society is privileged to have been invited to one of the open days.

More information is available on the Fawley Museum website. Light refreshments are available although taking a picnic is recommended.

Travel details:

The coach will leave from outside St Albans City station at 09.30 arriving at the museum at around 11.00.

Leaving the museum around 17.30 we will arrive back in St Albans at 19.00

All day parking is available at St Albans City station on Sundays for a nominal fee.

How to reserve your tickets:

Contact St Albans MES Treasurer: Mike Grossmith

Email: mikegrossmith@btinternet.com

Tel: 07810 394048

All tickets must be paid for by mid-April.

Letter to the Editor

From Geoff (G1 group)

Editor's note;

This letter refers to Geoff's experiences with Gauge 1 locomotives and some aspects do not comply with standards to be applied to larger scale models.

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the item in the last News Sheet by Jeremy on some aspects of Chemistry. (Feb 2023 page 16) Very few of the Gauge 1 and similar sized locomotives have a blow down facility. Even more unlikely is the opportunity to fit it low down by a foundation ring.

Most Gauge 1 locos use liquid fuels (Meths or Bio ethanol) or gas. These boilers do not have wet legs around the firebox. Invariably they have a shrouded firebox cut into the boiler barrel. All nice and easy to construct but it can leave problems in cleaning out. Normally a coal fired boiler would have wet legs to the firebox but on our size of model the fitting of a blowdown could be problematic and out of scale.

So, to overcome this we recommend the use of clean water. What is clean I hear you ask? Surely clean water is available from our kitchen tap. We don't like tap water as this is very often hard water as found in our parts and the limescale that can settle out when in the boiler can lead to problems of reducing heat transfer, clogging up pipes and valves, or even just being unsightly around safety valves etc. (I do know Gauge 1'ers in Cornwall and similar places geographically, that do use tap water as this is soft as it runs off the granite.)

So, what are the options for water?

Rain water- Yes this can be used but needs filtering to remove leaves and other organic materials that get mixed in the water butt or whatever you collect it in. Years ago, it was not recommended as it was considered to be from acid rain due to the power stations and coal fires polluting the atmosphere. For this reason, I have never used it. I have never tested it for acidity.

De-humidifier water- Water collected from a dehumidifier (or a domestic a/c unit) can be collected. It is recommended that the collecting vessel should be enclosed so as to not allow dust and other air born items to settle in the newly cleaned water.

Distilled water- You can buy distilled water (do not get it mixed up with De-ionised water) for use in car batteries, domestic irons etc. You could buy a still and distill water from another source (i.e., tap) yourself. The deposits stay in the heating vessel that is used to boiler the water.

De-ionised water- This is a definite no no. The water is “made” by electronically removing the impurities and it leaves the water molecule looking for a +ion. This it will take from within the metal work of the boiler. This degradation is an accelerated way of the reactivity of metals.

Fridge defrost- When defrosting a fridge or freezer the ice and ice melt can be collected and used. The ice has formed from water vapour in the air that enters the ice box every time you open the door, so it is good clean water. You do have to filter it to remove any escaped peas or similar.

A word on filtering. Gauge 1 members use coffee filters or kitchen roll or perhaps even fine cloth. These will remove items that are larger than the weave of the material the water is passing through but the water can take fibres from the filter medium into the collecting vessel. Over a period of time, you can still end up with some deposit within the boiler. Kitchen filter jugs are another option. It is recommended that the water is stored in a dark place. Depending on which water you chose, natural daylight can get things to grow in the water.

I learnt the hard way many years ago about internal corrosion when a banjo bolt fitting just turned and snapped off one of my Gauge 1 locos leaving the threaded part in the boiler bush. Yes, all metals in close contact react with each other as it losses electrons to form positive ions. This is known as the reactivity of metals, search the table of metals on the web. After my experience above I realised I had studied this at O level Chemistry but obviously had not really taken it in.

We make our Gauge 1 boilers out of copper which is low down the table. Apart from the main reasons for using copper (ductile, heat transfer, jointing etc) it is a good stable material and does not react with many other metals. More reactive metals are Iron, Zinc, and Aluminium (in that order). Brass, being a compound of Copper and Zinc (plus other metals depending on the type of brass) is normally used to make Gauge 1 boiler fittings. You will find that the Zinc will lose its ions first, as it reacts. The brass after a period of time will soften as the zinc is leached out. Any stresses on this brass will lead to failure. To overcome this it is recommended that some aluminium washers be fitted between some fittings and the boiler bushes (ie under the safety valve or dome). The Aluminium being even more reactive than the Zinc.

Then it is these ions that are leached from the aluminium first and these fail before other components, being brass, becoming degraded. Such a washer should be easily and cheaply replaceable rather than remaking a new fitting.

Again, we use a Phosphor Bronze for boiler bushes as these are more stable than the normal brass we use for fittings.

Club Dates for your 2023 Diary

Advance notice: -

14th May – Toy Boat Regatta

3rd June – Gravesend club visit

1st July – Under 16 drivers' day

10th July (Monday) – 2nd St Albans Beavers 6.30 – 7.30pm

5th August – Brean Group visit

10th September – Toy Boat Regatta

March	
Tue 7 th March	Council meeting 13.30 at HQ (see note below)
Every Thursday; A mix of RT Loco running when track is available, working groups, and general conversation	
Every Thursday & Saturday Ground Level Rly Working party at Colney Heath	
Every Sunday; Working party at Colney Heath 9.00 to 12.30	
April	
Tue 4 th April	Council meeting 13.30 at HQ (see note below)
Sun 23 April	All Day Slot Car meeting at HQ
Every Thursday; A mix of RT Loco running when track is available, working groups, and general conversation	
Every Thursday & Saturday Ground Level Rly Working party at Colney Heath	
Every Sunday; Working party at Colney Heath 9.00 to 12.30	

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