

# The News Sheet

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## The Chairman's Notes

I must say that I am flattered; I write the Chairman's notes each month in the belief that only a few earnest members will read them and that the majority of you will soon turn to the back and see if Nick has thought up a new joke from his days working the Northern Clubs!

Last month almost as a postscript I mentioned that I was going to address the problem of the differential subscription rates. Many model engineers have been in touch to say that they can barely contain themselves with the anticipation of what I am going to write. So here it is.

Someone a lot wiser than me said that you can please some people some of the time but you cannot please all the people all the time. I think that I am in danger of not doing any of it!

Where shall I start? Well a good place would be at the EGM in May last year (2005). There was no doubt that at that meeting that the will of a majority of the members present was that we should contribute equally and that the subscription should be £52 for all and sundry for the year, except for country and younger members that is. In any case it would be regularising something that has gone on for a long time, in that many retired members pay the full subscriptions regardless of the invitation to pay a reduced sum.

Later it was pointed out to me, with authority that our constitution says in rule 4. *'A reduced subscription shall be payable by members under the age of eighteen years (called 'Junior Members') and members upon attaining the age of 65 years'*. I got buffeted all over the place rather like the Edward Lear's pea green boat and the runcible spoon, and like the boat I was not going anywhere fast, or slow.

Then by chance a few evenings ago at a Rotary meeting, I happened to sit next to a couple of fellow Rotarians who were solicitors. During the meal I described my problem with the constitution and the EGM. I explained that we had voted to raise the subscription uniformly without regard to age despite rule 4 in the constitution. They pointed out to me that the decision at the EGM was invalid. We should have taken the precaution of changing the constitution first and that our decision could be tested in court. But perhaps they were just looking for a bit of business because an estate agent friend of mine on the table expressed an interest in the sites! In any case although they are undoubtedly correct, I think that sometimes protocols are taken far too seriously and that we ought to be able to work things out sensibly together. Especially when you think that we are actually a voluntary recreational society and definitely not a serious political party or some strict religious sect.

There seem to be several courses open to us:-

Idea One would be to realize that many of our pensioners are well off, having paid off their mortgages and have good pensions coming in. But there are also a number that have to exist on the State Pension and do find it extremely difficult to

make ends meet. By the same token many of our youngsters are in well-paid jobs with the mortgage being paid and with money left over for recreation. But I know there are a number, that due to their disbursements are also very hard up and that we should consider them as well.

So the solution could be that we should all willingly pay the full rate but that those on reduced means for whatever reason should let the treasurer know and contribute what they think they can reasonably afford. The last thing that I would like to see is the Club becoming rather like a PRO-BUS Club for the mechanically inclined. Or as a Round Table for the highest steamers only. We must make the Club attractive to all groups because that is where the strength of the Society resides.

Idea Two would be to have an EGM (which I understand that we may have to anyway) and after discussion of the pros and cons to take a vote on an alteration of Rule 4. In this way the will of the Club or at least of those members that are able to attend and vote will be satisfied. But we must take sensible care; our baby boomers will soon be retiring and the golden goose laying those golden retirement eggs will have soon flown away or at the very least contracted bird flu and run out of dosh. The retired today are a lot better off than those who will unfortunately follow. So it may be wise to retain the phrase and for the better off to help now out regardless of the expression.

Idea Three would be to hold at the AGM a discussion led by the treasurer, who after all is invested with the voluntary task of keeping the Club solvent. We could perhaps recognise that a rise to £52 is needed but that it could be done in two stages, a manoeuvre that has been done in years gone by. We could leave the contentious rule 4 as it is. Idea Three would have several effects; the reserves would be preserved and could be built up in two years. This would also have the effect of preserving our membership, who for various reasons is unable or unwilling to cough up the proposed rise.

Idea One would have the advantage of expecting all to pay the full subscription, provided there is a very easy confidential way of paying an agreed sum for those on reduced means. If it has to be the EGM route, then please please let's make it as least acrimonious as possible.

I am sure there are other ways out of the predicament and I'm sure that in one way or other I will hear about them. Please remember that the Chairman is really the servant of the Society through the Council. If you have ideas or suggestions then please let me or your Council member know. And remember it may be difficult to go back on the decision we took last year.

Have a good month.

*Ian Johnston*

## Secretary's Snippets

The Society has received information regarding:-

The Taunton Model Engineers Exhibition 1/2 April 2006.  
 Bristol SMEE Southern Federation Spring Rally 20/21 May 2006.  
 West Riding Small Locomotive Society Steam Rally 17/18 June 2006.  
 Harrow and Wembley SME 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Open weekends 10/11 June and 26/27/28 August 2006.  
 Cardiff MES 16<sup>th</sup> Welsh National Locomotive Rally 10/11 June 2006.  
 Woking Miniature Railway Society 7¼ inch Visiting Locos weekend 20/21 May 2006.  
 Merstham Model Steam Show 13/14 May 2006.

Also copies of the Bedford MES 'The Coupling' and The Southern Federation News.

The Exhibition to be staged by the Society at the Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Mills in May has been cancelled. The Society will be supporting the Redbourn Steam Rally on 8/9 July 2006. Jim MacDonald and Donal Corcoran are assisting this event.

The Northolt SME are to visit Colney Heath on Saturday, 29 July 2006 to enjoy our facilities and railways. Ian Johnston is acting as host for this occasion.

*David Harris*

## Treasurer's Report

Due to the wonders of modern technology and the annoying quirks of something going wrong and nobody knowing about it, March's Treasurers Report was lost in the ether somewhere between Nick's computer and mine, so unfortunately there wasn't a subscription reminder last month.

The rates for the year April 2006 – March 2007 are as follows:-

Full Member	£52
Old Age Pensioner	£52
Country Member	£20
Junior	The greater of £6 or £1 per year of age (i.e. 16 years old = £16)

As you should now be aware the reduced subscription rate for OAP's has been removed with effect from the 2006–07 subscriptions rates. This was at the recommendation of the

council, was put forward in the February 2005 edition of the News Sheet, and was agreed by over two thirds (32 in favour to 15 against) of the members present at the EGM in May 2005 (see the report of that meeting in the Feb 06 News Sheet).

On the Council's recommendation the membership present at the meeting decided that it was not necessary to have a specific OAP rate. A few, some of whom were at the EGM and others who were not (and why not is a question better left unasked) have objected. As a result the council have decided that the topic should be re-discussed at another EGM prior to the AGM in May, in order to resolve the issue for next year. I ask you to respect the decision of the EGM and pay your subscriptions; after all it will only be your loss.

*Kieran Corcoran*

## Notice of the 2006 AGM

The AGM of the Society will take place on Friday, 12 May 2006 at 8.00 pm at HQ.

This is your opportunity to listen to the reports from the officers of the Council, peruse the finances, and elect the officers and members of the Council for the year 2006/2007. All paid-up members of the Society are entitled to vote, so turn up and have your say.

Formal nominations should be sent to the Secretary prior to the meeting. Forms can be obtained from the Secretary at the various meetings during April and early May.

A petition has been received from 26 members who request **'That the Council make an unequivocal statement that a reduced subscription will continue to be payable by those (members) over 65 years of age.'** The Council is not prepared to make this statement unilaterally without reference to the membership, particularly as an EGM in May 2005 agreed that no differential should be applied.

An EGM will therefore be held prior to the AGM on 12 May 2006 to purposely discuss and decide on this request. You are urged to attend this EGM to contribute to the decision.

### Cover picture:

Class JS 2-8-2 on Huladao Limestone Railway, China, with a class SY 2-8-2 in the background. One of Gordon Massey's photos taken in October 2004; see the report of his talk in this issue, on page 9

# Examination & Testing of Miniature Steam Boilers

## by Donal Corcoran

It has been heavily publicised over the last few months by both the model engineering press and exhibitions that the Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies in conjunction with the Health and Safety Executive, the Midlands Federation of Model Engineering Societies, Northern Association of Model Engineers and the 7¼" Gauge Society Ltd. have produced a new edition of the 'Examination & Testing of Miniature Steam Boilers', commonly referred to as the 'red book'.

The new red book has introduced a new form of boiler certificate, but it is important to remember that any current 'old' certificate is valid until its expiry, where upon retest you will be issued one of the new certificates.

As a general rule the regulations regarding the examination and testing of miniature steam boilers have not been amended, although you may notice that the emphasis has changed on a couple of issues during your first test under the new red book; for example the paperwork element has increased.

However the regulations do not apply to very small boilers with a capacity of less than 1.5 bar-litre, such as most Garden Railway boilers, but we still require that the boiler has a valid certificate before running on any of our tracks. Bar-litre is a term newly introduced by the red book and refers to the working pressure in bar multiplied by the capacity of the boiler.

eg.: Working Pressure = 80 psi (5.516 bar)  
Boiler Capacity = 25 litres

$$5.516 \times 25 = 137.9 \text{ bar-litre}$$

Prior to presenting your boiler for examination you must measure its full water capacity in litres; this is because the new test procedures require this information as well as the bar-litre figure to be included on the certificate.

There is also a requirement for all boilers to have at least two methods of providing the boiler with water (either by injector(s), axle-pump or hand-pump); unfortunately for any model with only one method of supplying water for the boiler we will not be able to provide your boiler with a steam test certificate.

This means that the Society is currently unable to offer certificates to most Garden Railway engines. I have used the word currently because we hope with everyone's co-operation to produce a Society certificate for these boilers in the near future allowing them to comply with our rules (watch this space); however certificates for these models should be available from a GIMRA boiler tester.

Another new area to the red book is the inspection of a 'home built' boiler during its construction. It is recommended that you seek advice from one of the Boiler

Testers prior to starting construction to ensure that your build fully complies with the red book and Society policies.

In order to ensure that your test is successful the Boiler Testers strongly recommend that you conduct an operational test at home before submitting the boiler for its formal test. It is suggested that the following checks should be carried out:

- a) Check that the safety valve(s) operate at the specified release pressure;
- b) Check for any leaks or weeps from the fittings, bushes and pipe work;
- c) Check that the waterways of the gauge glass are clear by blowing down the glass and ensure that the water level returns to its correct position with minimal delay;
- d) Check the operation of any pumps/injectors required to maintain or replenish the water level in boiler;
- e) Check that the hand pump (if fitted) can be used to put water into the boiler in an emergency;
- f) Check that the clack valves seat properly;
- g) Check the regulator operation – does it operate smoothly and can it be completely opened and closed?
- h) Ensure that the heat source can be removed or shut down in the event of an emergency, e.g. that the grate can be removed enabling the fire to be dumped;
- i) Ensure that the blower valve can be turned at least six turns or that it has a captive spindle.

The above is only intended as a brief overview of some of the changes that have been made to the red book; for further information you can obtain a copy of the red book from the Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies or consult a Society Boiler Tester.

Please remember all the Society Boiler Testers are volunteers donating their time to test your models; we therefore request that you telephone a Boiler Tester to book an appointment in advance.

The Society's Boiler Testers are: Terry Baxter, Mike Chrisp, Mike Collingwood, Brendan Corcoran, Mike Foreman, Ron Price and John West (garden railway).

*Donal Corcoran*

## The Extra Loco Section Meeting held on 10 March 2006 by Roger Bell

This meeting was called to present plans for the ground-level and elevated railways and to have an open discussion and make positive decisions for the development of both railways.

After the presentation from the railway development group (RDG) votes were taken on the following points and it was agreed that:-

1. The ground level railway will be extended to loop around the mound and return as a double track.
2. The RDG are to look at the technicalities of laying the ground level track around the mound and establishing the position of a bridge which will carry the raised track over it.
3. The raised track will be extended in the future and the RDG will prepare the layouts for this, for the approval of the membership.

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## The Bedfordshire Steam Fayre By Jim Robson

I have to confess that I had not previously heard of this event and this was their 10<sup>th</sup> annual outing. It was held on 17 & 18 September 2005 at the Old Warden Estate and admission includes the Shuttleworth Collection, Birds of Prey and Swiss Garden in the rather unlikely event of you having time to see them.

Being this far North I had assumed that it would be a rather select gathering, but no, the first group we bumped into was Mick Avery, Franki and Jonathan,



*The Baxter family with their 4in McLaren Showman's Engine*  
**Photo: Jim Robson**

shortly followed by the Baxters en route for the show ring in their 4in. McLaren Showmans Engine; Terry



*Ron Todd with his 4in Burrell*  
**Photo: Jim Robson**

and Lynn were in the trailer with Jenny doing the driving. They were part of a gaggle of other models including one with Ron Todd on it. I did not see him myself but Mick said he had seen Peter Badger on a trailer throwing bags of coal at unwary drivers.

There was so much to see: 20 showmans Engines, many of them supplying power for the fairground rides, as originally intended. An exception to this was the c1905 Savage Steam Yachts, 'Columbia & Shamrock'. (I remember going on one of these at the first Barnet Fair after WW2; the chap I was with assured me that you had to sit at one of the far ends or you wouldn't get any sensation. He was right there, I had never been so terrified!) I have always been fascinated watching the driver start them up, first by hand



*The Savage Steam Yachts*

**Photo:** Jim Robson

until they have reached maximum swing after which they go on auto, rather like the procedure for a beam engine.

There were two beautiful Shand Mason fire engines, one of which had come from my favourite brewery, Benskin's of Watford (now sadly defunct). Built 1876 it is claimed to be the oldest working Shand Mason in the world.

Looking at the programme I seem to have missed more than I saw. Like Barleylands, it covers a vast area and



One of the Shand Mason fire engines

**Photo:** Jim Robson

you really need two days and strong legs. I did see a very nice Super Sentinel that I had seen at Fareham back in July; there were 9 Sentinels, 3 of them 'Supers'. Among the many miniatures there was a 9in. Foden Tractor, might as well gone the extra 3in., and 23 6in. of varying prototypes. Lovely work almost everywhere you looked; possibly the most unusual was the 4in. Hornsby Chain Track Engine c1910. Loads more, never got as far as the horse, tractor and steam ploughing. Managed to visit one of the beer tents, couldn't find the other. Good selection of trade stands. An excellent venue and possibly the best rally I have ever attended. I certainly intend to give it another whirl, if I'm spared.

## The March General Meeting by OMAH (MK 2)

The Chairman Ian Johnston welcomed the members to the meeting and enquired if there were any matters arising. Adrian announced that there would be an additional meeting of the Locomotive Section in order to discuss the plans for the new ground at Colney Heath. This meeting was to take place at eight on March 10<sup>th</sup> in the Headquarters. Ian then announced that there would be a coach trip to Amberley Museum on June 17<sup>th</sup> provided there was enough support.

Mike Chrisp was introduced and took the meeting on at a cracking rate. The subject for the night was *Down Memory Lane*. Many members were willing to contribute with their reminiscences and recollections of the past sixty years of the club. So with Billy Williams' tune 'I must go home tonight' still ringing in our ears, the first off was David Jones.

David Jones who looks so young that you could be forgiven in thinking that he had only just started shav-

ing was actually a member of the Club in 1958. He had seen a demonstration of 'rod rail car racing' at the ME Exhibition at old Horticultural Halls. He stated that he was the fellow to fight for 'lost causes' and joined the section which at that time was a getting to be a lost cause and was dwindling in numbers. Tom Pinnock and Bert Miller were the ringleaders and meetings were often held at Tom Pinnock's house in Athenaeum Road. David showed us four of his own cars which he had retrieved from his loft and proceeded to tell us how they worked. The cars generally had small diesel engines and a substantial ribbed fly-wheel which protruded beneath the car to facilitate starting. This was done by means of an electric motor with a revolving rubber bush, not unlike the contrivances for cleaning your shoes in hotels, now that you can't leave your shoes out at night for the bell boy to polish in case they get nicked.

The cars which had pairs of vertical rollers at bow and

stern ran on a rod track. The rod track consisted of a long metal rod about half an inch in diameter which was fixed horizontally just above the surface of the running board in a figure of eight configuration. The track was used at the Gas Showrooms in Lytton Road, which has now sadly gone, as has the track. The cars had centrifugal clutches and could race round the track at about fifteen miles per hour. The Club tractor was shown which at one time was thought to be the fastest rod racing tractor in the World.

Bert Mead was the next on the stage. Model engineering seems to have done him no harm whatsoever. At 94 years of age, he gave a performance of someone at least thirty years his junior. Bert showed us photographs of the track at Arkley and the old workshop at Colney Heath before it got fired. His main contribution was photographs of his exploits at Fetes. Bert with his son and 'The Paddleboat' must have earned



*Brian Mead at the controls of the Dugald Drummond T14 class 4-6-0, which were nicknamed 'Paddleboats' by virtue of their large splashers*  
Photo: Bert

hundreds of pound at the fetes all over North London, apart from giving untold enjoyment to thousands of young children. The youngsters were incidentally exceptionally well dressed compared with today. The members also seemed to dress for the occasion and few could be seen without a jacket and tie.

Ian Johnston had his turn next and showed the Club adverts for past Exhibitions that the Club had held. The posters had been donated to the Club by Beryl Collingwood who had acquired them during her long sojourn as club Secretary. It was interesting to see that the exhibitions lasted for up to six days and closed at nine pm. Life was a lot more leisurely in those days and that's perhaps why we don't do so much at present because we are all running about like blue-arsed flies at work. (Sorry for the language OMAH Mk1!). George Case had donated some photographs of club members and those present were given the task of identifying them. The results will be published later. Ian had discovered copies of the 'News Sheet' from 1962 which at least showed that some things had not changed over time, in that strong feelings abounded then and now, showing that deep down everyone still loves the club and doesn't mind the fireworks.

Mike Collingwood regaled us in his usual erudite way. We were amazed to hear that he had almost got dismissed from work for fitting a lamp to his cycle, not last week of course but millenniums ago. The main substance of his talk was about the Club membership list in 1947-48. It seems all the great and good in the model engineering world were members. Such as:-

Curly Lawrence. LBSC. Patron and 'father of Model Engineering'.

JC Crebbin Uncle Jim. ?cousin of Rolls or Royce.

Cyril Drayson. Of Juliet fame and a long standing member.

KN Harris Author and arch enemy of LBSC.

AG Mead. Nuff said!

The Pinnocks. The hearts and souls of the Club.

LH Sparey Author of *The Amateur's Lathe*.

HE White. Author of *Model Steam Locomotives*.

L Mason. Author of *Using the Small Lathe*.

Miss Cowing Proprietor of *Barnet Press*.

A Bradley Newsletter and author of *beginner's workshop*

Mike also mentioned that the club had at one time, a 'Scientific and Experimental Section' led by LV Raxworthy; as a result Mike had been given Derrick Hart's 'timer for hydroplanes' which has now been donated to a hydroplane museum in East Anglia.

Mike Chrisp's spot was the moment we were all waiting for. This came after an excellent cup of tea made by Ron and the raffle with prizes donated via Tony from the President of the NMRA (BR). Mike introduced us all to the saga of the coach. In the 1970's it was decided that more accommodation was needed at Colney Heath and a 'BZ' Stratford-built guards van was selected as the most appropriate. Mike Radford spotted one and it was almost acquired but a very skilled welder (not NLSME trained I hasten to add) who was cutting off the wheels managed to set fire to the whole lot, so another quest for a phoenix had to take place. A much better 'BZ' was found at St Ives and after a bit of wheeling and dealing with the wheels and batteries, it was purchased for a resultant £200.



Next came the problem of transporting a wheel-less guards van down the A1 to Colney. Mike showed us dramatic photographs of the imaginative way the coach was lifted onto a flat bed truck with a crane whose SWL was less than the weight of the coach!



The journey down the A1 was uneventful and that seemed to be the only thing about the acquisition that was uneventful. Because when the coach arrived at Colney, the crane that had been hired was not able to perform as planned. The SWL was quite adequate to lift the coach off the lorry but the ground was far too soft due to rain. The coach was rather unceremoniously dumped near the steaming bays and the Club left with the problem of moving it up to its present



position. This was where Leon Rochat came in; he was experienced in moving heavy printing machinery and tackled the task with gusto. Sleepers were placed along the line that the coach was to take and scaffolding bars put on top to act as rollers. With difficulty, chain tackle was set up to pull the coach up the slope; Mike Radford assisted by pushing with his Land Rover, which apparently covered a hundred miles in the task. Eventually the coach was positioned where it lies today.

Incidentally the War Office was written to for help as a ‘challenge’ at the start of the move. The curt reply from the War Office was that it was impossible! So you see that with the NLSME the possible can be done at once but **the impossible takes just a little longer!**

The meeting finished at just past ten; all the participants were thanked, so concluding a most stimulating and informative meeting about our interesting past.

We all give our very best wishes to OMAH and hope that we will see him soon back in action giving his best both at the track and at Headquarters.

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## General Meetings Update

Unless otherwise stated, General Meetings are held at our Headquarters in Legion Way, North Finchley, 8 - 10pm. Ron Thorogood dons his chef’s hat to provide welcome tea, coffee and biscuits at around 9pm for which our many thanks, Ron.

### 7 APRIL 2006 – MIKE FOREMAN: HOLIDAYS ON THE FOOTPLATE

A railway enthusiast and longstanding, active and knowledgeable member of our Society, Mike Fore-

man has a keen interest in and considerable knowledge of railway matters. This passion has taken him on a great many visits – some official and others less so – to many and various engine sheds. He has also met a number of ‘real’ railwaymen from whom he has learned much.

Mike has enjoyed recent holidays involving steam locomotion in full size and model forms in Poland and Germany. These and other associated topics dat-



ing back to 1963 will form the subject of Mike's presentation which he prefers to describe as "a brief review of time spent on the footplate by a non-railwayman".

In my notes for the March News Sheet I called Mike Foreman a 'train spotter'. Oops! I should have used the term 'railway enthusiast' and apologise to Mike for my *faux pas*. Supported by his family, Mike has spent considerable time preparing his presentation for our enjoyment. It would be appreciated if more members and friends than have attended recent meetings could make the journey to headquarters for this and future meetings.

### 12 MAY 2006 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Fully detailed elsewhere in this issue, the May General Meeting, which will take place on the second Friday of May, will be our Society's Annual General Meeting.

## The March Loco Section Meeting by Roger Bell

The meeting was a film show entitled 'Steam in China' by Gordon Massey.

Gordon first went to China in 2000 and decided then to take his hobby of photography more seriously. China is the only place left in the world where one can see big steam over great distances; everything we saw was taken in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, although it is coming rapidly to a close.

The trains are in the main absolutely packed and twenty coaches are a common sight; one woman spoke of standing for twenty hours in a vestibule and could not move afterwards. Gordon and his group had sleeper tickets but the ordinary Chinaman buys a ticket and is packed in. Freight traffic is expanding at the rate of 10% a year. Diesel locomotives have been built since the mid 1990's but production could not keep up with demand so steam has been given an extended life. There are virtually no cars on the roads, but the roads have been built complete with petrol stations ready for when they come.

He had drawn a rough map of China to give us a sense of place; China is 3000 miles by 2000. The west is very poor and sparsely populated with a poor economy. The south with the paddy fields is also very poor; all the growth and new industry are on the south coast. Most of the railways are in the north-east where the steel and coal are; the old industries which are dying are also there. Mongolia has a lot of self control; it is desert area, poor, sparsely populated with coal and steel.

There are 100,000 coal mines in China. One steelworks in the north-east employs 200,000 people.

The steam locomotive fleet since 1950 has become much

standardised; 1800 of the SY class 2-8-2 were built in 1964. There are 1800 of the JS class. 4700 of the QJ class 2-10-2 were built in 1964. The JF class 2-8-2 were built in the 1940's. They had large 12 wheel bogie tenders, 2 x 6 wheel bogies. The narrow gauge was C2 0-8-0's.

Gordon gave a commentary to the video as it progressed. All the filming was done in sub-zero temperatures; it can drop to -50 degrees, but -40 was the worst he experienced. On his first day waiting for a train at 7am in -17 degrees with fingers so cold they could barely operate the camera, he nearly went home. Between shots he stowed the battery in his inside pocket to keep it warm.

To see steam in these low temperatures is an electrifying experience; it condenses more because there is so much more of it. Gordon has spent a total of 14 weeks in China; having returned one has to go back again. He has produced 10 hours of watchable video and tonight's show was the greatest hits from 15 locations. The first film was entitled 'Industrial railways' from north east and west China. Industrial railways are unlike ours in that they use the same locomotives and coaches as the mainline and run for 20 miles or more, but the operating practices are the same.

As the film started we were immediately aware of our new environment which looked bitterly cold. Two 2-10-2 locomotives started to pull away towards us; the small wheels and big throw on the coupling rod journals accentuated the motion, the multiple exhaust beats rang out through the cold air, and the exhaust smoke was absolutely jet black billowing high into the air. The whistle blast made a raucous almost off-key note similar to the American type. We were suddenly in a fog-like cloud as they passed below us.

What an introduction!

One can travel and walk about on one's own anywhere you like, through stations, yards, on the track, in the workshops and film where one chooses; no one will tell you off. People scavenge for pieces of coal and just wander across the track; women were seen shovelling coal spoil into the back of a truck.

The large loading gauge made the locomotives huge; the chimney seemed to be 2 foot in diameter, and the sheer volume and speed of the exhaust made them awesome. A mineral freight with wagons piled high was double headed with 2-8-2's and a 2-8-2 banker at the rear. Escaping steam blanketed the cylinders back below the running boards.

A sequence in a workshop captured the shafts of light coming through the roof and highlighted the dust in the boiler shop where men and women in hard hats repaired locomotives. Locomotive repairs are carried out outside in the below freezing temperatures, like -40 degrees; only heavy repairs are done in the shed.

The amazing scenery was the finest backdrop; the Gobi desert was very inhospitable. We had watched a train enter a tunnel far off and were now waiting at the other end for it to emerge. It could be heard getting closer; the staccato was getting increasingly louder and eventually the double header blasted through the tunnel portico, the steam being forced out into the air like an explosion as 4000 tons of coal were hauled past, complete with rear banker all 2-10-2's. A horizontal jet of steam, like a steam lance jetted out sideways from below the footplate; it was the boiler blowdown valve being opened, which they are not supposed to operate in cuttings, tunnels or stations for obvious reasons.

At a steel works where 20,000 men work, a train stopped on an embankment, the side opening wagons were opened and the red hot slag was tipped out.

Spitting is a terrible habit amongst Chinese men as well as picking their noses, although when told to stop by a railway official they all did; they do respect authority. Chinese women are better mannered; in fact a young girl emerged from a hovel of a home looking beautiful. They glide rather



A C2 2-8-2 762mm gauge loco on the Huanan Coal Railway with temp -30C. **Photo:** Gordon Massey

than walk and are slim due to their diet.

The second film was of narrow gauge, 762 mm or 3 ft 6 inches. The forestry railways in the north east are very ex-

tensive, but they are now closed as there are no forests left, one line is still open for coal. One dilapidated tramcar was followed from a station by an open railcar filled with men; following that was a horse and cart.

A man crouched by a passing highly-loaded logging train, switching the points to and fro as the wagons passed, splitting the train up some this way some that, a seemingly perilous operation.

There were no birds to see, Chairman Mao had them all shot as they ate the crop seed. Trouble is the birds ate insects and without them the crops fail as the ecological balance has been upset. Domestic rubbish is thrown on the railway; at least it was frozen as it would stink in summer.

Gritting the roads is done by a gang of 12 workmen attempting to break up the ice with spades. The inevitable collision occurred between two cars and happened before our very eyes.

One steam shot was of a workman's train; the men travelled in an open wagon, again in freezing temperatures, just like some terrible prisoner of war film. Another shot showed coal hopper wagons being unloaded by a man riding between the trucks and kicking a lever to open the wagon door. Another shot captured a motorcyclist following a train into a tunnel.

Market day was seen in one town in south China where it rains for 200 days a year. The coal train went right down the middle of the main street between the fruit stalls. This is the real China not the one the tourists are taken to.

The final film was from Mongolia and covered the Jitong railway which was built to carry freight, opened in 1995 and is 600 miles long. It takes 22 hours to travel the entire distance. One hundred QJ 2-10-2 locomotives were bought second hand and the line was 2/3rds steam operated. The locomotives had a two hour turn around; they just keep going all the time. The Jingpeng Pass is the most spectacular part for watching steam in action; there are 7 tunnels and 5 viaducts. If a millionaire were to buy a play railway then it would be this one. Footplate rides could be had for a handful of English coins as the Chinese collect foreign money.

The shed and works at Daban where 50 locomotives were allocated, was the last large steam shed in the world. The last steam to operate on this line was in October 2005. Six steam locomotives have been kept as the line is to be used for tourism, and it's the Chinese that want to visit it.

If all this has whetted your appetite, it costs £500 for a two week holiday including flights.

We thanked Gordon for showing us his film which is the best that I have ever seen for portraying steam locomotives hard at work.

Next months meeting is a 'Work in Progress'.

## Au revoir by Mike & Beryl Collingwood

As some of you know, on April 19th Beryl & I will be leaving the district and moving to Warwickshire. It seems sensible that at this time in our lives we should move closer to the family, and it hasn't been an easy decision particularly as the anchors we put down some 40 years ago when we moved into the area are still firmly in place. We are moving to a smallish village situated between Stratford-upon-Avon and Evesham, called Salford Priors which used to be on a GWR branch line and can be seen in earlier railway atlases - what more can I ask!

Leaving our Society behind will be a serious miss as it has been a large part of my social life, particularly since we gave up our canal boating. I have met and enjoyed time spent with some very talented and interesting people and I always looked forward to the Friday meetings and the Sunday steam-ups, and even the winter work parties have had their rewards. I built and ran my first engine at North London, and I well remember the sheer excitement and satisfaction when my Simplex negotiated its first circuit at Colney Heath - that thrill has got to be close to winning a medal at the Olympic Games!

I am sure my steam interests are going to be well served at the new abode. The Avondale Model Railway Club is only 3 miles up the road, where it caters for 5" and 7¼" locos over a compact but imaginative one-third mile circuit. They are a small but energetic group, some 28 in number, who have turned a green field site at a local garden centre into a well equipped and busy railway in less than three years - lots of cuttings, bridgeworks, pointwork and signals. Some 19

miles away is the Birmingham Model Railway Society at Illshaw Heath. Birmingham like North London is one of the first division clubs with lots of history and a large membership. A couple of years ago I made myself known at one of their Saturday birthday parties - in fact Beryl and my sister Ann on that occasion got roped into helping with the catering in their splendid self-built brick clubhouse and meeting hall. The icing on the cake is the Gloucester & Warwickshire railway, around 15-miles down the road - regrettably it's GWR country but you can't win 'em all!

Anyway time to move on - the furniture van's just arrived and there's lots to do. I shall miss you all but most of all I shall miss the smell of gun-powder!

That's his bit - this is mine! Having devoted 9 years of my life as the NLSME's Hon.Sec. I feel I too should say how much I enjoyed it and the opportunities it presented to meet so many diverse people. I'll gloss over the amount of typing it involved! But I had lots of interesting phone calls from other Societies, from folk booking the portable track or birthday parties, and even - on one occasion - a serious enquiry about membership for a 7-year old son! Yes, it did happen! I could keep calling up highlights and memories but will refrain from boring you all anymore - it has been nice knowing you, and the bonus - you have all kept Michael very happy. Thank you. Cheers - Beryl.

## Bon Voyage!

It is 14 years since I first met Mike at a Loco meeting at Finchley. He sat in the hall looking like most of us look when joining a new club or association, a little lost perhaps! George Case and myself were the section leaders at the time and during the interval I asked Mike his interests and welcomed him to our meeting. He told me at that he had originally joined the N.L.S.M.E. in 1947 as a young man, who had no model engineering equipment or ideas what was what in societies like ours. The only thing that was very clear in his mind all those years ago was to eventually make a locomotive of his own. Like many of us his early thoughts and aspirations had to be put on hold owing to domestic and family commitments.

Mike very rarely talks about his early life but he spent many years in hospital after being diagnosed with T.B. during an Army National service medical, and it was during this hospitalisation that he met Beryl, and today we all know that they made a successful recovery and happy marriage.

It was very soon after Mike joined our club that our club Secretary Terri Cliff was going on maternity leave and a replacement needed to be found. Beryl decided to take the

job on for a year until Terri could get back into the job again. However, this was not to be, so Beryl kindly continued to do the job for several years and many thanks must go to her for the professional administration of this task. In the meantime Mike was busy building a Simplex, and a fine job he made of this engine. It has performed well at many fetes, birthday parties, and Mencap days. Mike is always on duty to help when the going is getting tough, and he very rarely misses a working party. He has held the Vice-chairman's job alongside Chairman Frank Dell, and also has been a boiler tester for some years.

The latest loco he has built is to the well-known design 'Maid of Kent'; this engine has been built with T.L.C. and again is a credit to his skills. On the stocks at present is a 3½" inch Heiland Lassie, which was bought as a box full of bits and a semi-finished chassis; this will be a project to finish in the new workshop when it's been built up at the new home. Mike and Beryl have been very good friends to Angela and me for the last fourteen years and I'm sure we as a club will miss them, so *bon voyage*, good luck and good health to you both.

**Derek Perham**

	Track Steward Rota 2006			
Date	Senior Steward	Track Steward	Track Steward	Track Steward
16-Apr	Ron Price	Maurice Cummins*	Graham Price	Steven Don
23-Apr	Brian Apthorpe*	John Amos	Mark Braley	John Waldock
30-Apr	David Harris*	Adrian Newson	Derrick Franklin*	Keith Ashman
07-May	Nigel Griffiths	Geoffrey Bullock	David Jones	John Beesley
14-May	Jack Edwards*	David Spencer	Jeremy Deans	Adam Gorski
21-May	Grahame Ainge	Peter Foreman	Simon Pearson	Richard Hesketh
28-May	Grahame Gardner	Peter Precious	Guy Ellerby	
04-Jun	Robert Oldfield	Frank Hills	Richard Castle	Michael Dear
11-Jun	Les Brimson	Roy Hall	Roger Brown	Jack Sanson
18-Jun	Keith Hughes	Jim Robson*	Victor Burgess	Philip Rowe
25-Jun	John Squire	Ian Buswell	John Riches	Richard Cross
02-Jul	Ian Johnston*	David Snellgrove*	John L Morgan	Naughton Morgan
09-Jul	Mike Avery*	John Winson	Jonathan Avery*	Mike Hodgson
16-Jul	Roy Chapman	Nicholas Rudoe	Peter Brewster	Anthony Mason
23-Jul	Ian Clift	Peter Lancaster*	John West	Richard Hall
30-Jul	Keith Bartlam	John Cattle	Gerald Moore	Peter Fraser
06-Aug	Mike Crisp*	Ian Reddish*	Alex Chapman	David Foster
13-Aug	Mike Ruffell	Brian Baker*	David Marsden	Brian Kennedy
20-Aug	Mike Foreman*	Alan Marshall	Geoffrey Mogg	Mike Franklin
27-Aug	Donal Corcoran	Lawrence Steers	Philip Hyde	R. Thompson
03-Sep	Tony Dunbar	Colin Thomson	Geoffrey Eccles	
10-Sep	Brendan Corcoran	Peter Davies	Peter Brown	Larry Cheeseman
17-Sep	Jim MacDonald	Chris Reynolds	Peter MacDonald	Peter Badger
24-Sep	Adrian Reddish	Dick Payne*	Nicholas Bone	Martin Ginger
01-Oct	Stephen Smith	Roger Bell*	Paul Lacey	Barrie Davies
08-Oct	Kieran Corcoran	Gavin Lang	John Mills	Roger Woollett

**NB:** For any selected date/row, please read across both pages to obtain names of all designated stewards.

## Loco Section & Tyttenhanger Committee News

### Railway Development Project

The extra meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> March started with a presentation of the “Amalgamated Members Plan” which has evolved from the features of the members plans submitted last September. It showed achievable stages whilst maintaining continuous running on both railways. It followed with “Food for Thought” and a final focus on the first stage. Jim followed with his thoughts on connecting to the existing ground level, initial loop around the mound and extension of the raised track. He also voiced his concerns of what is involved in proceeding with this project. Les reviewed details from his talk at the previous meeting and displayed Tony’s version of a loop around the mound. Discussion followed across the floor of the merits of the project followed by a vote on two key questions:

- Q.1 Do the members wish to extend the raised track? - Yes.
- Q.2 Do the members support the first stage of extending the ground level in a loop around the mound? - Yes.

The RDG is to look into the final route and bridge location.

### Winter Work Parties

We are rapidly approaching the start of the running season. Although much has been done we can still achieve a bit more in the remaining time. Thanks to those who have braved the bitter cold this winter and have achieved so much.

### Steward Rota

You may have noticed the incomplete published Steward rota last month. Our editor has promised to show it all this month. There are a few changes and additions. A few more have agreed to a second duty, which is very much appreciated. For us to achieve a full six track stewards and two tea stewards each week, a few more such volunteers will be needed to fill the spaces. Please pick an empty slot and let me know as soon as possible.

- If you cannot attend on your allocated slot for whatever reason, **arrange a swap with another member. BUT PLEASE LET ME KNOW** so I can amend the published list.
- If you appear on the list and you do have a valid reason why you should not, **PLEASE LET ME KNOW.**
- If you notice someone who has died, left or has a valid reason not to be on the list, **PLEASE LET ME KNOW.**
- Most importantly if you do not appear on the list and should be, **PLEASE LET ME KNOW.**

I also ask that **ALL TRACK and TEA STEWARDS SIGN THE RUNNING BOOK** for monitoring and insurance purposes.

It is not much to ask to do your duty, **but to just not turn up is unreasonable.** It is your responsibility to yourself and your club to make sure this season runs smoothly, so we can

Date	Track Steward	Track Steward	Tea Steward	Tea Steward
16-Apr	Jack Edwards*	Peter Weeks*	Ron Thorogood	Mrs Thorogood
23-Apr	William Mason	Dick Payne*	David Metcalf	Mrs Apthorpe
30-Apr	John Shawe	David Snellgrove*	R Lidzey	Mrs Harris
07-May	John Fitzgerald	Chris Vousden*	Mervyn Smith	Mrs.Griffiths
14-May	Reg Piper	Mike Foreman*	Robert Hatton	Raymond Goss
21-May	Kevin Wilson	Frank Hills*	Ray Smiles	Nicholas Griffin
28-May	Mike Avery*	Jonathan Avery*	George Case	Mike Chrisp*
04-Jun	Owen Chapman		Mrs Reddish*	Mrs Chapman
11-Jun	Arthur Rixon	Derek Eldridge*	Richard Deal	Ken Wilsher
18-Jun	Reginald Axton		Dave Lawrence	Frank Inman
25-Jun	Frank Adams	Brian Baker*	Peter Prior	Mrs Squire
02-Jul	Peter Berkley		John Morgan (M)	Mrs J Morgan
09-Jul	Tim Bittleston	Chris Platford	Colin Bainbridge	Ron Peirce
16-Jul	David Burman		Graeme Brown	Mrs Brewster
23-Jul	Bob Gamble		Harry Henderson	Mrs Clift
30-Jul	Jeffrey Bolton	Maurice Cummins*	Raymond Randal	Harold Barrow
06-Aug	Paul Godin		Alexander Robinson	Jim Robson*
13-Aug	Peter Sheen	Ian Johnston*	Chris Dean	Marcel Bolle
20-Aug	David Broom		David Morgan	Mrs Foreman
27-Aug	Lawrence Wood		Peter Funk	
03-Sep	Peter Lancaster*	Derrick Franklin*	Maxim Sarche	
10-Sep	Dave Green		L Brooks	Mrs P Corcoran
17-Sep		Ian Reddish*	Mrs. MacDonald	Mrs Badger
24-Sep	Peter Fox		Mrs Reddish*	Laura Reddish
01-Oct	Alex James		Mrs Smith	Julie Davies
08-Oct			Rai Fenton	Mrs Betty Fenton
15-Oct	Tim Clementson	Brian Apthorpe*	Derek Perham	
22-Oct	David Harris*	Roger Bell*	Mrs Baxter	Jenny Baxter

carry out our responsibility for health and safety for all those that visit and enjoy our wonderful facility. The Tyttenhanger Committee, thank you all in advance for your help.

### Events

Gordon Massey gave an impressive presentation with excellent video footage of **Steam in China**. Those who did not go missed a treat of the last of big steam. I was amazed at the scale to which the Chinese will go in temperatures of minus 20 and below. This was indeed a night to be remembered.

- Sat 15<sup>th</sup> April: **Track cleanup Day \*\*\*\*\*BIRTHDAY CANCELLED\*\*\*\*\***  
 Sun 16<sup>th</sup> April: **Running Season Start @Colney Heath**  
 Mon 17<sup>th</sup> April: **Private running day**  
 Fri 21<sup>st</sup> April: **Loco Section Meeting 8pm @ HQ. Work in Progress** is your last chance to show us what you were up to in the winter. So if you were not ready in November, now is the time to show the Club your prowess.  
 Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> April: **Birthday Party.** Help would be appreciated.  
 Sat 29<sup>th</sup> April: **Birthday Party.** Help would be appreciated.  
 Sat 6<sup>th</sup> May: **Birthday Party.** Help would be appreciated.  
 Sat 13<sup>th</sup> May: **Birthday Party.** Help would be appreciated.  
 Fri 19<sup>th</sup> May: **Loco Section Meeting 8pm @ HQ.** To be arranged  
 Fri 16<sup>th</sup> June: **Loco Section Meeting 8pm @ HQ. The British Owned railways of Argentina by Ralph Copnall** who lived his early life in Argentina and has returned on visits. He will give us a brief background to Argentine railway history, leading up to comments on the preservation scene. He will enliven the talk with personal reminiscences illustrated with stills spanning sixty years. This is a must for all sections of the Society.  
 Sat 17<sup>th</sup> June: **Birthday Party.** Help would be appreciated.

A year has nearly passed as Loco Section Leader, TC Chairman and Council member. Thanks go to the TC, the RDG and members for their support. I look forward to a great year ahead of progress for us all.

**Adrian**

(Loco Section Leader)

# nlsme

A wonderful day out for all the family

## A trip by charabanc to Amberley Working Museum

**£18.00 each place with reductions for children  
(includes coach trip and admission to museum)**

**Coach will leave Colney Heath (Church Lane)  
at 9.00am and return at about 6.00pm  
On Saturday 17th June 2006  
(subject to sufficient interest)**

17th June is a Steam Day at the Museum, and the Narrow Gauge Railway will provide a steam service.

Those who have visited before will know that the site has a range of railway exhibits as well as 38 other exhibits, including a Robey engine, bus collection and loco shed to name just a few.



### Good Home Required!

Surplus to current requirements and in very good condition, a convertible drawing board / desk is available free of charge\* on a first-come, first-served basis to anyone who can make good use of it.

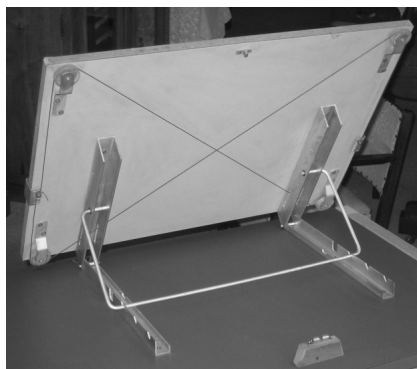
Suitable for paper to A2 in format and size, and ideal for use by a model engineer, the drawing board is 645 x 465mm with a resilient plastic surface. The board can be set to any of three positions, the tensioned stainless steel multi-strand wire keeps the



*Now you see it....*

rule parallel during use, and the board can be locked flat for storage when not in use.

Constructed with a polished beechwood frame, the desk is 1170mm wide x green melamine top surface.



*Now you don't!*

(\* A donation to club funds would be appreciated.)

560mm deep x 695mm high with a dark

*Three board positions guarantee convenience in use.*

## **Dates for your Diary**

Friday 7 April	8.00pm General Meeting; Mike Foreman: A Holiday on the Footplate; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Monday 10 April	8.00pm Council Meeting; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Saturday 15 April	Track cleanup day *****Birthday Cancelled*****
<b>Sunday 16 April</b>	<b>Start of running season at Colney Heath</b>
Monday 17 April	Bank Holiday - members' running day at Colney Heath
Friday 21 April	8.00pm Loco Section meeting; Work in Progress; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Friday 21 April	<i>Deadline for copy to Editor for May News Sheet</i>
Saturday 22 April	Birthday Party at Colney heath (help required)
Tuesday 25 April	8.00pm Tyttenhanger Committee Meeting; Loco Section Leader's house
Friday 28 April	8.00pm Workshop Evening; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Saturday 29 April	Birthday Party (Tinsley - help required)
Monday 1 May	Bank Holiday - members' running day at Colney Heath
5/6/7 May	National Model Engineering Show, Harrogate
Saturday 6 May	Birthday Party (Townsend - help required)
Sunday 7 May	Toy Boat Regatta, Colney Heath
Monday 8 May	8.00pm Council Meeting; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
<b>Friday 12 May</b>	<b>8.00pm Annual General Meeting; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley</b>
Saturday 13 May	Birthday party (Stephens - help required)
Friday 19 May	8.00pm Loco Section meeting; to be arranged; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Friday 19 May	<i>Deadline for copy to Editor for June News Sheet</i>
Tuesday 23 May	8.00pm Tyttenhanger Committee Meeting; Colney Heath (in the coach)
Monday 29 May	Bank Holiday - members' running day at Colney Heath
Friday 2 June	8.00pm General Meeting; Malcolm Stride: A History of Brush Electrical Engineering; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Saturday 10 June	Club day for Chingford/Chelmsford SME; contact D Harris/M Chrisp
Monday 12 June	8.00pm Council Meeting; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Friday 16 June	8.00pm Loco Section meeting; Ralph Copnall on Argentine Railways; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Saturday 17 June	Birthday party (Hibbitt - help required)
Sunday 18 June	Marine Section; Submarine Day at Colney Heath
Friday 23 June	<i>Deadline for copy to Editor for July News Sheet</i>
Saturday 24 June	North American Section Open Day; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Tuesday 27 June	8.00pm Tyttenhanger Committee Meeting; Colney Heath (in the coach)
	☆☆☆
Every Wednesday	Miniature Railways, British and American and Video Group at HQ
Every Thursday	Slot Cars Section at HQ
Every Sunday	Morning work parties at Colney Heath (start 9.00am).

## **MJ Engineering - Change of address**

We would like to inform you, and all of your membership, that MJ Engineering has moved premises and is now closer to you.

Our new address is The Forge, Cricket Hill Lane, Yateley, Hants GU46 6BB Tel 01252-890777

For the present our opening hours are Wed-Fri 10am-4pm (Lunch from 12.30-1.30).

We carry stocks of nuts, bolts, rivets, metal sheet and bar; as well as the fittings and castings for our range of engines.