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*This Month...*



# The News Sheet

Chairman's Chatter, Treasurer's Report, Raised Track Report, Forthcoming General Meetings, The December General Meeting, Quiz Answers, New Year Steam Up, Mr Grumpy, The January General Meeting, Diary Dates, Club Contacts.



## Chairman's Chatter

Firstly, I would like to wish, belatedly, a very Happy New Year to all our members and their families. I trust that the festive break was a welcome interlude for you all.

It does seem like an awfully long time since last putting pen to paper before being badgered again by our trusty Newsletter Editor, 'Where's your copy for this month? You're late again!'. Well done Derek for trying to keep me on time.

Where would we be without our Newsletter, to coin a phrase 'It is the glue that holds our Society together'. Each month it is a welcome revelation for all members to appreciate what is happening within our Society, especially for those that are unable to attend any of the 'happenings' as we proceed through the year whether they be exhibitions, slot car competitions, miniature scale events, open air events, parties and running days, etc.. All these and more go to make our Society what it is today. We are so fortunate to have such a diverse range of interests for our members.

The prospects for 2017 are very good with lots of ideas and projects in the pipeline, some waiting to be finished and some proposed for the future. Headquarters at Finchley is in serious need of some love and attention considering that it was a virtually derelict building when the Society took it on all those years ago. At Colney Heath, this year will hopefully see the erection and fit-out of a machine shop adjacent to the revised layout for the raised track steaming bays.

Now that the spaces between the storage containers have been made secure with the new doors. Progress is being made to fit these out for the appropriate storage and/or workshop use. This is in preparation for the removal of the bunker in the old workshop and subsequent dismantling of the old workshop.

As I noted in a previous Newsletter, it would be good to see all the current projects in hand all completed before any new projects at Colney Heath are started, that does not mean that they cannot be planned but let us take a couple of years to relax and enjoy what we have got already, and get to play trains.

**Robin T. Chairman.**



A reminder of the warmer days of recent past, September 2016. Jack S running 'Iris' with associations to the club for over fifty years. Owen C.

**Photo on front cover.** New Year's Day 'Steam Up', running the 'wrong' way round the track at Colney Heath. Keith H with his Polly. Photo Mike F.

## Raised Track Report

The New Year's Day steam up at Tyttenhanger was enjoyed by those who attended despite the overcast weather, which fortunately only devolved into a downpour as we were locking up the workshop to leave. We had four engines running, three steam, one electric and one failure, which we won't talk about!

As we have sometimes done in the past, the New Year's Day run is an opportunity to try running on our track in the reverse direction. It may seem straight forward, but it is very easy to get caught out by the different configuration of the gradients and the length of them. What is normally a steep slope down to the Steaming Bay from the Station now becomes a mountain at 1-65 to climb back up to the station. My thanks to Ian J for manning the coach and providing sustenance to all.



**The Raised Track is now closed until further notice**, whilst we make and pour concrete into the shuttering to make the four step-over blocks to assist access to the tunnel shed and the COSH cabinet.

The photo above shows two of the new step-overs at the tunnel along with the shuttering box ready for the next mix. The concrete is mixed in the car park and

poured straight into the bogie hopper wagon on the GLR (plastic lined first), pushed up to site for transfer by shovels, a very quick and easy exercise. We intend to take the opportunity at the same time to remake the step-over beside the lift out section on the new land. Also to rebuild the steps at the Steaming Bay to a better height and width.

The photo below shows the new roof on the garage, now awaiting the side fascia boards and refitting of the guttering. We have not identified any main beam sleepers that urgently require replacement this year, but we will be working on improving the ride quality around parts of the track.



Brian A and team are working hard on fitting new wheel blanks to some of our passenger cars, to replace the existing wheels, which have worn out. However, this has caused a problem in that the carriage lifting table is having to be modified to accept the slightly thicker flanges on the new wheels. It all makes work for the working man to do, as they say. Plenty to do on a Sunday morning at the track or even on a Thursday.



Recent action in the Slot Car section. A speeding car races past Owen's camera.

## Forthcoming General Meetings

Unless otherwise indicated General Meetings begin at 8pm at our Legion Way Headquarters in North Finchley, usually ending at about 10pm. All members are welcome and we are always happy to see friends and family attending. We hope for a good attendance to support speakers. Please remember that many of the meetings depend on the club to provide the catalyst for a stupendous evening.

For more information please ring me.

**Friday 3rd February.** **An evening for open discussion on Colney Heath matters** as prelude to the 2017 running season. Given that Tyttenhanger is now a multi activity site it will be informative to have views from members of all sections that enjoy the facilities. The topics to be as members wish to raise. These are expected to cover updates on agreed projects under way, ideas for new projects, feedback from recent years' experience of public running, review of stewarding resourcing, rotas and duties etc. The meeting is for members to comment on activities at Colney Heath and provide input to future development/operation. **Les B will chair the meeting and asks that to assist planning the agenda members email him beforehand, phone or raise in person topic items they wish to be discussed.**

**Friday 3rd March.** **Work in Progress.** Your 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 and progress. Bits of Locomotives please but this is a General Meeting so any general engineering is most welcome.

**Friday 7th April.** **Edward the Compressor** returns to provide a breath of air to resuscitate your forgotten and not so forgotten machines. So please ransack your bottom drawers and bring something along to hold us all spell bound when it springs into life. (We hope.)

Ian J

## **The December General Meeting.** **A Festive Event.**

The Festive Evening was scheduled to commence at eight-o'clock but interested members arriving on time were surprised to find that facilities had been prepared well in advance. The clean and refreshed meeting room was ready for the evening. Tables laid out and dressed, food was displayed and a fine pot of chicken Balti was bubbling away on a temporary hot-plate with its associated pot of rice. Mike C's traditional festive Christmas tree was resplendent on the stage and his traditional festive music was being played from his traditional festive music system.



Ian J welcomed the large gathering and explained the safety regulations with the appointment of a fire warden. Almost immediately expectant partaking of the food commenced with gusto. So much gusto in fact that by the time a large contingent from the Garden Railway Section arrived the adequate supply of Chicken Balti has been consumed. Which was a pity because like the Three Kings of the Orient they came bearing gifts of crisps, liquorice allsorts and chocolate biscuits.

With food consumed and conversation at full volume it was time for Jim M to entertain. He did not let us down. There were a couple of picture quizzes, one of car makers' emblems and one of national flags. They were



rather appropriate because everyone knew at least one badge and one country but you have to come from the antipodes to recognise the soon to be defunct Holden badge. The Australian Holden Car Company, the scribe is reliably informed by the previous editor of this journal, is to stop production of cars very shortly.



Soon it was apposite to interrupt the pleasing amount of conversation between groups of members from differing sections of the Society because time had marched on. Tables were willingly cleared and the room tidied ready for the next gathering in the room, which would be a council meeting.

So why do we have a Festive Gathering? I doubt if members were recalling a pregnant Mary trudging through the snow to Bethlehem. No,

perhaps the Gathering has a more Pagan origin. Could it possibly be a celebration of a summer of very rewarding activity in all the varying aspects of the Society? Could it also be as an anticipation of the hard work to come in the winter months during inclement weather; with cooperation between groups both at Head Quarters and at Colney Heath to maintain and proudly prepare the sites for the forthcoming season? Or was it just a 'thank you' from the Club?

Or was it to perform a blending function where members of the varying groups within the Society can understand each other's aspirations and needs? Or is that a pig we see flying over Summer's Lane? We sincerely hope not!!



The scribe can report that no-one was harmed or hurt in this completely free range and organic festive event.

**Ian J**  
Photos – Robin T



An unusual shot of a loco 'reverse running', photo by Owen C

## **NLSME New Year's Steam Up.** **New Year's Day Steam up at Colney Heath.**

New Year's Day occurred on a Sunday this year so that fact might have indicated why some members thought that the day would also be devoted to Working Parties and not celebrations as many of the 'not so hungover' perhaps thought. Nevertheless a goodly number turned out to join in with the celebration and fun by running the 'wrong' way round the track.



**Chris V running his Black Five. Photo Mike F.**

By the time that Ian J arrived at just before ten several members were at work preparing their locomotives for the first run of the year. The kettle was soon on and the carriage shed unlocked. Several young visitors arrived from Harpenden as they had done in previous years and promptly at ten were able to get their Planet cautiously into orbit going round in a clockwise direction in the same manner as the planets do in the solar system. The pre-walked track had been cleared of leaves and twigs and soon the small family were motoring round the track waiting for the big boys with their steam locomotives to compete.



Promptly at eleven the triangle was roundly struck which broadcasted to all far and near that refreshments were at hand, those not involved with steaming up were soon getting on the outside of mince pies kindly supplied by Mr Mike F and the visitors from Harpenden. Hot tomato soup of the Heinz variety with a hint of Basil but without the BO was dispensed steaming to chilled members; tea and coffee with chocolate biscuits added as a standard afterthought.



**Mike G with his B1 'Impala'. Photo Mike F.**

Up to eleven-o'clock the weather had been clement but soon there was a hint of rain which then materialised into real rain so the happy fulfilled associates quickly removed their locomotives from the track and headed for home. So ending yet another New Year's successful Steam up.

**Ian J**

Photo on previous page, Owen C.

## **Mr. Grumpy.**

Happy New Year and I hope that at least some of you enjoyed the Christmas Quiz that I set for you.

Much is happening still at Colney Heath, we have recently had The Tree Fellers in to remove dead and dangerous trees and branches.

New fencing is being erected adjacent to Orchard Junction Station.

The roof of the main station area, adjacent to the B Z Coach is having a major refurbishment.

The replacement of the garage roof is almost completed.

The G.L.R. Tunnel is now virtually covered over hiding all the hard work that has gone into it.

The traverser for the new steaming bay is starting to take shape and plans are in hand for the new machine shop that is to be sited close to the new steaming bays for the raised track.

Storage is being improved as the containers, and the spaces between them, are being fitted out; but with the imminent removal of the bunker in the old workshop we shall soon be hard pressed for loco and rolling stock storage. Along this theme, the site at Colney Heath is still home to a lot of members' items, both under cover and out in the open, that have not recently been used; and possibly not likely to be used. So once again I urge all members that own such items to consciously make an effort to remove them from site to make space for Society and members' items that are regularly in use whether it be for the members own use or for use by the Society.

Plans are in place to progressively replace the green fence panels around the site that are now falling into disrepair.

'Old Man's Ramps' are being installed at various locations around the raised track to make it easier for our ageing members to cross the track safely and with less effort.

Painting of our many artefacts and fixtures and fittings is still progressing even though it is more like spreading treacle in this cold weather.

Jet washing of the girder bridge and the paved areas has made these areas look much better and as if somebody owns them.

Soon it will be time to start the routine maintenance of the raised track to ensure that all is safe and reliable for the coming running season. Between the rabbits and the tree roots there has been a surprising amount of movement in some of the track supports.

As usual our Sunday morning Working Parties are progressing. There is a multitude of tasks in hand just to keep one step ahead of the on-going requirements to maintain such a diverse site as we are so fortunate to have for our hobbies and pastimes.

We all know that this time of year it is a bit cold and miserable to turn out when it is easier to turn over.

But, we need you! You can start as early as you wish and we normally leave at lunchtime.

Please do not be shy, there is plenty to do and most of it is being accomplished by a very small and dedicated team. We can always guarantee you 'tea and biscuits' served by our own dedicated caterers at 11:00.

**Mr. Grumpy.**  
**Tyttenhanger Site Manager.**  
**[A.K.A. Robin T]**

### **TOTAL CHANGE OF SUBJECT.**

I know that this is nothing to do with our normal topics generally related to Model Engineering but I do know that some of you come from the North Herts area and maybe you, or a close friend or relative, may have an interest in music; in particular Brass Band Music.

### **Hitchin Band announce New Initiative**

**Hitchin Band** is pleased to announce the formation of **Hitchin Community Brass**. The idea is to offer a playing opportunity for brass players who no longer play with a regular band or are still learning and would like to gain some ensemble experience. We are inviting them to come along and have a blow on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month starting 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017, between 7.30pm and 9.30pm, at '**Hitchin Rugby Club, Old Hale Way, Hitchin SG5 1XL**'. We would love to see players from the Beds, Buck & Herts areas. There is no age limit so whether you are a bit rusty, young or old, all are welcome. There will be an opportunity to pick music you would like to play from the extensive music library of **Hitchin Band**. A small donation of £1.50 per session would be welcome.

**Robin T**

## **General Meeting 6<sup>th</sup> January 2017.**

### **An Evening of slides, videos and a model.**

An expectant and enthusiastic group of members assembled at Headquarters. The expectant members were anticipating an evening of visual enjoyment and the enthusiastic ones were to supply it. They were not disappointed.

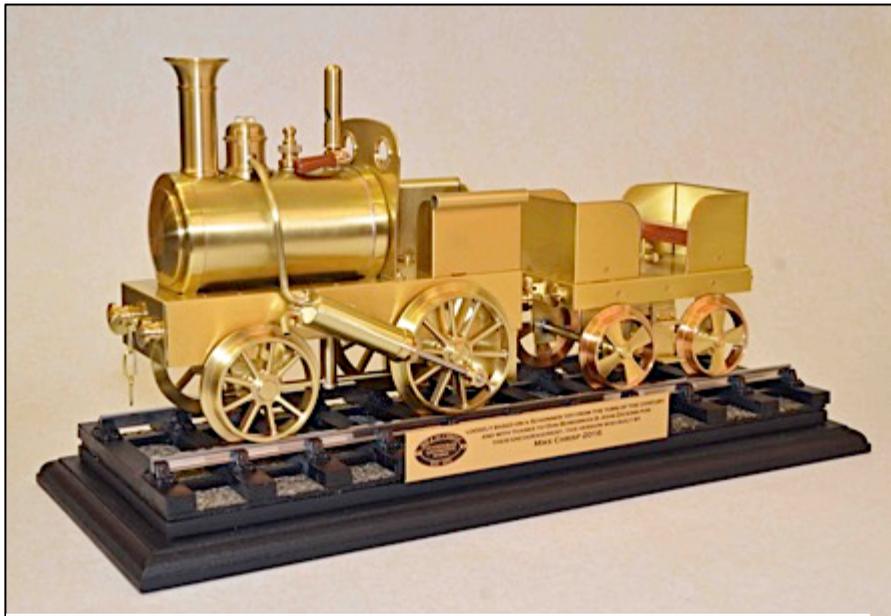
Ian J welcomed the fellows, displayed the raffle prizes, explained the emergency procedures and appointed a fire warden. News of the successful New Year's Steam Up was announced and the last of the Fetes and Fairs events commented on. A great many rides were given by the band of devoted supporters at one event and none at all at a subsequent event, which had to be abandoned due to very inclement weather.

First off was Mike F with videos he had taken on his hols in Northern Europe with Angela and Rob Roy (not a member of the Scottish independence Party) but a rather smart 3 ½" 0-6-0 tank locomotive. Mike had a cornucopia of events to show the assembled group. Scenes taken at Neuberger Ring, which was originally 14 miles of winding narrow country roads that was once the most terrifying motor racing track in history. The track was deemed too dangerous for competitive racing, but now seems to have been straightened a bit and the wrinkles ironed out. It is now possible for the general public to drive at great speeds on the track especially if you don't mind the engine blowing up. The next item was of German trams descending Bad Schandaudown with tracks through a winding village. By this time the Club sound had been switched on with the resultant incredible flange screeching on the tight curves. A trip up Hartz Mountain was seen next with a Mike taking a video from a rear coach with a telephoto lens showing the train slogging up apparently exclusively left hand bends all the way. The conclusion to Mike's donation was a splendid recording taken during reverse running on New Year's day taken from the rear of a train with Mike G following, demonstrating just how to drive Impala with perfect panache. . . A real joy to watch.

A very sociable tea break followed with tea and bics supplied by our own David L. The raffle was drawn and the slide projector installed ready for our friend from Yorkshire; David B. David showed slides that he had taken well over fifty years ago. It was rather nostalgic to see coaling towers and Flying Scotsman resplendent with two tenders. It took the audience back to the days of roll film and Kodachrome.

Mike C then showed the group his new model of the Dribbler. He explained that the model was not suitable for 'work in progress' because the job

was finished and as he had been made an offer he could not refuse, there it was! Mike had had his knee joint replaced and during his convalescence produced an immaculate model of the Dribbler. Of course that was after the appropriate research with John Dickens and John Bowerman regarding the original model Schoener. The scribe can envisage members going to see the doc to get new knees so that they can produce models like that!



**The Apsley 'Piddler' built and shown by Mike C**

Mike H followed with a CD of Summer Holiday. That is if the reader is old enough to remember that. Cliff Richard starred in the film! Mike showed the group the scenes at Aldenham works which was originally built to maintain Northern Line trains but due to WWII the line did not actually get there so the works was devoted to the overhaul and rebuilding of the good old Route Master buses. Accompanied with tunes from Summer Holiday the compelled audience saw buses being stripped down to the monobox chassis and then being rebuilt again. Finally Cliff took over a rebuilt Route Master to go with his pals on their Summer Holiday to Italy.

Jim M took the reins next with a video he took years ago at the Malden Model Engineering Club track. The reason for the trip and film was to see how the Malden Club manufactured their bridge over the tracks which were in the

form of a figure of eight. The North London Club's bridge looks remarkably like the Malden one but theirs is still standing so the North London Club must have copied it!

The meeting was complete at ten with the well satisfied and well entertained group helping to dismantle the equipment and wend their ways home.

Ian J

## **An item omitted from the January General Meeting Report.**

The general meeting scribe has been reminded that he omitted to report on an item included in Mike's submission at the January gathering. It is included below.

The missing item concerned a visit to a foundry at or near Canary Wharf. The event witnessed on video by Mike was the casting of a facsimile of Nigel Gresley's head and perhaps a Mallard sculptured by Hazel Reeves. Rather dramatically molten bronze was poured into patterns on a rotary table one of which must have been Sir Nigels.

Sir Herbert Nigel Gresley 1876-1941 as the cognoscenti of the Society will know was one of the most famous locomotive engineers of the twentieth century. Born in Edinburgh educated at Marlborough and a premium apprentice at LNWR's Crewe Works. He became a pupil of John Aspinall at the L&Y Rly works at Horwich. Gresley then quickly rose through the ranks to become CME of the newly grouped LNER, where he designed and built some of the fastest locomotives in the world. His A1 pacifics were capable of over 100mph. (A disputed first) and his A4 Mallard held the world record of 126mph. His locomotives not only looked aesthetically pleasing but were very efficient. He used only two sets of Walschaerts valve gear for his three cylinder engines making them smooth and economical.

For many years Sir Nigel lived just up the road from Barnet at Salisbury Hall where he was able not only to design railway artefacts but also to study and feed local water fowl including Mallards.

A statue of Sir Nigel was unveiled at King's Cross, including his head but not his Mallard in April 2016 which was the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death.

Ian J

## Dates for your Diary

<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>2017</b>
Fri 3rd Feb	General Meeting. Discussion about Colney Heath.
Sun 5th Feb	Working party at CH, 9am – 12:30
Tues 7th Feb	Council Meeting. 8pm at HQ.
Sun 12th Feb	Working party at CH, 9am – 12:30
<b><i>Fri 17th Feb</i></b>	<b><i>Deadline for copy to Editor for March News Sheet</i></b>
Sun 19th Feb	Working party at CH, 9am – 12:30
Tues 21st Feb	TSC Meeting at St Mark's Church Centre. 8pm
Fri 24th Feb	Workshop meeting. 8pm HQ. Tooling, Mike H.
Sun 26th Feb	Working party at CH, 9am – 12:30
<b>MARCH</b>	<b>2017</b>
Fri 3rd Mar	General Meeting. Work in Progress.
Sun 5th Mar	Working party at CH, 9am – 12:30
Tues 7th Mar	Council Meeting. 8pm at HQ.
Sun 12th Mar	Working party at CH, 9am – 12:30
<b><i>Fri 17th March</i></b>	<b><i>Deadline for copy to Editor for April News Sheet</i></b>
Sun 19th Mar	Working party at CH, 9am – 12:30
Tues 21st Mar	TSC Meeting at St Mark's Church Centre. 8pm
Fri 24th Mar	Workshop meeting. 8pm HQ. Tooling, Mike H.
Sun 26th Mar	Working party at CH, 9am – 12:30

NB. Please notify Alan M (Secretary) of all meetings and other Society events for inclusion in the Society Calendar. Approval for special events still rests with Council and/or the Tyttenhanger Site Committee.