

Issue No. 868

July 2024

# The News Sheet

North London Society of Model Engineers

July 2024



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colour by visiting our web site at [www.nlsme.co.uk](http://www.nlsme.co.uk)

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### **Front cover; -**

LittleLEC competitor Stephen with his teal green Rob Roy. Opting to take 35.4Kg of weight instead of a passenger enjoying his run. There is a full report on the weekend in this issue.



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

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

## Chairman's Comments

Les

Two events held at Tyttenhanger during June have been very successful.

Firstly, the LittleLec competition, of which a detailed report is elsewhere in this issue. I must say that my daughter-in-law Anne deciding to have a go and enter with my old Juliett was a moment of pride for me and a reminder that this hobby should always be fun. The loco had no prior preparation, nor had Anne driven it until the day before. Completing laps on our challenging track was an achievement much enjoyed by members who witnessed her steam through the station on her second run. John and son Jack's entry with an old LNWR Jumbo of uncertain heritage ran as both a 2-4-0 and subsequently a 2-2-0 (see report for reasons why). It was a run full of spirit in keeping with the adventurous side of our hobby.

Finally, Bryan running LBSC's own Hariett (2.5" gauge) on the cuckoo line just completed a perfect model engineers' weekend.

Many thanks are due to all members that helped with the organisation, recording and observing the competition runs over the weekend.

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June was the biannual visit by Barnet Beavers, these came from Finchley, Hendon and Edgware scout groups. There were 90 beavers which, together with their leaders and helpers, made for a busy afternoon. As before the



beavers are split into two groups, one riding trains the others completing games and a railway related quiz. After 1.5 hours the groups swap over. This is a good plan enabling all to participate fully with no long queues. No rest for our members though who drove without a break for the full three hours. Many thanks to the GL and RT boys for maintaining the service. An innovation the leaders implemented this year was use of the pond. Supervised by one of the leaders the beavers had made barges out of plastic bottles that contained a load. These were roped together and towed behind a radio control boat under control of beavers themselves. This was, as always, a very pleasant day. The leaders manage the event and keep us supplied with tea whilst the children are well behaved and enjoy themselves as our guests.

A reminder that general meetings during summer are BBQ and evening run at the track. BBQ lit at 6.30, bring your own food.

## Treasurer's Report

By Mike

Writing this report on Sunday 23rd June, a day late for our Editor's deadline I have twelve members subscriptions outstanding and unpaid. If you do not wish to renew your membership, please let me know asap.




The last Council meeting was pleased to accepted one new member into our midst, we are unlikely for the present to see the young man at Tyttenhanger as Jacob is residing out of the country, maybe when he is in the UK.

The open Sundays have produced a comfortable number of visitors, new and old, they seemed to enjoy themselves and help our coffers, which will finance our next major project of revitalising the steaming bay area.

LittleLEC for some was a great success, for others the less said the better!

Congratulations to Les's daughter in law for a terrific performance with Juliet2, never having driven an engine before.

Nothing else to report, but if you are listed for a track steward duty, please make the effort to attend. Your assistance once a year is much appreciated and it is a chance to see what a wonderful site we have in the country.

Anybody wanting a new car sticker or membership badge please contact me in the usual way. Enjoy the summer.

## Oak Processionary Moth Caterpillars

By Nigel

Normally I am writing about grounds maintenance matters at our Colney Heath site but this month it is on somewhat different matters.

It has recently been discovered that a small number of Oak Processionary Moth Caterpillars (OPM) were found on the trunk of one of the two oak trees inside the Gauge 1 layout. In this instance as there were only a relatively small number they were destroyed.

The hairs on these caterpillars can cause a serious rash on the skin.

Should you see any of these caterpillars anywhere on site  
do not take any action.



Please report these to me so that I can advise Affinity Water who will instruct their contractor to deal with them. Any area where these caterpillars are found should be barriered off.

The presence of any OPM's is notifiable to the Governments Forestry Research Department as they are classified as a quarantine pest. So, you know what to look out for the is a photo of the caterpillars which were found on site.

## Unsafe Tree – Out Of Bounds Area

By Nigel

The second matter to write about is another safety concern. Those of you who have recently visited the site will have seen that an area has been barriered off underneath one of the apple trees near the garage. The reason for this is that there is a very large and heavy dead branch in the tree and a sub branch has broken off of this. It is only being held up by a combination of the sub branch being jammed against the large branch and being supported at the other end by a branch which is alive. This has been reported and we anticipate action will be taken shortly to sort this out. In the meantime, please do not enter this area.



## An unlikely source of coal

By Bryan

I moved my family business down to Cornwall about 20 years ago and have been the main driving force to create a model railway society, conveniently very near my home. The site is in Mount Edgcombe Country Park possibly the largest public park in the U.K. surrounded by sea. Our membership secretary received a phone call from a local resident called Malcolm who asked if the railway in the park would like some coal? It did not take me long to answer that question, to follow with another, what is it and how much?



The answer was amazing. Malcolm walks his dog along the beach every day and has been doing so for many years picking up black pebbles from the beach, taking them home, washing and drying them and, finding they burn, putting them on his open fire.

He investigated the source and found that a vessel "S.S. Rosehill", transporting coal from South Wales to Devonport Royal Navy yard, destined for the Royal Navy's boiler rooms, was torpedoed by a German U-boat off Whitsand Bay in 1917, sinking with hundreds of tons of fine Welsh coal on board. Wave action over decades has tumbled that coal into smooth rounded pebbles of varying sizes that now wash up onto the beach.

Malcolm continues collecting the coal but, since fitting oil central heating, has accumulated about 7cwt of it, all kept in plastic bags after washing to get the salt off and dried. He contacted us after seeing us steaming in the park, hence the phone call. His little shed was housing the coal and he wished the coal to go to a good home as long as it could be collected. We obliged.

The pebbles steam well and have a good old sulphur smell and I found, if you make a good hot fire in your loco, put some of these pebbles in, wait a few moments, then turn your blower off for a few moments, the smoke, a little green, emerges from the chimney and flows down onto the running boards! Makes a great photo! Give it a try, I gave Les a bag.

By the way, is Ron is still up to his old tricks of either putting some smelly house coal in your tender when you are not looking, or putting your loco into reverse if you left it in forward gear while you are at the station? Have times changed?

Steam well and enjoy our great hobby, Bryan.

Footnote from Les:

Bryan has donated a bag of this coal. I will maintain a supply on the shelf behind the Tyttenhanger station sign, help yourselves but I suggest use for authentic effects only!

# Narrow Gauge1 News

By John

Welcome everyone to July's Narrow-Gauge news. As I am writing this, we have just enjoyed the warmest day of the year and I am hoping that this is a harbinger of days to come and that you're reading this in the middle of a beautiful summer!



Of course, when the weather is fine there is nothing better than playing trains and us narrow gaugers are no exception and we have been enjoying some very pleasant running sessions recently.

I am very happy to welcome to the narrow-gauge section the clubs very own Derek. I am sure you know Derek who is very active on both the raised and ground level tracks, but like so many before him found the siren call of the Narrow-Gauge Garden railway impossible to resist. Derek has just purchased from what is



usually called a well-known online auction site but we just call it eBay, a fine example of Roundhouse engineering's Single Fairlie "Taliesin" of the Ffestiniog railway a particularly good-looking engine that just needs the name plates builder plates etc. finished and fitted to complete. Once the loco and radio control idiosyncrasies were sorted out it is now a good running locomotive too, with the Roundhouse chuff effect fitted it sounds fabulous as well! The photo shows just what a fine-looking engine it is, really looking forward to seeing it next to George Greens "Double Fairlie"!



As I previously mentioned now the weather has improved, we have had





some decent runs just for ourselves and of course for public running days, which incidentally in my opinion have had just the right number of visitors. And because the numbers are not mad it's nice to be able to talk to visitors as there is always someone who wishes to know all about what we do, and who seem to be genuinely

interested in our activities. And who knows possible future members?

I think that's enough waffle from me for now, so in time honoured fashion I will let the pictures speak for themselves. Enjoy your hobby!!

## James takes to the rails in steam

A member has generously place into the care of the club an unstreamed (until recently) Silver Crest 4MT standard tank locomotive.

The loco has been given to Tim and James to look after. With the support of Les the few snagging faults with the locomotive have been rectified. As can be seen in the photo the engine is now in running order.

James under the watchful eye of our chairman has now taken up the challenge of learning the skills required to successfully steam up and drive this engine.

It's great to see a younger member of the club taking up this hobby. We wish him many miles of happy steaming over the coming months and years.



## GLR Waffle

By Paul

This month ground level waffle will be short and sweet. I am afraid because I have been away a lot this month. My first outing was to the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway steam gala to see Didcot's two new locos pulling a good length trains. The lady of legend was misbehaving the whole time I was there. It



failed to move several times when the driver opened the regulator. All the steam just went straight up the chimney. I wonder why? This engine's younger sister Betton Grange didn't miss a beat.



Regarding matters closer to home, during discussions with Steve the GLR regular dispatcher he raised a problem which he encountered on most public running days.

Members are standing in the triangle of grass in front of the signal box. This greatly reduces the dispatchers view of what is going on.

So, to solve this problem we have decided to plant out the area possibly with lavender in the hope this will stop anybody standing there.



*Ground preparation for planting out of the area in front of the signal box. The ratio between workers in HV clothing and supervisors seems about right.*

General maintenance has continued with a couple of weed killer trains being run very late this year due to the amount of rain we've had.



*Terry facing backwards applying weed killer to the GLR from the back of a slow-moving works train.*

Finally on the Little LEC weekend we had a train out on the ground level to give rides to anyone that might like one. There were no takers on Saturday but I did take a few around on Sunday. It was good to watch the competition with some doing better than others, but all seem to be enjoying themselves, which is what it's all about.



## LittleLEC at NLSME 2024

By Les & Owen

LittleLEC is the locomotive efficiency driving competition for small locomotives weighing 50lbs or under, developed by members of the Guildford Society of Model Engineers as a companion to the larger IMLEC competition, spot-lighting those small designs that were once the introduction to the hobby for many but now eclipsed by larger models capable of greater distances and speed. Locomotives are run around a track completing as many laps as possible within 20 minutes, the amount of fuel used is recorded and efficiency calculated from this and with the weight of the engine, trailing load, track characteristics and distance travelled. The locomotive driven the most efficiently being the winner. Colney Heath was the venue for 2024, the club having hosted the event on two previous occasions prior to the track being extended to its current configuration.

A colder mostly overcast day than expected Saturday in June saw a cohort of members ready to officiate as the competitors arrived for a 10 o'clock call. Coal was being sieved and weighed into several containers. Charcoal, water and temporary steam raising facilities were arranged at the raised track station with the run time indicator set up beside the full-sized Semaphore starting signal. Martin Cooper had organised the necessary paperwork and laptop under the coach canopy. After some deliberation suitable level surface was identified to place a set of electronic bathroom scales to weigh the competing locomotives. All competitors this year brought along 3½" gauge engines. The longer main line being chosen for the competition.

The dubious pleasure of having the first run fell to our Treasurer, Mike with his well-travelled Rob Roy in working black with no additional passengers or weight started his run at 10:38. The engine was not so happy with the early start and suffered with lubricator problems. Despite Mike's best efforts a stop to restore boiler pressure on the new land embankment was required during the



2<sup>nd</sup> lap after which Mike called time after 21 minutes.

Next to run was Sean from Guildford MES who brought a smart SECR green Mona.

After a bit of head scratching over a leaking water glass blowdown the run was begun with Grandfather Les as passenger offering constant encouragement.

A cautious first lap was made, with the climb to the bridge taken slowly but a faster 2<sup>nd</sup> lap was made after taking an additional pot of coal as insurance. The run was ended after 19 minutes.

The Third competitor of the day was Peter of SMEE with his very smart Royal Caledonian Blue Rob Roy.

With Bryan as passenger Peter picked up the pace with a bold and confident run at a much faster pace. Completing 4 laps in 21 minutes and doubling the average speed achieved so far.

He also demonstrated the art of deftly refilling the side tanks on the move without the aid of a funnel or tube.



Making what may be the carriage shed traverser's first use as a mobile steaming up track were local engineers John and Jack with their LNWR Jumbo 2-4-0 built



to the Mabel design though with fixed valve gear and just within the competition weight limit. The days fourth run began well with John driving and Jack as passenger. With a long association of running on our track, a blisteringly fast run began for the old engine, running for the first time in a great many years. Sadly, shortly after passing Dingley Dell the right side leading crank pin flew out. The now detached connecting rod struck the sleepers and the engine was brought to a stand ending the run. The rods were fully removed, and the engine

was recovered to main steaming bays for attention. (The crank pin was later found by the track repair team the following week).

Saturdays Fifth competitor was Stephen with his teal green Rob Roy. Opting to

take 35.4Kg of weight instead of a passenger this engine set off again for a fast run going fast for 3 laps. However, when attempting a 4<sup>th</sup>, the grate dropped off its supports into the ashpan making the fire difficult to maintain and the engine slowed and stopped beside signal 5 opposite the station.



Stephen attempted to rescue the fire but retired after a short while as we all did for sandwich lunch provided by the club.

The LittleLec Competition rules give the competitor two runs with which to obtain results and so the running order was repeated after the break. Mike, being the only competitor available for both days, electing to have his second run on Sunday so Sean and Mona were the first run of the afternoon with companionship provided by Les as before. With the pace now set and experience gained from the earlier run this was one was much more confident, and four laps of the track were managed in 20 minutes without fuss with extra supplies taken from the beginning.

Peter, having raised the pace with Rob Roy earlier in the day, hopes were high for a record number of laps of the track. Even with the sun coming out from between the clouds and despite the engine appearing to running faultlessly, the speed dropped significantly during the fourth lap and the engine crossing the timing point just the wrong side of 25 minutes and so automatically disqualifying.

Spirits were high as John resolved to run Jumbo again, but this time as a 2-2-2 with the coupling rods disconnected. With Jack again as passenger the engine struggled for adhesion during the first part of the run. So it was that Jack dismounted alongside the station leaving John to carry on alone but at a better pace. Now back in the running and without further incident three laps were completed in 19 minutes.



This left the final competitive run to be made by Stephen Once again choosing to carry weights instead of a passenger. Three more laps were completed at an

almost identical pace to the morning effort but without the fire falling through until the end when the engine was lifted off the track back to the temporary disposal bay. As with all the runs the remaining fuel was gathered and weighed to calculate the final use and the results recorded into the calculation spreadsheet operated by Martin to await the following days results to show the winner.

Following the official proceedings on Saturday competitors and members lingered on site where Mike, having made adjustments, completed a trial run of his engine for the following day. This was followed by Peter running his superb 3 ½ inch gauge model of early Victorian engine Jenny Lind an ornate 2-2-2. All doubts concerning how the single wheeler would cope with the long run and steep gradients were soon cast away as the engine flew round the track several times with ease and steam to spare.



After Peter, as mentioned later, Anne and James ran Les's Juliet as a familiarisation run for the following day. Elsewhere Bryan and Jack ran the diminutive Harriet, Curley's own 2 1/2inch gauge 0-6-0 on the Cuckoo Line making the most of the now more pleasant weather.



First run of day two was by William who brought two locomotives to the competition.

A freelance 0-6-0 “Jessica” and a Mona. Opting to run Jessica first and after careful preparation William elected to carry an additional weight (a 17.9kg concrete block) and set off at a steady pace which he maintained achieving two 10-minute laps.

Second run was guest driver Anne, wife of NLSME member James, with a 49-year-old Juliet 2.

Anne had never driven Juliet before this weekend. A one lap training session on the Saturday evening after the competition had finished was the extent of prior experience she brought to the event, which was however unmatched by her willingness to have a go. Electing to take husband as ballast Anne managed to complete one lap within the allotted time including stops for a blow up prior to tackling two of the three inclines on the track.



Next and third run of the day was William with Mona. William has a careful preparation routine maximizing use of charcoal until last minute and ensuring cylinders are warmed before commencing run. Electing to pull a second truck with member Bryan on board, William completed first two laps within 13 mins continuing for a third lap which he easily completed in another 5 minutes.



Following lunch break Anne took to the track again. James prepared Juliett for the run but this time Anne felt confident enough to go solo and left James behind. Setting off with the lighter load she sped up the first bank, completed a circuit non-stop and passed back through the start point at decent speed to encouraging cheers from those watching. Second lap was a bit slower but overall, her run was within the 20 minutes allowed and whilst gauge glass was



quarter full and with decent fire decided against a third lap. The competition results show that her run was the least efficient but her achievement, as a novice driver, was arguably the greatest.

Fifth run of the day was William with his second run with Jessica. As before William took an additional weight and as before completed three laps, this time in 18 minutes and resisted the temptation to go for a fourth. Nonetheless he had done enough as can be seen from the table to finish second.

Mike took to the track with his well-known Rob Roy which normally flies round the NLSME track with passengers on board. In recent weeks the loco has been struggling with timing as shown in the first run on Saturday. His second run proved equally uncharacteristic by its relatively slow pace. After one lap with further poor steaming Mike decided to retire.

Last run of the day was William with his second run with Mona. Again, taking a second truck with Bryan as passenger he put in a great run completing four laps in 20 minutes. The run involved some slick handling by the pit crew passing coal and water as he sped through the station.

This final run placed William triumphantly the winner of LittleLEC 2024 taking first place with his Mona and Second place with Jessic. Very closely behind, Sean also with a Mona was awarded third place. Surely a testament to the suitability of this compact design from North London club late president Curley Lawrence, (LBSC).

The running of this event is to be savoured bringing out the essence of model engineering where a group of like-minded people were able to pleasurably gather together and share their common interest away from the drama of the concerns of modern everyday life.

The full results table is published on the next page.



LittleLEC 2024  
Leader Board

North London SME

8th and 9th June 2024

Event Run ID	Driver	Loco	Gauge No.	Run No.	Laps Run	Work Done ft lbs	Coal Used lbs	Energy Released ft lbs	Average Speed mph	Eff %	Status	Position	Comments
25	WILLIAM I	MONA	3/4"	2	4	37,878	0.845	9,520,435	6.7	0.398	Finished		
23	WILLIAM I	JESSICA	3/4"	2	2	12,257	0.278	3,132,049	3.7	0.391	Finished		
6	SEAN F	MONA	3/4"	2	4	31,395	0.141	8,352,131	6.7	0.376	Finished		Leaking blowdown valve
19	WILLIAM I	MONA	3/4"	1	3	28,408	0.781	8,739,566	5.6	0.323	Finished		
3	PETER W	ROB ROY	3/4"	1	4	28,446	0.827	9,321,574	5.8	0.305	Finished		
17	WILLIAM I	JESSICA	3/4"	1	2	12,257	0.384	4,325,210	3.3	0.283	Finished		
5	STEPHEN I	ROB ROY	3/4"	1	3	18,522	0.617	6,960,109	6.3	0.266	Finished		
9	STEPHEN I	ROB ROY	3/4"	2	3	18,522	0.635	7,193,969	6.3	0.259	Finished		
2	SEAN F	MONA	3/4"	1	2	15,698	0.639	7,208,684	3.5	0.218	Finished		
8	JOHN S	JUMBO	3/4"	2	3	13,036	0.670	7,556,690	5.6	0.173	Finished		
18	ANNE F	JULIET	3/4"	1	1	7,007	0.481	5,418,942	1.5	0.129	Finished		
1	MIKE I	ROB ROY	3/4"	1	2	7,989	0.776	8,749,851	3.2	0.091	Finished		
22	ANNE F	JULIET	3/4"	2	2	7,416	0.736	8,302,415	4.2	0.089	Finished		



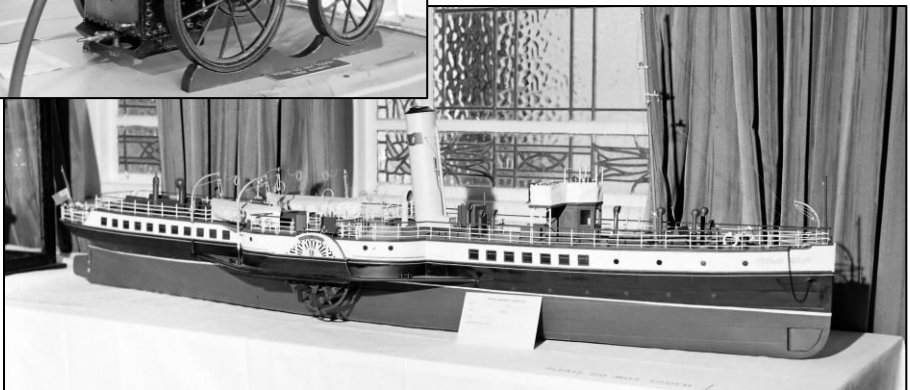
## The Geoff Cashmore Photo collection

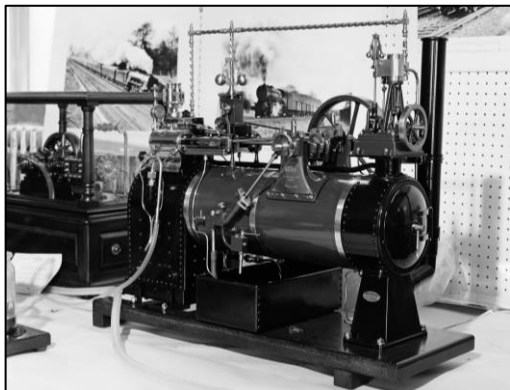
The Society has been gifted the photographic collection of the late Geoff Cashmore. It is a vast collection, prints, slides and negatives, mainly dating from the late 1950's to mid-1960's.

This month we have a collection of pictures taken at the NLSME exhibition held at St Andrews Church Hall, Southgate in the early 1960's. The 00 layout is being operated by Peter Marshal. What is very apparent is the vast number of engines and other models on display. Some of the other models depicted will be known to some. Your editor would welcome and information about the day or the people and models shown. All these years later we still enjoy a society with these same diverse interests and skills.











## Bookworm Writes

Well, here we are back in another summer (it is trying) and a time when all good English folk think about .... the winter. Ever since I became safely ensconced in the family bookcase more years ago now than I care to remember, I have been astonished that no sooner has the hot weather arrived and my owner starts to worry about having the heating ready for winter.

I think he gets it from his father, for when this house was new coal fires were all the rage and with them the need to have the chimneys swept every summer, then after the Second World War it was gas fires and the need to have them serviced by the gas board...every summer, then it was night storage heaters followed by that miracle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, gas fired central heating so ditto servicing. Now he's talking of doing his bit for the environment whilst saving a shed load of money by on servicing by having one of those (what he calls) new-fangled "Heat Pumps" installed.

We have a saying on the shelves that no matter what volume of life you find yourself from, if you wait long enough the knowledge you sit on will one day be back in fashion. I am therefore much indebted to the lads in volume 113 (1955) for bringing this month's interesting item to my attention.

Seems there is nothing *new-fangled* about heat pumps at all. Back in 1852 even old Mr Therms himself, Kelv Kelvin (a man who definitely knew at what temperature bits dropped off a brass monkey) he of the temperature scale, became highly excited at the thought of what would happen if he compressed his gas long enough in a tight space (..)

So, having got that bit of history behind us, we move swiftly on now to meet Mr Sumner who around 1946 was destined to play a decent and significant part in England's understanding of heat pumps when, it is conjectured, he was overheard to say one day in his local, '*Do you know how long they said I would have to wait to have a heat pump installed? The 21<sup>st</sup> Century, S## that!*' Or words to that effect and went right ahead and built his own, tucking it snugly under the King Edwards growing in his potato patch, somewhere near Norwich.

Now I know what you are thinking. '*But that isn't an air source heat pump.*' And in that you would be correct, but for the sake of spoiling a decent story I don't think we should be too hung up about what sort of heat pump it was as long as it followed the same principles that got our Kelvin hot under his cravat nearly one hundred years earlier. Let's then return to the story once more.

At a time when *curves* were scarce (mainly because no one had yet coined the phrase) Mr Sumner did well to get ahead of his and it was only because he already had a track record in this field (not this time the brown stuff with the spuds in) that he did so. For he had already been responsible for designing a half decent system installed in the Norwich Electricity offices after the war. My

limited information has it that it was the other half that let it down so it didn't remain in situ long, but it did provide some useful data.

Spin forward to 1951 and the Festival of Britain (which for my younger readers, the festival was intended as a *pick me up* to us Brits after the war to show a brighter future awaited all of us if we did but keep the faith (heard it before?) and to act as a platform for the nation to show the rest of the world there was *still life in old dog yet* and that Great Britain could be relied upon to invent, design, manufacture and sell things that people wanted. Which is why by the time of the 2051 anniversary, it will be more than ironic that it will be the rest of the world that we Brits will rely on to show us just how much they can invent, design, manufacture and sell to us instead. Funny how things turn out) Anyway in 1951 optimism was the order of the day and with that optimism came BIG IDEAS.

One of those ideas was to show how by incorporating stonking great heat pumps in the heating and ventilation system of the new Royal Festival Hall (to augment its boilers) they could be used to help burn less fossil fuel by using Thames water to provide the source of latent heat. They are quoted to have been able to produce 8 to 9million BTU/hr – **Bookworm Disclaimer:** Now in case I am inadvertently misleading you with these statistics I do urge loyal readers to undertake their own research before dashing ahead and ripping out their own boiler and ordering the full kit, as my owner finds his 26,000 BTU / hr boiler ample for most purposes.

Mind, it would appear that some of the other gear installed in the RFH to make it all work would have been worth a look as well, not least because it is said the compressors fitted to the system comprised two 12 cylinder derated Merlin MK 140 engines running on gas, which I think in hindsight we should all be grateful they were at least derated. Clearly it would not have been an environment for those of a nervous disposition to have worked in. However apparently it did work... I wonder if any of it is still there?

It has to be said that looking at this installation today with a modern critical eye, we may consider that by using gas and tapping a bit of the heat from the Merlin's exhaust system, didn't make it a very green process...however that brings me smoothly onto a point about all this heat pump business that possibly explains why it has taken so long for it all to take off once more.

After the entertainment value of scientists such as our Kelvin *et al* compressing their gas just because they could had worn off, developments were largely focused on making things colder, not hotter (same science) and when it was seriously looked at again it was driven mainly by the desire to find an alternative to a particular source of fuel, not necessarily because it was going to be cheaper or greener. In fact, the 1955 ME article hinted that nuclear heating was probably

going to be the ultimate fuel of the future with heat pumps contributing and being part of a transition.

Heat pumps then, air, underground, down a well, in your pond, under the Thames or even from your bath are not necessarily cheap to set up and run (only less expensive to run when conditions are right), they are a much more thermally efficient way of generating heat by using – certainly in the case of air source – a lot of electricity instead of burning something like unclean coal, oil or gas, they are a more *bang for your buck* way. However as most of these systems require a hefty supply of electricity to feed them *it* too has to be clean, cheap and plentiful, none of which was the case until the late twentieth century, and even in this first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is still something to be conscious of not least because we all now want to do even more with the electricity we already have.

In my owner's case, I can't help but wonder if he has thought about what will happen when he buys the next thing he wants, an electric car. Maybe at that point the thatched roof will have to give way to solar panels and his beer making in the basement will have to cease to make way for a storage battery instead.... or just maybe the Tyttenhanger wind farm will be up and running by then?

Why is modern life so full of difficult decisions? It's all much more complicated than it looked in 1955.....

Source material:

Model Engineer 24<sup>th</sup> November 1955 p788 Suggested further reading:

Paper by J. Sumner- Institution of Mechanical Engineers 1948 Institute of Fuel Archive

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## Coal, Steam Oils and Lubricating Oil for Sale

Coal: Anthracite Beans in 25kg bags

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

Anthracite Grains in 20kg bags

Suitable for 3 ½" gauge and small fire-hole doors. £13.00 a bag.

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

OIL: 1000 grade Steam Cylinder Oil is available in 1-pint bottles for £3.00 or in 2-pint bottles for £5.00.

460 grade Steam Cylinder Oil is available in 1-pint bottles for £3.00

or in 2-pint bottles for £5.00

Lubricating oil for your locos is available in 1-pint bottles for £3.00

or in 2-pint bottles for £5.00.

Contact the Treasurer – Mike

## Lucky Seven

It has been several months since we reported on progress with the rebuild of this large narrow-gauge loco. Donated to the club some years ago it was steamed and with several faults identified the decision was taken to strip it down and refurbish or replace parts as reassembly proceeded.



*The loco sits gleaming in the sunshine with John in the background*

The task of rebuilding the engine fell to John (The chap with the hat on) who sort of stepped forward and volunteered for the task.

With a little help from various members who have refurbished or manufactured parts at John's request the loco is starting to look like an engine again. The chassis, cylinders and valve gear have now been reassembled and the smoke box fitted.



As can be seen in these pictures it will when finished be a very large and powerful locomotive Even as a 3 ½" gauge engine being narrow gauge it is of the proportions of a good sized 5" gauge engine.



## My model boat collection part 18

By Roy

This is Dolphin, a project from about 10 years back, but started 50 years before! Sometimes you casually read an enquiry and there was something that triggers your interest. This was an enquiry for a modeller to build / finish an old model boat. The back story was it had been started by his father some years ago, sadly, he had died only recently a bit before the enquiry. Rather than just offer to do the job, I said I was interested but would need to see and find out what was expected.

*Dolphin sailing at the right speed, with a bow wave and still with a 40 minute per battery duration.*



A few days later he came with his charming mum Liz, and we discussed the project. Thoughtfully they had also brought the original plans from the Model Dockyard, up North, but there was nothing else left of the original kit except for a large piece of balsa later identified as the roof. I showed them some previous models hopefully to encourage their confidence. Dolphin was 42 inches long and the model had been re-purposed to be a Straight Runner and there was a sturdy engineer's version of micro control of the rudder. Subsequent conversation revealed that he had abandoned the boat and moved onto engineering, later making a Traction engine a Steam lorry, and a loco. I wondered if he had found out that the Straight Running boat class was for 40-inch-long boats and just stopped?

The family requirement was for the boat was to be completed and made ready to function with radio control to entertain the grand-children. I did a review of what there was and what the cost would be. I reckoned about £200 would be needed including the radio to get to this point. We agreed a fee for my part and they left the boat and then departed.

I have a little red book which all model boat builds get noted, and in this book, I did a detailed project plan, made a lot easier by having the original plans to work from. The design was for an i/c engine which needed a very large (and ugly) air intake and this had to be left out as my plans were for electric power.

The 'engineering' for the rudder set up was very difficult to access and strongly made and eventually I used my Dremel cutter to reduce it to pieces and remove them. I then sourced a set of parts to make up a kit as I did not want to have separate wait-times for individual items. Some came from stock, some had to be made and I found a dinghy hull for sale that looked just right and found some old davits from the period.

Model boats with i/c engines are made very substantially as they are frequently gripped between the knees and then with a cord around a groove in the flywheel they are persuaded into life. Meanwhile the knees have been putting a similar pressure on the hull, so the hull was quite strong and a tad heavy. I roughly worked out how much she would weigh to give an idea of the power needed. I was pleasantly surprised and thought a period circa 1960 Marx Hectoperm motor running on a six pack of NiMh cells (7.2 volts) would work fine.

You can imagine how the deck was, all rather scarred from 40+ years of being discarded and propped up in the corner of the workshop! Even after cleaning up the deck, it was too damaged and I decided to plank the deck in a colourful manner with alternate pale and dark strips.

I should add that I had done several commissions before and developed a simple technique of a weekly email with pictures of progress and any questions on what to do next. This then included the owner in the restoration and so giving them an input as well.



*View of old style Hectoperm electric motor I installed, a rare item these days.*

The prop tube was my next worry, but it turned out to be easy. I used some mole grips and then a sudden twist and the glue joint parted very easily. In retrospect thinking about what was available in the 50's I should not have been

surprised. A replacement prop tube assembly was at hand and the drive train was introduced.

A new rudder was installed with provision for a control servo. I usually leave the insides empty to allow for a bit of ballast shifting to balance the boat. I made a new roof for the cabin, this was a complex curve and sanded from a solid piece of balsa wood, as supplied. It is a soft surface and needs a filler and then a re-sanding.



*On the way and during the build.*

*You can see the deck was very plain and needed cheering up*

Once the insides were complete, I painted everything in a pale blue and started the simple electrical installation with the radio. I was ready for a quick test of the radio so took myself off to the lake at St. Albans. She seemed to work rather well, so in she came and I replaced the battery with a freshly charged one. She got out about 20 feet and stopped! The wind brought her in, but nothing seemed to work, so Dolphin and I were homeward bound.

She then went on the work bench to work out what had happened, it was amazing, all the on-board electronics had failed! To this day I cannot account for it, the receiver, rudder servo and speed controller never worked again. Some new radio and servos were found, mated up with the original transmitter and all now worked fine.

The windows were all glazed and the small glass fibre hull was fitted out with seats and oars and painted, and became a delightful dinghy which was then positioned on the lower roof. The old brass davits were just right and these



were installed. I had made some boat hooks and placed them at the bow with a few more fittings.

The cabin area comes off for access to battery etc and she now looks ready to present to the new owners. I still had a worry about the total failure from the first trip to the lake, so with some trepidation I went to the lake again and this time she worked OK. I also took with me a small supply of propellers as I wanted her to go at the minimum speed yet still have a bow wave and the 3<sup>rd</sup>. propeller choice was just right. I also changed the batteries over several times to try and simulate the original catastrophe but whatever the cause, it had gone away.

I contacted the owners, Liz and her son, and they arrived an hour later and were thrilled with the finished model, I had grown rather fond of her too over the past month. I demonstrated all that had to be done, the modern speed controller also supplied power for the RC receiver. I had bought 2 batteries, one as a spare and also a battery charger. The transmitter was run on dry batteries for simplicity.



*The finished boat with new deck planking and the rather nice fitted out dinghy*

I was told when they were to test her on their local lake with the grand-children in tow. Liz later sent me a photo and said it was 'just perfect'!

A couple of years later I asked Liz if she would like to bring Dolphin as an exhibit to our exhibition and I would repair or sort out any problems. She did this and I put the boat as display on our club stand. I asked her if there were any problems I could help with? "There are no problems", she said, "we just switch her on and she works"! I wish I could say that for some of my other boats though!

## Track Steward Rota

Until the end of October on the first and third Sundays each month between 2pm and 5 pm the public will be admitted to take the opportunity of having rides on both our raised and ground level railways.

Would you please look at the updated Track Steward Rota below and check when you are scheduled to be a steward. The full years rota was published in the May edition. Also, in the centre of the May News Sheet there was an updated copy of the Stewards Duties which you a to bring with you for reference when you are scheduled to be a steward.

### **7 July 2024**

#### **Mike – Senior Steward**

1. Robert
2. Peter
3. Henry
4. Ian
5. Rai
6. David
7. Robert
8. Geoff
9. Paul
10. Howard
11. Derek

Ground Level Despatcher  
Steve

### **21 July 2024**

#### **Richard – Senior Steward**

1. Jonathan
2. Mike
3. Robert
4. Stephen
5. Paul
6. Jeremy
7. Brian
8. Peter
9. Mark
10. Terry
11. Jack

Ground Level Despatcher  
Steve

### **4 August 2024**

#### **Owen – Senior Steward**

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

Ground Level Despatcher  
Steve

### **18 August 2024**

#### **Michael – Senior Steward**

1. Frank
2. Peter
3. Peter
4. Peter
5. Waz
6. Nigel
7. Alan
8. Jack
9. Dave
10. Roy
- 11.

Ground Level Despatcher  
Steve

## Another new loco for 2024.

By John

A Modelworks Britannia kit was delivered over a period of 24 months from 2004 and took 20 years of stop/start building to complete.

It was advertised and sold as a “bolt together kit” but in reality, it was an attempt to assemble, fail then find a solution.

Some of the motion components were poor quality and the help of a professional engineer was needed to produce some replacements.



This proved to be a good move, and the result is a free running and good sounding locomotive.

Construction and the final steam test were completed in the very wet late autumn of 2023, followed by just a 3-lap run. After which my wife Kay being now thoroughly wet through asked “can we go home now”?

Running recommenced in April this year. I now have 15 miles on the clock. The knack of topping up the boiler with water while ensuring the pressure is up to the mark when it is required, is still being learnt.



Too many laps are run with only just enough steam to climb the banks. That does however give me an excuse to travel to the site again (and again) to practice and hopefully in time improve my driving skills.

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## Federation of Model Engineering Societies

FMES are pleased to announce that they have launched a new search function on the website. [www.fmes.org.uk](http://www.fmes.org.uk)

It is visible on the top menu bar on all pages, called 'search our site' and you do not need a log in to use it.

We have developed this because we are working to expand our collection of articles and a search function will assist people to find things of interest as they add to this resource.

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## Fetes & Fairs List of events 2024

By Peter

This is the provisional list of events for this year. As you will see, we start next Friday and if Laurie isn't feeling better, Jim and I will be on our own unless any of you can help. We aim to start at 11 a.m. and if we have help, should take about 2 to 3 hours.

	EVENT	SET UP
<b>JULY</b>		
6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup>	Chiltern Traction Engine Club Rally	<i>Provisional (new)</i>
13 <sup>th</sup>	Martin Primary	<i>Provisional (new)</i>
<b>AUGUST</b>		
16 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> & 18 <sup>th</sup>	Flamstead Scarecrow Festival	Rig and run Friday 16 <sup>th</sup>
26 <sup>th</sup>	Burnham Green Village Festival (near Tewin)	

## The Fetes and Fairs team need your help.

If you could help support the team either setting up or on the day of any of the events listed you can be assured of a warm welcome.

For more details, please contact Peter

Looking forward to seeing you all during the year.



**Federation of Model Engineering Societies  
Rally 2024**



Hosted by the

**Nottingham Society of Model and Experimental Engineers  
Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024**

The Nottingham Society of Model and Experimental Engineers is pleased to invite you and your members to attend the FMES rally hosted by the NSMEE on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024. Anyone visiting the rally is invited to take part in Public Running on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September, subject to the approval of the Operation Superintendent or his appointed Deputy.

NSMEE is located on the grounds of the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre: and has a 3½ & 5-inch dual gauge raised track approximately 2312 feet with gradients of up to 1 in 115. The ground-level railway is a 7¼ inch gauge track of 3168 feet or 0.6 of a mile.

***(A current boiler certificate will be required for any model running on steam together with an insurance certificate for any running model).***

***The following types of models are welcome***

- a locomotive of any gauge up to 7¼" gauge, (a limited number of driving trolleys are available)
- road vehicles of any type up to 4" scale,
- clocks which will be displayed indoors,
- static marine (no pool or pond to run on)
- static aircraft (no airfield to launch from)
- any type of stationary engine running or static
- dioramas which will be displayed indoors

**Also**

- Refreshments on the day and to include a sandwich lunch.
- Car parking is available on-site. A car park donation of £2 may be requested.
- The Australian Association award will be made at the rally.
- A prize will be awarded to the visitors who have travelled the furthest to the rally.

Our address is:

**Nottingham Society of Model and Experimental Engineers  
Mere Way,  
Ruddington,  
Nottingham,  
NG11 6JS**

***Site Entrance can be found using the following What 3 Words  
Bath.fuzzy.doctor***

Finally, if you could let us know the approximate number of members that would like to visit us so that catering can be organised it would be appreciated.

*Please complete the Booking Form*

If you require more information contact Tony Knowles by email

[tony.knowles12@btinternet.com](mailto:tony.knowles12@btinternet.com)

## Club Dates for your 2024 Diary

Every Wednesday; G1 group meet at Colney Heath	
Every Thursday; A mix of RT & GLR Loco running & working groups	
Every Saturday Ground Level Rly at Colney Heath	
Every Sunday; A mix of RT Loco running & working groups,	
July	
Tue 2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Council Meeting at Colney Heath – 13.00
Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Local school visit – Sponsor Peter 09.00 to 11.00
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> July	General meeting 7pm BBQ and evening running at Colney Heath (bring own food)
Sat 6 <sup>th</sup> July	Byan Family event 10am to late (All members welcome)
Sun 7 <sup>th</sup> July	Public running day at Colney Heath
Sat 13 <sup>th</sup> July	G1 Tom Barratt Memorial Day Sponsor Geoff 9am – 5pm
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> July	Public running day at Colney Heath
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> July	<b>Deadline for copy to Editor for August News Sheet</b>
August	
Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> Aug	7pm BBQ at Colney Heath (bring own food)
Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup> Aug	Breen Loco group visit – Sponsor George
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Public running day at Colney Heath
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Public running day at Colney Heath
Advance notice of events in 2024	
Sat 7 <sup>th</sup> Sept	3½ inch day – Sponsor Martin
Sun 8 <sup>th</sup> Sept	St Marks Church picnic – Sponsor Les
Sun 8 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Vintage Model Yacht Assoc visit – Sponsor Peter
Sat 21 <sup>st</sup> Sept	Keech Hospice visit – Sponsor Keith
Please notify our secretary of all meetings and other Society events for inclusion in the Society Calendar and also tell the news sheet editor. Approval for special events still rests with Council.	

A representative of any Section or Committee or an Officer of the Society shall, on request to the Secretary, be entitled to attend a Council Meeting as an observer and submit proposals thereat. If attendance is agreed the secretary will advise the member concerned. The Editor of the News Sheet shall be entitled to attend, ex officio, all Council Meetings.