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# The News Sheet

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## FROM THE CHAIR

The last few weeks have been blessed with quite reasonable weather so that the various working parties on Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sunday mornings have been able to push ahead with their projects.

Mike Chrisp and I met with Buffy Wilson of Three Valleys Water plc to show her around the Colney Heath Site and in particular, the refurbished pond. She agreed that the pond could be filled free of charge, the costs being met by the Company's Community Fund. The Society is pleased to have this support so no doubt, by the time you receive this News Sheet, the pond will be filled. The Company, through Buffy, has also offered support and advice in keeping the pond looking fresh in the future. This will be most helpful, particularly as pine needles and leaves do produce considerable sludge at the bottom of the pond.

The Ground Level Railway continues to grow. At the time of writing this report, there were just four panels to be manufactured to complete the main loop. Clearing up, and landscaping will follow before the railway is fully active. Two years' hard work and many man-hours have been put into this major project.

Similarly, the main track loop is also progressing well, with many of the track panels in place. As I said last month, this loop is a considerable enhancement to the railway. I look forward to driving on it.

Even though there is considerable work taking place at Colney Heath, the Site does not look like a building site as much clearing up has been taking place at the same time. The hard core at the gate has been moved to the Ground Level Railway track bed, and that corner cleared up. The area behind the tunnel has been cleared out as well as the shed.

Thanks to Peter Brown and Peter Lancaster. The passenger trolleys have also been maintained and, where necessary, rebuilt by Brian Apthorpe, Derek Eldridge and others.

At Headquarters, Peter Funk has repaired the roof of the old library, while Tony Dunbar has cleared out the rain-soaked contents. The area still has to be left to dry out fully before further repair work can be completed. Thanks to you both.

The new audio loop is now at HQ and Tony Dunbar has offered to get it installed, with appropriate help.

The Society's next major project will be directed at improving the steaming bay/workshop area. At present some initial ideas are being informally discussed. Maybe during the summer months we shall see some of the tentative ideas mulled over at

the General and Locomotive Section meetings. This area does need refurbishment as it gives a poor first impression of the Site to our visitors. So if you have ideas of your own, why not discuss them with Chris Vousden who is producing the initial study.

*David Harris*

### **SMALL CHANGE TO AGM NOMINATIONS PROCEDURE:**

**As Nick will be on holiday, all NOMINATIONS for positions on the Council should be mailed instead to MIKE FOREMAN. The deadline of Friday 11th April is unchanged.**

## **Treasurer's Report**

Congratulations to all those members, who have slaved over the winter months at Colney Heath, building the Mainline deviation and the Ground Level Railway Extension into the new territory. Well done everybody.

The proposed subscription rates mentioned in last month's News Sheet were subsequently approved by those attending the March General Meeting. Therefore, I shall be pleased to receive suitable payment of your subscription renewals at your earliest convenience, sent together with your Membership Card and a stamped self-addressed envelope to the address on the back-page, or alternatively see me at a future meeting or at the track. Alternatively, it is not too late to set up a Standing Order payment direct to the Society bank account.

Rates for the forthcoming year 2008-2009 are £52.00 (Seniors £47.00 after five full years at normal rate); Country Members £20.00; Juniors and Students in Full-time education £6.00 min. plus £1.00 per year of age.

At the March Council Meeting, we were pleased to welcome two new members to the Society:-

David E West,  
Interests: Garden Railway Gauge 1

Paul D Godwin,  
Interests: Locomotives, 'OO' Gauge.

*Mike Foreman*

### **Cover picture:**

Down Memory Lane: a young Bryan Luxford at Colney Heath in 1964 with B17/5 4-6-0 'City of London'. See Jim Robson's reminiscences on page 20.

## **NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS WHO USE THE COLNEY HEATH SITE**

**By Nick Rudoe**

(This notice has been written with the express authorisation of senior members of the Council.)

Since Mike Ruffell's note in the March News Sheet there have been further instances of the gate, coach, toilet and sheds being left unlocked overnight. As Mike said, leaving the site unlocked is in effect an open invitation to thieves and vandals to come in and steal and/or damage our property.

Some members may believe that if there are still cars in the lane outside, this means there must still be people on the site. This is not necessarily the case; usually these cars belong to folk who are walking their dogs. It is your responsibility before you leave to:-

- (i) **Lock away any hand tools** that may assist intruders in damaging or entering into any of our buildings or property.
- (ii) **Check whether anyone else is still on site and that they have the keys**; I know that this may be tedious, particularly as it may involve walking down to the new land, checking the hut where our signals are stored, the workshop and the other sheds, but it is absolutely essential. It is particularly important to check that any person(s) still on site have a key; there has been one occasion recently when a member left the site in the knowledge that there was one other person still on site, but didn't realise that that person had no keys and so was unable to lock up when he left.

These are simple and commonsense rules, but disregard for them could have very serious consequences for the Society. If equipment is damaged by outsiders, members will be hit in the pocket, because the Society would have to purchase replacements and the membership would in all probability have to bear the cost. Worse still, our running tracks could be rendered unusable if the miscreants chose to

inflict damage in that way.

May I therefore ask all of you who go to Colney Heath to work or to run trains, when you are about to leave, to make sure that all tools have been locked away and check whether or not there are others still on site, and if so, that at least one of them has the keys to lock up.

**If no-one else is on site, then you must lock up. This involves checking and if necessary locking the coach, toilet, sheds and signal hut, not just the front gate.**

## Committee Meeting News

### Tyttenhanger Site Committee Meeting, 25 February 2008

Malcolm Read has obtained a new lawn mower with a grass box.

There was further discussion of the surface damage caused by poor drainage in the car parking area and it was noted that we presently have no way forward to resolve the problem. The worst area is adjacent to the unloading ramp for the steaming bays. The cost of restoration is prohibitive and it was suggested that the project should be revisited following completion of the main line and ground level railway projects. It was noted that the 'scalpings' put down in the lane have been effective for fifteen years. Council will consult members who have relevant expertise.

It was suggested that Alan Marshall should be given more time to discuss signalling than was available when he addressed a recent Loco Section meeting. It was agreed to offer time during the May Loco Section meeting.

The gentleman who lives adjacent to our site will be pleased for us to remove and make use of the large pile of spoil dumped at the end of his garden.

### Council meeting, 10 March 2008

Mike Chrisp reported that the Operations Manager of Three Valleys Water was very impressed by what she saw during her recent visit to the Colney Heath site.

The astonishing progress achieved by both the Ground Level and Raised Track Deviation teams was noted.

The Society continues to receive small donations towards the cost of the GL railway.

## **SITE MANAGER'S REPORT UPDATE - APRIL 2008**

As the winter working party season comes towards its end, I thought that I would reappraise and update the Society on the various maintenance jobs still to be completed at Colney Heath. I would be pleased to receive offers of support for any of these tasks.

1. The Car Park remains our biggest problem. **OUTSTANDING**
2. Untidy areas at the entrance to the site. **COMPLETED.**
3. The small shed window needs repairing. **OUTSTANDING**
4. The steam roller shed needs repair. **OUTSTANDING**
5. The barge board at the rear of the workshop needs replacing. **OUTSTANDING**
6. The concrete steaming bays need totally renewing. **UNDER REVIEW**
7. Storage for coal needs to be provided. **UNDER REVIEW**
8. The drive-way to the station has poor drainage. **OUTSTANDING**
9. The Fire Extinguishers are out of date. **IN HAND**
10. Food package rubbish adjacent to the station needs collecting and removing. **CLEARED**
11. Old plastic tables and chairs are still in use
12. Roof felting between coach and station canopy appears to be leaking. **OUTSTANDING**
13. Damage to station canopy felting in several places. **OUTSTANDING**
14. Untidy signal cabin. **COMPLETED**
15. Apple and crab apple trees need pruning of much dangerous dead wood. **COMPLETED**
16. Bonfire rubbish adjacent to Garden Railway needs to be cleared up. **COMPLETED**
17. Area behind tunnel needs clearing out. **COMPLETED**
18. General thinning out of saplings. These are generally less than 5 years old and are self setters. **COMPLETED**
19. The planting of bushes along the new fence would remove the starkness of the wire fence. **OUTSTANDING**
20. The new land needs generally clearing of wild growth. **IN HAND**
21. Boundary trees need a major trimming and cutting back as their branches are touching the ground. **OUTSTANDING**
22. Undergrowth around Dingley Dell needs cutting back. **OUTSTANDING**
23. Too much general rubbish behind coach - a good clear-out is required. **OUTSTANDING**
24. General untidiness adjacent to workshop/container on all sides. **OUTSTANDING**
25. Dead tree adjacent to roller shed - should be removed for safety. **IN HAND**

26. Flooring of coach needs recovering. **OUTSTANDING**
27. Repair to tunnel shed door. **COMPLETED**
28. Permanent light at side of toilet block needed.
29. Grass areas adjacent to station need re-seeding, plus slabs. To be left until Spring.
30. Paving stones for Tom's seat. **OUTSTANDING**

*David Harris*

## **The March General Meeting by OMAH**

Mike Chrisp apologized for the late start as our speaker had had traffic problems between Penge and HQ due to delays at Finsbury Park related to a shooting affray there. While the speaker was setting up his gear our Chairman had one or two comments. Firstly he wished to thank all those involved with various tasks at Colney Heath for the progress they had made. These include: cleansing the boating lake, the raised level track diversion, the ground level track work and various other tasks, being done quietly and frequently unnoticed. Among the GL donations received was one from Brian Baker's mum, thankyou mum. Sadly, Dave Foster is unwell again, just when he seemed to be doing well. He is suffering severe back pain and has to have morphine administered regularly. Our sympathy goes out to Dave and the hope that he will recover soon. Peter Funk has nearly completed work on the HQ roof and has stopped the leak into the old library area. This needs some time to dry out, after which a team is required to re-furbish it. Any volunteers?

We are planning an outing to view the triple expansion pumping engines at Kempton Park on June 14<sup>th</sup>; please contact Ian Johnston if you wish to go so he can have some idea of numbers. (Definitely not to be missed).

The date for traction engine boiler tests will be April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mike Chrisp's name was put forward to continue to represent us at Southern Federation meetings etc., proposed by Tony Dunbar and seconded by Dave Lawrence, and carried by a unanimous show of hands.

Mike Chrisp then introduced our speaker for the evening, Frank Banfield, who last visited us in 1995. Frank's speciality is collecting old and vintage archive films on a variety of subjects, most of which are sourced from the BFI (British Film Institute). The first group covered c1895 to 1900 and depicted railways showing period stations, locos and passengers, each scene being run through twice to give the audience a second look. The earlier ones were in France followed by some LSWR shots, which made Bert's evening. We then jumped forward to 1950 and a documentary of a rolling mill at Corby "supplying the world with steel products" (it made me

think of when we were 'the workshop of the world'; where did it all go?). They were showing the progress of a series of white-hot billets of steel being transformed from solid into tubing, growing in length with each rolling, depending on the desired finished diameter - fascinating stuff.

The next was a 1958 British Transport film "Under London's Streets" about the maintenance that is carried out on the LT Underground in those brief hours between the last train and the first in the morning. It showed brief shots of the various teams, the group of gangers continuously renewing the track, 300ft a night, those checking and correcting alignment of the rails, and the ladies (fluffers) who pick up all the bits of fluff and assorted rubbish between the rails which could create a fire hazard. At intervals the man in charge would come along on a 3-wheeler cycle with wheels to fit across the outside rails (this gave rise to some comments at Ian's expense). The climax was the discovery of a broken rail, approx. one hour before trains were due to start running and the calling out of the emergency team who came along and cut out the broken piece and replaced it with a new length of rail. The work was completed some 4 minutes after the first train was due on that section; all the others meantime had been powered up. (Although it was all a carefully rehearsed ad lib it was still real enough to get you sitting on the edge of your seat.)

There followed a series of aircraft from c1914 to some time after WW1 starting with a lot of airship shots, including the Graf Zeppelin, and several different aircraft including an 'Autogiro'. Next up was a very nostalgic film of trolley-buses at and around the Fulwell depot; lots of very good shots, sadly ending with them being cut up for scrap - BOO.

After tea we went back to 1944 and PLUTO, Pipe Line Under The Ocean, a length of pipe that stretched from the refinery at Fawley near Southampton across the Solent, the Isle of Wight and the channel to the Normandy beachhead. This enabled a constant flow of fuel for the invasion effort without the delay of transferring to and from tankers plus getting rid of the risk to the tankers and crew on the crossing. It required Stewarts and Lloyds to provide hundreds of miles of pipe, and to cope with such a large order they had to add to their rolling mill facility and build three additional mills. The rolled lengths were welded together into  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile lengths and stacked for transit. Although their inside diameter was 2in. they were incredibly flexible. The shots of  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile lengths being tipped from an upper delivery track on to a lower storage rack by easing one end off the upper track with a crowbar and then letting the remainder follow it by slithering down its full length to the storage rack were quite a sight. When they arrived at the docks the process of welding them into a continuous pipe, some 80 miles long, began. At intervals the sections were cleaned by compressed air being blown through followed by a piece of shaped wood being blown through at considerable speed. As the pipeline got longer it was fed onto a floating bobbin called a Conundrum and when it was full, it could be towed, paying out the line as it went. The 70-mile trip took some 10 hours. Four lines were

installed, the pumps being housed in buildings suitably disguised as chalets, cafes, etc. (The point of departure from the I o W was from Shanklin Chine by Keats Green and the museum there is well worth a visit.)

To round the evening off we viewed "The Iron Mule", USA c1926, a delight to see depicting a trip on a passenger train fraught with problems, most of which were dealt with by the driver in a particularly imperturbable manner. The period was not specified but since the loco looked a bit like a descendant of 'Rocket' and the passengers travelled in stage coaches on flat trucks, I would put it at fairly early rail-roading days! Lacking a fireman, the driver had to cope with everything, his first problem being a tunnel not high enough to take the tall chimney. He solved it by removing the chimney, running over the top of the tunnel and replacing it with great aplomb. In addition to being attacked by Native Americans, they came to a section of the track where their progress was hindered by a river. This was over come by attaching logs to the sides of the train and floating it across, no problem. An amusing end to an excellent presentation. The applause was vociferous. Mike thanked Frank for all his efforts, particularly his problems with the traffic.

(Just a PS. Mike Chrisp spent a fair bit of the evening telling us about various items and what various folk were up to, but 'hiding his own light under the proverbial bushel', he neglected to mention that he is currently the new Chairman of SMEE!)

## **Ever Thought about Buffers?**

### **Those Red Things that are attached to the four corners of locomotives**

#### **Text and drawings by Peter Kearon**

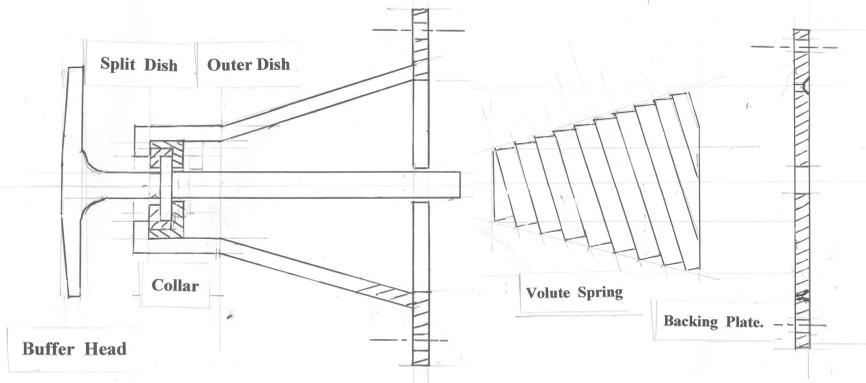
There are those aficionados who insist that GW Castle-class engines must carry tapered-barrel buffers. Such a point of view must be respected but equally it must be accepted that this simply awful design comes from the autocratic era of Dean and Webb in the late 1800s and sadly was not discarded even by the great G J Churchward.

Buffers from all types of engine were the staple diet of the newest apprentice fitters at Barry Works and there was scant shortage of work as no shunting engine ever came in with even one buffer in working condition. A buffer with a broken spring could easily be identified : if the buffer head could be moved by hand then the spring was broken. All broken buffers, in truth all buffers, were sent for the attention of some unfortunate apprentice working under the sharp eyes of Mervyn Davis. Buffer damage included broken springs, bent shafts and distorted collars but all demanded the crude work of disassembly.

Having clamped the backplate to the barrel with two long bolts - in the unlikely event of the spring suddenly having suddenly renewed itself - the next task was to remove the two countersunk set bolts which secure the backplate against the barrel. Using a civilised tool such as a screwdriver was a waste of time; recourse had to be made to a hammer and crosscut chisel which soon became covered in blood from the apprentice's pulverised left hand while sweat and tears flowed freely. "Never look at the head of the chisel" we were instructed when the obvious place to look was the head of that uncooperative chisel. Gloves were not a consideration. Such good experience.

Sometimes a kindly passing fitter would apply a few useful hammer blows and loosen that antagonistic screw. More often the complete countersunk head would be cut away by timid blows. Once separated the shaft would be sent to the blacksmith's shop for straightening and for the collar to be built up by welding. Then back to the apprentice.

*Fig 1: tapered-barrel buffer*



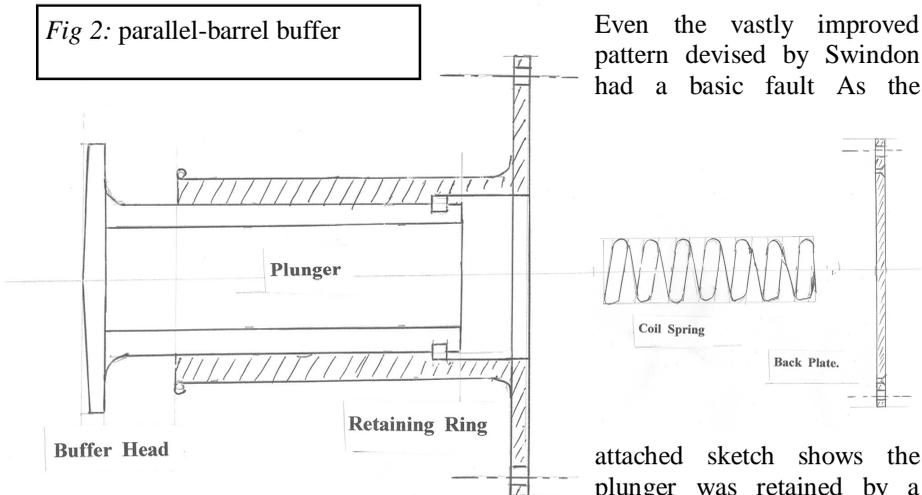
Assembly was a joke. With the buffer shaft standing upright the barrel was lowered over to stand on the inner face of the head. A split dish was first held around the far end of the collar while a full dish was pushed around it. In an endeavour to keep these ill-fitting parts together shims were pushed around the connection, but this near-impossible task had to be carried out in the depths of the barrel. It was hopeless and in practice once the buffer was put into use the two dishes often came apart so that only bits of loose metal prevented the shaft from falling out. Remember how often a shunting engine sported only three buffers! Having botched up the dishes it was easy to locate a volute spring against the inner dish and compress it by pulling the back plate hard against the shell using two long bolts and nuts before adding two new set bolts.

Volute springs were manufactured in the blacksmith's shop at Barry Works and provided a steady source of work. A length of spring steel about 2x3/8 inches was

heated and wrapped around a shaft to make a sort of Swiss roll. Further heating then the roll was hammered in to a tapered former to produce the required shape. This was a difficult operation as the flat coils had to lie in a symmetrical form as if they formed a tapered thread and under a compression load must move smoothly over or within the adjacent coil. Further heating gave the proper spring characteristics.

In the 1920s the railway companies came to realize that too much labour - and money - was being devoted to buffer repairs. The four main companies produced remarkably similar designs each with a hollow, parallel plunger housing a coil spring. Barry did not manufacture coil springs which I believe were supplied by outside spring manufacturers but to the very end continued to make volute springs

Fig 2: parallel-barrel buffer



Even the vastly improved pattern devised by Swindon had a basic fault As the

attached sketch shows the plunger was retained by a split spring steel ring located in a groove in the plunger. In earlier models this ring had one split but its removal was a difficult and dangerous task. Fox wedges were used to prize open the ring while shims were inserted under it to keep it open until it came completely clear of the groove in the plunger. The amount of latent energy held by this stressed ring was enormous and had it been simply knocked off the plunger it could have shot away like a bullet to inflict untold damage to some unlucky passer-by. We used to wrap sacking around the plunger before knocking off that ring but even so everyone stood well clear.

Fortunately Swindon came to realize their basic design fault and in later buffers the ring was cut to form two equal parts which could be removed by hand. So simple. But do not think that the work of the apprentice was transformed. Tapered-barrel buffers with volute springs continued to be the norm until Nationalized British Railways set about scrapping the older classes. Possibly "Caerphilly Castle" is the only remaining GWR engine equipped with those dreadful, ill-conceived buffers.

<b>Track Stewards Rota 2008</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Senior Steward</b>	<b>Track Steward</b>	<b>Track Steward</b>	<b>Track Steward</b>
04-May	Brian Apthorpe	David Jones	Keith Ashman	Robert Johns
11-May	Ron Price	Maurice Cummins	Graham Price	Jack Edwards
18-May	Graham Ainge	Peter Foreman	John Johnston	Nicholas Bone
25-May	Nigel Griffiths	Peter Sheen	Mark Braley	Alan Marshall
01-Jun	Richard Castle	Graham Gardner	Peter Prior	John Sandwell
08-Jun	Les Brimson	Roy Hall	Roger Brown	Derek Eldridge
15-Jun	Keith Hughs	Victor Burgess	Phillip Rowe	Keith Bartrop
22-Jun	Jim Robson	Ian Buswell	John Riches	Peter Fraser
29-Jun	Ian Johnston	Edward Kitchener	John L Morgan	Naughton Morgan
06-Jul	Mike Avery	Geoffrey Burton	Johnathan Avery	Nick Rudoe
13-Jul	Roy Chapman	Mike Hodgson	Peter Badger	Anthony Mason
20-Jul	Ian Clift	Peter Lancaster	John West	Bob Gamble
27-Jul	Keith Bartlam	John Cattle	Gerald Moore	Frank Adams
03-Aug	Mike Chrisp	Ian Reddish	Alex Chapman	David Foster
10-Aug	Mike Ruffell	Brian Baker	Peter MacDonald	Brian Kennedy
17-Aug	Mike Foreman	Peter Precious	Mike Franklin	David Broom
24-Aug	Donal Corcoran	Lawrence Steers	Richard Deal	R Thompson
31-Aug	Tony Dunbar	Colin Thompson	Dave Chisnall	Owen Chapman
07-Sep	Brendan Corcoran	Peter Davies	Michael Gibbs	Peter Badcock
14-Sep	Jim MacDonald	Chris Reynolds	David Marsden	Peter Brewster
21-Sep	Adrian Reddish	Dave Green	John Firth	Martin Ginger

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

## **Mike's Musings**

First of all I must once again draw everyone's attention to site security at Tyttenhanger.

Last month I had unfortunately to report that the coach and signal hut doors were left open. This month it gets worse; not only have those two doors been left open but the toilet door was also open with the lights still switched on, the workshop was open and worst of all the main gate was left wide open. This apparently happened after a Thursday working party.

I would draw all members' attention to the note by Nick Rudoe on page 4 of this issue, and I cannot stress how important it is that before you leave you do the checks

Date	Track Steward	Track Steward	Tea Steward	Tea Steward
04-May	Peter Brown	Derek Perham	Mrs Apthorpe	William Mason
11-May	Adrian Newson	Peter Weeks	Ron Thorogood	Mrs Thorogood
18-May	Frank Hills		Peter Funk	
25-May	Dick Payne		Mrs Griffiths	Mrs Marshall
01-Jun	Michael Dear	Frank Adams		
08-Jun	John Bainbridge	Reg Piper	Dave Laurance	
15-Jun	Derrick Franklin	<b>Mike Ruffell</b>	Frank Inman	
22-Jun	Richard Cross		Nicholas Griffin	R Lidsey
29-Jun	Geoffrey Mogg		John Morgan (M)	Mrs J Morgan
06-Jul	David Spencer		David Lapham	George Case
13-Jul	John Beesley		Mrs Badger	
20-Jul	Gregory Metcalf		Mrs Clift	
27-Jul	Jeffrey Bolton		Rachel Chapman	David Metcalf
03-Aug	David Burman		Chris Dean	
10-Aug	Norman Back		Mervyn Smith	
17-Aug			Mrs Foreman	Paul Godin
24-Aug	Michael Gibbs		David Morgan	
31-Aug	Bryn Morgan		L Brooks	
07-Sep	Daniel Procter		Mrs P Corcoran	
14-Sep	Michael Smith		Mrs MacDonald	Mrs Brewster
21-Sep	Adam Gorski		Mrs Reddish	
28-Sep	Anthony Sykes		Mrs Smith	Julie Davies
05-Oct	Paul Bexfield	Guy Ellerby	Mrs Betty Fenton	Rai Fenton
12-Oct	Tim Clementson		Richard Hall	
19-Oct	Susie Frith		Mathew Stallard	Mrs Harris
26-Oct	<b>Rai Fenton</b>		Mrs Baxter	Jenny Baxter

as per Nick's note. Hopefully this will be the last time that I will have to report upon such serious matters as above.

Now for something a bit different: this is an appeal to all you budding poets or inventors of rhymes to put your thinking caps on and put pen to paper. Most members will remember our good friend and respected member Tom Luxford and you are probably aware that we have a memorial seat that will be placed in a suitable location at the track site. What we would like to do is to place a plaque on the back of the seat, with a rhyme or poem as a tribute to either Tom's life or to the type of person that Tom typified, perhaps with a little humour that Tom would have appreciated. Please send your poems and rhymes by the sack load to me. Thanks in anticipation of being inundated with letters and E-mails.

Mike Foreman has got hold of an ex - car blower motor so has anybody out there got a suitable fan unit that can be attached to provide the society with a blower unit? Once again drop me a mail if you can help or contact Mike Foreman.

*(continued over page....)*

**Forthcoming Loco Section Meetings:-****Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April – Visiting speaker from Loctite.**

This evening we have the pleasure of a visit by Bob Goss of Loctite who will no doubt be able to demonstrate and answer all your questions regarding the latest adhesive/joining technology.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May – Peter Funk 4<sup>th</sup> ground level progress meeting.**

Under discussion following on from this winter's exceptional progress will be the remaining work to complete this part of the project including signalling.

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June – loco section BBQ at Coney Heath.**

Nearly the longest day, so plenty of time for a good run. Don't forget your sausages or if you're particularly flush a nice fillet steak.

**Track Stewards Rota**

I have been very heartened by member's responses to my request to let me know about any date alterations etc., thank you.

There are still quite a few gaps in the Rota so if any of you feel the urge to carry out a second duty please let me know and I will update the Rota accordingly. The latest version is published with this note.

*Mike Ruffell*

*Loco Section Leader*

## **GENERAL MEETINGS 2007 – FORTHCOMING PROGRAMME**

**by Mike Chrisp**

Our General Meetings are normally held 8–10pm at our Legion Way Headquarters in North Finchley unless stated otherwise. We usually have a raffle – thanks to Peter Davies (donations of suitable prizes appreciated), and refreshments around 9pm - thanks to Ron Thorogood. All profits from meetings go directly to club funds.

We can seat about fifty in our meeting hall. All members are particularly welcome when we have special Guest Speakers and we are always pleased to see members' friends and family at any of our General Meetings. Please call me if you have an idea for a meeting, or if you would like to enlighten and / or entertain your fellow members. On the other hand, please also let me know if I schedule regular meetings that you don't much like. I am very keen to see more folk at our General Meetings

and look forward to your company.

#### **4 APRIL 2008 – KEITH HALE (CuP Alloys): SILVER SOLDERING**

Many model engineers use silver bearing alloys to join assemblies during the creation of their models. The success of the result depends upon the use of appropriate materials and correct techniques. An acknowledged authority on the subject, Keith Hale has agreed to share some of his expertise with us. He will have travelled a long way to spend the evening with us at Finchley, so I hope we can fill our meeting room with members and friends for his presentation.

#### **2 MAY 2008 – I REMEMBER ...**

Peter Funk, Dave Lapham, Malcolm Read and Mike Ruffell all have a practical engineering background and a wealth of anecdotes and experiences to recount. They have agreed to sit together to reminisce about events they recall while at work. No doubt some of their anecdotes will be amusing and others hair-raising; whatever else, we can look forward to a first rate evening's entertainment!

#### **23 MAY 2008 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

From an administrative point of view, the Annual General Meeting may be considered one of the most important of the year. It provides an opportunity to review the recent past and to look forward to the future. It is also a time when those involved in the day-to-day running of our Society are elected to office. If you have an interest in Society affairs and the way they are managed, you should attend the Annual General Meeting to make your views known.

#### **6 JUNE 2008 – TIM COLES: A GAS TURBINE LOCOMOTIVE FOR 5in. GAUGE**

An experienced model engineer with several completed projects to his name, Tim Coles' current project is a gas turbine locomotive for 5in. gauge. Tim has agreed to bring his locomotive to our Finchley headquarters to describe the trials and tribulations involved in its development and construction. He will have travelled some distance to spend the evening with us at Finchley, so I hope we can fill our meeting room with members and friends for his presentation.

### **For Sale**

#### **Rarely on the market: a Duplex Power Hacksaw**

This is an opportunity to purchase a Duplex Power Hacksaw complete with vice and single phase motor. The Duplex power hacksaw is well known for its rugged reliability and accuracy of cut. This machine has cut accurately 1/16" slices off 1¼" mild steel bar. Restriction of space is the only reason for the sale. **£40 ono.**

For further details and a viewing phone Jerry



# Letters Page

6<sup>th</sup> March 2008

To: the editor, The News Sheet

## **Railway Signalling**

Greetings from the wilds of Rutland! As a distant member I still enjoy keeping in touch. I was most interested to read in the latest issue the discussion of Ground level railway signalling, hoping one day to make a return trip to the track to try it for myself. May I make a comment from my experience over the past twelve years of operating my Hunslet at just over thirty different locations throughout the country? Perhaps half of these have signalling and it is usually automatic insofar that the areas remote from the base are controlled in the ways outlined in the discussion. The treadle system is the more common, but in every case there seems to be the need for someone to maintain it throughout the running period. Failures do seem to be related to the very variations in flange profile which were noted.

On the other hand, the track-circuited examples seem to perform without major problems, even in wet conditions. By the way, I was involved in the original design of the track circuits for the elevated track in the 1970s; in those days, we were using old post office telephone relays, which were simply switched by the change in resistance between the rails as trains went into the sections of the track. The impedance of the relays generated an enormous back e.m.f., which sent the unsuspecting Tom Luxford and Bert Mead into orbit as they performed their marshalling duties. I therefore proposed doing the detection job electronically (and therefore gently). Geoff Cashmore and I spent some time measuring the resistance between rails under different conditions and we came up with a "best value" of resistance, below which the circuit would be closed and above which it would be open. Having provided the individual switching units (eight I seem to remember), the hard work of wiring them into the track environment was carried out under the leadership of Terry Baxter.

I hope you can find space to print this piece of ancient history of the Society.

Best wishes,

Derek Brown

## **G.L.R.NEWS UPDATE**

### **Never have so few done so much for so many.**

Last week I went on holiday and gave specific instructions to the crew **not to finish before I got back**, I got back and guess what? Reverse psychology works every time.

We've done **it** and **it** rides beautifully, and if you haven't been up the track lately **it** is the completed G.L.R. loop over the new land. I take my hat, boots, socks, vest, and pants off in recognition of a superb (heard that before) job done by a great team. Having thanked my ground crew personally I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who helped in whatever way they did to push the project along; just think of the many hours of fun and enjoyment a few members of our club are going to give to so many over the coming years. I know it makes me feel good as I hope it does you.

### **ONCE AGAIN THANKS.**

I would like to start my update by emphasising that there is a need for more members to come forward: the ones who think about helping out but for some reason or other stay in the background. Maybe you are shy, hard of hearing or think someone else will "do that job"; well that someone is you and our club can only benefit from your input no matter how big or small.

### **JOBS TO DO:-**

- 1 Bridge building to the loo,
- 2 Cuckoo Line G.L. re-alignment,
- 3 Landscaping and clearing up,
- 4 G.L. link around the hump,
- 5 Painting, completing the carriage shed and track.

These are just a few of the jobs I can think of and I can't print them all as I will frighten off the crew I have. Please ask me for a job. You can have your own project or work with others; it's your choice so do come forward. Maybe you would find, as I have over the last 2 working seasons much to my delight and the ground level crew, that you have produced something for the club that we can use and look at for the foreseeable future, saying "isn't this great? We did this as a team, within our club, the results speak for themselves."

Donations continue to be given: Mrs E Baker (Brian's Mum) has given £100 and has been promised a first ride on one of the three engines we are building (can't wait). Mr ----- a colourful loco sec member has also given £100 and £50 was given through mutual agreement by Jim Mac and Brian Baker. It humbles me to be trusted to use these donations for the cause and betterment of our railway. I'll do my best to deliver, and looking at the great facilities we already have at the track our successful future looks a foregone conclusion.

As ever in the frozen muck.

***Peter Funk***

## GARDEN NEWS &



*Left:* View of the station on 'Dobson Bridge', GIMRA's showcase layout, as seen at their Spring Meeting in Loughborough.

**Photo:** *Greg Metcalf*

Greg Metcalf writes:

"Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March saw the spring meet of GIMRA at Loughborough. As with the AGM held at Woking, it was indoors, spread over two halls. One hall had the cafe plus some trade stands, and the other had the running layout - Dobson Bridge - and the rest of the trade stands. Dobson Bridge is a large layout with two tracks for running. I did not sign in when we arrived so when I went to the track at lunchtime all the steaming slots were taken.

For someone like me who has only been in the hobby since last September, it is still really interesting, looking at the kits available, the locomotives for sale, plus all the general paraphernalia. The Gauge 1 Model Railway Company were there with their latest model - the British Railways Standard Class 4MT. I picked one up for my brother, but sales were very good for I saw many men walking about with one tucked under their arm.

What I was impressed with was the quality of the kits and locomotives. I bought my loco last year from Keith Cousins and he had a number of other loco's there and they looked pristine. I asked Keith what the chances were of my building one from a kit - he said he knew a man who would finish it for me if I had difficulties!

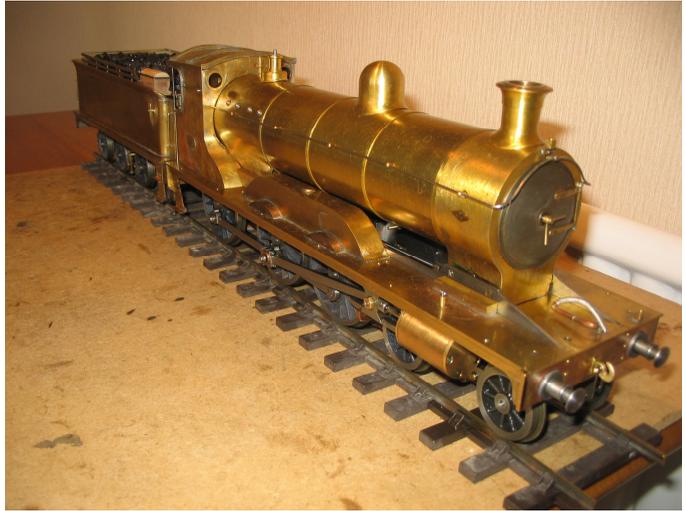
The Society was well represented, as I saw a good half a dozen members there running loco's as well as scanning the trade stands. I have bought a Bachman class 66 diesel loco and am keen to run it. Having a background in model boats the electrics are not too much of a worry; it's just getting hold of the right bits. I have bought some intermodals to go with it and I can store the batteries etc in one of them. I know the bulk of you are all steam men but I am afraid I am a diesel fan! So, an excellent day out, met some old friends and saw some great loco's and wagons - it's given me a lot to think about. "

# RAILWAY

## NOTES

*Right:* Philip Rowe's magnificent Highland Railway Castle class 4-6-0, described below.

**Photo:** *Philip Rowe*



Nick Rudoie writes about the HR Castle Class:-

David Jones, before he had to resign due to ill health, had completed a design for an express passenger version of his famous goods 4-6-0, and it fell to his successor, Peter Drummond, to place the engine in service. The Castles were built in three series under the direction of three different Locomotive Engineers: the first batch under P Drummond, the second under FG Smith, and the third under C Cumming. The class became the mainstay of the passenger service between Inverness and Perth. The last three were built in 1917 with 6ft drivers to cope with the heavy wartime traffic on the Highland Railway, which carried men and munitions to Wick, from whence they embarked by boat to Scapa Flow in the Orkneys to join the fleet.

Philip Rowe has supplied the following notes on his model of the Castle Class loco: "My engine was in the first batch, built by Dubs & Co. in June 1900. It's no.143 *Gordon Castle*. I chose this particular loco because Gordon Castle is about a mile from where my mother-in-law lives. I intend to paint it in full Drummond period 1 livery which is 2 tone green and claret and fully lined (if I'm brave enough!). The loco was built to Paul Forsyth's design. In order to get the loco built quickly I used parts from Keith Cousins and had a boiler built by Maccsteam. I finished it in a year. Although I used some ready-built parts I will claim that, apart from the cylinders, all visible parts were made by me!"

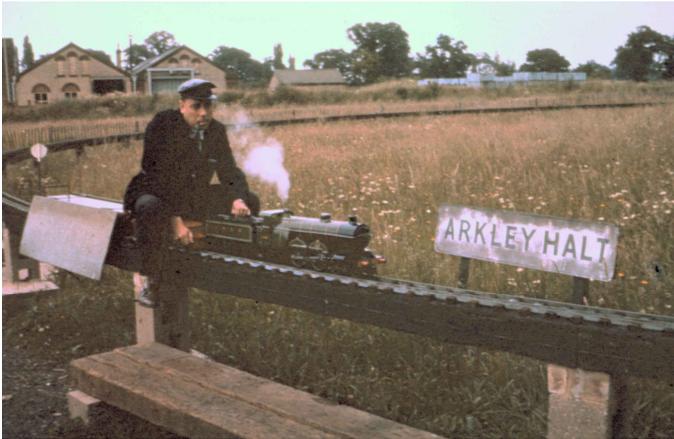
We look forward, Phil, to seeing the engine painted and in steam up at the track.

The last four weeks have seen another busy period on the Garden Railway, with one new member, David West, to whom we extend a warm welcome. David is well known in G1MRA circles for his video-camera and computer skills, and his DVDs of G1MRA Get-Together's are much sought after.

# MEMORIES

## by Jim Robson

At a General Meeting at the track last year seeing Jean and Mike Chrisp at their table with their youngest daughter Barbara and her children Bethan and Jacob, I was reminded of those Sundays many years ago when we used to visit every week. Our children sometimes comment that they thought that was the norm for everyone, Sunday afternoon at the track. It may sound a bit idyllic but I look back on it with pleasure. We had not yet been ‘discovered’, and many folk in the village did not know we were there; if we wanted tea we had to make it, we did not have to make it for visitors. Visitors were welcome but there were notices asking them to make themselves known and to keep dogs on leads. Initially there were no stewards; if there seemed to be a larger than usual number of locos running someone, usually the late Harold Pill, would don the steward’s armband and keep running in order.



Not being inundated with numbers, our children could hop aboard any loco with space and have a ride. Our children and Jean and Mike’s played and grew up together; when they were small we used to bring a playpen to keep them safe. Mike and I used to run ‘Iris’, sometimes

*Early days at Tyttenhanger: Geoff Wren driving ‘Maisie’, his 3½in gauge GNR large-boilered Atlantic; seen in 1964, a year after the site opened.*

**Photo:** Alan Brett’s uncle. *How pristine the site looks and how small the trees are. In the background at left is the original water pumping station.*

with a passenger trolley behind. We were spoiled for choice in being offered a drive of other folks’ locos. Bert Mead and the late Ed Hobday were both gentlemen who preferred to sit and watch their locos being driven by others, of which there was never a shortage. Among the regulars in those early days were: Ted Moon and family, Bob Pitt (sometime editor and more than somewhat of a character), Tom Luxford and family, ‘Bunny’ Austin (who had lost an arm in WWI but still managed to build a 3 ½in ‘Netta’), the ‘Terrible Twins’ Ron Price and Geoff Wren, Dave Chisnall (always cheerful with his greeting of “allo and that”). The only time I heard

him upset was the time he was driving his 5in 'Terrier' up towards the tunnel when a fairly large and rather warm cinder shot into the air and dropped neatly into one of his wellingtons. 'Kin hell, he exclaimed, or some similar technical term, by the time he had managed to get his boot off it was a bit late!)

The late Geoff Cashmore was another with his beautiful 'George the Fifth'; eventually I was allowed to drive it. Geoff always insisted on wide open regulator and drive on the reverser, LNWR style; it certainly worked well provided you weren't of a nervous disposition. Ron had built a Juliet in company with his father; he then dashed off a Princess Marina, Heilan' Lassie and a 'Jubilee'. He had a Pansy under construction. Geoff Wren was building a 'Speedy'; his 3½ in. Atlantic and Ron's Jubilee both ran like the proverbial sewing machine. Derrick Dant was often seen with his 'Bantam Cock', he was building a 5in 'Petrolea' but sadly did not finish it. (I wonder if Nigel has it). Fred Freeman, a real character used to pop up occasionally with a 'Maisie'. Mustn't forget the late but still remembered with affection Cyril Drayson with his 'Juliet' II with Baker valve gear, a great runner. Cyril was also a marine enthusiast and at the drop of a hat would regale us with tales of "my old 'Nippy'". He was also building a 'Doris' and would never tire of expounding the virtues of the Delapena hone for lapping cylinders.

I was somewhat in awe of Ed Hobday when we first met, and for some time after, like his locos, he was larger than life. However, I soon discovered that beneath that bluff exterior lurked a really nice man, a gentleman, in every sense of the word. I'm not sure how many locos he built, but his favourite seemed to be 'Lady Mabel', a large 5in. overscale; I seem to remember her being a 4-6-0, doubtless Bryan Luxford will correct me. I can remember Bryan driving her and firing by throwing lumps of coal thro' the large firehole into the capacious firebox. Ed also had an LNER L1 tank, a 3½in Pacific called 'Antimeticulous' and a unique 3½in Mallet tank called 'Nuff Sed'. He was a great fan of LBSC who had shown a general arrangement drawing of his answer to Bulleid's 'Leader'. Apart from the name 'Nuff Sed' he had given no other details so Ed schemed out the boiler and other missing bits and added electric cab lights for night running. I saw this loco for sale at Christie's some time after Ed had gone to the great workshop above, and some bright spark had removed the nameplates and there were no remarks as to its antecedents in the description. So apart from indicating that its sometime owner was not a Curly fan I am sure it could have made more money; as it was it made me feel rather sad. Apart from turning up at a meeting with a vertical boiler used for testing injectors which could also have been used as a standby for Battersea Power Station, Ed's Swansong would have been a very large Pacific; he brought it to a meeting as a rolling chassis but sadly ill-health prevented further progress.

I am sure I must have missed some folk so I'll have a little think and bore you with some further memories, if you're not careful.



## 📖 Dates for your Diary 📖

Friday 4 April	8.00pm General Meeting; Keith Hale on silver soldering; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Monday 14 April	8.00pm Council Meeting; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Friday 18 April	8.00pm Loco Section meeting; Bob Goss on Loctite's Products; HQ, Legion Way, N Finchley
<b>Friday 18 April</b>	<b><i>Deadline for copy to Editor for May News Sheet</i></b>
Friday 25 April	8.00pm Workshop Evening; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Monday 28 April	8.00pm Tyttenhanger Site Committee Meeting; St Mark's Christian Centre, Colney Heath
Friday 2 May	8.00pm General Meeting; I remember....anecdotes from work; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
<b>Sunday 4 May</b>	<b>First public running day at Colney Heath</b>
Monday 5 May	Bank Holiday - members' running day at Colney Heath
Sunday 11 May	Toy Boat Regatta; Colney Heath
Monday 12 May	8.00pm Council Meeting; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Friday 16 May	8.00pm Loco Section meeting; GLR Progress Meeting, with discussion of signalling; HQ, Legion Way, N Finchley
Sat/Sun 17/18 May	Steam Fair 2008 at Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham Abbey
<b>Friday 23 May</b>	8.00pm <b>Annual General Meeting</b> ; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
<b>Friday 23 May</b>	<b><i>Deadline for copy to Editor for June News Sheet</i></b>
Sunday 25 May	Narrow Gauge meet at Colney Heath; contact Owen Chapman
Monday 26 May	Bank Holiday - members' running day at Colney Heath
Monday 26 May	8.00pm Tyttenhanger Site Committee Meeting; St Mark's Christian Centre, C. Heath (date is a Bank Hol, so may change)
Friday 6 June	8.00pm General Meeting; A Gas Turbine Loco for 5in gauge; talk by Tim Coles; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Sat/Sun 7/8 June	Whitwell Steam & Country Fair, Codicote, Herts
Monday 9 June	8.00pm Council Meeting; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Saturday 14 June	Outing to Kempton Park pumping station; contact Ian Johnston
Sat/Sun 14/15 June	Narrow Gauge IMLEC, Rochdale SMEE
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Every Wednesday	Garden Railway Section at Colney Heath (11am - 4pm); OO and HO Model Railway Groups and Video Group at HQ (evening)
Every Thursday	Slot Cars Section at HQ (evening)
Every Sunday	Morning working parties at Colney Heath (start 9.00am).

**NB: Please remember to notify all meetings, events & exhibitions, in advance, to Owen and Rachael Chapman, who act as Keepers of the Society Calendar and Tyttenhanger Site Events Co-ordinators.**