

# August 1998 / Issue 584

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## Words of Chairman Dell

When a member asked me if the new colour of the News Sheet cover had anything to do with my political views, I made an evasive reply. Red has always been a favourite colour of mine. When I was about 16 I bought my first motorbike. It was the same age as myself, made in 1928, a vintage year. I paid 3 pounds and a pedal cycle for it. It was a 150cc Francis Barnet 2-stroke, hand painted fire engine red. To me, it looked fast, even standing still; when moving it had a top speed of 35 M.P.H. I had never ridden a bike before, so I pushed it home from Greenwich to Catford, a distance of some 5 miles. I arrived home exhausted but very excited at the prospect of things to come. The next day I had my first ride. The excitement of sitting astride a powered machine was almost too much to bear. The thrill of those first excursions have never been repeated. I've owned many bikes since, but I've never felt the same excitement as I did on the old Francis Barnet. It was a two speed machine with a gear stick straight from the gear box; back was bottom and forward was top. Soon my thoughts turned to perhaps having a young lady on the pillion and riding down to the coast. I actually did get a young lady on the back once, and although she was nice and slim, this still proved too much for 150cc. After that all my excursions were solo. I made several attempts to ride to Hastings. By this time I was getting myself equipped; I bought an inner flying suit from Pride and Clarke, price 7/6 and a pair of fur-lined goggles, price 1/6. I thought I looked just the ticket, so on one fine Saturday morning I set forth Hastings bound. Alas, at Green Street Green the bike seized and the attempt was abandoned. I made several more attempts to reach the coast but never got further than Green Street Green. A routine was developed - put the bike on the stand, take out the sandwiches and lemonade and after half an hour give the bike good kick; and off we would go - I never had any trouble getting home. Although I would readily vote for Ken Livingstone as Mayor of London, it was the little RED Francis Barnet all those years ago that made me choose RED for the News Sheet cover, and not any political leanings.

*Frank D*

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## Off the Cuff

I'm back in harness and fighting fit after our holiday on the Isle of Man. We drove to Liverpool, flew to Douglas (25 minute flight) and took a taxi to the guest house - which was the last time we travelled in a car as we made maximum use of the island's Victorian transport system - horse-drawn trams, electric trams, steam railways, and finally modern buses. We ran into the Baxter Family here and there, Terry having taken his traction engine and IoM loco "Lo'ch" so they could join in the island's celebration of 125 years of STEAM. I sincerely hope we'll be going back there again one day. That's enough chit-chat and now to the reason for these notes - the July Council Meeting. Fourteen of us in attendance - good job we didn't all speak at once! A rent increase at Headquarters has successfully been reduced to a more acceptable level over a two-year period: Barnet Borough Council have confirmed that our site at Finchley had been one of the areas considered for a new sports stadium but was found to be unsuitable - the whole area is apparently known as "Glebelands" and is designated for recreational activities. The Chairman reported on the popularity and performance of the electric loco, for which state of the art battery chargers had been purchased to keep it in top running order: for safety reasons all inflammable substances and gas bottles kept in the Workshop are now housed in the old Oil Store, and for the same reason gas cylinders in the coach will eventually be housed outside: remedial work round the inner edge of the pond and laying the paved pathway is making good progress: and what I thought was a Flying Saucer suspended from HQ's ceiling turned out to be a video projector which will greatly enhance your future viewing of all videos - a piece of equipment which has our Cine members cock-a-hoop with delight. I then reported that a model engineer in Worcester has had his ROMULUS 0 4 0 stolen - details elsewhere in this issue: that St Albans & District Model Engineering Society are giving us their transporter which we will probably use for the Cuckoo Line - they, of course, are having to dispose of all their track as they will shortly be "homeless": and the Northern Association of ME Societies are holding a 1-day seminar at Wigan Pier in August to discuss Health & Safety and Fairgrounds & Leisure Parks involvement in miniature railways, a meeting at which we hope to be represented. The Treasurer was thought to be looking a bit on the pale side which was attributed to payment of several large bills! A supply of polo shirts (with Club logo) should shortly be available through Colin B. Four applications for membership were approved. D-day at HQ (the big clear out) is likely to be 15 August so beware - if there's anything you want to keep, don't leave it laying about but tuck it away somewhere safe and sound! There were reports from all Sections - Slot Car members attended Open Meetings at Silverstone and Southport, and enjoyed more Home & Away events with the Coulsdon Club: when work in and around the pond is complete, Marine members will grass the surrounding area and purchase a gazebo to enhance the facility: Cine members have been happily engaged with the installation, testing and trial runs on their newly acquired video projector and are now installing sockets, amplifiers, speakers and other ancillary items, and to complete this new facility for the maximum benefit of all members a new video player is to be purchased: 00 gauge members have spent the last four weeks actually "playing trains" instead of wiring, building, etc: North American members have started work on a new section, with signals, points and scenery work all being on-going items: on the Loco front, the Fetes season is now over but there are three Birthday Parties scheduled - 22 August: 12 Sept: 17 October - and the Erewash Valley Society are visiting Colney Heath on August 15: Stationary Steam members have been involved in some of the Fetes when traction engines have successfully replaced the portable track & locos. The North London Society of Model Engineers now has a presence on the Web where relevant sections of our News Sheet will be "published" each month - all this courtesy of Peter Foreman - he has already received around 160 "visitors" since June 14! For those of you who can access it, reference is: <http://www.comports.com/nlsme>. Many thanks, Peter.

*Beryl C*

## Workshop Nights

Workshop nights, which will be held on the fourth Friday of the month, will be starting as from 23 October at 8.00 at HQ, Summers Lane. The format will be the same as last year. We hope to start the evening with a short talk or demonstration leaving plenty of time for questions or discussions about our engineering problems, and to exchange ideas - which is what the evening is really all about. However, I'm short of speakers to start off the evening with a 20 - 40 minute talk. If you have a subject related to our hobby, or you know someone who can give us a talk or demonstration, it would help me to arrange these winter talks, which will be a total of 5 evenings.

*Derek P*

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## **Tythenhanger Gazette**

The July Loco Meeting was a barbecue and running evening at the Track. One of the locos running was the club's class 37 battery electric of which I wrote last month. The battery charger for the loco, also from Cyril Rylatt's bequest, has now arrived. It is designed to charge Leisure or Caravan batteries and has short circuit and reverse polarity protection. When the battery is first put on charge, the charging rate is 10 amps at 12 volts, and after a period of time, this drops down to a trickle charge at 13.6 volts, which can remain on indefinitely; so they can be put on charge Sunday afternoon and taken off the following Sunday morning. Whilst looking around for a story, the only other loco on the Track came into view. It was a 5" gauge 'Sweet Pea', much redesigned and built by Brian R. It was named 'Lady Margaret', after his good wife, who made the shovel for it. During the evening, 'Sweet Pea' achieved one hundred miles since January. Brian is a driver on the Kent and East Sussex Railway whilst Margaret is a trainee fireman, trainee diesel driver and second man on diesels. (I rather like how the gender of the job titles have not been interfered with here). A couple of weeks ago they entered the Northern Federation first efficiency trial for narrow gauge engines, and came second on both of the days with 1.157%, winning a plaque, a pint glass and a cheque, and also having an enjoyable weekend. The winning loco had a Sentinel outline, a loco boiler with a uniflow exhaust; the engine had cam controlled valve gear with a chain drive to the wheels; all this made it difficult to beat. Brian and Margaret usually pay us a visit from Dymchurch every Halloween night for about a five hour run round the track. They are hoping to visit us about once each month this year, even though it is a 200 mile round trip.

*Roger B*

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## **Stationary Steam**

Although we haven't attended any Rallies in the month of July, we have had a busy time doing numerous jobs on both the lorry and roller, mostly connected with the coming visit of John G. the boiler inspector. We have brought the lorry inspection forward a month so that we can have both vehicles done together. I've always used John since first buying the Roller and as he comes down from Birmingham, one journey must mean a reduction in the price. As an inspection costs around £200, any saving is worth while. We took the lorry to the village school. John S. brought his engine and Tim J. came as additional driver. After a little while, the rain started - at first quite light but soon turning into really serious downfalls. Tim was driving John's engine and no matter how hard it rained. he refused to give up. I think we have a traction Engine convert here. Eventually the fete was abandoned - such a shame when the School had worked so hard. Next, we attended a Hospital Fete near Welwyn. Jack E. came along and helped and, as always, John W. and John S. worked very hard. We had taken over £70 when, once again, rain stopped play. Terry B. has been as active as ever, this time on the Isle of Man. Although the weather was not good, the Rally was, and a good time was had

by all. More news of this Rally later - perhaps I can persuade Terry to write a few words. Also on the I.O M at the same time were the Collingwoods, who met up with Terry and they both thought the island was marvellous - a 50 year time warp.

*Frank D*

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## Sprocket Hole Writes

By the time you read this, a large object resembling a space ship will have been very, very securely suspended from the ceiling at HQ. This is one of the newly acquired video projectors enabling a picture in excess of 8 feet (measured diagonally) to be projected onto the screen from a VHS size video player. This will be of great benefit to all groups who want to show videos to large audiences. The Cine Section has already spent four Wednesday evenings and two and a half full days on this project and wiring in and fine tuning is still in progress at the time of writing. Testing of amplifiers, speakers and various video players is still in progress as we aim to get the best value and quality for the least cost. Andy L. has put a great deal of his time and effort into this and his experience of similar equipment has been a great help in getting things running. When all ancillary equipment is fully running, it should mean that anyone who can operate a video player will be able to switch on, insert their tape and sit back and watch big pictures as opposed to tele-sized images. It is easy to hire or buy videos but how much more satisfying it is to make your own and with the equipment now available within the Cine Section it need not cost much more than the price of video tape. Already, three members of other sections are showing an interest on Wednesday evenings, which is good for the Society as a whole. I have never been fond of the word 'section', as this implies membership of a part of the group, whereas we are a Society where all members can enjoy any of the varying activities, both at HQ and at Colney Heath. There are twelve very happy members involved in video making who would like to express their appreciation of the efforts of Jim M. in acquiring these superb video projectors at a remarkably low price. As the saying goes, it's not what you know, but who you know', and it has been our privilege to know Jim, who always seems to be working for the benefit of the NLSME. Our BBQ on Wednesday 15 July at Colney Heath was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by all our guests, who outnumbered the members present. The Loco Section as usual did a great job providing rides and driving tuition, and they only consumed exceedingly small quantities of the beer and food offered to them. Many thanks to Rod W., who did the shopping, and John O., who did the cooking and managed to melt his plastic apron when he stood too close to the BBQ! The lady members provided us with salad, tea and cakes, and there was more than sufficient for all. A nice friendly atmosphere, aided by the weather being kind to us, made for a nice pleasant evening. We hope all members will enjoy many pleasant evenings watching their videos at HQ. At the last Council meeting it was agreed that a new video player will be purchased, capable of playing VHS (low band) and super VHS (high band) for optimum quality. Anyone wishing to use the new equipment, but unsure how to go about it should contact the Cine Section leader, who can arrange a demonstration. As any event organiser will know, you should always check on the use of, and working practices of any equipment before the event. Happy viewing.



*Sprocket Hole*

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## Marine Section Part One

The June Marine meeting began with a précis of the Council meeting by Frank. Taking one of the

points from his report, I would like to thank, on behalf of everybody, and the Marine Section in particular, for the most generous anonymous donation of £1,000 towards the cost of the pond. The meeting was devoted to my lecture on air-brushing and weathering. I was pleasantly surprised to see so many people come to hear me 'drone' on. To weather a model or not is a personal preference. The main problem with weathering is how much to put on. I have seen some models with so much rust added that they look like rejects from a scrapyard. Subtleness is the key. To make authentic-looking rust, for dry-brushing, I use an equal amount of raw umber and burnt sienna oil paints mixed together. It also looks better than the tinned paint colour. A number of dry-brushing techniques were shown, using pastel chalks and graphite powder. The high point of the evening, once we got an extension lead that worked, was a number of those present having a go with an air-brush on the newly uncovered Precious / Inman hardstand outside HQ. From the expertise shown, it won't be long before they will be taking orders for custom art work on cars. The evening was brought to an end when we could not see each other - due to darkness, not paint! It was good to see Bill M. with his own air-brush at the meeting. I hope to give my last talk on decaling and finishing at the November meeting.

*Peter S*

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## Marine Section Part Two

A general discussion took place at the beginning of the July Marine meeting. This was followed by a talk given by Eric G.. Eric talked about old lettering and typesetting, and machines in the days when he was a lad. This proved to be an interesting talk with several questions being raised. A video was also shown about old clipper boats and Thames sailing barges, followed by one about power boats, although there was insufficient time to see all of this one. We hope to be purchasing a gazebo later in the year from our cash funds. If the building work is complete and the pond filled with water, we hope to hold the August Marine meeting at Colney Heath. Please ring me to check nearer the time if in doubt. The July meeting was taken by myself, in Peter S.'s absence.

*Frank I*

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## Loco Section

### Tyttenhanger Wish List

As we stated in last month's News Sheet, here is a list of work that is best done in the summer months when the weather is slightly more clement! The list is by no means exhaustive and you will no doubt be able to suggest as many small jobs that can be done on a sunny day as we have given. A list will be put up in the workshop for ticking off.

- \* Approach road needs pot-holes filling
- \* Entrance gate and posts need repainting
- \* Workshop doors to be repainted
- \* Workshop and station gutters to be cleared and painted
- \* BBQ table to be repainted
- \* LNER post at end of platform to be refurbished
- \* Coach buffers and end of coach to be refurbished
- \* Kitchen floor to be repainted
- \* Wood floor in coach to be varnished

- \* Fence to be painted
- \* ¾ mile post to be repainted
- \* Signals washed and repainted
- \* Station benches painted
- \* Rotted arris rails in fence to be repaired
- \* 'Beware of Trains' sign to be erected
- \* Station path to be levelled
- \* Rafters in station roof to be painted.

These are just a few of the smaller and larger jobs that can be done at Tyttenhanger. Cost of materials will, of course, be reimbursed.

*Ian J & John S*

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## Notices

### We're Wired

I would just like to update you with the sort of response I have been receiving from our web site. The people contacting us range from Tom L.'s daughter, Tina, who's in Australia, to a couple in Vancouver and Les M.'s son, Roger, who is in Hong Kong. I have received a number of captions for the competition. (*Issue 583 Page 9*). They will appear in the on-line News Sheet in September.

*Peter F*

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## Stolen

Paul Booth of Worcester had his 7 1/4" ROMULUS 0 4 0 Side Tank Loco and 4-wheel water tender stolen on 19 June 1998. When stolen, it was painted maroon and black, with "Elidir" name-plates, "Avonside Engine Co. 2071, 1933" builders plates, and "Caldewell Estate Railway" in gold vinyl letters on tender sides. This engine is one of four built by TMA Engineering in 1980. The locos side tanks were cut away at rear to clear the reversing mechanism; it has twin heavy duty adjustable "Buffalo" injectors and generally overscale commercial size "Crane" valves in cab etc; steel boiler, single water gauge (stamped G. Oughton) on right-hand side, and cast wheel with raised lettering "Minimum Gauge Railways". The tender is missing its proper top and seat, is fitted at rear with sprung side buffers, centre hook and chain, and centre buffer/ coupling, and has coal bunker forward of tank. Mr Booth thinks the name plates (thick cast brass, 10" long) and oval builders plates may be offered for sale separately, and the loco may have been repainted. He suggests owners of railways in the South/West Midlands should be on their guard. Mr Booth is appealing for people, clubs, societies, etc. to be on the look-out for any part and or parts as above.

His local police station's no:  
0345 444888  
Incident no. 182532  
E-mail: [Sheila@Caldewell.demon.co.uk](mailto:Sheila@Caldewell.demon.co.uk)

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