

December 1998 / Issue 588

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Thoughts of Chairman Dell

I've stopped smoking once AGAIN. It was Mark Twain who said its easy to stop smoking, I've done it dozens of times. I'm afraid I fall into the same category.

I first stopped smoking over 20 years ago having sampled the delights of PIPE, CIGARS, TAILOR MADE and ROLL UPS for many years. Even when I stopped I still spoil myself by having a Cigar at XMAS. When asked if I smoked and how many, it was nice to reply yes, one a year, it gave one a smug feeling. However, when the first Xmas came round I was quite content with a small Hamlet, but as the years went by the cigars got bigger and bigger until by the fifth year I was smoking Coronas. I could make one of those last all Xmas afternoon. I became like a child longing for Xmas to come, but like all addictions it wasn't long before I was on the slippery slope. I started to smoke on special occasions, i.e. my birthday, the wife's birthday and anyone else's that needed celebrating, me doing the celebrating. I was now smoking in secret as my wife did not approve. She can smell tobacco smoke from a 100 yards, so I had to be very careful. I found that eating oranges took away the smell, so I ate lots of oranges and my wife often remarked, "All the oranges you eat must keep you very healthy". But eventually I was always found out, a pack of cigars left in a jacket pocket or matches. Once having been found out, I always stopped and have gone on for three or more years before failing again.

Why is it that things that give you pleasure do you harm. Why not a cigar that strengthens the lungs or milk and butter that makes the heart beat stronger. I can only think of one thing that gives you pleasure without harm and I don't belong to that club anymore.

I can remember my mother giving us bread dripping for tea, "Eat it all up, it will do you good". Dripping, for those who don't know is the fat from a roast joint which is poured into a basin and allowed to set at the bottom was a layer of brown jelly and on top the dripping, absolutely delicious with a little salt; what it did in creating cholesterol, I dread to think.

When I was working on the bench many years ago, if you worked overtime after 6 pm you were entitled to additional tea break. A tea lady came round with her trolley, on some occasions dripping toast. I remember on one particular evening in the stampede to gain a slice of dripping toast one old

chap was knocked over and trampled on, fracturing his left leg. We finished our toast and then rung down to the surgery. Such was the power of dripping toast. Happy days.

Frank Dell

Off the Cuff

Guy Fawkes Night has been and gone, at many venues probably washed out by the rain: Armistice Day and the annual march past at the Cenotaph was almost obliterated by rain: and a lot of our rivers and streams have burst their banks in recent weeks – but compared to the tragedy in Honduras we really have nothing to complain about. Now we can look forward to Christmas, the New Year and the Model Engineers Exhibition – the last one at Olympia, and of course the Millenium is getting ever closer!

The November Council Meeting has been and gone and while everything is fresh in my mind I'll give you my usual rundown. We had two apologies for absence and the October Minutes were approved and signed, which took us onto Matters Arising. The first item concerned a Risk Assessment team for HQ where a third volunteer is still required (come on HQ members – it's for the benefit of all of you so why not offer to help?): the next item was a review of Constitution revisions dating from 1995 which still have to be put to members – the Council want more information from me so discussion has been deferred for a further month but we'll get there eventually!: we are currently looking at buying a steel container to make a secure store for those items which always seem to be nicked when we have a break-in, price will have to be right of course, so if any of you have any useful contacts in this field give the Chairman a call: there's been a "slight hiccup" in calling for bids for the late Bill Camp's locos because the address was wrong in the November newsletter – there should be more about this elsewhere in this edition, and the auction of Bill's "bric-a-brac" was very successful with nothing being left – thanks to everyone who supported the auction.

The Chairman was optimistic that we will continue to "hire out" the portable track or similar at fetes next year but the trailer may have to be replaced and the track itself could do with a thorough check-up – is there anyone out there willing to report on its condition and life expectancy? The Chairman would be delighted to hear from you. And perhaps we could find a few more customers to book birthday parties?

From my point of view correspondence continues to be at a low level but I get quite a few phone calls – asking where locomotive drawings can be obtained, how hot air engines are made, how easy would it be to make an electric loco – obviously all subjects I can speak about with authority!! Thank heavens Michael is only a quick shout away and soon comes to my rescue. The Treasurer gave his usual run-down on our finances, bills paid, etc., and two membership applications were approved - details elsewhere in this News Letter. Section Reports were fairly brief – you can all relax round the pool next summer as we are now the proud owners of a lifebelt: its wiring and scenery as usual in the 00 Room: North American members will soon have their white wipe-clean board returned to them: and a volunteer is needed to become Juniors Section Leader and oversee their activities. Once again the Chairman will be delighted to hear from you.

The exhibition at Olympia is not that many weeks away and Maurice Cummins is our Exhibition Organiser, so if any of you have anything really tasty that would show to advantage on our Stand you know whom to contact.

Get this and the Minutes out of the way and I can really begin to concentrate on what matters most – writing the Xmas Cards and wrapping the presents! Well it takes me a long time as I get writer's cramp. Bye.

Beryl Collingwood

Tythenanger Gazette

The November Loco Section meeting was a Work in Progress, and the first to speak was a new member to the Society, Frank Hills. He fancied building something quickly, and last January bought the plans for a Peak Class 45 battery electric loco. Progress has been quite rapid as it is now up to the rolling chassis stage. Each of the frames is ¼" thick, so these were bought laser cut. Not having the correct size bar in stock, Frank turned the solid steel wheels from 5 ½" diameter bar down to 4 ½" over the flanges. The Myford worked hard, each wheel taking a day to make, and generating loads of swarf. The axleboxes were machined from 1" x 1 ½" mild steel bar; the axle covers are machined from a casting and pressed in the axlebox; the suspension uses coil springs and imitation leaf springs. The leaves are made from 1/16" x ¼" mild steel, the bottom leaf having a spigot turned on it to locate it in the hole in the top of the axlebox. For its size it is very heavy. The design was by Dan Jeavons.

Jim Taylor and Reg Dale are building a "Butch" each together. The joint project was started 14 months ago and many accurate and well finished parts were displayed. The frames were still bolted back to back with the hornblocks machine finished. We looked at connecting rods, the handbrake column, cylinders, steam chest and the cylinder end covers to name but a few parts. Such was the accuracy that any cylinder end cap fits any end of any cylinder. Whilst turning the wheels the centre of the wheel boss was marked out and centre punched, the wheel placed in the 4 jaw chuck and a wobble bar set up to assist in adjusting the chuck jaws to get the centre pot to run true. A wobble bar has a centre at one end which is placed in the tailstock centre and a point the other end, which is placed in the centre pot. The diameter of the wobble bar is clocked up at the chuck end to measure the eccentricity. It was mentioned that the part of the wheel that is usually taken as the datum is the inside diameter of the rim.

The dome for Mike Ruffell's "Simplex" on the drawing looked too small for his GWR livery. The dome from the 'Metro' looked the right size, so he made that only to find it would not fit the boiler. Not to be out done, Mike trepanned the domes mounting mounting face away, rolled a piece of 3/16" brass plate to suit the curve and brazed it to the dome. Finally, it was filed to shape and one could not tell the difference.

The gauge one G&SWR loco on the table was Bert Mead's project and at a nice manageable size. The smokebox door hinges were held on by two 12BA screws; the door was held secure by a handle with a screw on the end rather than the traditional dart. The machining of the funnel where it mates to the smokebox was described, the funnel being held on a vertical slide whilst a boring tool clamped to a flat bar that was secured to the faceplate all rotated. The arc of the rotating boring tool was adjusted by sliding the flat bar across the face plate.

David Harris brought along his tender for a 5" gauge Britannia. He purchased the part-started loco 2 ½ years ago and now the major part of the work is his. The tender, now nearly finished, will have a hand pump fitted inside, and a ladder up the back. The coal bunker is next to be made. It is held together by 1/16" rivets and will be soft soldered to make it watertight using a microflame torch and solder paste. It was mentioned that araldite has been used with great success without the risk of distortion, or that soldering can be carried out using a hot air gun. Perrier's drawings were used with Spinks drawings for comparison. The two bends in the tender sides were tricky to make, without a good folding machine, so these were contracted out to a sheet metal firm to make for him. All in all it was very well made.

The boiler for Les Brimson and his sons' 5" gauge 0-4-0 loco was finished only the previous

evening. It has not yet had any water in it. The loco will have an American outline and was designed by Don Young, with some parts re-designed by Les. A superheater will be fitted, and as the smokebox tubeplate sits some way down inside the boilerbarrel, two 2BA screws will secure the superheater to the boiler instead of the usual six 6BA screws. The firehole in the boiler has been raised to provide a deeper fire than original 5/8" above the fire bars.

Instead of buying a brazing hearth, Les went to the local builders merchant and bought some Thermalite blocks. Each one was light, the size was 18" x 9" x 4 1/2" and cost about 60 pence each.

Derek Perham spoke of making the sand box cover lids for his loco. The handle for the lid was made from 16 swg flat brass, the ends being slightly radiused in plan to enable it to sit centrally over the recess in the lid whilst it was brazed.

A tool was then described for machining small hexagon heads. It can also be used for square or any other regular number of sides. Hexagon headed screws could be made in 20 seconds each from cheese head screws, the hexagon being machined from the part of the head that is below the cross slot for the screwdriver. Across flat sizes were .062 to .065 or .073 to .075, depending on the scale and size of screw required. A rivet can also have a hexagon head where it does not need to come apart. Basically, the tool was a piece of slotted angle. A piece of hexagon holding the screw was slid along the slot past a cutter in a drilling machine. Derek may do a write up on this tool, it sounds a handy gadget.

The Clayton road locomotive at 2" to the foot was brought along by John West. It has been in steam, which has showed up a few problems, which John has rectified. The engine has a wet sump, which kept leaking, so it was stripped down, new pistons, 'O' rings, packing and covers were fitted. The covers were sealed with Araldite. The gearing was too high and it would not pull enough, so following an article in the Model Engineer magazine, some sprockets and chain were fitted after purchasing from a local bearing company, which has improved its performance. Whilst filling the water tank, muck from the chimney went into the water, so a push pull pump has been fitted. This can be operated without removing the lid from the tank. The superheater is to be removed to enable the tubes to be cleaned without having to turn the whole locomotive upside down. The cab is to be made and then it will be repainted. The design was by Robin Dwyer.

This was Ian Johnston's last meeting as Loco Section leader, and Mike Chrisp spoke on behalf of us all in thanking Ian for all the work he has done in running the section over the last two and a half years.

Ian concluded that there was not enough time to summarise, and do justice to all the excellent models that we had seen through the evening, but suffice it to say that the Work in Progress evenings were the most enjoyable ones he comes to.

Roger Bell

[The International Model Show and The Model Engineer Exhibition, Olympia, 29 December 1998 - 3 January 1999](#)

We have been allocated a stand within last years "Centennial Village". On this we will be putting Frank Dell's steam lorry, with two rostrums on the back for models. Beside this will be another two rostrums mounted on tables. At the end of the 30 foot stand we hope to have a display of traction engines from four to one inch. Any member who would like to do stewarding please let me know as you will be given a free pass to the exhibition. Setting up day is Monday 28 December.

We have also been invited to exhibit at "The London Model Engineering Exhibition" at Picketts Lock from 22 to 24 January 1999.

I wish all members a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

P.S. I still have some car badges for sale at £ 8.00 each. They make a good Christmas present - better than a pair of socks!

Maurice Cummins

Marine Mumbles

Before I make my Marine Mumbles this month, I would like to take time out to send Raymond Goss, one of our Marine members, best wishes and a speedy recovery from his illness. I am sure I speak for the whole Society in saying we look forward to seeing you soon up and about.

I have also got to thank Frank Inman for jumping in (not literally) and running last month's Marine meeting. My only excuse was that I had to go back to work at very short notice that evening. I owe you a drink for that Frank! I know he is still talking to me, as he and Bill Mason invited me to join them on the long trek to the International Model Boat Show held near Leamington Spa. This was a three-day event. All the adverts give the impression of some huge aquatic M.E. Exhibition, with everything for the model boat builder. At least the organisers' hearts were in the right place, as there were ships on display. Unfortunately, there was not a vast number of clubs supporting the show, nor was there the major Marine traders. I only saw in the whole show, two Radio Control units for sale. At least they had two ponds inside with displays going on. One of these was of a German Fire Boat, which released and reclaimed its little fire tender from a stern ramp.

I bet it took a fair number of R.C. channels to control that little lot. That was nothing compared with this chap who had build a destroyer operated by twenty four channels. Even the lifeboats were lowered. I don't know how he knew what did what on it.

Anyway, the show was not too bad - let's hope next year's one will be better. There will not be a December Marine meeting, as it is getting so close to Christmas.

Happy Christmas to all in the Society from the Marine Section, and have a Prosperous New Year.

Peter Stern

For Sale

Stamford Model Engineering Society have a number of machines for sale:

=+ Hobbymat Lathe, Metric model, 2 5/8" centre-height, nearly new, chucks, toolposts, usual equipment. Offers around £ 450.

=+ Sealy ½" pillar drill, bench model, 12 speed, nearly new, £ 60.

=+ Double ended grinder, 6" model, £ 25, nearly new.

=+ Emco Compact 8E lathe; 100mm 3-jaw chuck, 180mm face-plate, quick-change toolpost & 3 toolholders. List price £ 1,700. Will sell for £ 795.

=+ Centec 2A Mill, Imperial model, complete and partly restored on maker's cabinet. Overarm, 2MT arbour, single phase electrics & coolant. 2 vertical swivelling heads. Sensible offers.

=+ Flott high speed drilling machine. ¼" capacity. 3-phase 2-speed motor, Cheap to the right home.

If you are interested in any of the above items, please contact,
D.A.G.Brown, Chairman, Stamford Model Engineering Society
Mallards, Mill Lane, Tinwell, Stamford PE9 3UD
Tel: 01780 753162

WUT News from the North American Section

We've kept a low profile in the news recently, unable to outdo the level of interest in the affairs of William J Clinton - whoever he may be. We are still here. Barry Church has relinquished the role of Section Leader. We are all very grateful to Barry for his warm leadership style over several years, attempting to reconcile the diverse aims of members and keeping us all in approximately the same direction and especially for his diplomatic chairing of excitable section meetings. Clive Winter has agreed to keep the Section Leader's badge in his tool box. In spite of following through the thoughts of Chairman Dell in September's Little Red Journal, he will not be calling himself Clive E Winter III.

Three of our members have been out to the Pacific North West to see what we can learn from Burlington Northern Santa Fe. They returned with miles of video tape and ideas, but no desire to adopt a ponderously long name in which each word gets progressively shorter.

So what is going on each week as we pack into the 28ft by 13ft space? According to the employee Timetable we have 9 miles of main line and a number of miles of other lines with some fierce gradients, (well they are fierce to locomotives designed for the Prairies), and the theoretical ability to move 12 trains simultaneously. Quite how we'd fit 12 operators into the narrow aisles is a question best avoided among gentlemen of a certain comfort level . . .we like our chocolate biscuits during the tea break or even chocolate cookies with our 'cawfee'.

After some full and frank discussions the industrial area now being developed in the centre of the room has been renamed Richmond, after the locomotive builders in Richmond, Virginia. Track is beginning to appear, disappear and reappear as the reality of trying to set out and operate Version 6 of the plan in the space available is found to differ from the reality. Operators are learning a southern drawl to go with the location name, but they will not be required to eat Grits for breakfast. When we get on to the buildings then perhaps one of our sidings will serve a tobacco warehouse. On the wider stage a group of us have agreed to run the NMRA British Region Convention 1999 to be held in Peterborough October 22-24, 1999. We'll be looking for North American layouts to show there as we don't feel it practical to both organise the convention and operate the portable(ish) WUT2. The smaller Young Street Yard is a possibility.

Wednesday December 9th will be our open evening when we welcome members of all sections in the society to come to HQ and run trains up real hills, and then wonder where on earth they've disappeared to. There will also be refreshments.

Clive Winter

Loco Section

The Halloween Evening at Colney Heath was surprisingly well attended considering the inclement weather. The rain was so heavy that the main running on the track was carried out by a locomotive without driver! It fitted in well for Halloween evening to see a Ghost Train wending its way through lights and decorations. Surprisingly, the bonfire, which consisted of Rod Pomeroy's pallets and fallen trees, went up in flames for the enjoyment of all. Thank you all who helped and indeed attended this sodden but enjoyable evening.

On Sunday 8 November, an auction of Bill Camp's model engineering bric-a-brac took place at the track. Quite a few members from other clubs were present at the lively auction, conducted by our very own, articulate, Mike Chrisp. Thank you Mike.

At the November Loco meeting Rod Pomeroy was unanimously welcomed as new Loco Section leader. John and I will give him our full support as will all members, and we wish him well.

There was a good attendance at the first working party which took place at Colney Heath on Sunday 15 November. A great deal of work soon got underway under Rod's leadership and Jim Robson's tea break.

Thanks to Peter Shewry for last year's coffee breaks.

Ian Johnston

Workshop Nights

I must apologise for not attending our November meeting, and must remember next year that my old school dinner and dance always seems to clash with the 4th Friday of November.

All thanks must go to Mike Chrisp who always stands by when I'm in a tight corner. Mike will, I know, keep you interested and informed. I hope he will see some pop-boats!

So on to the future meetings - 22 January 1999 we will have Dr.Philip Hitchcock explaining the types of power sources we need for our Diesel/Electric, outline locos etc. He is an expert on batteries and D.C. Not to be missed.

Our 26 February meeting will be with the talented D.A.G.Brown, who has kindly given us the choice of three talks, and you decided at October's meeting to ask for the talk on 'Injectors and their problems'. D.A.G.Brown, or Derek to us, writes on several subjects in the Model Engineer and Engineering in Miniature magazines, and all his articles are written in a way which can be easily understood without having to be an Engineer with honours. The two other talks offered were on his four facet drill sharpening jig, and the use of C.A.D. in model engineering. I had assumed that the meeting would vote for this talk, but another time perhaps. It's a pity, because Derek has a book being published in the New Year on this subject. Thanks to Derek for coming to our meeting. He has been a member of NLSME for many years and now lives in Stamford, Lincs.

The meeting on 26 March will be a grand show of pop-boats which you have all designed and made over these winter months. I expect to see 12 plus people. In April we will hold a competition at the

pond at Colney Heath. This may be held at the Marine meeting on 16 April if agreed by Peter Stern. A prize will be given to the fastest boat over 12 feet or 3 metres of 4" house guttering. Would someone care to supply the course, suitably fixed to a board or boards for level and stable running?

We might be able to get younger members interested! To conclude our winter meets our Chairman, Frank will be giving a talk on antiques, a subject we all associate with, whether it be our years or objects. Don't miss Frank's talk, it will be a good finish to our Workshop Nights.

That's it folks, all has been sorted I hope. Do have a Happy Christmas and a Productive Model Engineering New Year.

Derek Perham

Nostalgia Corner

Recently Maurice Cummins lent me his copy of the 30th Anniversary News Sheet – for August 1975 – and there are all sort of interesting items in it including four pages of photos, some taken at the Colney Heath Open Day in June 1975, the rest at Arkley, all printed without the aid of a scanner or – come to that – even a computer judging by the typeface. As you all know "model engineering" is not one of my interests but even I have enjoyed reading through the news sheet and that led me to speculate that our members – both "old stagers" and "newcomers" – might also be interested in some reminiscences hence the following article written by the late Geoff Cashmore – he also supplied the photos which are not reproduced here due to lack of definition.

"LOCO" FOR THIRTY YEARS. GEOFF CASHMORE

Well nearly! I can at least say I have followed the fortunes of the Loco Section for thirty years. I did not join the Club until I had completed a locomotive (JULIET) because I thought, quite wrongly, that this was the qualification one needed to get proposed and seconded. What a mistake that was. I expect I could have done the job in half the time if I had been able to seek advice from members.

I remember taking my very young children, 2 and 4 years old, to the NLSME Exhibition at Ewen Hall (Potters Bar) in 1948. Ken Stockall was running "MAISIE" on one track and Bob Baird, an unpainted Midland 31/2" 4-4-0 with eight wheeled tender on the other parallel track. Bob Baird emigrated to Canada soon after and the Midland engine created quite a stir in the Province. Bob and I corresponded in later years and before he died he had finished a fine 31/2" "PRINCESS".

The track referred to above was made by Mr.H.A.Taylor, that famous Model Engineer who now lives in Bletchley. He was of course a member of our Club in the early days and has won several awards in the succeeding years with magnificent locos. I think his "BLACK FIVE" was on show in the 1974 M.E. Exhibition.

At those early exhibitions familiar faces would be Bill Vaughan, at that time a proud owner of a "HIELAN LASSIE", Bert Mead with his beautiful "PADDLEBOX" made on a treadle lathe during the war, Ted Moon and "SUZIE M" – let's face it, how many of us can remember when Ted didn't have "SUZIE"?

Uncle Jim Crebbin was a member of NLSME and those of you who know your Model Engineering history will know that probably he, more than anyone else, put live steam on the map up to the time LBSC started writing. His "COSMO BONSOR", although now retired, is in a place of distinction at

SMEE Headquarters. I am sad to say that I never got to know Uncle Jim before he died.

In 1950 a "human tornado" hit the NLSME. Encouraged by his neighbour, that well known Model Engineer and Founder Member, Bert (H.E.) White, Reauleux Wuidart joined our Club. Reauleux (pronounced Rollo) ran a small engineering factory in Wood Green and had many interests – particularly fast cars. He was impressed with Bert's 3 1/2" G 3 cylinder Pacific. He borrowed Bert's patterns and in 30 days flat he had an engine on the track! Mind you he never bothered to strip it for painting – he slapped some on the boiler and smokebox and left it at that. Now he wanted somewhere to run it. Mr. Taylor's track was only about 120ft. long, so Reauleux decided to make some more. Due to this enthusiasms he had been elected Loco Section Leader. Working parties were "ordered", I use this word carefully. One dared not to turn up. On arrival on Saturday morning at his Works everything was organised. Jigs were made, materials ready and machines set up. Hacksaws were running so fast, blades were getting red hot, drilling machines were buzzing and capstan lathes running at top speed were making the tie rods and spacers. Poor Arden Marchant was told when drilling "come on laddie put some beef into it, we haven't got all day".

We made the track in about 3 Saturdays and as most of you know this portable track still exists today and is used occasionally.

Ernie Simes (dear old Ernie) arranged with the Water Company for this straight track to be erected at Arkley. It was now about 300ft. and gave Reauleux a chance to do a bit of speeding. More than once he went over the end, landing up in the grass. He decided 3 1/2" G was too small, so set about making a 5" G Atlantic. He took his time over this engine and finished it in 6 months! Having achieved his ambition he decided model engineering no longer represented a challenge and left to become Commodore of a local Marine Club but not before he had given us two years as an active Chairman (1953-54).

Spurred on by such enthusiasm, the rest of the members decided straight portable tracks were restricting and another human dynamo emerged – Ed Hobday. With further aid from Ernie Simes, the Water Company allowed us to have space in the corner of the cricket field at Arkley. Several loco meetings were spent discussing the way we should construct the track. There were plenty of 'experts' and armchair critics.

In the Spring of 1954, Ed asked for volunteers to help at Arkley one Saturday morning. He did not say what for. Half a dozen of us turned up to find several lorry loads of precast concrete all made to bolt together. Ed hadn't waited for the 'experts'. Here was material to make a railway line 450ft. long. Sunday mornings were spent assembling with the aid of Glyn Black (and his wife who made the tea), Dave Chisnall, H A Stevens (Steve, who started model making at 75), Pop Pinnock and Tom Luxford, to mention a few.

The rails were soon made out of flat iron, 1" x 1/4" and jig drilled. 2 1/2", 3 1/2" and 5" gauges were catered for and the rails were spaced apart by conduit with 1/4" dia. rods holding the whole together. By mid-summer 1954 the official opening took place with Mr. Stace, our President, driving Reauleux's 5" G Atlantic through the tape.

What fun we had in those early days. Open Days were organised, the Aircraft Section led by Eric Pritchard and Norman Allen, demonstrated their skill with gliders and parachute dropping from power planes, radio controlled. Ernie Rhodes, Arthur Weaver and of course Tom Pinnock would show us the speeds and excitement of Diesel Cars racing on the "Nordo Drome". These cars ran round a track guided by a 5/16" dia. rod about 1/8" clear of the baseboard. Ernie Rhodes decided it was time to try the railway track and put some flanged wheels on his car. It ran alright until it hit a bad rail joint and then took off like a rocket. The Stationary Steam Section was also known to perform at these functions with G.A. Flanagan (Flan) and Andy Gudger very much in evidence. There was always a good supply of tea and buns served from the cricket pavilion by the ladies,

usually organised by Mrs Florence Pinnock (Gynt) and supported by Mrs Rhodes, Mrs Moon and others.

By 1955 I had been elected to the post of Chairman, having been Loco Section Leader for the two previous years and the members were keen to have a longer track. Application to the Water Company to extend was quickly granted and we started construction in September 1956 to make the track nearly three times longer. By Easter 1958 the track was opened and was 1,580ft. long.

The extension was cast in situ and when finished was quite exciting to drive on with gradients and reverse curves. All the work was done by members on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Of those who helped I recall Geoff Wren, Ron Price, Bob Pitt, Dave Chisnall and Brian Luxford (chief concrete mixer), Tom Luxford, Bunny Austin, Harold Pill, Jack Calderbank, John Sumpter, Charlie Doublesin (now in New Zealand), dear old Pop Pinnock and Steve (who always cycled up to the field although nearly 80). Ed Hobday acted as consultant and I was General Foreman. Some of those mentioned will remember the "Arkley Menace", a fair haired youth of about 14 who was always waiting outside the gates for us to arrive. In a high pitched voice he would sing out "Morning Mr Wren" which has remained a "family joke" between Geoff and myself ever since. He nearly drove us mad with his perpetual questioning and desire to be of help. Poor lad, I'm sure we were most intolerant.

After only three years of use, you can imagine our disappointment when at the end of 1961 we were told we had four weeks to dismantle the track and clear off the site. We made it however and stored all the material hoping to be able to use it again at some future site.

The Water Company wanted the area for a deep underground reservoir. We were offered two new sites, one at Roestock, the other at Colney Heath. What wonderful co-operation we had from the Water Company. The rest is more recent history which most members will recall. The first track at Colney Heath was opened in May 1964, again by Mr. Stace, who this time drove "SUZIE M". True to tradition it was not long before the members again wished for a longer track and various schemes were contemplated. Mr Shaw, a member and also a senior engineer in the Water Company, solved the problem for us by producing a working drawing and the track extension at Colney Heath is his brainchild. Nearly half a mile in circuit, we can truthfully claim we have one of the finest railways in the country. The extension was completed in the Winter of 1970/71 and was opened by Mr. Reynolds, Chief Engineer of the Water Company, on May 16th 1971. Two years later we built the Cuckoo Line of 365ft. inside the top circle. This line is for beginners and those with 21/2"G engines.

For nearly twenty years the members of the NLSME have been engaged at one time or another in building railways and this possibly is a reason for the very good fellowship which exists. We must ensure that we continue to think up schemes for the improvement of facilities in the future, ensuring we have targets at which to aim, thus avoiding complacency.

When writing reminiscences of this sort, it is impossible to remember all names and if I have left out a name here or there, please excuse the omission – it would certainly not be left out wittingly.

I have a bit more archive material to dip into and from time time will do another article – hope you all enjoy this offering.

Beryl Collingwood

[December General Meeting](#)

Notice to all members, wives and friends. We are pleased to announce our speaker for the evening will be ex-Detective Chief Inspector Clifford Wrate. He is an excellent raconteur, whose main subject for the evening will be, 'The Great Train Robbery'. An evening for everybody and not to be missed.

[ON-Line News](#)

On-Line News

We now have a guestbook, so come along and sign it.

We also have an email list for you to join.

The counter is now at 660. (As of 19/11/98).

So dont forget to come along to our web site at:-

<http://www.comports.com/nlsme>

Peter Foreman Web Editor

The opinions and views expressed in this News Sheet are not necessarily those of the Society or editor.

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