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Thoughts of Chairman Dell

I've just received my Newsletter. I opened the front page and started reading. The standard of my writing has certainly gone up this month I thought, and then I realised I was reading Beryl's Off the Cuff, not the usual rubbish I write!

I've just returned from the Enfield Pageant - four days of absolute pleasure. Even the weather wasn't too bad! Two thousand classic vintage and veteran cars; seventy club stands ranging from large American classics of the 50's down to Austin 7s. Over seven hundred auto-jumble stalls, lots of interesting things to see and buy and of course around 30 steam engines and lorries. Standing next to us was a Clayton and Shuttleworth steam agricultural engine, just on 100 years old. The owner told me it's still running on it's original firebox although it now has a welded patch in the firebox crown. He recommends frequent boiler washing, at least three times a year. There's hope for all of us as regards our own boilers.

At Enfield they have a car sales compound where there were forty or fifty cars ranging from beautiful restorations to complete wrecks. An E Type Jag in pristine condition was priced at £13,000. By the last day it had been reduced to £10,500 and had still not attracted a buyer! My eye was caught by a 1950 Triumph Renown. It was the best restoration I have seen in many years. Dove grey, it was perfect inside and out. Now I like my wife to be involved in any purchase I make (really? -Ed), and I decided that if I could get agreement, I would buy it. I knew if she saw it she would be convinced. Alas it was not to be, for when I returned to the compound on Monday morning the car had been sold.

I must confess that about eighteen years ago I was lured away from the steam scene to restore old cars - Austin 7s. Ten years ago I recovered my sanity, returned to steam, and have been happy ever since.

John West had a good rally and bought many things. We cornered the market in flashing beacons buying a total of five. The opening price was £7, but by dint of some hard negotiating we drove the price down on each successive purchase until the last one,

every bit as good as the first, cost us only £2. With all five mounted on the headboard, we could be the owners of the first showman's steam roller! Does anyone want to hire a five channel steam disco?

John Squire bought a black shirt with the Burrell emblem emblazoned on the pocket so he was happy.

Our next rally was Leighton Buzzard, and the weather looked grim. We took the caravan over on the Thursday before, and found the site extremely soggy. I have yet to attend a really wet rally where all the engines have to be towed out by large tractors, but there's always a first time. (You must have missed last year's Great Dorset Steam Mud - Ed). My thanks to Jimmy who has now finished the fence at the Colney Heath site. His solo effort looks splendid. Jimmy is one of our unsung heroes who gets on with a job quietly and efficiently. The experts who told us that evaporation was responsible for the significant (up to 1 a day) water loss from the pond now look to be correct. The water level seems to be up to its usual level. We don't need any more water so I've arranged for the rain to stop.

Jupiter, soon to be renamed Bill Camp, is now running. We had the usual teething problems, mostly injectors. We now have one good working injector, but I think it might be wise to purchase a spare as the engine has no axle pump. With this engine and the Class 37 we should have no problem pulling passengers and will be well equipped for birthday parties.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank Tom Luxford for all his efforts for the Society over many years. I think he has held every office the Society has had to offer. I hope he will now have the time he needs to get City of London up and running. I would also like to thank Brendan for his spell as treasurer, one of the 'hot seats' on the Committee. Thanks too to Mike Avery and Jim MacDonald for their efforts as Council members. We have new blood on the committee representing younger members, and it's nice to have a member from the HO section, Ken West. Mike Collingwood is now Vice-Chairman, and his logic and clear thinking will help us function in a workmanlike manner. I haven't forgotten you Rod Pomeroy. With your responsibilities as a Council member, a Track Committee member and Loco section leader, have you any spare time? What I really want to say is thank you all for making North London what it is today.

I'm also grateful to Tim Joiner for acting up as Editor for this month's issue to give Angela a well earned break. Have a nice holiday Angela!

Frank Dell

Treasurer's Corner

Last month, I was asked to enquire about installing a telephone at HQ. Owing to the cost of installation and rental, the Council has decided that it is not a viable proposition as we can use the phone in the British Legion.

The subscriptions are coming in at a steady rate. In the next Newsletter I shall be sending out individual reminders.

We have 3 new members who are joining the Marine section, Loco section.

Maurice Cummins

Off the Cuff

JUNE - almost "busting out all over" as the song goes! JUNE - our holiday time as we're off on our narrowboat on the 19th for a couple or so weeks . JUNE - the Council Meeting and my usual run-down of subjects discussed, argued over, or agreed. There were a couple of corrections to the May Minutes, and bit more discussion of fetes - this time from the point of view of the traction engine enthusiasts. Next month we'll once again be listening to a "presentation" about the potential for locos and portable tracks in the Millennium year, so we do continue to give time and consideration to all the aspects relating to fetes.

We have now received from the Southern Federation a 7 page draft document for consultation, prepared by the Health & Safety Executive, on the subject of "Model Engineering - Guidance on safe operation of miniature railways and model traction engines", with considered comments required by end June! The H&SE have now recognised and acknowledged that the complete application of the fairgrounds guidance (which they previously used) to private clubs is inappropriate though they still consider it does contain useful information. H&SE have prepared this latest draft after consultation with the Midlands, Northern & Southern Federations, the GLG5 Association, the 71/4"Society, SMEE, and FMEMS. It is specifically aimed at those building and operating miniature railways and traction engines, and describes the legal requirements, managing health and safety, risk assessment, inspection procedures for both pre-service and in service use, and the duty of care when buying and selling equipment. That is just the starter to the document which will be discussed by the Track Committee and their comments (if any) will be passed to the Southern Fed. by Rod Pomeroy (I'll be away). The Council and the Track Committee continue to have your best interests in mind and will keep you informed as this matter progresses.

Also the Southern Fed. has written to all affiliated clubs on the subject of "model road vehicles and the Road Traffic Act", and the relevant information has been passed by John Squire to members owning traction engines in order to ensure they are aware of the latest information. The Southern Fed. is negotiating for an add-on insurance package to bring their third party liability up to Road Traffic Acts cover and will keep everyone advised, and they are also seeking clarification from the Department of Transport regarding the general application of the 1988 Road Traffic Act to the operation of model road vehicles.

The Chairman asked when the sea container will be commissioned as he envisaged in the not too distant future that the Club locos - Butch, Jupiter, and the 21/2" Dyak - being permanently and securely stored in the container, and he also expressed the opinion that JUPITER will be an ideal engine to use at birthday parties as it is capable of pulling 3 loaded trolleys.

Section Reports started with MARINE and it was suggested that members' access to the boating pond would benefit from some form of low bridging, approached by ramps, with the middle section removable for occasions when the Cuckoo Line is in use. The logistics of this simple idea will be investigated to establish if it is workable and if cost estimates should be prepared. CINE members and the Society have been congratulated by visiting Cine Societies on the excellent projection equipment now in place at H.Q.

One member of the 00 Section has expressed surprise at the length of a shed on the Bath Green Park exhibit which measured 5' 3". Other Section work continues much as usual. In the NORTH AMERICAN Section work on the Young Street Yard layout is progressing well in readiness for display at the October Convention in Peterborough. By coincidence, one member has just moved to the West Country and another member is about to move there. The LOCO section has been tidying up Colney Heath in preparation for their Jun Open Day (next one will be in September), and Friday evening barbecuing sessions are now in full swing - weather permitting. STATIONARY STEAM members will fly the Society's banner at the Colney Heath School fete on 19th June, and again at the St Stephen Parish Millennium Pageant in Greenwood Park on 11th July.

And that about wound up the meeting.

Beryl Collingwood

MILLENNIUM CELEBRATIONS 11th JULY 1999 **AT GREENWOOD PARK, CHISWELL GREEN, ST** **ALBANS.**

The St Stephen Parish Council are the principal organisers of this event and they first made contact with the Society in December 1997. At that time they were talking of a total of 3 events, the others being a New Years Eve Millennium Party at Greenwood Park, when a beacon will be lit at midnight, and on 19th June 2000 at Greenwood Park the inauguration of a Millennium Monument. The Royal National Rose Society at Chiswell Green has agreed to name a floribunda rose after the parish.

Their next contact was a year later and obviously in the ensuing year a great deal of preliminary planning had been put in place. They are also producing a Commemorative Book and Programme for the event, in which we will have a small paragraph.

Since March I have been receiving minutes of various meetings which indicate a video will be made of the pageant: there will be tug-of-wars: tapestries, paintings, a collage and a wall hanging are being made by local Clubs and Guilds: the Deputy Lord Mayor of Hertfordshire will open the pageant: there will be a Church Service, presumably in the open: children from several local schools will be participating: members of the Sealed Knot will stage a re-enactment of an English Civil War battle: there will be various dance demonstrations: etc etc.

The Society will be sharing space alongside the De Havilland Aircraft Trust (the Mosquito Museum), and several micro-light craft, and a Belgian dance organ.

So far as I know, entry to the show and its main attractions will be free but you have to pay for car parking and food. Catering arrangements will include a Hog Roast, barbecued burgers and sausages, ploughman's lunches, and a vegetarian caterer. Cream teas, cakes and other light refreshments will be available, and there will be a Beer Tent - for the use of non-drivers, according to the organisers!

Well Michael & I almost live in Chiswell Green so I imagine we'll pop over there during the day - taking Basil for his walk - and perhaps we'll see some of you there.

Beryl Collingwood

[Marine Mumbles](#)

Congratulations first off to Dave Jones and Jim Taylor in coming first and second respectively in Derek Parham's Pop-Pop Extravaganza. I gather there was only three seconds between them. Also thanks to all who turned up with their boats, not to mention the officials. Could this become an annual event? Anyone got any ideas on outboard Pop-Pop's?

The summer sailing has got underway on the pond at the track. It was good to see so many people there last month. There is plenty of room for more boats, so why not come along to the next sailing evening on the third Friday of the month. If it floats bring it and try out the new edging slabs around the pond. (if it still floats after that, try the water! - Ed)

Last of all a big thank you to all concerned with the building of the pond, and to Frank and Terry for sowing grass seed over the spoil.

Marine Mumbles will return.

Peter Stern

[Turning Thoughts](#)

It has been a great pleasure to edit the July Newsletter. I hope that contributors will forgive any mistakes which may have crept in. Some will be due to my inability to read handwriting, but some will inevitably be due to the fact that I print what I think contributors wrote, but what I thought they wrote may not be what they thought I would think they wrote. It's all in the translation!

As a Councillor for Westminster, I have the honour to meet visitors from Local Authorities around the world who come to the City to learn more about the way it is run.

These days, many of these visitors are senior politicians from a variety of Eastern European countries. Their grasp of English language and culture is frequently limited, and the foreign office provide an interpreter to help me grasp the detail of the questions and to ensure that the value(?) of my reply is not lost.

I recently enjoyed a good lunch with the Mayor of Kurgislavia, (name changed to preserve diplomatic relations and my skin), and answered innumerable questions on refuse disposal, rating appeals and traffic flow processes. Despite my best efforts, I felt that I was not really imparting anything of particular value to this gentleman who had travelled so far to visit the City. I walked with the mayor towards the large limousine which was to whisk him to his next visit, waiting with him for the lights to allow us to cross Piccadilly. When the green man gave us the all clear however, he stayed firmly on the pavement and spoke rapidly to the interpreter. The Mayor would like to know why the traffic lights are bleeping the interpreter said. Please tell His Worship that they do so

to let people who are blind or who have very poor eyesight know when it is safe to cross I replied. There was another staccato exchange, this time with many gestures. I raised my eyebrows to the interpreter. Deadpan she turned to me. His Worship finds this extraordinary. He says that in his country blind people do not drive. It's all in the translation!

Tim Joiner

NORTH LONDON SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE 55th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Welcome to the 55th Annual General Meeting and my first report as your Chairman. The saddest part is remembering we lost 3 members - in early December Mrs Marjorie Simes, an Honorary Member, died. It was her late husband who was instrumental in getting the Colney Heath site for the Society. Just before Christmas, Bill Douglas, an elderly and much respected member of the Cine Section died, and in March, Ralph Dapling, a proper little gentleman, died, to be followed a month later by his wife Betty. There were no marriages that we knew of, but we did learn of the birth of a son, Oliver, to Graham & Amanda Price, giving Ron & Sylvia Price a grandson.

The Society played an active role in a number of Exhibitions - the St Albans & District MES show at Marlborough School: the SMEE Centenary celebration at Brunel University in September: the annual ME show at Olympia where the Society won the Best Stand Award - next year (well, early December) the venue will be Alexandra Palace: late January it was the North London Gathering of Model Engineers at Picketts Lock, and finally there was a coach trip to the popular ME show at Brighton where we visit but do not exhibit. During the course of these events Maurice Cummins took over from Brendan Corcoran as Exhibitions Manager.

Over the past twelve months we have enjoyed a "Bring & Buy" sale, two Open Days at Colney Heath - one very wet, windy and cold, as was Halloween Evening in October. Speakers have included Graham Nixon on EMCO lathes, Clifford Wrate talking about the Great Train Robbery, and an excellent evening by Alan Wilmott of Windjammer Films who showed a number of British Transport films. As a result of an excellent auction of the late Bill Camp's effects when the Society declined to take their usual commission, we were presented with Bill's steam locomotive JUPITER by his executors, and this loco is now being overhauled by a team of members. The year came to an enjoyable conclusion with a hard fought and hilarious "pop-pop boat" championship at Colney Heath.

The Loco Section, having been left a generous legacy by the late Cyril Rylatt, purchased an electric Class 37 loco which has been dedicated to Cyril, and which is proving of excellent value on Sunday afternoons - particularly now a battery problem has been satisfactorily sorted out. Cine members have been delighted to get a "new" video projector - courtesy of another member with the right contacts, which will soon be further enhanced when their new screen is delivered and installed. With safety in mind pond-side, a lifebelt has been purchased since when the water level has been dropping!.

and this summer the pond will be enhanced with a gazebo. Several new "park" seats were bought for Colney Heath, the Loco Section seemed to anticipate considerable civil engineering work as they now own 3 cement mixers. Trenches have been dug and armoured cabling laid to the workshop, and quite recently a container has been delivered which is going to be converted into a secure store as every time we have a break-in we lose more equipment.

The CINE SECTION's year began with an enjoyable dinner at the Salisbury Arms, Hertford, and with the acquisition of the video projector a long-term ambition was achieved. A coach outing to Battle proved a very pleasant day out - all members are invited on these outings, and suggestions for future venues would be appreciated. Finals of the latest Triangle competition were held at Headquarters, where the improved facilities were greatly appreciated by all visitors. The Section took second place in the competition.

The LOCO SECTION began their year with John Squire and Ian Johnston as Joint Section Leaders, with Rod Pomeroy taking over in September when they stood down. John & Ian oversaw completion of the lower section of the loco lock-up and provision of a trolley lift, both vast improvements, and with the ground level track passing loop and points completed largely due to Jack Edwards. Over many months the raised track signals system was completely overhauled by John Riches, though we must not forget the sterling work over many years by Terry Baxter installing the system in the first place. The water system at the station was connected to the mains, and a substantial supply of Welsh steam coal was purchased. Despite a poor summer, running was well supported, and the new Class 37 electric loco proved extremely popular with members and public alike. North American, 00, and Cine Sections members enjoyed visits to Colney Heath; visiting Clubs included Erewash and St Albans; Loco members visited Ascot and Brent Hudson's ground level track in Cambridgeshire; and the annual Mencap visit was enjoyed by everyone who came along. Some 8 birthday parties and fetes were undertaken despite the appalling weather. Friday evening barbecues were well supported, and on one occasion Mike Murphy came along to give a demonstration of his gas turbine engine. Plates for the ground level track were welded and should improve track alignment and when all work is finished it should be a good track to drive on. Due to growing concern at the lack of head-room at the tunnel entrances the whole structure was raised and firmly rebedded onto sleepers and concrete, the work being carried out by Les Brimson, John Squire and an enthusiastic team of helpers. Thanks are due to everyone else who turned up at work parties and on other occasions to carry out a wide variety of tasks, and finally to past and present section leaders - John Squire, Ian Johnston, and Rod Pomeroy.

Peter Stern took over as Section Leader MARINE, and Frank Inman continued to attend Council meetings as well as working in the pond area most Sundays with Terry Hammer. The pond is now finished and is being landscaped, and other Clubs have shown an interest in holding regattas on this facility. Tom Luxford and Frank Inman selected an excellent gazebo, and Norman Brown - who has now left the Society - made a frame to hold the lifebelt. More members have attended meetings and quite a number are constructing boats, and talks and videos have been interesting and appropriate. Thanks are due to everyone who helped build the pond, and particularly to Peter Badger who did a first-class job paving the surround.

It was a quiet year for 00 members, with only one exhibition at which the Binnegar layout was displayed, though a number of other exhibitions were visited by members. Membership numbers remained constant, and the start of running nights on the first Wednesday each month was welcomed by everyone as a break from the years of work

on Bath Green Park. Mike Avery decided to stand down as Section Leader and Council Member for the past four years, with Ken West taking over as Section Leader.

Work on the NORTH AMERICAN section's Woodside Union Terminal 3 progressed well, and weekly meetings were revised to allow 2 running sessions each month. In order to have access to the layout and running schedules several members have been arriving late afternoon before the evening influx of bodies. During the year a baseboard for Richmond has been created - an industrial location with rail access and a power station which uses coal from a mine, also passenger services and an overnight Pullman car. The Section is organising the British Region Convention for the North American Railroad Association, to be held at Peterborough in October 1999, when their Young Street Yard layout will be on display.

STATIONARY STEAM members attended 3 fetes with their traction engines, they hauled passengers at most birthday parties and for Mencap's visit to Colney Heath. The Section was represented at SMEE's Centennial exhibition with engines in steam most days. Terry Baxter's McLaren Showman's engine was a regular visitor to the track, displaying new fittings on each occasion. Several traction engine rallies were attended including three days at Whipsnade Zoo, and the New Year's Day parade in London when Hyde Park corner was successfully negotiated in full traffic. Traction engines were also well represented at the M.E. exhibition, as was my steam lorry which formed the main display base for the Society's exhibits.

A major event for SLOT CAR members was the 1998 National Championships, with one member coming 2nd in all three classes and with several other finalists. The team race was again won by the NLS. A new slot car venture - Riverside Raceway - opened in Newcastle where members came second in an 18-hour race. Club nights at Finchley were well supported on Thursday evenings, with visitors from other tracks, and a Home & Away match with Coulsdon which the NLS won on aggregate. This event started in 1997 and the score stands at 1 win each. As the track was modified in January '98, members have for the past year concentrated on learning it properly. Changes in National Rules has meant experimenting with new tyre compounds which are stickier and more expensive! Stop press news for the AGM was a team win in an 8-hour race in Holland.

There had been a major clear-out at HQ to ease a potential fire hazard, and a draft risk assessment document had been produced - thanks to Mike Avery's efforts - and will be considered. At COLNEY HEATH a transporter and small shed were given to the Loco Section by the St Albans DMES who had lost their track facility at a Harpenden school: here too a draft risk assessment has been completed - largely due to Jack Edwards - and is to be studied by the Track Committee: there had been a couple of attempted break-ins and one successful break-in when new heavy duty strimmers were amongst other items stolen.

MISCELLANEOUS - approximately 27 new members; and format of General Meetings changed: a Health & Safety Executive/Northern Federation seminar on safety aspects of our hobby was held at Wigan, where the Society was represented and reported on by Bob Bullen, and these matters are now an accepted facet of our hobby. The Council recommended, the Track Committee agreed, and a majority of members approved a decision to cease hiring the portable track and steam loco to school and village fetes, and to concentrate instead on birthday parties which are held at Colney Heath with far fewer risks involved. Members can book birthday parties, when donations would be appreciated, just give Beryl a ring! The Council, at Tom Luxford's suggestion, decided to reintroduce the Gutteridge Cup which, in the past, was presented annually to the

person who it was thought had contributed most to the Society over the past 12 months. Through the News Sheet members were invited to send nominations to me - your Chairman - and several were in fact received, and it is with great pleasure that I announce that JOHN RICHES received a majority of the nominations. Congratulations John!

I conclude my first report to members with some particular thanks - to Angela Foreman as Editor of our News Sheet: to Peter Foreman for putting the Society on the Internet: to Angela Perham and helpers for organising catering and keeping the coach stocked with comestibles: to Roger Bell for his regular and comprehensive write-ups about Loco meetings; and finally to Sprocket Hole (who is (s)he?) for his (her?) Cine notes.

Frank Dell MAY 1999.

Society Sweatshirts

The Society has a stock of sweatshirts (£15) and polo shirts (£12). They are blue with the club logo embroidered on the chest.

Available from Colin Bainbridge (after 8.00pm) or Beryl Collingwood

The Wide Angle

Diminishing Returns

Downsizing - now there's a 90's phenomenon for you. Stressed out executives and their like deciding that the rat race no longer holds any appeal for them. Ditching the company car, the Armani suit and platinum credit card and instead opting for the less is more attitude.

These folk usually pursue alternative careers in occupations far removed from their previous endeavours, often with less remuneration but a huge bonus in the shape of quality of life.

This, you might say has nothing to do with video making. However I beg to differ. The 90's has seen the birth of digital video which uses tapes the size of matchboxes - more downsizing?

The reduction in the cost of technology has resulted in professional results in a small and affordable package - less is more?

The introduction of digital video also meant that computers could finally connect directly with this image medium. The result - instead of a room full of various black boxes to produce your masterpiece, all you now need is a camera and a half decent computer. Computer editing is faster and easier, more akin to film editing and also offers greater flexibility - quality of life?

Of course, just like downsizing, digital video won't suit everyone. Technophobes beware, computers do bite (Byte?) sometimes and although the cost of the technology is steadily dropping, you'll still need deep pockets to fund and all singing and dancing rig.

Which in all probability means you'll have to keep that stressful career going for a bit longer - life sucks, eh?

Andy Lawrence

Loco Chat

Firstly I would like to thank all those who helped at our first Open Day of the season last month, especially Angela Perham and all of her helpers who provided tea and sustenance throughout what turned out to be a very warm day. Thank you Angela.

This month is fairly busy as we have three birthday parties booked on Saturday 3rd, 17th and 31st of July.

Please come along and support these, especially if you can bring a steam loco. They are good fun and nine times out of ten we get fed.

Another date this month is Sat 10th when the HO section are visiting the track. Arrangements for this are in the capable hands of John Squire. I feel sure that any offers of assistance would be welcome.

Yet another date is Wednesday 7th July when at 6.00 pm (as you will read elsewhere) the cine section are at the track for their annual barbeque. Food and drink will be provided for anyone who goes along with an engine to provide rides and entertainment.

Finally would all members please note the addition of the following two names to the list of boiler inspectors. They are Mike Foreman and Brendan Corcoran. A full list will shortly appear on the notice board in the workshop.

Rod Pomeroy

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

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