

The Chairman's Notes

It is with great sadness that I must report the death of two of our members, Cyril Drayson and Derek Dant and send our condolences to their families on behalf of the Club. A fuller account of their respective roles in our Society appears elsewhere in this News Sheet.

We have voted for two new Council members at the AGM, David Harris and Donal Corcoran. David retired from GEC at Borehamwood in 1997, having been involved in electronic and mechanical engineering in the research and high voltage divisions. He is a Fellow of the Institution of Electrical Engineers. Within the Society he is a keen supporter of the ground level track project, and is building Britannia in 5-inch gauge. He is also a well-known church bell ringer, and rings at Hertford.

Donal, who I have known since he was a relatively little boy is studying law and has been a member of this Society for many years. He has always been much involved as a junior in our activities at Colney Heath and his enthusiasm has continued into adulthood.

Two of our serving councillors have stood down this year, Jimmy Taylor and Jack Edwards. I should like to thank Jimmy for his hard work, in particular on the Club's electrical safety and I wish Jimmy and his wife a happy retirement up in Leyland in Lancashire. Jack Edwards is one of those members who do an inordinate amount of work for the Club and yet make very little fuss over it. He has been a long serving Council member, is treasurer of the Loco Section and has stuck with the ground level permanent way since we started this project. He has made, or been responsible for four sets of points and they don't come out of a box labelled "Peco". So thank you Jack for the time and effort you have given to the Council and thank you for your ongoing work as Loco Section treasurer and point maker to the gentry,

A bunch of people who seldom get mentioned are those who produce our News Sheet. The Editor is the obvious up front visible name who does an enormous amount of work to produce our excellent magazine (ably helped by his daughter Jill Prior), which in my view is the cement that bonds our Society together. But these magazines arrive on the doormat every month and I would like to thank the team who print it under the leadership of Ron Thorogood and staple it together, fold it up, address the labels, stick on the stamps and post it every month come rain or shine. So thanks to our editor, Grahame Ainge, Jill Prior and our printing and distribution team, Ron Thorogood, Maurice Cummins, Ken West, Dave Lawrence and Marcel Bolle.

We have acquired a new Club battery loco, a "Class 31" which we should have taken delivery of by the time this article is published. Frank Hills has very kindly offered to overhaul our "Class 37" loco and will be putting a new set of gears and new wheels on this loco.

I would like to congratulate both Ian Reddish and Peter Macdonald on their infernal combustion narrow gauge contractor's engine, which can be seen and heard on our ground level railway. This engine does bear a resemblance to a prototype, hard though it may be to imagine. What has impressed me is how this machine has evolved. It

started (just about) with no suspension (it fell off the rails), belt drive and an elastic band clutch control. It now has chain drive, a proper clutch and some suspension and stays on the rails. This surely must be the very essence of practical engineering and I am delighted to see two of our younger members showing such ingenuity. I look forward to further refinements.

On Saturday 13th July the Slot Car Section will be spending the afternoon at Colney Heath to try their hands at a different kind of track. And don't forget as part of the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations we will be taking a borrowed fete track and at least one miniature traction engine to the Colney Heath village celebrations on June 4th, which are to be held on the playing fields next to the school. Any help with this would be useful.

John Squire

From the Secretary

A very sparse month for correspondence with only a single letter received!

Tony Dunbar, Hon Secretary

The Chairman's Report to the AGM

This is my report on the last twelve months activities of the NLSME.

Initially I must report that three of our members have passed away this year; Terry Hammer last summer and this week we have lost Derek Dant and Cyril Drayson, one of our longest serving members. Also sadly both John Old and Reg Dale lost their wives this year. On behalf of you all I would like to express our condolences to their families and ask you all to stand for a minute's silence in their memory. Both Derek and Cyril will be commemorated in our News Sheet.

On a happier note we celebrated the 90th birthday of Bert Mead who is now building a gauge one loco and still cracking his own special brand of jokes.

The great strength of our Society is that our activities are numerous and diverse and although we have two sites, one here in North Finchley and one at Colney Heath, we remain one club.

We haul passengers at Colney Heath every summer Sunday and there was hardly a Saturday when Colney Heath wasn't used for a special event of some kind. On Thursday afternoons there is a regular and well-attended meeting.

Over the last year we have conducted two auctions, one on each site, and both succeeded in raising substantial amounts of money for the Club.

This building is also much used. There are three Sections meeting weekly at HQ on Wednesdays and one Section on Thursdays. On Fridays, as well as the General meetings, the Loco Section, Marine and Garden Railway Sections and the Workshop group each meet once a month, as does the managing Council.

This year we entertained Mencap, ran a free fete for Colney Heath School (in the sun) and had a party of autistic children from Childs Hill School up at Colney Heath. All of these events were a success, but the staff of Childs Hill School was particularly delighted with the successful outcome of their visit.

We ran the Curly Bowl competition, a large event with a splendid exhibition of the Club's activities, food, passenger rides etc. etc. For this event we purchased a large marquee and a number of canvas Gazeboes. All of these were paid for out of the funds raised at the event and will remain an asset for future Society events.

Many birthday parties were run at Colney Heath raising funds for the maintenance of the site and giving pleasure to many children in the process.

We entertained a number of model engineering clubs at our invitation open days. This seems to be a very successful formula allowing other model engineers to enjoy our track and giving a measure of certainty as to the number of visitors that we entertain.

Both the Video Section and the H0 Section enjoyed having a go at Colney Heath. It is worth reminding all members that they are welcome at the track: we are all in the same club. We have "Club" engines and all members are welcome to have a go. The only provision is that it be under the auspices of the Track Committee who must ensure that the site is run safely. If you're a new member or you would like to try a train rather than a slot car or a boat, an 00 or H0 engine or a video camera, phone the Chairman to arrange it.

As a Society we were represented at two major model engineering exhibitions this year. The displays at both exhibitions were a credit to the Society and to the exhibition organisers.

The Marine Section ran two successful open days at Colney Heath with visitors from both Welwyn Garden City S.M.E. and St Albans S.M.E. taking part in various competitions in the first one. The second one saw visitors from five clubs taking part in the competitions with Ms Lisa Morgan of the NLSME the youngest and shortest contestant. The Marine Section has also completed extensive works around the pond culminating with a splendid shelter for boaters.

The loss of Pat Old was a severe set back for the Video section at the beginning of the year and for a period filming went on hold. However in the summer the group went on two trips and had their BBQ evening at Colney Heath. They were also invited to judge this winter's semi-finals of The Triangle Competition. Filming has restarted and they enjoyed a splendid Christmas Dinner. If you have a video camera and want to

use it properly why not contact the Section Leader. If you can't get hold of him try the British Legion. This Section spends a lot of time planning their next move in the bar.

The H0 Section has started to dabble in digital control and have succeeded in setting up a system, which can be switched between digital control and standard DC control over the branch line. Much improvement has been made to the scenic appearance of the Club layout and they have taken the portable switching layout "Young Street Yard" to five exhibitions this year. The members of the Section had a great time on their day at Colney Heath and most of them had their first taste of steering a full sized steamroller. No one was squashed.

The 00 Section has had a pleasant year with more actual running on the permanent layout. Nevertheless the a new reversing triangle has been completed and is fully scenic, repairs were made to water damage and the "Binnegar" portable layout has been rejuvenated and has travelled to two exhibitions.

The new Garden Railway goes from strength to strength. There is still more to do to complete it and more track to lay, but next year we hope to entertain both the 16mm Association and the Gauge One Model Railway Association on our track.

The Slot Car Section is a busy Section. They attend many open meetings on a regular basis and the NLSME had four members who qualified for finals of the National Championships and one semi-finalist. They have taken part in a 16-hour race in Newcastle and a 24-hour race in Brussels and are at present building "Retro" designs (designs from the 70s) and running these cars in special competitions. They start their club nights at 19.30 and are always looking for new members. As advertised in last month's News Sheet, Paul Harwood is setting up meetings on Fridays for commercial slot cars such as Scalextric. Many youngsters have this type of slot car and the Section hopes to attract more youngsters to these races. If you have a kid with a car come to the loco meeting and park "junior" with the Slot Car Section.

The ground level railway is now up and running, with the points working and two operational turntables. This time round we have used a far superior track system and I look forward to its future expansion to this same high standard.

The Stationery Steam and Traction Engine Section takes part in many traction engine rallies and is happy to entertain any members who visit these rallies; our record to date is thirty members in one weekend. We run a pretty good tea bar and can usually provide seating to ease those aching feet.

We are a very busy Society and we get a lot of pleasure from our various activities and we should be grateful to those who put so much effort into organising all our events and activities. However unless you as members are prepared to come forward and take part in the more mundane aspects of maintaining and organising our Club we will see a decline. The whole is only as good as its parts and the parts of a club such as ours, are its members. This means you. We need members to support our efforts, to stand for our offices, to take part in our organisation and at the moment we need them badly.

This is the year when the Lease of our HQ building is up for renewal and the managing Council will be entering into negotiations with the Local Council, as and when this becomes necessary. We will eventually need legal representation and may well find our rent increased. This we have to tackle during this ensuing year.

John Squire

From the Membership Secretary

Subscriptions are rolling in - please keep them rolling as I hate chasing late payers. I am still gratified at the number of Pensioners who are paying the full subscription and the number of members who are adding donations to their subscription.

New Members

This month we welcome seven new members approved at the May Council Meeting:

Mark Braley, Derrick Franklin, Maxim Sarche, Ray Smiles, Roy Sturmeay, John Wakefield, Roy Wilsher.

Bernard Lambert

Tyttenhanger Gazette

By Roger Bell

As we now have an established gauge1 track layout at Colney Heath it was rather appropriate that the topic for the May Loco meeting was a talk by Andrew Pullen from Aster Locomotive Models. John Fuller, who is Chairman of the Chiltern Group of the Gauge1 Model Railway Association, assisted Andrew in the presentation. Historically, Gauge1 started at the end of the 19th Century. By 1910 the gauges of 1,2,3 and 4 were agreed upon, gauge1 being the most popular and 1 ¾" between the rails. The rolling stock is either 10mm to one foot or 3/8" to one foot, their being only a small difference between the two. Steam was the main form of propulsion for gauge1 and Bing and Basset Lowke, amongst others supplied the locos. During the 1920s gauge 0 was the most popular and by the 1930s gauge 00 and H0 had gained in popularity. By the 1940s gauge1 was all but finished, with little available commercially. In 1947 a group of enthusiasts who were determined to keep the gauge alive formed the Gauge One Model Railway Association. In 1970 membership was 320: today it stands at 1700.

Whilst LBSC had created some notable designs in gauge 1 locos for the model engineer Martin Evans continued with 'Southern Belle', amongst others, in the 1960s.

In the 1970s the track was assembled by hand. Each chair was fitted to the sleeper and the rails slid in. A yard of track would take an evening to make. Today it is complete and flexible for radius and transition curves.

Aster was in the business of making mechanical cash registers and with the advent of electronics changed to model locomotives, mainly as a couple of the staff were interested in them.

On the table was a selection of locos built by Aster, their first one in 1975 being a Schools Class. A small meths fuel tank was in the tender. Its only controls were a blower and a regulator. The safety valves were set to 30psi. 3000 were made and it took five years to sell them all. Some of the parts left over were used to make a King Arthur in 1978: 300 of these were made. The original cost was £350 built up. Today in its box, unsteamed, it would be worth £2000. They would run for 20 to 45 minutes and give a good bark up the chimney.

In 1984 some 250 Mallards were made, 150 as Sir Nigel Gresley and 100 as Silver Link. These were three cylinder locomotives with Walchaerts gear on the outside and slip eccentric gear on the inside cylinder. It had an axle pump in the tender, water and pressure gauge and safety valves set at 60psi. The kit was £1600; built up £1850. One was sold two years ago for £10,500. Andrew said if he had 50 he could sell them in a week. Aster's philosophy is to make a batch and no more, and hold spare parts.

Two large American locos were on the table: a USRA Mikado in Santa-Fe livery and a K4 in Pennsylvania livery. They are from 1985. These gas fired locos are very powerful and would just pull a light adult. Gas is not an ideal fuel. It stinks and is noisy. New technology is to use ceramic burner blocks.

The smallest on show was the 0-4-2 with a four-wheel tender, Lion. Based on the full size built in 1838, it is available in the Liverpool and Manchester Railway or Titfield Thunderbolt versions. Its specification is as follows: scale 1/30th, weight 1.58kg, length 325mm, width 93mm, height to top of chimney 130mm, driving wheel diameter 46mm, single 10mm bore by 14mm stroke cylinder, cut off 75%, water capacity 60cc at 70% full, meths capacity 56cc, working pressure 60psi, minimum track radius 1.2m. This loco in kit form is £875 painted with touch up paint and toolkit; built up price is £995.

Also on view was a pre-production model of Flying Scotsman, an A3 due to come out in July. It has three cylinders with conjugated 2:1 valve gear and a corridor tender. It looked magnificent: all castings are lost wax brass and it has a 'Precision Paints' green finish. The detail was so small it would be beyond most model engineers' capability. The meths tank gives 30mins running. It gives six clear beats and goes like stink pulling a heavy train. 250 are to be built. The approximate prices are £3800 for the kit and £4300 built up. Now is the time to place your order, before they are all sold.

The other locomotives on the table were described and some discussion followed. I noted that the smallest metric thread used was M1.5 fine and that the cylinders have

0-rings fitted. With use of the regulator the scale speed of the loco can be varied between 10 and 150mph. They can be converted to run by radio control with a servo on the regulator, blower and reverser.

Andrew and John were invited to visit Colney Heath and John invited us to Beconscott Model Village, where he works as chief electrical and mechanical engineer, one evening when the public have left, to run on the track there. The Salvation Army as a charity runs the Model Village and they have donated £41,000 to worthy causes.

We thanked Andrew and John for giving us an interesting insight into an area of modelling that our Club has ventured into somewhat recently.

Introducing Donal Corcoran

I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am Donal Corcoran and you have just elected me onto the Society Council. I have been involved in the Society since 1987 (I was nine back then!) and I am currently studying an undergraduate course at the University of Hertfordshire.

I would like to make it clear that if you have anything that you wish to be raised at a Council meeting then I will be more than happy to do so.

Donal Corcoran

Slot Car News **By Steve Francis**

Five racers from our Club headed off to the wild and distant lands of Birmingham recently, for the latest round of the Tottenham retro series. Oaklands Park have an excellent and easy track to learn and some close racing ensued. First up was the concours event, which was to hold John Secchi in good stead later in the day. The first race was for the new F.I. class for cars from the same period as that of the sports cars. In the final John Secchi was 2nd. and Ian Fisher was 3rd. On to the Sports Cars after lunch John was 2nd in the race but with the extra points gained in the concours earlier he was promoted to first. Paul Harwood was second. An excellent day's racing was had by all even if the rear wing did fall off my Chaparral.

We held our first Scalextric evening last week with ten racers turning up, split evenly between home members and visitors. After some problems with the lap counters, due partially to the fact that we raced in the opposite direction to normal, the visitors did better than we did. In fact we lost. The next event is this coming Friday so it looks

hopeful that this is now a regular event in the calendar. Don't forget if anybody from the Society or friends have a Scalextric car or two knocking about the loft come and join in the fun. Or you can go to your local model shop and buy one for about £20-£25.

Ian Fisher has put together a new series for us southerners, the Southern 32 Racing league 2002 to give its rather grand title. As the name suggests it is for 1/32 scale cars, individual and team race, run on tracks in the south of England, over the next few months. Full details available from Ian.

Next month is our annual calvados run-- sorry ---The Le Mans 24Hour Race to give it its rather grand title. This is a tradition that goes back as long as men have distilled apples ---I mean raced cars and have enjoyed the finer tastes that life has to offer, er, enjoyed the spectacle of racing day and night. My usual report on the event and the race if we are back before the next copy date and if my computer comes into focus wiU be next month or not depending on our wonderful post.

Good news for anyone interested in having a go at something with more than four wheels. John Squire has very kindly invited us to have a go at driving a train on Sat. 13 July at Colney Heath. For anyone not familiar with this form of transport there is only one lane or track so overtaking is not possible. Taking the train off in front of you at a suitable corner to get in front is not allowed; nor is taking it apart to true the comm. or fiddling with it to make it go faster. They normally operate single lap runs at Colney Heath but this does not mean it is done to a stopwatch. There are no prizes for fastest time of the day. Now there's a thought! I wonder if anyone's got a model of *Mallard*. (Yes, Ron Price has the best model of *Mallard* you're ever likely to see. And I'm sure he'd love to discuss scale speed Ed)

CALENDAR FOR JUNE

6 th	1/24 open group 12
7 th	Scalextric (to be confirmed)
13 th	1/24 production
15/16 th	Le Mans
20 th	Team race 1/24
21 st	Scalextric (to be confirmed)
27 th	Saloon

Marine Mutterings **By Bernard Lambert**

The Season is now in full swing thanks to John Morgan. We can still use some assistance on Sunday mornings with grass cutting and general tidying up around the Lake.

Enjoy the boating

Happy boating - *Bernard Lambert*

Editorial

40th Anniversary of the Colney Heath Site

It was pointed out to me recently that this spring it is 40 years since the Society was offered the site at Colney Heath to build the Loco Section's track.

With dismantling the track and vacating the site at Arkley members were somewhat downhearted and anxious to find a new site and it was a great relief when the news was received that the Water Company had offered to rent the Tyttenhanger site to the Society. At the 1962 AGM Ron Price was appointed Section Leader of the Loco Section and work immediately got underway that summer, Ron's records showing that the first working party on the site took place on Sunday 17th June 1962.

It is appropriate timing that Geoff Wren in his Spotlight article this month refers to the building of the new track. His diary entries for 1964 will jog many happy memories for members who participated in the building work.

Below is the plan of the site that appeared in the July 1962 News Sheet. The track took two years to build and although the site over the years has been transformed, the original layout still forms part of our present raised track.

If you haven't done it already, next time you're at the Colney Heath site look for the little brass plaque on the track at the steaming bays which commemorates the completion of the work (but be careful not to do this during an operating session!!)

Grahame Ainge

Cyril Drayson - An Appreciation

It is with deep regret that I have to report the passing away of Cyril Drayson.

Cyril was born in 1908 and spent his adult life in engineering. An accomplished universal miller, a large part of his working life was spent at Standard Telephones, New Southgate, where Cyril was well known for his dedication; only the best was good enough for Cyril.

I first met Cyril in the 70s at the Model Engineer show at Wembley. We soon became good friends. For many years I would visit his home on a Tuesday. Cyril would visit me each Thursday. We would have a session on the lathe. I do not know a lot today but the little knowledge I do have, I have to thank Cyril for. In life you do not meet many people like Cyril. He would go out of his way to help others: nothing was too much trouble. 'Bring it along', he would say to people, 'Let's have a look and see what we can do.'

Looking back on my visits to him whilst he resided in Potters Bar I will always remember him as a person who loved promptness and attention to detail. His life ran

like a well-oiled clock. He would look at his wrist watch whilst we were in his workshop and say, 'Ah, it's 3.28pm Elsie will ring the bell in two minutes to tell us tea is ready. He loved his tea.

I am proud to have known two such lovely people as Elsie and Cyril. I paid many visits to them when they moved to Holtspur near Beaconsfield. Always a lovely spread and towards the latter part of his life Lesley, his youngest daughter, doing the honours.

As one of the original members of the North London Society of Model Engineers (attending the first meeting in 1944) Cyril will always be remembered for his 'Nippy' boats he built and his *Juliet*.

Our sympathies go to his daughters Maureen and Lesley and their families.

George Case

Derrick Dant - An appreciation

I first met Derrick in 1967 when we were just coming up toward Bank Holiday time and it was usual to have an efficiency trial on the Monday. I was seconded, with one other, to assist Derrick, who had already roughed out the rules, to make arrangements and help run the event. All went smoothly, (the trial was won by the late Cyril Drayson), and Derrick and I retained an affable relationship thereafter.

Derrick was a rather private person but he did a lot for the Society in his own quiet way. When he took over as Loco Section leader he had a very successful term. I can't remember any upsets during that period. He may have been quiet but he could be quite firm. He did not suffer fools gladly; that is not to say that he considered himself to be superior, but rather that he had no time for people who did not think before acting.

After he had completed his run in office he later became "i/c paints", a golden era when paint, preservative, or whatever, was always available, or procured, for anyone doing a painting job, and the brushes were always washed out and pristine ready for the next session.

He built a very nice version of LBSC's "Bantam Cock", an excellent runner, which he, and his son Nigel, used to drive at the track. As a long-term project he was building a 5in. version of a Great Eastern 2-4-0 E4. Nigel hopes to complete it.

Derrick was a keen railway photographer; he had a lineside permit, obtained with the assistance of H.R. Wethersett, a colleague and well-known railway photographer of the day. Derrick's photos are extensive and, in some cases, unique. Let us hope that they may become accessible.

Derrick loved anything to do with railways. His fondness for the G.E.R. is self-evident, but he had a particularly soft spot for the Ffestiniog and a few years back he gave us an evening of video that he had taken there. His ashes, most appropriately, will find their final resting place at Portmadoc.

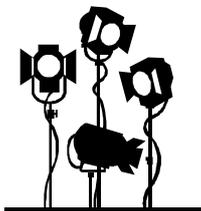
He will be sadly missed by those who knew him.

Jim Robson

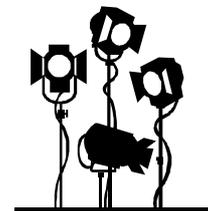
“About that ‘Day Off’ that you asked for”

- There are 365 days per year available for work.
- There are 52 weeks per year in which you already have two days off per week, leaving 261 days available for work.
- Since you spend 16 hours each day away from work, you have used up 170 days, leaving only 91 days available.
- You spend 30 minutes each day on coffee breaks, That accounts for 23 days each year, leaving only 68 days available.
- With a one hour lunch period each day, you have used up another 46 days, leaving only 22 days available for work.
- You normally spend 2 days per year on sick leave. This leaves you only 20 days available for work.
- We are off for five holidays per year, so your available working time is down to 15 days.
- We generously give you 14 days vacation per year which leaves only one day available for work and I'll be damned if you are going to take that day off!!!

How's that for logic! - *Bernard Lambert*



Spotlight on Geoff Wren Part 2



After the war, contracts started to run out at Bryant Symonds and I thought about doing something else. My father's business involved the printing of cartons but I didn't really want to work for him. But in the end I did and after a year I was running the factory. I actually enjoyed it but my father was a bit of a martinet and eventually it ended up with having disagreements with him.

In 1948 I married my childhood sweetheart, Jean, and this was the start of almost 50 years of much happiness together with many shared pleasures.

When I got home from work one Saturday Jean said there was a model exhibition at Barnet so we went. I saw a chassis there ticking over on air with a mirror underneath it. The name on the card accompanying it was Geoff Cashmore and I wondered if it was the same Geoff Cashmore I'd known just after the war who was, like me, into model railways. I asked if he was there and sure enough he was in the next room. It certainly was him and we renewed our acquaintance. He told me that he was now into building big engines you could ride behind. He said that the Club had just opened a new track at Arkley. 'Why don't you come and have a look?'

I hadn't really the time to start building an engine but he invited me to come along saying that it was only one meeting a month! He didn't tell me all the work, which was necessary to keep a club like ours running and also to keep an engine running! This was about 1952, I think. On the next Saturday I went to Arkley and there was a loco in steam at the station – a Minx, I think it was. Two men were there and one said, 'Are you ready then?'

'What?' I replied, surprised.

'Well you wanted to drive it didn't you?'

'Thank you very much,' I said.

Well I knew enough about steam engines, I thought. For example I knew it had to have water in the boiler so I said, 'Oh, there's just one thing – how do you get water in the boiler?' I was shown the by-pass so off I went. As I went round Geoff Cashmore arrived and complimented me on doing so well so I was very pleased with myself. The explanation for the readiness of the two gentlemen to let me drive was as follows: Apparently, one of them was expecting his cousin to come and have a drive and the other was expecting a friend of his to come and have a drive. Each assumed I was the other one's guest!

Well that was it for me and when I got home I said to Jean, 'I must build an engine.' She asked me where I was going to build it and I'd already thought that I would build it in the loft. I had by this time built a large '00' gauge railway in the roof but seeing engines you could build and drive – I was hooked. The roof space was boarded over and there was a small billiard table up there that was never used. I boarded that over and made a bench out of it and joined the Club in June 1957.

I bought a second hand ML7 from a man in Kent. It was in fact brand new and I paid £50 for it. A new one at the time was £60. In those days I had an Austin A50 car so I fetched it myself next evening and I've still got it today. My first engine was a Great Northern Atlantic and it took me three and a half years to build.

It wasn't all that long after I joined the Club that we lost Arkley but we were all delighted when we heard we were to get the site at Colney Heath. At first it was intended that we should use the old Arkley track at Colney Heath but I felt we should have new track for the new site; the best we could get.

I remember fighting for this at a General meeting and was opposed by arguments over us not having enough money. I felt that the Society never had much money but that we always got there in the end. After the meeting it was decided we'd have new track. Jean ran a couple of jumble sales and with other fundraising eventually the money was realised. One of our members, the late John Sumpter, had a track in his garden at Tottenham. Some members of the Loco Section and Track Committee spent an evening at John's garden. We were all very impressed with his track. His design was adopted and we ended up with one of the best tracks in the Country.

During the changeover of the track from Arkley to Colney Heath we were without a track for about three years. During this time, of course, we never had a problem getting engines for fetes. Members were always keen to run and fetes were their best opportunity and visits to other clubs were very popular.

I have diaries I've kept of running my locos. Reading them now, they bring back many happy memories and they include details of finishing the track at Colney Heath:

'Saturday 11th April 1964. The last welded joint of the new track was completed at 6.23pm by John Sumpter. By the time we'd tidied up and got the rolling stock out etc almost everyone had gone. Ron Price got his Marina out. He ran the first lap ever. John and I also did a few laps on the new track.'

'Sunday May 17th 1964. The track was opened at Colney Heath at 3.00pm by Mr Stace of the Water Board. My engine was in the parade of 11 engines on the day. After two laps we took the 3 ½" engines off so the 5" ones could do some passenger hauling. It was hot and sunny and many wives made refreshments in tents.'

After a few years of running at Colney Heath we found that working parties were dwindling. The time when we were at our best was when there were new projects. We discussed an extension to the track and I approached Mike Chrisp, who was chairman at the time, suggesting we should ask the Water Board if we could run right down to the other end of the site at right angles to where our track then was. The board were asked and we got the permission.

When we opened the extension I bought three maroons from Brocks. I planned we fire one for the Water Board, one for the wives and one for the Club on opening day. I told Ted Moon, who was chairman at the time, what I was planning to do and he was in agreement. However the Council discussed it and decided it was not really appropriate for some reason! At the end of the next General meeting when it was any other business, I raised the question of the maroons. I knew that the chairman and Mr Stace were very happy with the maroons so I asked why it had been decided against. 'Well,' I said, 'I've got to let the buggers off any way because I don't want these shells sitting at home. So I'll have to do it the other side of the hedge.' As it turned out all objections later evaporated and I let them off near the tunnel. Everyone enjoyed the enormous bangs!

We did at one time have engine trials at the track with weighing coal and measuring water consumption etc but I didn't feel it was much fun so when it was my turn to organise the trials I decided to make it more of a fun thing with such activities as bursting balloons on the move and dodging a sticky bun! It certainly provided entertainment.

The disagreements with my father got to a point where I decided to leave the Company. (Later, I'm pleased to say, a good relationship between us was restored). I wasn't sure what to do next so I discussed the whole thing with Jean. One of her uncles worked for Joe Lyons in administration. They had a printing works in Covent Garden and another at Alperton. They had very big machines, which I wasn't sure I could really handle but they offered me a job straight away. I stayed there for four years. On one occasion they had 20 tons of chocolate at Greenford waiting for some cartons which we were having trouble with. I was asked to work Sundays week after week, which I was not prepared to do. So, in the end I left. I next worked for a printing works along the North Circular Road and then I went to WH Smith for a time. In the end I felt I wanted to go back to engineering but although I had kept my interest up in my workshop I felt I was a bit rusty. I went to the tool-room at Belling and Lee at Enfield and did four years there. At first it was a bit of a struggle because I had no tool-room experience. At the interview I showed the foreman some bits of my Speedy I was building although he didn't seem too impressed. But I was taken on and my first job was a drawing of a washer. I had to make 10 out of a very small piece of plastic. I was allowed one and a half hours but I used to have to queue up at the stores for 15 minutes. I found all this hard going and used to take bits home and do them in the evening!

In the end I got a bit fed up because although it was intricate, very accurate work and I'd mastered it, it was all the same – plugs and sockets. There was a chap in the Club who worked for Belling and Lee too and he was fed up with the monotonous work as well. We both agreed, being back at Bryant Symonds seemed an attractive thought. Next day after I'd been to a dental appointment I called in at the Company and saw Mr Davis who had been on the bench when I was there before but was now in charge.. 'Hello there, Jenny Wren,' he said in his usual loud voice and straight forward manner, 'What do you want – a job?'

'Yes.'

'When can you start?'

'When you like,' I replied. It was in fact nearly Christmas so I changed jobs after Christmas. It was like going back home and I spent some of the happiest working days of my life there. It was a lovely shop. The Company had a very good name. They were renowned for their engineering and I remember one of my friends left to go to Newcastle for personal reasons and when he looked for a job as soon as he said where he had been working he got a job straight away.

Vick Walker and I were building piston-turning lathes with diamond tools and we could get a finish on a piston, which looked like chromium plating. But that would have been no good. We had to produce them with so many grooves to the inch so that

they held oil and the pistons themselves were slightly oval to accommodate a change in the block, which occurred when the block heated up.

Eventually the firm started to go downhill and we moved out to Hoddesdon but it was more like a shed there than a factory. At Tottenham we had about four or five bays with 10-ton cranes, which I used to like operating. At Hoddesdon I enjoyed operating the forklift trucks and it was whilst operating one that I got my first tip; in fact the only tip I ever got in the whole of my working life. A driver had backed his trailer into one of the two entrances to pick up a piece of machinery. The entrance was somewhat overcrowded and a massive new milling machine we'd just taken delivery of, blocked the other entrance. The driver was concerned that he'd have to wait for hours before he could get loaded and get away. I established where the machinery was and got out the forklift truck. The machine was so heavy the back wheels were coming off the ground but I managed to wriggle round things and eventually I loaded it on his trailer. He was so pleased he emptied his pockets of change – about £3 I remember. As I say, it was my first and last tip!

After I'd finished the Atlantic I started on a Speedy. This time it took me about 15 years! Although I liked model engineering I did not spend all my hours in the workshop. I did like my home life and the social aspects of the Club. It was 1978 when I finished Speedy. I got on very well with Geoff Cashmore. He spent more time in his workshop than me. I remember when he finished his Juliet he took it into the kitchen and put it on a greased board and lit up. When he opened the regulator the wheels spun and oil and water shot all over the ceiling. His wife was not always as enthusiastic over his model engineering as he was!

Bill Carter, the Chairman of The Society of Model Engineers, who'd built a gold medal winning Atlantic came over one day. I'd asked him to come and give the Club a talk on pattern making. He came up to my workshop and looked at my partly built Speedy. He liked the tumblehome on the firebox and several other details so I was pleased to be complimented by a man whose work I admired.

I had the honour of serving as Chairman twice – for two years on each occasion although I can't remember which years now. During one of my reigns the engine shed/workshop burnt down. I remember I heard about it being burnt down when I got home from a train trip to Bath with Ron Price, Silvia and Jean. Ron and I immediately went to the site and found it a smouldering wreck. I think the fire was started by children. The shed was wooden and was a lovely old thing, all made from scrap wood, most of which had been obtained by Ed Hobday. Tom Luxford made a stained glass window for it and we all loved that old workshop.

I retired in 1990. Sadly, Jean died in 1994 after a long illness. She was sorely missed and she always helped me to organise things at the Club. The first jumble sale she did made £100, which paid for the wooden hut on the station platform. Jean was one of the band of ladies who worked hard on Open Days and many other Sundays, providing drinks and refreshments. Well-done ladies!

I have had great pleasure from the social side of the Society and made many friends. I enjoyed organising rail and coach trips and dinner-dances and my real favourite was the firework displays I used to organise. We had on occasions over 300 people

attending. I always had someone detailed and ready to drive people to hospital if there was an injury. But it's all in the past now.

I had known Vina for some time. Jean and I met her at indoor tennis evenings, which we used to very much enjoy. Eventually Vina and I set up home together in St Albans. She's a lovely person and into the bargain she's a wonderful cook!

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