

The Chairman's Notes

First of all I would like to congratulate the H0 Section, which exhibited its new layout at Alexandra Palace. This layout under the banner of the NLSME was a credit to our Society and it was also very nice to see members of the 00 Section helping with the operation. The 00 Section itself is about to embark on a new project and at the last Council meeting we were happy to authorise the initial expenditure necessary to get it started. Our club will continue to thrive while new projects are started and our efforts are on display to the public. Exhibitions are always a good source for new members.

Its very nice to see the progress being made with all the ongoing projects at Colney Heath and how tidy it is looking as we start on our new season. There are too many members to thank individually but your hard works and efforts over the winter working parties are self-evident.

This I think will be my last effort as Chairman as the next meeting should see a new chairperson in charge and a new hand writing these notes. I would like to say how pleased I am to see our Society doing so well. At Colney Heath the development of the ground level railway and its facilities are progressing well; the new rail on the raised track looks as though it's going to be a big success. Our catering facilities are going to be second to none and the Boat Section's additional shelter has improved their all weather capability. The HQ Sections are thriving with a recent new racing track for the Slot Car Section, the H0 Section now exhibiting their latest layout and the 00 boys starting a new project. I'm not quite sure what the Video Section are up to as when ever I look in on them they seem to be holding their meetings with the lights out, but whatever it is they all look very happy in the gloom.

Finally the Garden Railway Section, also known as "Fiends of the Bad Back" is doing well and attracting more new and existing members to the smaller end of the model-engineering spectrum. This has been my particular project over the last three years and as with all of our other activities is an ongoing and never ending project. That's what hobbies are and long may it continue thus.

I would like to thank every one for putting up with me and I offer my successor my very best wishes and support

John Squire

Secretary's Snippets

The Society has received an invitation from the Fareham SME to attend their Open Day on Sunday 23 May. If any members would like to attend would they please contact Trevor Fry.

We have also received details of a Miniature Railway Gala to be held on 2 and 3 May at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre at Quainton. Details can be obtained from their Chairman.

David Harris

North London Society of Model Engineers
Notice to members

The 60th Annual General Meeting of the North London Society of Model Engineers will be held at Headquarters, Legion Way, Summers Lane, Finchley, London N12 at 8.00pm on Friday 7th May.

Preceding the AGM will be an ordinary general meeting to receive nominations for Council and there will be an informal talk after the AGM by Bert Mead.

David Harris. Hon Sec NLSME

Marine Mutterings
By Bernard Lambert

The Marine Section has had a good winter. The 'mound' has gone, the new wooden 'gazebo' has been completed, the 'Chester' seat is immaculate and the outdoor furniture has been cleaned and treated with preservative. To complete our joy the newly sown grass seed is now beginning to germinate.

Once again my thanks go to all who have contributed to the work.

All we need now is some decent weather and a regular turn out of boats!

At the risk of being repetitive do not forget our four events:-

Sun. 16 th . May	– Toy Boat Regatta
Sun. 23 rd . May	– North London Regatta
Sun. 25 th . July	– North London Regatta
Sun. 1 st . August	– Toy Boat Regatta

Enjoy the boating

Slot Car News
by Steve Francis

As I am determined not to miss yet another deadline I looked up in good time when I actually started this article and was amazed that it read Dec. 03. With great apologies and realising it is ancient history to all of the Slot Car Section here goes in bringing the rest of the Society up to date on what we have been up to recently and in the recent past.

With work, European races, holidays and a 27inch long Thames barge this article has taken a back seat recently. Although I am up to my eyes in cleats, deadeyes, bowsprits and mizzens I am not about give up slot racing or turn this into Marine Mutterings (yet).

After 8 long months of campaigning in Europe our very own Team W.O.S. (Walmington on Sea) have now been crowned European Champions of the European Endurance Championships. We finally clinched the title at the Millstream 8 hour race in Ringwood, Hants in November. Although we only managed to come 6th in an incident packed race it was enough to beat the leading French team by one point. The team consisted of John Secchi, Mark Harwood, Bob Hallums and myself. Well done also to the North London team of Greg Harwood, Cas, James Cleave and, making a return to slot racing, John Newton for winning the race. On the subject of returning, welcome back to the Club to Brian Church who has rejoined us after a few years break. Numbers on Thursday night are very healthy at the moment with a few old faces reappearing and a couple of new people. Lets hope it continues and we can join them up to the Society.

This year's championships are well under way with a good turn out on Thursdays and the scalextric nights on alternative Fridays still popular.

On the 29th May we are opening our doors for an event where we can run our historic and modern versions of historic cars from around the 1960s/70s. Also May sees the BRSCA national finals; this year being held north of the border near Dingwall, which I believe is somewhere near the Arctic Circle. I shall report on how our members fare soon. Paul and Greg Harwood will be going there to defend their respective titles. Good luck to them and I hope they do not come back with frostbite!

This time of year all thoughts turn to a small corner of France that is forever England. Yes its Le Mans time again. Or it will be in June. Tony Condon, John Newton, Bob Hallums and myself will be making the trip south again and cheering on the Lister team especially as Tony's son Dan, a former member of NLSME, is now working for them.

That's all for now and no I haven't finished the Thames barge yet but if my slot cars that I have been building lately don't start bringing in the results soon then it will be splicing the mainbrace and no mistakin' me hearties.

Calendar for May

6th Sports

7th AGM

13th 32nd. prod.

20th 24th. prod.

27th Open Gp12

The April General Meeting

by OMAH

Mike Chrisp welcomed us to the meeting, it had been listed as Work in Progress but in fact was a progress report from the sections.

(I must apologise in advance for the brevity of this report but such a lot was said and I could not write fast enough, so for those words of wisdom I have missed-sorry). First up was Nigel G. with some photos of ground level track progress. He was very impressed with the loop round the Cuckoo Line. He had problems recently with some Welsh steam coal that was so efficient it removed the paint from the smokebox of his 'Firefly', this has now been redone with barbecue black, despite handling problems due to his bad back. This was not helped by having to reset the valves, which involved a fairly major strip-down to get the valve chest covers off. Hopefully fully resolved. Nigel also had some laser cut kits for 5in.g coal wagons under construction, he produced one "that he had made earlier" in the shape of one of Derek P.'s excellent scratch-built LMS trucks.

Next up was Ian F., eloquent as ever, it is nice to hear someone so committed to his hobby, as indeed are most of his section. I was so interested that I kept forgetting to take notes, this, combined with a certain lack of understanding of the technical aspects tends to lose some of the excellence of his presentation. They have made some changes to the track layout, staggering corners to enable closer overtaking, repaint in pale grey etc. They have had a successful season both at home and abroad and are looking forward to another. Le Mans racing is testing, both on drivers and cars with up to eight lanes in operation with working lights for the night periods. Any car with deficient lighting has to be removed until they are fixed. Motors and/or tyres have to be changed at intervals, occasionally bodies. These cars are far removed from their Scalextric ancestry, the techniques get more advanced each year, real state of the art stuff. Anyone who thinks that this is not 'model engineering' would have their ideas changed by the details of the work that goes into making a car that little bit better than a competitor. Tyres and motors alone are something of black art; tyre materials play a big part in the performance, and motors can cost from £7 up to £115 for one with a ceramic magnet.

Dave L. reported that the Video Section is still proceeding but ill health had reduced activities of late. Editing is made much easier these days by the choice of computer video suites, particularly with digital cameras. Dave has also been dabbling with miniature indoor flight light aircraft. Once these were invariably free flight due to the weight limit but a new generation of ultra-lightweight motors, servos and batteries allow radio control, albeit at a cost. Dave showed some examples of motors and servos that I could hardly see from the front row, typical servo weight 9g down to 1.9g for latest models, fairly easy to keep the all up weight of the aircraft below 150g.

Adam G. had some examples for the garden railway, both 16mm and 0 gauge. He said that there had been a considerable upsurge of interest since the 70's both in scratch and kit built locos', Jack Weldon and Stuart Brown being two of the enthusiasts mentioned. He showed us a 0-4-0 under construction, centre flue gas fired which had

the advantage of adjustable wheel gauge, 0 or 1 gauge he has it on 1 g. He also had some kits for log wagons, also a flat wagon with a jeep for freight.

John M. had an unusual model of a Norwegian icebreaker, c1900, radio-controlled twin-cylinder steam powered unit, gas-fired cross tube boiler with pre-heated water supply. It has electric running lights, also lighting to check water level, pressure etc, all unobtrusively visible from outside the superstructure. A beautiful little vessel which I hope to see running this season.

We had an unusually full evening, which sadly meant that Jonathan A. did not have time to fully expand on his contribution for which he had done a lot of preparation. As well as telling us of the latest mods to the 00 layout Bath Green Park etc, including new larger fiddle yards and improvements to Binegar, the detachable section which becomes a portable layout in its own right for exhibitions, he had brought a wagon kit made up from flat packed laser cut brass. His piece of resistance was not just a piece of model engineering but a commission from the Barnes Wallis Trust for youngsters in the shape of 20 off trophies, to be completed in time for the Harrogate show in May where they will be presented. They consist of a half-section model of the R100 airship moored to its mast at Cardington, mounted on a plaque. The airship is moulded in pewter. Jonathan has some experience in moulding from his employment in the jewellery industry in Clerkenwell and also from working at home to produce artifacts for his mother's antique business. Unfortunately, the gentleman who made the pattern for the airship made it twice the size requested which not only increased the quantity of pewter needed but shortened the reusable life of the silicon rubber mould. The example displayed was excellent and we can only hope that Jonathan can beat the time requirement despite the setbacks.

A most interesting evening as evinced by the applause given to the contributors. (Footnote; the R100 was designed for Vickers by Barnes-Wallis assisted by Nevil Shute Norway. Best remembered as 'the one that flew', as opposed to the R101. For anyone interested I recommend "Slide Rule" by Nevil Shute.)

Tyttenhanger Gazette

By Roger Bell

The topic for the April Loco' meeting was a talk by George Case and another by Les Brimson.

George has been a railwayman all his working life. The last of his talks covered the period in his life from the ages of fourteen to seventeen. He has written a book on those years entitled 'George Case starts work with the London North Eastern Railway'. It is a Potters Bar Museum publication and was on sale at the meeting autographed by George for £2.

At the age of seventeen after spending three years in a signal box he attended the signals school, newly held in the Lord Salisbury station waiting room at Hatfield. Lord Salisbury was a three times Prime Minister. One had to study on the course; it was not a ten-minute job to learn the procedures, which were laid down in a rulebook, a rules and regulations book, a section appendix and a general appendix. Hatfield was a busy signal box with branches going to St. Albans, one from Welwyn Garden City to Hertford and another to Luton. The platforms were staggered and it was alleged that the reason for this was that no train could stand opposite the Royal train should it arrive. George was advised to take some matches on the course as the pipe smoking instructor was always on the scrounge for them, due to wartime shortages.

Eventually he passed out of signal school with a certificate of competence and was sent to his first box at Crews Hill with twenty-five levers. It was a sleepy town with one pub, no shops and three nurseries. Having reported for duty at 9am he found that the stationmaster William (Bill Camm) affectionately known as 'Jumbo' would not arrive until just before 10am. William stepped down from the train, hands in pockets and slouched up to him, 'what oh boy, you are Cases boy, I know your old dad'. This greeting typified the start of an enjoyable period working in a wonderful atmosphere. Out of interest the nickname 'Jumbo' had come about because Williams's father had been the stationmaster at High Barnet, and periodically when circus trains arrived to unload the animals, William as a young man would allow his school friends to have a peek at the elephants and charge them 1/2d to do so. George was a porter / signalman and duties included cleaning the toilets, scrubbing the waiting room floor once a week, gardening in the flower beds and bill posting. The handbills were stuck on with a thick paste and could only be removed by scraper after a copious supply of hot water from a boiling kettle; there was not much spare time. The early morning turn started at 5-50am in the booking office selling the EMR (early morning return tickets) to King Cross for a shilling.

Crews Hill was the only station on the line to have electric light; the Glasgow Stud was one of their main customers and the British Bloodstock Agency demanded it.

There was an up and a down line, two sidings and a head shunt. A restaurant car in one of the sidings was broken into and after a police investigation the crime remained unresolved. A while after, one of the lads, Oscar did not arrive for work. This being a common occurrence for him the stationmaster decided to pay him a visit. Oscar's real name was Lenny Ramsey, he was affectionately known as Oscar after the character in the *Just Jake* cartoon in the Daily Mirror. The stationmaster and George clambered aboard a 1920s BSA motorcycle and sidecar, part petrol and part paraffin fuelled, due to wartime shortages and amongst much smoke arrived at the house. The mother invited them in for a cup of tea whilst emphasising her son's poorly condition. On entering, much to their surprise they spotted LNER crockery on the dresser, the stationmaster said to George 'Oh my gawd, keep you mouth shut'. The teapot had the same livery, and the mother proudly spoke of it as being a present from her son. On leaving, the stationmaster joked that as her name was Lill Ramsey perhaps her second and third names were Nellie and Elanora (LNER). George was sworn to secrecy, but something must have been said as shortly afterwards all of the crockery returned to the coach.

Anthracite would come in by the wagon-load for the nurseries; its arrival was noted in a book. It could stay in the wagon for the arrival day and for the two days following at

no cost to the customer, but after that, demurrage was charged at a shilling per day until the wagon was emptied. Often a few tomatoes from the nursery would defer the payment period.

One Saturday morning, George with nothing to do was cleaning his motorcycle in the subway, a down train arrived with some golfers on board. He asked one gentleman for his ticket, who waved a medallion that hung from his watch chain. George said 'I don't want to see your watch chain I want to see your ticket', the gentleman said 'this is my ticket'. With this the stationmaster appeared from the booking office door, saying 'what seems to be the problem'. The gentleman said to the stationmaster 'this cheeky young man wants to see my ticket. I have explained to him, I have shown him my medallion and said this is my ticket'. The stationmaster replied 'Ok leave it with me, carry on sir'. When he had gone he said 'Blimey mate, don't you know who that is?' 'No sir' George replied. 'That's Mr Palmer a big noise on the Southern'. It transpired that these medallions were issued to high-ranking officers of the railway as a permit to free travel. It was feared that would not be the end of it, and duly George was summoned to room 42 at Kings Cross to see Mr W. E. Green the District Operating Superintendent for the Kings Cross division. Whilst sitting and waiting, the Chief's assistant came in and shouted 'Case, follow me'. The chief greeted him with 'Case', George affirmed 'Yes Sir'. He continued, 'don't you know anything about these ticket passes'. He was then advised that he would be sent on a two-day ticket collectors course to find out about them.

It was decided to resume a pre-war competition for the best kept station, George was asked to scrounge some plants and to whitewash around the flower beds, a £5 prize shared amongst the station staff was at stake. He collected the pre-ordered flowers from the nursery down the road on a heavy barrow. Having prepared a superb display, the team of adjudicators arrived in their coach with its open veranda at the front, being propelled by the loco' from the rear. To their delight they won first prize. The next day the stationmaster had George return the plants to the nursery and it was business as usual.

George is currently writing his next book to cover this period of his colourful life on the railway and I feel that it will make for a good read. We thanked him for his amusing presentation, which was an interesting insight into working life of the time.

Les Brimson then spoke of a unique book titled 'A pictorial tribute to Crewe works in the days of steam'. The first picture projected onto the screen was of 'King George Fifth' locomotives on the assembly line; a man in a bowler hat was watching the workmen. From the following pictures I noted a machine shop, which had an absolute forest of overhead line shafting with belts coming down to the machines. A connecting rod was noted with an extra hole for Joy valve gear. The sheer length of the machine shop and the outside light in the distance which shone as at the end of a tunnel.

A Bessemer converter had the same shape as those drawn in notes from lectures during ones engineering apprentice days. A rolling mill for steel sheet had an enormous flywheel. Another shot showed a large round table where loco' tyres were made. Surprisingly when asked what the machine did no one amongst us knew. Slowly suggestions came forth. The tyre would not be made from a length of bar and

rolled round and joined but from a doughnut shaped forging and rolled to size. In another were a pair of wheels on an axle suspended vertically by chains; possibly this was where the wheels were assembled to the axles.

Wheels were being turned on a lathe; an exposed box of electrical contacts was an obvious safety hazard. In the foundry molten metal was being poured into moulding boxes. The men all wore cloth caps. One man was inside a firebox with a rivet dolly; the firebox was on its side, and another man held a pneumatic rivet gun against the outside. Neither man had ear protection.

One caption described how a machine folded a firebox wrapper in one process, but here again the machine did not look big enough for the job. It made one fear that this technology has been lost forever.

One guy was sitting on a pile of wood grinding the end of a long bar on an eight foot diameter grinding wheel without a guard. He was not wearing any goggles although his trilby hat was firmly in place.

Les accurately described the book as absolutely stunning and utterly fascinating and we thanked him for showing it to us.

The following loco' meetings are to be held at the track. The next one back at H.Q. is the September one.

The May General Meeting

7 May 2004: Annual General Meeting - Plus

The Society's Annual General Meeting is arguably the most important of the year. It is the occasion when Officer of the Society present their reports on the preceding year and the opportunity for all assembled to elect members to the Society's Council of Management.

Annual General Meetings do not always take up the entire evening, so Bert Mead has generously agreed to round off the meeting with some of his inimitable reminiscences.

The meeting, will take place at our Headquarters in Legion Way, North Finchley, and is scheduled to begin at 8pm and finish around 10pm.

Mike Chrisp

Advanced Notice

General Meeting 4 June 2004: CAD is Easy!

Engineers and other folk of a practical disposition will know that the word 'CAD' has entered the language with a specific meaning concerning computers and drawing or drafting.

CAD is to drawing what Word Processing is to writing. CAD provides us with a means to prepare 'perfect' drawings, but to be effective requires a level of understanding and expertise.

Our very own expert on the subject is DAG (Derek) Brown who is travelling from Rutland to Finchley to show us that CAD is Easy!

The meeting, which will take place at our Headquarters in Legion Way, North Finchley, is scheduled to begin at 8pm and finish around 10pm, with refreshing tea and biscuits at about 9pm, courtesy of our own Frank Dell.

The following month's meeting (2 July) will be all about techniques for Marking out and Measurement, and is an ideal opportunity to discuss problems.

See you there!

Mike Chrisp

Spotlight on Jim Robson

Part Four

Confessions of a Non-Model Engineer

It is difficult to say just when the bug to create bites you. I think in my case it went back to before WW2 when Odhams used to produce books of 'push-out' thin card models which they advertised in the Daily Herald, (2 minutes silence please). Each year there was a different collection; I particularly remember Coronation Scot, Tower Bridge, etc. The "working models" were driven by a 'magic power source' which when made up was about the size of a small soap powder box and contained a 'water' wheel driven by fine sand. When the sand had all passed through the wheel you could reactivate by turning the box through 180 degrees so that the sand returned to the hopper in the top and started the power cycle again. Since I was never very successful in making any of these devices sand tight; the rotation invariably deposited some of the sand on the floor! I continued making card/stiff paper kits; the "impregnable" Maginot Line, the battleship 'Nelson', etc, and quite a lot of aircraft. These were followed by solid aircraft kits and just after the war Kielkraft Achilles and Ajax flying models. During the war I got my first taste of metalwork via the Juneero workshop set, which at 84/- (£4.20) was their premier set. I still use the metal box it came in, like a miniature ammo box, as a bits and pieces container for steaming up locos. I started taking "Model Engineer" in 1943 but never had anything more than pipe dreams about actually building anything. It was all way out of my league.

Around 1958, when I was dabbling in 00 and building 'Rosebud' plastic loco kits I bought a kit to electrify the GW Prairie tank. I did not have too much success as the motor had more power than the plastic coupling rods could cope with. Romford were offering metal wheels, coupling rods and motion but by the time you had paid for them I thought I might as well have gone the whole hog and bought a Romford or similar metal kit. In 1958 I discussed this with the chap in charge of Special Products department at Marconi Instruments, who just happened to be Peter Lambert, secretary

of St Albans MES. “Why don’t you come along to one of our meetings, and chat to some of our members who dabble in OO, etc.” I went and was lost.

You may hear a lot of sinister comments about Freemasonry; they are as pure as the driven snow compared to the machinations of ME Societies. Shortly after this, in 1959 I met Mike Chrisp, who, like myself was employed by, (I nearly said worked for), Marconi, when we became founder members of the Marconi Instruments Cine Enthusiasts, or M.I.C.E.

I discovered that Mike was also keen on model engineering and later he also joined St Albans MES. At one of their meetings a large box of bits, which was claimed to be a 3 ½ inch gauge loco was offered for sale for £20. There were no takers. I was quite excited since I recognised from the cab sides that it was LBSC’s *Iris*, a great favourite of mine from the description in ME. It turned out that the vendor was the “company postman” at Marconi Instruments, so next day Mike and I offered him £15, which he accepted. (It transpired that the loco had been given to the postman’s son who was on an engineering course. The builder was in his 80s and no longer able to run it. Junior decided to strip it down and refurbish it. He stripped it down, largely with a hacksaw, which resulted in the box of bits that we acquired. The boiler was sound and most of the rest of the bits were recognisable.) “*Iris*, the antidote” was described by “Curly” as an antidote to the Southern Railway’s Bullied Q1, to which Curly took great exception, (even though’ it was probably the most powerful 0-6-0 loco ever built to the British loading gauge, pretty it was not!) *Iris* was based on the GWR 2251 class, but with outside cylinders to save people having to make a crank axle. The builder of our loco had opted to build on SR lines with a parallel boiler, clacks behind the smokebox and safety valves on the Belpaire top. We started rebuilding in 1966, deciding that we would return it to the original GW concept. In the meantime, we had been to Open Days at North London in 1964, 5 & 6. In 1966 we discovered the Luxfords: Tom, Ruth, Bryan and Tina. Bryan had recently acquired an *Iris* built by the venerable “Pop” Pinnock.

We sought advice, which was readily forthcoming, as well as a footplate trip. It has to be said that, up until this time, we had not been overly impressed by the general bonhomie of the Society. We were given the relative freedom of the track and plied with refreshment, but there was not a particularly welcoming spirit. On asking if we could have an application form we were informed that they didn’t sign up new members willy-nilly, but folk were invited to attend club meetings for a few months to “see if they liked the Society, and to see if the Society liked them.” A form having been duly filled in, it was the duty of the proposer and seconder to be responsible for the new member and to look after them during their early days. At the time we thought this a little over the top but soon came to approve of the arrangement. (I well recall folk at St Albans saying, “you don’t want to join North London, they’re a ‘cliquey’ lot!”)

Those early days were made much happier by the Luxfords who had a rather different approach. They didn’t take it quite as seriously as some, and in fact they seemed to feel it was a hobby to be enjoyed. After we had served our apprenticeship we were allowed to do things. Being asked to do a job was considered an honour: I well remember being asked by Ted Moon to be one of a three man committee to make up the rules for an efficiency trial. (In those days we always had some sort of a contest on

bank holiday Mondays.) This was shortly followed by the further honour of being on the General Meetings Committee and taking the notes at General Meetings for the Newssheet. It may sound a bit draconian but I look back on that period as halcyon days. *Iris* was completed and awarded a joint 2nd prize at the 1977 St Albans MES exhibition, (it would have got 1st but we hadn't built it). Mike made the cladding tapered to give the correct appearance and the safety valve placed in its normal position. Now there isn't much clearance on a taper boiler between the water and the bottom of the valve in the GWR position. On a parallel boiler there is less, as we discovered on the first steaming when it emptied the boiler on blowing off. This was overcome by blanking the bottom of the valve and drilling side entries. She gave us a great deal of pleasure and visited many other tracks. I think it can be safely said that we had our money's worth.

The track, which seemed vast to us, was in the order of 1208ft in length. In 1970 Geoff Cashmore suggested that "we were getting stultified and that we should ask the water company if they would permit us to extend the track." This was duly granted and in November 1970 the first sod was turned. Served me right for getting in the way! A tidy bit of engineering was involved but it was ready for the grand opening in 1971, for the second time by Mr Stace. At 2386ft it was one of the longest tracks in the country at that time and we had some incredible turnouts on Open Days, with visitors having to be rationed to one-hour stints. By comparison, for some strange reason, our own running attendance figures actually declined, so the proposed member rationing arrangements never had to be implemented.

Mike and I, and our wives, Jean & Julie, never missed a Sunday and our children thought that this was all part of normal life. When they were small we used to take a playpen to keep them from straying. In those days it was very much a members and families Sunday. Visitors were few, but none the less welcome. The vandals had yet to discover us. There were characters, mostly affable, Jack Calderbank, Ed Hobday, Harold Pill, Bob Pitt, 'Rollo' Wuidart, Geoff Cashmore, Ted Moon, etc, etc. Initially I was in some awe of Ed Hobday who was large and seemed a bit fierce. He never made anything small. Like the builder, they were larger than life. LBSC described an articulated tank loco inspired by Bullied's "Leader"; he gave no details other than a GA drawing but that was sufficient for Ed to build one in 3 ½ in. G, called "Nuff Sed". He was a prolific builder but his favourite was an over-scale freelance 5in. called "Lady Mabel". I was soon to discover that beneath that somewhat brusque exterior was a most helpful, generous and affable person, one of nature's gentlemen, sadly missed. He always seemed happier to sit and watch his locos being driven by others, a philosophy shared by Bert Mead, happily still a member regularly attending meetings and running days at Colney Heath. I must have clocked up many miles behind his "City of Sarum", would that I could clock up a few more.

Having acquired a treadle-powered Drummond round-bed lathe for £10, I began work on LBSC's "Pansy" in 1967. Work proceeded apace and just before Xmas I got an ML7 for £60, (courtesy of a NatWest loan). I sold the Drummond for £25 so I wasn't too far out of pocket. By 1970 I had built the frames, wheels, crank-axle, cylinders and boiler. Then we moved house, and again in 1979. Both houses needed a lot of work and somewhere along the line progress ceased. I retired in 1993 and thought that the first thing I would do was to finish "Pansy". So far, all that has been added is the bush for the topfeed, which "Curly" had omitted from the boiler drawings. However I

did manage to build a “Toby” for my grandson, which has been moderately successful, I am indebted to Derek Perham for advice, encouragement and some materials. I spent two enjoyable seasons running Bert Mead’s “Saint”, (just as a favour!). More recently, in 1999, Ernie Millington very kindly loaned me his 5in. G “Firefly”, as he was not running it. This loco was built jointly by Martin Evans and Norman Spink and runs beautifully.

I’ve suddenly realised I’ve forgotten to mention *Annabel*. For anyone who is not already aware, she is a 2 ½ in. G, 2-6-6-4 Mallet, to American loading gauge, 5ft. long with tender. This loco had been willed to “Curly” in 1940 by the late Noel van Raalte, (or “Bro. Wholesale” as “Curly” nicknamed him), but his association with it goes back to at least 1938 when it was brought to him by ‘Bro. Wholesale’ for “monkey gland” treatment, as it would not steam. After “Curly’s” death the trustees asked Tom Luxford and Geoff Cashmore, to dispose of the locos which had not been earmarked for friends. I think there was something like 14, and initially the Society just ran them and displayed them. I well remember us running some of them at the Birmingham track at Illshaw Heath and driving *Caterpillar* and *Annabel*, among others. Now, I had always been especially captivated by *Annabel* whenever she got a mention in “Curly’s” ‘Lobby Chat’, but I never expected to see her, let alone drive her. Some time later I enquired, with some trepidation, if any of the stud were still available for acquisition, I was told that they had all gone, except for *Annabel*! Now, since if I had had the choice of any of his locos, it would have been that one, I was not displeased to take her off their hands. I have to confess that she has not been run of late, and has only had one outing since the Cuckoo Line was rebuilt. (I have redressed that failure toward the end of last season.)

So, although I have driven a lot of locos, up to 2ft. 6in.G, mostly other peoples, I have to confess that I am not really a model engineer but merely one who enjoys the hobby, and the company of MES members. I have found a warm welcome wherever I have met them, both here and overseas. I hope to continue to do so for some time to come.

In our own backyard, I am saddened by the lack of enthusiasm of late by members to volunteer for office, although we are never short of critics. We manage to get things done but it always seems to be the same faces. Time was when it was considered an honour to be asked to hold office; we even had elections regularly at AGM time. That having been said, I am still proud to be a member of NLSME, there is no one in the Society that I don’t like, (hope they feel the same about me), but there are always some with whom one feels more comfortable.

Over the years I have done the odd stint on winter working parties but now find that I am a bit lacking in the manual labour ability department, I can usually find some skive to give the outward appearance of important work. Currently I am tea-boy. It’s a tough job but someone has to do it. (The fact that it keeps me out of the weather has nothing do with it.) Look forward to seeing you on Sunday working mornings in the autumn.

The End

Future Locomotive Section Meetings.

**Held on the Third Friday of Each Month.
At Headquarters or Colney Heath.**

The following is a list of meetings for the next session:

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|---------------------------------|--|
| 21 st May 2004 | Visit by the Branch Line Society to the Colney Heath site. All hands on deck |
| 18 th June 2004 | B.B.Q. at Colney Heath. |
| 16 th July 2004 | B.B.Q at Colney Heath. |
| 20 th August 2004 | B.B.Q at Colney Heath. |
| 17 th September 2004 | An evening with Donal Corcoran to give a progress report and to discuss with all the members the future of the Club. |
| 15 th October 2004 | An evening with Derek Perham and Frank Dell. |
| 19 th November 2004 | A visiting lecturer. Subject to be announced. |
| 17 th December 2004 | Work in progress. Please bring something to discuss. |

2005

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| 21 st January 2005 | An evening of member's videos. |
| 18 th February 2005 | An evening with George Case and Tony Dunbar. |
| 18 th March 2005 | A presentation by an external speaker. To be announced. |
| 15 th April 2005 | An Easter slide show. Ian Johnston and others. |
| 20 th May 2005 | Work in progress. Please bring something to discuss. |
| 16 th June 2005 | B.B.Q at Colney Heath. |
| 21 st July 2005 | B.B.Q at Colney Heath. |
| 18 th August 2005 | B.B.Q at Colney Heath. |

Ian Johnston

The views expressed in this News Sheet are not necessarily
those of the Chairman or Council of the NLSME