

November 1998 / Issue 587

Contents

Thoughts of Chairman Dell

Off the Cuff

Tytenhanger Gazette

Loco Section

Stationary Steam

Marine Section

The Saga of a Disastrous Day Excursion to York - Steam Hauled!

The September Open Day - a Marine Perspective

Thoughts of Chairman Dell

The running season is now coming to an end at Colney Heath and I think we had a very good season. After a very slow start things livened up - it was not uncommon to have eight engines on Sundays.

The club loco still has problems - quite small ones, but nevertheless quite annoying, but at last the problems have been isolated and we are taking steps to overcome them. I look forward to next season being completely fault free. Those of you who weren't at the track on Sunday 21 September missed a rare sight - I actually steamed and drove George the Fifth, I am ashamed to say, for the first time this season. I really must try harder and bring out George more often. I recently purchased on behalf of the club 4 wooden bench seats after visiting most garden centers in Hertfordshire, I eventually found suitable benches, both in quality and price, at Barley Lands steam rally, and, as John S. was with us with his Transit van, we were able to bring them home with us. They have now been treated with Ronseal wood preservative and look quite smart, and what is more important, people are using them.

Ian's list of jobs are being ticked off one by one. At last count 6 jobs have volunteers. There are still lots of jobs left, but please hurry and get your name on the list and avoid disappointment. Although the working parties have not started yet, some of the jobs need tackling as soon as possible. Painting is no fun when you have to scrape off the frost before you can start, and you can't do a good job. I suggest that all those who are going to paint start as soon as possible before the real winter sets in. I look forward to seeing lots of you at the work parties. Although lots of work is done, there is a lighter side. We normally start between 9 and 10 am. and, being British, we have tea break at 11 am - this can last up to half an hour with much chat and interesting discussion. If you are a new member or even an old member who hasn't been before, do come along - but I warn you, it can become habit forming!

As you probably know, John S. is standing down as loco section leader after nearly 3 years. Well done John for all your hard work. We now have members who are prepared to stand and we hope the good work will carry on. It doesn't matter how good the previous incumbent has been, a new section leader means new ideas and enthusiasm, so I think we can look forward to many exciting things to come.

Another job on Ian's list is the pot holes on the approach road to our site. We have Tractor and A Steam Roller - all the tools to do a good job. We could all take a spell on both Tractor and Roller. A Saturday would be a good day - less traffic. If anybody is interested, please let me know.

Frank Dell

Off the Cuff

We've had a bit of a "wedding" theme in our lives in recent weeks. It started when some friends celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary by arranging a 3-hour cruise for family and friends on Glebe Cruisers "Chiltern Countess" wide beam electric trip boat from Pitstone to part-way up the Marsworth flight of locks on the Grand Union Canal – a very pleasant way to pass an afternoon. In late September, Michael had the great pleasure of "giving the bride away" when our late friend Dennis's daughter married at St Lawrence's in Abbots Langley – it was a lovely occasion and we were so proud to be there both for our friend and his daughter, Elaine.

The October Council Meeting was a lengthy affair due to protracted discussions on risk assessments, break-ins - how in future we can more securely store tools etc., and the Society's possible involvement in auctioning the late Bill Camp's locos and "bric-a-brac".

Several loco members have offered to assist in the preparation of a risk assessment document for Colney Heath, a task which needs to be started asap. Unfortunately at the time of the Council Meeting no-one had volunteered to carry out a similar and necessary task at Headquarters and again it is a task that should be started asap. If any members from 00, North American, Slot Cars and Cine Sections would be willing to undertake this assessment our Chairman would be delighted to hear from them.

The Chairman's Report should, in my personal view, be called the Chairman's Question Time as this is how he presents his part of the meeting. It is a most effective way of starting a discussion, summing up, and defining actions to be taken. As usual several subjects were covered – electric hand driers: lifebelt for pool: cable to workshop: pros and cons of buying a sea-container to make a secure store, and so on. Well it keeps the rest of us on our toes!

Several applications for membership were approved and details will be found elsewhere in the Newsletter.

An alternative heating system for HQ is being considered and hopefully recommendations on suitable systems will before long be discussed with the Council.

HQ Section Reports were sparse, but we were told that wiring and scenery work is proceeding as usual. We learnt that a recent Loco section meeting had agreed that work on the existing ground level track would be consolidated during the winter and any possible extension would be surveyed next Spring: and there is likely to be an election for a second Section Leader at November's meeting. Stationary Steam Section hope to organise more events at Colney Heath next year. The Society's assistance to the executors of the late Bill Camp's estate was discussed and it was agreed the Chairman would pursue the matter further with the executors.

Beryl C.

Tythenhanger Gazette

At the October Loco Section meeting a lively discussion took place on the development of the ground level track, admirably chaired by Les B.

The summary of the meeting was that the Society agrees to continue with the development of the ground level track incorporating a loop at the bottom end.

Tony Dunbar agreed to survey the land for the extension and then a route will be decided upon at a future meeting.

The Water Company will then be asked for their view and agreement on the fence line. All agreed future developments must take into account maintenance and grass cutting as well as safety.

The priority for this year is to concentrate on finishing the work on the existing railway. The Winter Working programme will be planned in advance so that people will know what work is required of them.

As the meeting finished rather late, the Auction will take place at the track. This will be on Sunday 8 November at 10.30 am.

The November Loco meeting will be a 'Work in Progress'.

Roger B.

Loco Section

Now that the running season has come to an end we would like to thank everyone for their help in stewarding at Colney Heath. This season a few people have not turned up for their duties but the majority have and in many cases alternative arrangements have been made. Well done and thanks.

We will shortly be drawing up the rota for next season which will be broadly on the same lines as last season. Please advise us on your preferences and please let us know if your partners are willing to assist. The running season has been very successful although there appears to be a marked drop in the number of members coming up to run their locomotives on the track. One of our Open Days was very successful and well attended, and the other was very successful but poorly attended - a fact we must remedy in the future.

The Loco Section meeting on 13 Nov. has the subject 'Work in Progress'. We hope to see the progress the doyens of the craft made with their superb models as well as the tyros. Please take part; you will be amongst friends.

Work at Colney Heath begins on Sunday November 8th when we look forward to seeing you on the site. We particularly welcome new members; but please make yourself known to the folk at the track. Work usually begins about 10.00 am, although we always hope to start earlier. If you haven't got a specific job please don't hang around, but ask for one.

Do come along and enjoy it both for the physical exercise and the fellowship (tea/coffee 11.00 am).

As you will know, Bill Camp tragically died in a fire some time ago. His locomotives are for sale by sealed envelope bids. The locomotives will be sold as seen. The locomotives are also being advertised in neighbouring clubs. The locomotives are listed below.

Bids should be sent in a sealed envelope marked,

"Locomotive bid",

to: Mrs. C. Bysh,
81, Churchbury Crescent,
Enfield,
Middlesex
EN1 3HP.

The closing date is Saturday 14 November.

The locomotives will be available for viewing at the Auction (see notices for details).

3 1/2" "MAISIE" - LBSC ATLANTIC design.

3 1/2" "HIELAN' LASSIE" - LBSC PACIFIC design, 3 cylinders with Baker valve gear.

3 1/2" "DORIS" - LBSC BLACK FIVE 4-6-0 design.

5" "MAID OF KENT" - LBSC 4-4-0 design.

7 1/4" MAXITRAK 0-4-0 unfinished, but has run, with parts to fit.

Ian J.

Stationary Steam

I have been asked why I have resigned as loco section leader. Well imagine this scenario, lounging comfortably on a sunlit grass lawn under the dappled shadow of an apple orchard sipping a cool drink with a steam engine slowly pulsating beside you watching Brendan getting really cross with his 5" loco. An impossible dream? No, a reality. Stationary Steam offers unimagined delights and I having been seduced by this hedonistic idyll, now I seem to be the Stationary Steam Section leader.

Despite it's name however, Stationary steam is in fact very active and rather mobile. The various section members have taken part in many different events this year ranging from traction engine rallies to fetes.

Members of other sections have been thrust terror struck on to small traction engines and being so struck have in turn struck a variety of hard objects like walls and fences. One loco driver made a serious attempt on his own car!! Driving a road loco requires all the skills of maintaining the water level, notching up, controlling the regulator and keeping a good fire. Skills well known to many [some] of our members, but above all, steering, which for those used to rails can be a bit of a problem.

Three Society traction engines were in steam during the SMEE exhibition. The concrete roads were a bit hard on the unsprung drivers but we all met many like minded people from around the world and had a lot of interest shown in our engines.

The kids at the Mencap day and the party on the 26th Oct discovered the Klaxon on my passenger wagon. This has added a new dimension of counties sound at Colney Heath but it is confidently expected to be inoperable on its next outing.

As a section we have made a number of assaults on the Crooked Billet some have been more successful than others, but pushing an 8 ton steam roller home really is fun in retrospect. Next year we will organize one or two official road runs from Colney Heath with invited visitors and see if we can expand this area of our activities We also have a rich selection of beautiful and genuinely stationary steam engines in our club. Next year we will have barbecues at Colney Heath with such engines on display and, where possible, running. Take note now, and get them working over the winter. We all know they are there and hardly ever run, give them an outing.

John S.

[Marine Section](#)

I had to take the Chair for the October meeting at the last minute as Peter was unable to take charge due to a work commitment.

Fortunately, I had 2 videos with me and both were shown on our new large screen.

‘Operation Pedestal’ was about the Naval battle of Malta, a very interesting video and much enjoyed by the people who came along - so much so, that it was 10.30 before we packed up.

Bert Mead brought along a small, very old boat, 100 years old, for us to identify, but it was sparsely fitted out, and nobody could say what it was. It was suggested that the owner take it to a museum in Devon. Apparently, it was built in the Devon area by somebody’s great grandfather.

The pond was discussed and it has been decided that we should have a lifebelt near the pond. Norman Brown has offered to make the frame for it. I have seen two different types of lifebelt at Barnet Marine, and I think the dearer one would be a better choice at about £40.

If you want any stainless steel bolts, nuts, self-tapper screws and small fittings, Barnet Marine have them in stock.

The next Marine meeting will be at HQ, Summers Lane on 20 November. See you there.

Frank I.

[The Saga of a Disastrous Day Excursion to York - Steam Hauled!](#)

In truth I was the one who spotted the advert and persuaded Michael what a great day out it would be - steam hauled by 34027 TAW VALLEY from St Albans to York, 4-hour stop in York, back to Toton (Derby engine sheds) to switch to a diesel engine for the final run back to St Albans - unfortunately the reality became a nightmare.

Saturday 15 August dawned grey. We arrived at St Albans Station well before departure time, in a steady drizzle that gradually got worse as the minutes ticked by. All too soon departure time arrived and went by with no sign of TAW VALLEY - plenty of rumours but nothing factual, and nowhere to shelter as it was far too early for Station staff to be on hand to unlock the waiting rooms.

45 minutes late TAW VALLEY pulled in, to pick up its first passengers and all its victuals which, of course, took time to put on board. There were a number of scheduled passenger stops, all looking damp and disgruntled - they obviously didn't know what had caused the delay either. As there was no tannoy system on this particular excursion, the staff of Days Out tried to keep passengers informed by personally coming round with vague stories of what had happened and what was happening, but it was still very much a guessing game.

Due to the late start and serious loco water shortage the scheduled water stop at Kettering was re-arranged for Bedford where we sat for an hour contemplating nothing in particular while TAW VALLEY steamed to a hydrant to fill up. There were various other inexplicable and unexplained delays as we made our way to York where we arrived over 2 1/2-hours late. As a peace offering we were given an extra hour in York and told to be back on board by 5.30pm otherwise the train would leave without us. I wish I could say we missed it and came back on a normal train but no such luck - everyone was back on time and we then sat or marched up & down the platform for another 1 1/2-hours wondering where on earth TAW VALLEY had disappeared to. Whiffs of smoke and steam on the far side of York Station merely tantalised us until, at long last, TAW VALLEY appeared, was connected to the coaches, and off we went at 7.00 pm - three hours behind schedule!

From York to Toton we experienced a few short bursts of speed, otherwise we seemed to be going at a fairly pedestrian speed. On arrival outside Toton engine sheds TAW VALLEY exited by driving slowly past all the coaches to some derisive cheers, clapping, and total apathetic indifference by some of us -including me. To be honest, Michael tried very hard to defend the tour operators and kept assuring me this had never happened to him on any of his previous "steam" outings - frankly his words offered no comfort. Now diesel hauled we finally set off yet again to finish our journey, with its multitude of 2-minute stops for passengers to disembark (10-minutes would be more accurate), finally arriving at St Albans at something like 11.15pm. I wish I could say that all things considered it was an enjoyable outing, but as far as I'm concerned it was a totally frustrating and exhausting day and it took me 48-hours to feel like a human being again. Considering we did nothing all day but sit on a train I find it difficult to understand the exhaustion - it must have been the boredom.

Recently, in a steam magazine, I have read that the Rail people had managed to put TAW VALLEY facing the wrong direction and then sent it on a 25-mile chase from Southall to Acton Main Line, North Pole (I can believe it!) Junction, South Greenford, Drayton Green and back to Acton Main Line to finally reach Brent Junction via the West London line right way round! This meant TAW VALLEY needed to take water out of sequence with its scheduled stops and so the domino effect came into being. I am the first to admit I am not a steam or train enthusiast and doubt I'll change my mind in the future.

Question for Mike Ruffell - did you and your friend enjoy the day?

Beryl C.

[The September Open Day - a Marine Perspective](#)

Firstly a big thank you to Frank and Terry for cutting the grass by the pond the weekend before. It made all the difference.

The morning of the Open Day got off to a bit of a slow start as far as us Marine people are concerned. I know we like horizontal water but not the vertical kind in large amounts. Once we had got Terry's 'tent thing' up we were quite happy watching the 10.30 am. rain.

Thank goodness the afternoon turned out a lot better. We had a good few boats on the pond after lunch; everything from sail to steam, scale to fast electrics. Our thanks must go out to our friends from the St.Albans club who brought their boats. I was very impressed with a 1/24 scale Schnellboot (E-Boat) which had a 'heck' of a turn of speed for its size. If we ever need the pond made larger I am going to call on this boat to move the banks for us.

For those who are still wondering why Terry's Queen Mary was sailing around in a decapitated state, the answer is simple. His usual battery did not take up the charge the night before. This resulted in

him using the other battery he brought with him, which was too big for the superstructure to fit flush to the deck without a great big gap. It still looked very impressive.

I think the biggest shock to me was actually seeing my youngest son doing the washing up in the coach. Whilst on that subject, a big thanks for the wonderful food the ladies provided. Bet you can't get Nick to do the washing up again next Open Day!

Peter S.

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Top

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