

The Chairman's Notes

Summer is with us - one moment lying under an unrelenting sun beating down from a vivid blue sky and complaining about the intense heat and the next shivering in a torrential downpour and battling with mud and floods and moaning about the lack of sunshine! And that's just at traction engine rallies.

But our summer events have managed to avoid the weather. The Cine Section evening at Colney Heath was perhaps a little damp but the food was good and lots of circuits were driven around the track and they enjoyed themselves.

The H0 section was very lucky and had an unexpected dry slot on their visit to the track. They all had a go at driving on the track, behind the miniature traction engine and rolling the car park nice and flat.

Our family day was just that; a nice relaxing day with plenty of opportunity for our youngsters to have a go: A very pleasant event.

At the Trent Park Traction Engine Rally no less than thirty members, wives and children visited us and we managed to provide tea and rides on the roller for those who fancied a go. We are at Barleylands Rally on Sept 8th and 9th. Come and see us and have a cup of tea and a sit down. But if you want a go on the Roller please remember to wear your best white summer clothes!

The boss, deputy boss and I are off for a break in Wales where it is just possible that we may perhaps visit a railway. It makes such a nice change.

I expect the Curly Bowl will be over by the time you read this, but just in case please turn out and support the organisers who are putting so much effort into making this event a success.

John Squire

From the Secretary

The World appears to be on holiday as I have received no correspondence and only one phone call. However, that call has resulted in a new member and it is Roger Woolcott who we welcome to the Society.

Tony Dunbar

A New Membership Secretary

Ron Thorogood has handed the membership records over to me and from now your Treasurer will act as Membership Secretary as well.

I must say a very sincere thank you to Ron for keeping the job going while I found my feet as Treasurer. I doubt if I could have coped without his efforts.

We have lost some members this year and have also gained a few.

Currently membership is down on last year but we will probably recruit many more new members in the remaining months of the year. The situation is reasonably healthy but anything that individual members can do to assist in swelling our numbers will be welcomed as our subscription income is only marginally adequate.

Bernard Lambert

From the Membership Secretary

New Members

This month we welcome two new members approved at the July and August Council Meetings.

Guy Ellerby

Roger Woollett

Bernard Lambert

Treasurer Twittering

There is only one significant item to bore you with this month.

As you will already know our Chairman has had success in collecting the residual funds of the Fetes and Fairs Section. This will enable us to write off the outstanding loan to the Section and draw a line under the Section's activities. Your Treasurer is relieved, so thank you John for your efforts at persuasion.

Bernard Lambert

Marine Mutterings

From Bernard Lambert

John Morgan is reporting elsewhere on our July Open Day, which was enjoyed by all.

The Lake is being quite well used and we hope to build on John's success and have an even better Open Day in September. We must make it clear that our own member's boats will be very welcome on the Lake on our Open Day. We can never have too many boats.

Please try to support our second Summer Open Event - Sunday 16th. September.
Also remember the September Meeting at Colney Heath.

Happy boating - *Bernard Lambert*

Video Group News

From John Old

The Video Group is busily getting into the subjects for next year's TRIANGLE COMPETITION. Several themes for films to be shot on video have been put forward and the selected ones of these will be scripted so that production can get under way.

Our attempts at editing on computers is making satisfactory progress both on Apple Macs and PCs, with Apple Macs seemingly easier to use.

Despite all the hard work that is going on we still find time to have relaxing evenings as well; one of these being our BBQ at the Track which was a great success thanks to the Loco men who provided trains for us to ride on and consumed very little of our food and beer. The Garden Railway aroused much interest and there were a couple of boats on the pond. Although the evening was quite chilly everyone warmed to the occasion and Frank Hills did a grand job organising the rides for us. Over 30 people were catered for and there was still some food left at the end that was shared amongst the poorer members – i.e. those still in employment, while the idle rich - i.e. OAPs looked on enviously.

You don't have to be rich to enjoy making videos. Most of the equipment necessary is available to anyone joining our Group, to learn how to use, and of course all NLSME members are eligible to visit our Section meetings held at HQ on most Wednesday evenings. Check with Section Leader (me, John Old) first as some of our meetings are held at quite exotic venues. You can usually be assured of a cup of tea and a biscuit. How's that for wild living!?

Marine Section Open Day 22nd July 2001

by John Morgan

This was to be the first open day for the Marine Section and therefore a step into the unknown. It was thought that some organised event should be arranged but it should not interfere too much with members and guests being able to "free sail" as they wished. Having pushed the boat out, our leader, Bernard, was then pressed ganged into a holiday over the chosen weekend. I was asked, or put my hand up at the wrong moment, to stand in. I cannot remember how it came about. These things always become a blur!

A simple course was devised, but with one difficult feature to separate the scores and enable three (small) prizes to be given away. This was to be touching a buoy and reversing away from it without hitting anything else. It did the trick as even the new comers managed a clear round up to this point - perhaps the rest of the course was too easy!

To save time on the day, the course was set up two weeks before hand, but then we had that heavy, continuous rain through one night and some of the anchor's lifted from the bottom and the then floated off, but at least I gained experience of using the waders and it did not take long to put it all back together again.

To my horror, the first visitor, from the Welwyn Garden City SME arrived, just after 09:00. There were only two other members around, but he was happy just to inspect the place and watch me launch the harbour. He was so early the gates were still closed; otherwise he would have been at the lake even before that, having driven past us on his first circuit.

During the next half an hour five more Welwyn GC members arrived, so I thought it was about time to lay on the entertainment. Now these boaters are experienced on steering courses, having their own rolling competition on alternate Saturdays throughout the summer at Stanborough Park, so it was no surprise the scores were on the high side until that "touch and reverse" part - they are not use to doing that. It is strange that when you do not want to touch a gate they just appear in front of you and no matter what avoiding action is taken it seems not to have any effect, but try to aim at one to actually hit it and it becomes almost impossible!

I am indebted to John Old, from the Video Section. He was also on site from an early hour and he kindly offered to make some tea for our visitors (and me). Thank you John. He returned throughout the day and has some video of the proceedings.

By 11:30 all our visitors had been round the course and no North London men had arrived with a boat... The reason was explained to me. Apparently it is tradition on the railway side for the home members not to bring their locomotives but to leave the track free for their guests and this way of working was then transferred to the marine section. **THAT WAS NOT HOW IT WAS SUPPOSED TO WORK!** So I had an uncomfortable three hours hoping our guests were not getting bored - Welwyn Club

open days are non stop competition – bursting balloons; musical buoy's (same rules as musical chairs) - all sorts of ideas.

Although a number of other nearby Clubs were invited by letter, none of them turned out, which was a disappointment. We have their telephone numbers so they will be reminded about the 16th September repeat -please make a note of the date and that YOUR boats are most welcome!

I was beginning to feel it was all going far too slowly, but there was no need to panic as there are plenty of distractions at Colney Heath. By 14:00 some North London members had arrived, four with boats. Gentle persuasion and Derek Perham; Nigel Griffiths and Robert Ryan took on the challenge and would you believe they all did very well. (Me thinks they have been practising when I was not looking).

The weather forecast had been a bit on the threatening side so it was no surprise that midway through the afternoon, after we had attracted an audience both at the pool side and along the fence, that a few drops of heavy rain came down. It only lasted 60 seconds, but did it clear the area of spectators!

In spite of the slow start I thought the day went well. I even overheard someone say, "this is good fun" - hooray, perhaps we have started something and I would like to see a monthly steering regatta, points being accumulated (for a trophy?) during the season. How about giving Bernard or myself your views?

For the record the leader board takes this format and is shown below:

Name

Club

Gates hit

Gates missed

Points lost

Total

Nigel Griffiths

NLSME

0

0

0

200

Robert Ryan

NLSME

0

1

5

195

Alan Trowbridge

WGC SME

0

0

0

200

Derek Perham

NLSME

0

2

10

190

Bob Fox	Mick Miller-Mead
WGC SME	WGC SME
1	2
1	1
15	25
185	175
Harrold Barrow	
WGC SME	
1	Roy Graver
2	WGC SME
20	3
180	0
	30
Olive Miller-Mead	170
WGC SME	
2	Simon Fox
0	WGC SME
20	2
180	4
	40
	160

Nigel, Alan and Robert walked away with a box of goodies (chocolates) each.

The method of scoring was:

Start with a total of 200 points. Each gate missed or for an unscheduled reverse deduct 5 points: Each buoy hit deduct 10 points: For each miss of the buoy at the end of the course deduct 5 points: Hitting the harbour walls/rocks etc. deduct 10 points.

DO NOT FORGET OUR SECOND MARINE OPEN DAY - 16TH SEPTEMBER.

Frank's New Order

(Or Second Thoughts of Ex-Chairman Dell on How to Cure Some of the Problems of Today)

- 1) Anyone lucky enough to reach the age of 80 years shall be put down. So when you reach 79 you can put your house in complete order, your relatives will know what's coming to them and can fight amongst themselves for a whole year. Also it would save the NHS a small fortune.

- 2) All males convicted of any crime, after being sentenced, will at once be sterilised so stopping the criminal classes from breeding.
- 3) All drugs will be freely available on the National Health. If people want to kill themselves, so be it. As 60% of all crimes are drug related, this will cut the crime rate considerably.
- 4) The implementation of items 2 and 3 will enable the police to resume their proper duties of helping old ladies across the road, directing foreign tourists how to get there and being wonderful like they used to be.
- 5) All white van drivers to sit a test every three weeks for obvious reasons.
- 6) All lady drivers will only be allowed to drive on Friday evenings, enabling them to do the weekly shopping. No reason for this I just liked it.
- 7) All children to walk to school either in small groups or supervised convoys thus cutting out all school runs.
- 8) No professional footballer be allowed to play for any team other than in the area he was born in, thus cutting out all transfer fees. Admission to grounds will no longer be £20. Also wages for footballers or any other professional sportsman will be twice the national average – more than enough for something you enjoy doing.
- 9) A similar policy for all actors and pop-stars. They too enjoy what they do and if they wish to cavort in front of an audience instead of the bedroom mirror, twice the national average is more than enough.
- 10) Anyone who has been married for thirty years will have the old-age pension increased three-fold.

That should put the world to rights!

Thanks For The Riverbanks Fun Day

From Jim Robson

You will, I hope, have noted our Chairman's comments regarding the recent Saturday parties at the track for the Nursery School and the Brownies: Two of the most pleasant and restful Saturday events that I have attended. We don't get a lot of fan-mail so it was nice to receive a thank-you card from the Nursery two days afterwards, (my apologies for not getting it in for the last issue). It says :-

1/7/01

Dear Everyone at Colney Heath Miniature Railway Track,

Riverbanks families would like to thank you for a SUPER TIME on Sat 30th June 2001. You were so welcoming & relaxed about the whole event. Please pass on our thanks to all who turned up and gave up their time. Best wishes for a happy and sunny summer season!

Kind regards from,

Shirley Hayman and all the members of the fun-day committee

S.S. Sir Walter Scott

By Bernard Lambert

When on holiday one must not miss an opportunity to sail on a 1900 steamship, even if it is only on a lake - sorry Loch!

But what a nice lake - Loch Katrine, which I understand derives its name from the Gaelic 'Cateran' meaning a Highland robber, is just under 10 miles long and over a mile wide and lies in the heart of the Trossachs' deep in Clan Gregor country. The Clan graveyard is still to be found near the head of the Loch, as is Glengyle House, birth- place of the Clan's most famous member Rob Roy MacGregor. Needless to say the scenery is majestic.

The Waters of Loch Katrine are extremely pure, being fed by many small streams rather than one big river, and was developed as a water supply reservoir for the City of Glasgow in 1859 by raising the water level and constructing aquaducts, one of the earliest of such schemes. It still supplies Glasgow today.

Back to the main subject: The S.S. Sir Walter Scott is claimed to be the only surviving screw steamer in regular passenger service in Scotland. She has been sailing on Loch Katrine since 1900 and provides a quiet and serene afternoon cruise.

S.S. Sir Walter Scott is a proper ship, licenced for over 300 passengers, with below decks accommodation and a quaint little bridge - quite grand for an inland vessel. The ancient triple expansion machinery can be viewed through the engine room scuttle as can the stokehold end of the boiler(s). Details of these were not apparent but 'Coalite' smokeless fuel was being shovelled in.

She was built by Wm. Denny & Bros. Ltd., at Dumbarton and was launched on 31 st October, 1899, having been taken in 'knock down' form up Loch Lomond by barge and then overland from Inversnaid to Stronachlachar by horse and cart. Wm. Denny appeared to specialise in this technique and used to build 'knock down' ships for inland waterways in many parts of the world.

S.S. Sir Walter Scott provided a relaxing interlude in a motoring holiday and was enjoyed equally by wives - though for different reasons. A strong recommendation if the you are in the area.

- Bernard Lambert

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