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# The News Sheet

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*Plus...*

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## FROM THE CHAIR

It was good to see our large stand at the St Albans Model Engineering Society Exhibition at the end of September. Derrick Franklin and his merry men are to be thanked for their efforts; it was a first class presentation.

After months of wet weather throughout the summer and a generally water logged car park at Colney Heath, the drier autumn has given us the opportunity to take action to rebuild the car park. Over the past few weeks 100 tons of road scrapings have been delivered. Laurie Steers, Peter Funk, and many others, have levelled off the roadway and grass areas. Hopefully, the new roadway will solve our problems which have persisted for many years. With a drier autumn, we have been able to sow many of the bare earth areas with grass seed. Perhaps a little rain, and more warm sun will encourage the grass to sprout before the winter. May I ask you all to park in the lane, and not on site, to give the area a chance to recover. I thank you all for your cooperation, as an improved car park will benefit us all in the long run.

As we approach the end of October, our thoughts are beginning to turn towards our Winter Working Parties. Whilst there are a number of routine repairs to be carried out, there is also interest in a major restoration of our steaming bays and workshop area. Chris Vousden has produced some enlightening plans which address the deficiencies of our present system. These plans will be discussed at the TSC meetings, and ultimately with the Council for financial approval. The steaming bays, in particular, have served the locomotive groups well for many years, but they are well overdue for a major refurbishment. This, I am told, is likely to be a long term two to three year programme. Once complete, it will present a much pleasanter aspect of the entry area to Colney Heath.

The Society is most fortunate to have Mike Chrisp and Mike Ruffell to set up the General and Locomotive Section meetings for our benefit. I commented in last month's issue of the News Sheet about the metal casting general meeting. Now I offer my thanks to Mike Ruffell and Ken Barltrop for setting up a superb talk by Mark Miller on the restoration of a de Havilland Dragon Rapide. It was much appreciated by a very good attendance of interested members.

Saturday morning, 18 October, saw a poignant group of members and friends gathered for the scattering of Geoff Wren's ashes amongst the woodlands of Colney Heath. Geoff may have gone, but his spirit truly lives on within the Colney Heath site that he so loved, and worked hard to create, with others, over the years.

Again, at the time of writing this report, there has been no formal contact with Barnet Council regarding the HQ lease.

*David Harris*

# Treasurer's Report

Nearly the end of the running season and looking forward to the Sunday morning ritual of maintenance, new projects, tea, coffee and banter at the Tyttenhanger site, plus a small libation afterwards. Might even manage a little time in the workshop to repair the ravages of the hard work done by the V3 during the summer, rather than leaving it all until next March, when it is too late.

At the last Council Meeting we were pleased to accept two new members to the Society, which allowing for six final non-payers who have been deleted from our Membership list gives us a current head count of 228 members.

New Members:-

Michael J Woolsey,

Interests:- Locos, Garden railways, Marine, OO & Slot Cars.

Malcolm E Barnes,

Interests:- Locos and Garden Railways.

With this copy of the News Sheet you will find a copy of our new Name & Address list, which I would remind you is for your use only and not to be disclosed in whole or in part to any third parties. If you find any errors or omissions please call or email me, so that we can correct the records.



Finally, this issue of the News Sheet sees our new Editor take on the Editorial hot seat. So welcome Nick and hope you enjoy yourself.

*Bridges at the Great Cockrow Railway, Chertsey. Food for thought for the ground level / elevated railway extensions.*

**Mike Foreman**

**Cover picture:** The Fosse Way Steamers are a popular element of the exhibition and were in action for much of the exhibition. This shot captures a view of some of the engines in steam on Sunday afternoon. **M Chrisp**



Russell climbing up the grade from signal 10

**Photo:** Owen Chapman

## **SITE MANAGER'S REPORT**

On Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November, the delightful pleasures of working with other like-minded folk in the cold, rain, mud, and maybe snow, ie the Winter Working Parties, will begin. I have a list of maintenance jobs that need to be fixed, and no doubt some of you can add a few more!! All I need are volunteers to tackle these jobs. The rewards are great, there is a great team spirit and comradeship, and as a bonus, we get a decent cup of tea or coffee complete with biscuits!! If you have never come to these Sunday morning events, why don't you try it? We start at 9.00 am and finish around 12.00 noon.

However, may I ask you all not to park on site; as you know, the car park has been rebuilt with a new roadway, and the bare earth area seeded with grass seed. We shall not be able to use the car park again until May, when the ground has dried out and the new grass has become established. Thanks for your observation of this request.

*David Harris*

# The October General Meeting

## by OMAH Mk 2

(All photos by Mike Chrisp)

The subject for the evening was Work in Progress and we had a good turnout of both models and audience. Our worthy Chairman had a few comments; Laurie Steers had been working hard all week scraping away the muddy surface of the car park and laying a road. The Club stand at the recent St Albans MEX was a good show and a credit to Derrick on his first outing as stand manager. We had successful outings to Great Cockrow and Capel Manor and the MEX at Ascot. It was sad not to see an NLSME stand, but other clubs had opted out this year. A letter had been received from Roger Clarke at 'The Boot' regarding their fun day saying "Thank you for your help". They had taken £629 which has been sent to the St Francis Hospice. Also enclosed were two cheques, one for £50 for helping and £75 towards the track. He also mentioned that he will be having an outing with his steam narrow boat on the 15/16<sup>th</sup> of November. They will be going from Harefield to Kings Langley and any members who would like a trip will be welcome. Thank you Roger.

Dave Lapham was first up to talk about his much modified ex-Charlie Starnes tram chassis that he had bought at one of our sales. Dave thought that as diesel locos are normally driven by an engine coupled to a generator driving the traction motor/s. He thought this would be more realistic, and exciting, than a tame old battery. His aim was to do this economically, like for nothing, to this end he had acquired a strimmer motor from Peter Funk, after Peter had run over the strimmer! He then mounted the motor, driven by an alternator coupled to a petrol engine, on the chassis. (Not sure where the last two items were acquired.) Control does not seem to have been high on his list; no clutch, no brakes, 'control' of the motor being via 'adjustment' of the voltage to the field winding. The first run was quite exciting, initially it wouldn't move but with a little help from his friends he got under way having two speeds, OFF and look out, plus no brakes! He managed to get all the way round and stopped via the well known and reliable two boots method. He has made several modifications, with trials following each change, all exciting, including at least two electrical fires and a derailment while driving in the dark due to discovering the braking efficiency of accidentally dropping a rag under the wheels, an interesting learning curve. He now has a petrol motor with a clutch, an ex-Scalextric controller for the field winding and, as soon as he has sorted the correct lengths, coupling rods which will enable four-wheel drive. An interesting lesson in persistence, watch this space. (Doubtless Dave's expertise with electrics stems from his earlier acquaintance with a 25kV overhead line!)

Another Dave, Marston this time, told us about his Simplex, which has taken him 8 years. Bearing in mind that he knew nothing about model engineering nor how to operate a lathe or use hand tools it was a very workmanlike job. He had the frames

laser cut and the boiler made by Western Steam, he also bought the boiler fittings from GLR, as he said "life's too short". It has bronze cylinders and he was lucky enough to be given the wheels and coupling rods which machined beautifully. The boiler came with all the fitting bushes drilled and tapped and the blind bushes for the firehole door and hangers were pilot drilled, they also fitted crown stays, neglected in the original design. The superheater came from Paul Gammon. He used 'Flowliner' for assembling and sealing the side tanks and the whole was finished in black with Halfords acrylic car spray. There were problems with the 'to design' safety valves and he has fitted another home brewed pair which work efficiently. The original purchased injector was not a success but the one from Gordon Chiverton has been very good once the clack problem on the boiler was sorted. He had to learn to drive and is very grateful for all the help and advice he has received from fellow members.

Les Brimson came up with a 'quickie to fill in the space before tea. Having spent 32 years on his 5in L1 he found that he was getting a bit stale and losing enthusiasm, so he fancied doing something fairly quick and unusual. He opted for a Stuart model of a shaping machine and got a set of castings for his birthday. He found the material superb and has enjoyed machining the parts so far, although he found the equivalent of working in a smaller gauge a bit tricky especially with little parts like the clapper box. The therapeutic value is obviously making the project worthwhile. After tea Brian Baker stepped up to the table which was groaning under the weight of various 7¼ in. gauge bits. He told us that the parts were from three 'Tinkerbells'; one being made by Brian, one each by Peter's Mac and Funk. 'Tinkerbell' is an enlarged 'Dot'. It is a chunky loco some 91 in. long, weighing about a ton, and has Walschearts valve gear. Brian brought along the bogie, wheels and coupling rods. The frames and rods are laser cut by Roger Marsh of Commercial Railway at Hythe. The driving wheels are quite small and being on 18 in. centres will allow the loco to take sharp bends easily. Peter Mac nearly has a rolling chassis at home and brought along a cylinder with valves. I didn't actually see 'Funky's contribution, doubtless it was hidden among the mass of parts on display.

Peter Stern had brought his Fairmile gunboat 'Brave Borderer' equipped with Mk 9 Bofors fore and aft. With three Russian electric motors driving the three props it is possessed of a lot of welly and Peter has had to reduce the size and pitch of the props to calm progress when running on our lake. The fibreglass hull has three gel batteries and three speed controllers which can be adjusted via a pot to get all the props turning at the same speed. Having three controllers has the additional advantage of staying cool as the current is spread over all of them. A delightful craft, and one I look forward to seeing on the water.

Last but not least, with one eye on the clock, was Mike Hodgson who had bought some of the bonnet hinges from his full size Morgan. The hinges are riveted to the casing with aluminium rivets and, having borrowed a rivet clamp from Derek Per-

ham, he made a larger version to do the same job on the car.

Mike thanked all the participants, who were given a round of applause before we disappeared into the night. (Nice to see a large and appreciative bunch of members.)

Jim Robson



Peter Stern brought 'Brave Borderer' to the meeting and is seen here removing the superstructure to reveal some of the work he is undertaking to bring the model up to the standard he requires .

## **Committee Meeting News**

**Council Meeting, 13 October 2008**

Headquarters roof repairs have been approved by council and were completed on 23/10/08. During the recent cold wet weather the roof has not leaked at all.

The rent demand for HQ was received from Barnet Council recently. It was for the current rental amount and has been paid. The negotiations for the rent review are still on going.

Tytenhanger site committee (TSC) has been advised by council to appoint a project manger to support, document, assess and put forward a proposal for the changes to the steaming bay.

The Garden Railway section has been advised to put a proposal to TSC to relocate to inside the raised track loop near the steaming bay.

## Tyttenhanger Site Committee Meeting, 27 October 2008

Dedicated charger units are being obtained for the Class 31 and Class 37 locos.

Peter Funk thanked Laurie Steers, David Harris, Derrick Franklin and David Snellgrove for laying the roadway around the car park, it is looking good.

The use of Netlon 'Turfguard' is being investigated for the front of the station area.

Some bags of coal will be bought for the running season next year; they will be kept in the coal store under lock and key.

Insurance matters concerning junior members driving are still being discussed with our insurers.

## **MARINE MUMBLES (Rides Again)**

Well the "Dynamic Duo" of Flatman and Ribbon (that's Dave Lawrence and me) have finished covering the whole pond with netting. We think we might have caught it just in time as the leaves are about to "home in" on it. The net is in two halves which overlap in the middle of the pond. Our only plea is if any member wants to sail during the leaf falling time, please put the net back afterwards. We don't want to have to remove the entire prop clogging rubbish in the spring. We found that if the net was pulled back on to itself, from the middle, the leaves can be deposited on the bank. Dave and I both think it will work, with everybody's co-operation. With the lack of leaves in the pond it is hoped that we will have to dispense with chemicals to keep it "gin" clear next summer.

The Marine Section are also looking to start up a few winter meetings at HQ to see if it is worthwhile finding a regular slot, as we used to have all those many moons ago. No I'm not really mad, it's just a lot more bodies seem interested in sailing these days. Also a lot of clubs do have the water to themselves, as we do. So let's use it.

I would be interested to know how many people would like to see the resumption of a Marine Meeting Night. If you are interested just e-mail or phone me (all on back of news sheet), or let Dave Lawrence know. Well that's about it for this month. Another short one. Typing and net sewing do not go together.

P.S. Don't try walking over the pond (Just a thought).

*Peter Stern*



# Mike's Musings

At the loco section meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> we had the first talk of the winter season and what a way to start. Mark Miller gave us an evening which I for one will remember for a long time, his presentation on the restoration of a de Havilland Dragon Rapide was absolutely fascinating, culminating with a short film clip of him flying the aircraft at the Flying Legends air display at Duxford. Those of you who missed the evening can read all about it in the October Loco Section meeting report.

The following day there was a memorial run at the track to say a final fond farewell to Geoff Wrenn and to scatter his ashes. Colin Bainbridge brought along Geoff's Maisie as a static exhibit and Speedy, which was soon in steam. Mike Foreman also had his V3 in steam. I along with other members of the Society, Vina and her family foregathered in front of the coach. Mike Chrisp then gave a short speech in remembrance of Geoff. This was followed by Colin who drove Geoff's Speedy with his ashes on board round to the back straight for the scattering ceremony which was carried out by those present using Geoff's firing shovel. I feel that if Geoff were observing us from the great workshop in the sky he would have been happy especially when Mike Foreman sprinkled some of the ashes into the firebox of his V3. A fitting farewell to a gentleman who had over the years given so much pleasure to those who had come to know him.

Since my last musings very little seems to have changed regarding stewarding of the track on a Sunday afternoon. Stewards are still not turning up to do their turn, in quite a lot of no show cases they can't even be bothered to let any one know, or when they do turn up it's a couple of hours late and they spend most of the time chatting to friends. I would, however, mention that some members have carried out 3 or more turns as stewards, my thanks to them.

For those of you who read these notes you will be aware that I have devoted a meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> March to discuss the consequences of public access to the Tyttenhanger site.

It is patently clear that we do not have the human resources to safely and efficiently steward the site every Sunday afternoon throughout the running season. We could not do it this year with a shortened season so we most certainly will not be able to do it next season unless we shorten it still further.

In light of what I have said, I would ask all members who have an interest in the Tyttenhanger site to think very seriously about next years running season and if they can't be present at the above meeting would they please contact me to make their thoughts known. I can assure those members who do write to me that I will read their letters out at the meeting. My suggestion is that we only admit the public on

say the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday's of the month.

I managed to visit the Midlands M.E. exhibition on the Monday. What a joy it was to see so many models covering all disciplines of our hobby under one roof. I estimated that there were some 27 club stands showing models to a very high standard.

One can't but help make comparisons to the recent M.E. exhibition at Ascot with its lack of club stands etc. Obviously Meridienne has found the secret to staging a 5-day M.E. exhibition packed with exhibits and paying public. As I said last month, my hope is that someone can come up with an answer to stop this decline and to return the Model Engineering Exhibition to its place as the UK's premier Model Engineering Exhibition.

### **Forthcoming Loco Section Meetings.**

- Friday November 14<sup>th</sup>:** - Another guest speaker tonight - Tony Earl who will be giving a presentation on the building of the London Underground. **Please be advised that this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday in the month and not the usual 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday**
- Friday December 19<sup>th</sup>:** - Talk by Ian Johnston – By tall ship from Liverpool to the Canaries.
- Friday January 16<sup>th</sup>:** - Members films, DVD's and videos.
- Friday February 20<sup>th</sup>:** - Talk by Tony Dunbar – A trip to Train Mountain, USA.
- Friday March 20<sup>th</sup>:** - Meeting to discuss the consequences of public access to the Tyttenhanger site.
- Friday April 17<sup>th</sup>:** - Work in progress. Should be lots to look at on the table, as this is the first Loco Section work in progress meeting for over 12 months.
- Friday May 15<sup>th</sup>:** - T.B.A.
- Friday June 19<sup>th</sup>:** - 1<sup>st</sup> BBQ of the summer at the track.
- Friday July 17<sup>th</sup>:** - BBQ at the track.
- Friday August 14<sup>th</sup>:** - Last BBQ of the season at the track.

### **Track Stewards Rota.**

All finished this year.

*Mike Ruffell.*

*Loco Section Leader*

# **GENERAL MEETINGS 2008 – FORTHCOMING PROGRAMME**

by Mike Chrisp

Unless otherwise indicated, General Meetings are normally held 8–10pm at our Legion Way Headquarters in North Finchley. Thanks to Peter Davies (our man with the persuasive manner) we usually have a raffle (donations of suitable prizes appreciated), and thanks to Ron Thorogood (our maestro of kettle and teapot), we usually have refreshments around 9pm. All profits from meetings go directly to club funds. All members are particularly welcome at any of our General Meetings and we are always glad to see members' friends and family, too. It's always pleasing to see a good turnout to support our speakers - we look forward to your company.

## **7 NOVEMBER – OUT AND ABOUT WITH OWEN CHAPMAN**

Have camera, will travel. Our man with his camera on the footplate presents an evening of photographs and reminiscences.

## **5 DECEMBER – PRE-CHRISTMAS SOCIAL**

An informal gathering with food and drink.

## **2 JANUARY – MEMBERS' WORKSHOPS**

Our video team have been out and about again. If the results of last year's filming are anything to go by, this presentation promises to be a fascinating eye-opener showing what some of us get up to when nobody is looking!

## **6 FEBRUARY – COLIN GENT: CA CLASS WW2 DESTROYERS**

On his previous visit, Colin presented a fascinating account of Merlin engines. Tonight's talk will focus on the construction, deployment and service of the seven CA Class Destroyers plus an account of his own service aboard HMS Caprice as her Electrical Officer.

### **For sale,**

(due to the need for space in the workshop and time for other projects)

71/4" gauge Liverpool & Manchester 'Lion' 0-4-2 chassis, smokebox and boiler. Ideal for the Society ground level railway. Chassis is complete and runs on air. Copper boiler is commercially made, brand new and includes part made regulator, safety valve housing and welded stainless steel superheater tubes. Some prototype drawings and castings also included. OIRO £1500.

Taylor Hobson pantograph milling machine. Will make small(ish) sheet metal components from large patterns. Good condition & complete with cutters. Can arrange delivery (at fuel cost) OIRO £300.

**Contact:** webmaster.

## **Extension of the Ground and Elevated Railways by Les Brimson**

At the loco section meetings we have discussed the potential for extension of the elevated (ER) and ground level railways (GLR) on the new land. Not all members attended those meetings and may not be aware of the thinking behind the present position. Therefore our Chairman thought it worthwhile summarising the current position in a note rather longer than meeting reports that have been in the newssheet. The purpose of this note is to bring about a common understanding and what we have done to date, why we did it that way and the principal issues that are to be addressed in the decision process for taking this to the next stage.

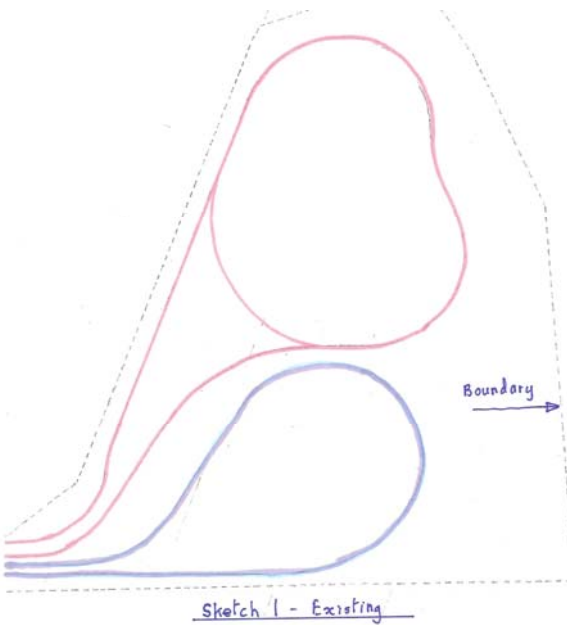
The issues are significant but let's start with the benefits. The ER track length would be increased from its present 843 yards (0.48 mile) to 965 yards (0.55 mile) with an additional bank to ascend and descend. For the GLR it opens the whole of the bottom loop area for future development.

Sketch 1 shows the existing arrangement. It is clear that no significant extension to either railway is possible without one crossing the other. The society decided that the route of the GLR extension into the new land should allow the future extension of the elevated track. This directive partially determined the route of the GLR and entirely determined its levels. As the ER is by definition above the GLR it follows that it is the ER that takes the high road, so to speak, and would cross over the GLR on a bridge. To achieve this safely a rail to rail vertical separation of at least 2.2 m is required. Using a maximum gradient of 1 in 70, commencing at Camps Cairn, the GLR comprises a falling gradient of 2m (6'8") to its lowest point. At that low point a small reverse curve was introduced to accommodate an overbridge carrying the ER.

The GLR rail level is thus as low as possible, given the confines of the site. Correspondingly the ER of necessity must have a rising gradient approaching the bridge to contribute to the 2.2 m required clearance. Using a maximum gradient for the ER of 1 in 100 the required height is gained at the GL reverse curve location. It is this combination of falling levels on GLR and rising levels on the ER that determined the location of the ER bridge. From that, the route of the ER extension has only one logical, or possible, solution and is shown in the sketch. Earlier this year I pegged this route and hope that members have been to inspect it. The point of exit and re-connection to the existing ER have to be finalised and there are alternatives to consider, but neither of these factors affect the bridge location or its approaches.

It is apparent that the GLR, having passed under the elevated track, must then pass back out at some point. For the reasons given above, the up line has to pass under the ER in same location as the down line. Sketch No 2 shows the combined routes,

though the actual GLR route has, within the extended ER loop, considerable flexibility and would be determined by the clubs GLR navvies.

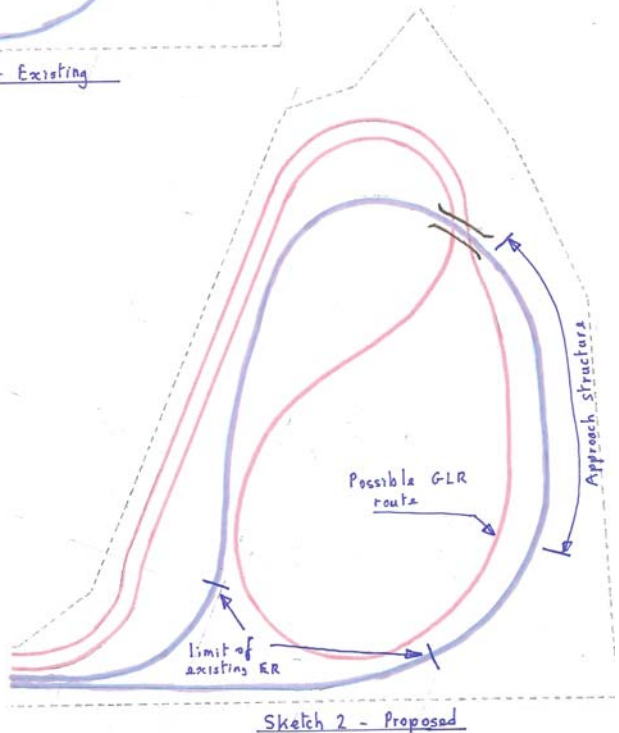


Two points should be apparent. The first, that a length of the existing GLR, approximately 100m, will have to be removed, a new track bed laid forming a double track returning outside the elevated loop, and a new loop constructed inside the extended ER. The second, that a significant approach structure will be required for the ER to gain the height necessary to cross the double track GLR.

Unfortunately the ground levels are not favourable

along the route of the ER approach to the crossing, being effectively level for most it. Once over the bridge the situation improves as we have the double advantage of both the mound and rising underlying ground levels. This section presents no problem, apart from ensuring suitable foundations on the imported material.

The GLR rail level at the bridge location is approximately 0.15 m (6") below ground level, therefore the ER rail will be 2.05m (6.5ft) above ground at



this point. The ER bridge section over the GLR will be a challenge but is less problematic than the approach structure.

The approach to the bridge includes a section 65m (190 feet) in length with a rail height greater than 1.5m (5 ft) above ground, increasing to 2.05m at the bridge. (The bridge itself will be around 5m long (17')). To put this in context, the existing ER loop is no greater than 1.1m (3'8") above ground level. There are several solutions for the bridge approach, steel structure, wooden structure, embankment etc. All have advantages and disadvantages. It's important that the chosen solution is within our ability to construct and, importantly, maintain.

This is where we now are. Members have views ranging from those chomping at the bit to make a start and others who want to leave as is. I trust that it is clear a decision to proceed has to be taken by the ground level and the loco sections, as both are utterly dependent on the other for either extension.

To my mind the next step commences with solving the ER approach structure, without that there can be no progress. The following stages are required:

- Members propose solutions to the EL bridge and approaches
- A smaller group consider the above solutions and recommend a solution to the loco sections
- Loco and ground level sections decide if they want to proceed
- Costs and designs worked out in more detail
- Tyttenhanger committee to review and recommend
- Loco and ground level sections to ratify Tyttenhanger committee recommendation
- Council to review and agree expenditure

The GLR and Loco section leaders Mike and Pete are keen to have your ideas, politely put please. Or you can send them to myself. All will be collated and considered.



NLSME's Richard Castle's beautifully finished 5in. gauge BR Class 2 2-6-2T locomotive gained a Bronze Medal and the Charles Kennion Memorial Trophy at the Model Engineer Exhibition . **Photo:** Mike Chrisp

## **Exhibition Time**

**Reported by Mike Chrisp**

During the past 2 months those with the ability and desire had two model engineering exhibitions to visit. The first, at Ascot Racecourse, was the Model Engineer Exhibition sponsored by the publishers of Model Engineer magazine; the second, at the Fosse, the Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition sponsored by Engineering in Miniature magazine.

This year the two exhibitions were very different. Those visiting the Model Engineer Exhibition would have noticed a relatively low attendance of both club and trade exhibitors, whereas the Midlands exhibition had an abundance of both. Visitor numbers at the Model Engineer Exhibition also appeared much lower while the Midlands exhibition was busy throughout the 5 days. There were many fine examples of model engineering at both exhibitions.

At the Model Engineer Exhibition a major feature was the presence of The Society of Model and Experimental Engineers with a well stocked and very busy stand that was manned by enthusiastic and knowledgeable stewards. Adjacent to the SMEE stand, and clearly associated with it, were the Stirling Engine Society, the Gas Turbine Builders' Association and the I/C Engine Builders' Group all of which were kept busy throughout the event. The large SMEE display also featured experimental engineering, tool making, small models, railway locomotives and information concerning the Society, membership and training. SMEE stand manager Stuart Walker had persuaded several SMEE members to give demonstrations and others to present lectures.

A good number of fine models including Barry Hares' magnificent 1:5 scale Rolls-Royce Eagle 22 aero engine were gathered in the Ascot Grill. Among the other exhibits were Roddy Turner's superb 1:76 scale Ruston-Bucyrus 1260-W walking dragline, awarded the Duke of Edinburgh Challenge Trophy; Alan Jackson's comprehensive and well presented 'Stepperhead' multipurpose CNC machine and accessories received a Gold Medal; and the Bowyer Lowe Challenge Cup. Ronald Paddison's 1:8 scale Whitby lifeboat 'George and Mary Webb' was awarded a Gold Medal and the RNLI Model Lifeboat Trophy.

A much publicised feature of this year's Model Engineer Exhibition was the presence of an extensive 5in. gauge ground level railway brought to Ascot from Germany. Part of the annual Sinsheim exhibition, this track was laid on a tarmac roadway in the middle of the racecourse. Fortunately, the weather throughout the event was warm and sunny resulting in attention from a fair number of visitors. Our own Mike Foreman enjoyed a run on the 2.5km track but, the highlights of the weekend were two demonstration runs by Tim Coles at the controls of his 5in. gauge English Electric GT3 gas turbine locomotive.

The difficulties experienced by many exhibitors last year made them determined never to attend this exhibition again. However this year, Ascot's security staff were helpful, friendly and co-operative. Attendance at this year's exhibition was affected by the number of other activities in the model engineering calendar. I sincerely hope that this once prestigious event will resume the stature it used to enjoy. I was pleased to spend some time during and after the exhibition with Owen Davies, Chief Executive of myHobbystore media, current owners of Model Engineer magazine and the exhibition. I am glad to report his assurance of a much heightened awareness of the significance of both to the model engineering fraternity and has told me he will do his best to support the activity while at the company helm.

This year's visitors to the Midlands Exhibition will have appreciated the much improved new entrance to the exhibition halls. A substantial addition to the original building also provides additional space for displays and stands. On the Sunday of my visit the weather was fine resulting in plenty of outside activity with the atmosphere of a miniature traction engine rally. I was particularly pleased to meet up with Mark Johnson at the regulator of his father's 1:3 scale Farmer's Engine.

The main hall at the Fosse houses most of the traders expected by model engineers at these exhibitions together with plenty of club displays, competition and loan models. Beneath the mezzanine floor are further stands and a workshop area that maintains a variety of activities throughout the exhibition. A wide ranging programme of lectures was presented by acknowledged authorities in their respective fields.

Among the wealth of models to study and enjoy at the exhibition, I was much impressed by Ian Hughes' 1:4 scale Aveling-Barford DX6 diesel Road roller under construction and Ian Glasspool's 1:3.5 scale 1924 BSA side valve V-twin motorcycle with a taxi sidecar. Soon after I arrived, Chris Deith took me to look at a splendid group of exhibits made and entered by young engineers at centres in Hereford, Berkshire and Warwickshire. Clearly pleased that they were part of his exhibition, Chris drew my attention to the fact that they had all won awards. I was much encouraged by the high standard of workmanship that bodes well for the future of our hobby: hopefully the UK will still have an engineering industry to employ these capable young people when the time comes.

## **Thanks from the Event's Coordinators 2008**

We would like to say a huge thank you to all of you who have been involved with the birthday parties and other events this season. Thanks to your help and support we have had a very successful season. All the parties and events have been well attended and enjoyed by all. So thank you for all your help and support without which it would be impossible to organise such successful events, so THANK YOU

Rachael and Owen



# **The October Loco Section Meeting**

## **by Roger Bell**

It was nice to see Bert Mead at the meeting, whilst he is a regular attendee we wished him well as it was his birthday two days earlier, his 97<sup>th</sup>.

The scalplings have been laid at the track with courtesy of Laurie Steers and his gang. We were asked not to park or walk on the re seeded grass area and park in the lane.

The topic for the evening was entitled 'Restoring and Flying a Dragon Rapide' and was made possible thanks to Keith Barltrop liaising between our club and our speaker Mark Miller.

Mark spoke of the project as being a lifelong one of his father David and himself, reflecting on how it took over his life he recalled his parents met whilst flying model aircraft competitively. We saw a picture of Mark at Duxford in 1967 with his glider, Duxford was being planned as a museum early on and various aircraft were stored there as the former military base was mainly empty and derelict. A Liberator arrived in 1973, 'Sally 'B', a Dan-Air London Comet (the Comet was famed for being the world's first transatlantic jet service). A Monarch Airlines Britannia flew there in 1975.

In June 1975 Mark saw a Dragon Rapide G-AKIF in flight and was captivated by this magnificent aeroplane. The development leading to it was from the Fox Moth DH83 in 1932 which carried 4 passengers followed by the Dragon DH44 in 1933 carrying 8 passengers. The Dragon Rapide DH89 was built in 1934, also with 8 seats.

In August 1975 a rather sad looking Dragon Rapide G-AGJG was parked in the wet grass, by then Duxford Aviation Society had been formed. Initially Mark and his father leased the aircraft on the basis of the lease being without charge, they could restore it and hand it back in twenty years time. Eventually they purchased the aircraft. It was built at Hatfield as RAF X7344 and based at Hendon; it went on to No 1 Camouflage Flight, Associated Airways Joint Committee, and Scottish Airways Northern Division who sold it to British European Airways. Island Air Services then operated it from Croydon and Heathrow. In 1966 it was being used for parachute drops. Photographs were shown of the aircraft in its various liveries.

To gain flying experience Mark took flying lessons at Cambridge at £36 per hour subsidised by hiring bicycles out. He flew his first solo in 1982. His father had bought an Auster.

Mark then spoke of the reconstruction which was quite extensive. Some lugs were laminated from two pieces of metal and corroded between them. The tubular wing spars were corroded and a repair had to be agreed with the CAA. The aircraft was re skinned using the original method of plywood and fabric construction. The wing was sprayed on its own, the wings were fitted, masked and then the fuselage sprayed in the spray shop at Duxford. The Gypsy Queen engines had their crankshafts re-tubed due to corrosion.

Several coincidences occurred, whilst at college in the midst of a lecture on a hot day, the wind blew in through the open window and an instrument cabinet door blew open, from Mark's seat he could see a DH compass, after much negotiation with the school he bought it off them. The wheel hubs were badly corroded and in need of replacement, one Saturday morning whilst at work on the aircraft a guy pressed his nose against the window outside, inviting him in he said that he had a pair of wheel hubs identical to those he needed, so Mark bought them off him.

The eight passenger seat frames were pressure washed and repainted; they were eventually upholstered and looked superb, complete with Scottish Airways timetables in the pocket in the seat back. Passenger lap strap anchorages were added. A GPS radio was fitted to the floor to keep the view ahead original. A copy of the original sign in the cabin read 'Passengers are requested to keep to their seats whilst approaching an aerodrome or landing'.

The zero fuel weight was 3,813 lbs and the centre of gravity came out ideal so there was no need for ballast. The engines were test run in the airframe with a special prop fitted used solely for testing. They ran straight out of the box, the carburettors being tweaked whilst the engines were running.

Mark asked a friend who had the appropriate experience to carry out the initial test flight; he was delighted to be asked. It took off quickly with its fine pitch propellers. Mark had flown 500 hours in an Auster and 80 in a Chipmunk. As the Rapide had one pilot's seat his friend took it up to 4000 ft and handed over to Mark. Eventually Mark was able to take off and land it with confidence. Mark described it as remarkably light and easy to fly. The aircraft really looked superb with its Scottish Airways livery on the side. Photographs were taken from the cabin looking out at the bi-plane wing and the countryside.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2005 on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War Mark flew the aircraft over Buckingham Palace leading a formation of six Dragon Rapides in the fly past.

Mark has flown at several displays; we watched a video from the cockpit of him flying in formation, due to the large amount of glass in the cockpit visibility is su-

perb. There is no heater fitted in the aircraft but the greenhouse effect of the glass often makes it too warm. They visited the Belgian Air Force Transport Week; photos were of Mark with the Belgian Defence Minister and the Chief of Air Staff.

The aircraft has flown 140 hours in four years. The engines develop 260 horse power each. There is a 38 gallon fuel tank behind each engine, there are no cross feeds. Each engine uses 9 gallons per hour of 100 octane fuel. At 2000 RPM with the fine pitch prop it flies at 95 knots or 100 MPH.

This was an absolutely smashing evening. I felt that it was a great credit to Mark and his father David for taking on this long and very difficult project and actually seeing it through to successful completion, and for Mark to come along and meet us and give us such a good account of their work, we thanked him very much.



Mark Miller's DH Dragon Rapide G-AGJG

**Photo:** Damien Burke

## G.L.R. News

I think we have done Geoff proud, 25 of his family; friends and members braved the nippy start to say goodbye to one of North London's finest. Two engines were waiting in attendance. The lead engine being Geoff's own beautiful Speedy, and after a few thoughtful words the cortege steamed slowly down from the station, up through the tunnel stopping along the back straight to where the water troughs used to be. Geoff was instrumental in its conception and construction, now a fitting point for his final resting place, as the dappled sunlight filtered through the Autumn leaves a cheeky Robin descended to watch what was going on. For me this broke the awkwardness of the proceedings and made us smile. Job done we returned to the station for a welcome brew. I'll miss you Geoff but will always remember you with much fondness.

October has been a fruitful month for the club and we thank all members who got off their backsides and helped to remake the mud bath we called a car park into something that is going to look great. Hopefully with all members cooperation we will not drive on the repaired areas and maybe next year the grass will have grown back to finish the job. The heavens have opened and tested the drainage, not one puddle in sight. (I have counted up to as many as fifty Partridges grazing early in the morning on the newly sown ground and we may need to sow again!) Many many thanks to L Steers, D Harris, D Franklin, D Snellgrove and apologies to anyone not mentioned for a job well done.

My thanks go out again to the ground level boys who supplied engines and gave their time to steward the birthday party of those very lively kids on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>. (I can still see Jeffers growling) Another great day and very rewarding to help out those not so fortunate as us.

The list for the winter working parties grows ever longer and promises to give us an even better G.L.R. when completed. Just to complicate matters quite a few members have asked that we look again at running through the narrows, around the steaming bays, and connecting back up through the station to complete the loop. To this end the G.L. crew will be laying some temporary track this winter just to see what (if any) problems arise. The approximate route has already been measured and the radii do fit. If anyone is interested in furthering this project the G.L. group will be glad to discuss any thoughts by anybody anytime. Please note as I am always up for a heated argument, others in the loco sections are not. So please think before becoming too passionate and try to respect your fellows. (P.S. we don't do negative arguments) A G.L.R. meeting will in due course be called to put our/your best plan to the club for approval.

By the time you read this Halloween and the last running day will be history. We will all be looking forward to THE WINTER WORKING PARTIES (YIPEE).

Can't wait can you? So here is a taste of jobs to do:-

1. fit points to the cuckoo line and re ballast.
2. re ballast and super elevation to new land track and bank.
3. repair toilet point.
4. fit a point to the toilet siding, and lay new track.
5. finish the foot bridge and re-make the path to the toilets.
6. install slip joints to the new land straights.
7. landscape the new land.
8. lay hardcore for the link around the hump and bed out ready to lay track.
9. move the fence around the large tree to the toilet area.
10. finish the carriage shed.
11. lay temporary track through the car park.
12. prepare ground to rear of steaming bays
13. help Allen with point detection circuit
14. extend head shunt to Henley Halt
15. check and maintain existing ground level track
16. to be continued

The above list is in no particular order and can be done at a leisurely pace so we need to bear it in mind to keep some jobs back for after Xmas. Luv ya all,

As ever in the muck

**P. Funk** G.L.R. Section Leader

Peter Funk and Company enjoying an Autumn evening drive on the ground level  
**Photo** Owen Chapman





**ST ALBANS MENCAP**



Patrons: The Worshipful Mayor of St Albans  
The Right Reverend The Lord Bishop of St. Albans.  
Registered charity No. 210073

24<sup>TH</sup> September 2008

To All Our Friends at the N.L.S.M.E.

Please could you pass on our thanks to all your volunteers for providing us with yet another fantastic Railway Afternoon! Even the weather was fantastic!

Our members where really spoiled for choice by the number of different engines that they could choose to ride on, the young and old alike enjoyed the day immensely.

Thank you all for giving up your time so freely in order to provide us with such a fun filled day.

Kindest regards

Rosemary Somerset  
On behalf of St Albans Mencap

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Registered Charity Number 210073

Another letter of thanks was received from the David Miller, chairman of the Barracuda Swimming club, thanking the Society for their hospitality whilst celebrating their club's 40th birthday.

## 📖 Dates for your Diary 📖

Friday 7 November	8.00pm General Meeting; Out and about with Owen Chapman; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Monday 10 November	8.00pm Council Meeting; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Friday 14 November	8.00pm Loco Section meeting; talk by Tony Earl on the building of the London Underground; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
<b><i>Friday 21 November Deadline for copy to Editor for December News Sheet</i></b>	
Monday 24 November	8.00pm Tyttenhanger Site Committee meeting; the coach at Colney Heath
Friday 28 November	8.00pm Workshop Evening; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Friday 5 December	8.00pm General Meeting; pre-Xmas Social Evening; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Monday 8 December	8.00pm Council Meeting; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Wed 17 December	6.00pm Open House at HQ hosted by the HO section; HQ Legion Way, North Finchley
Friday 19 December	8.00pm Loco Section meeting; talk by Ian Johnston - By tall ship from Liverpool to the Canaries; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Sat 27 December	2.00pm Running section at HQ with the HO section; HQ Legion Way, North Finchley
26 Dec - 4 January	Informal winter running session at Colney Heath
Friday 2 January	8.00pm General Meeting; Member's Workshops; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Monday 5 January	8.00pm Council Meeting; HQ, Legion Way, North Finchley
Friday 16 January	8.00pm Loco Section meeting; Members films, DVD's and videos; HQ, North Finchley
Fri/Sun 16 - 18 Jan	London Model Engineering Exhibition; Alexandra Palace, London.
<b><i>Friday 23 January Deadline for copy to Editor for February News Sheet</i></b>	
Monday 26 January	8.00pm Tyttenhanger Site Committee meeting; the coach at Colney Heath
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Every Wednesday	Garden Railway Section at Colney Heath (11am - 4pm); OO and HO Model Railway Groups and Video Group at HQ (evening)
Every Thursday	Slot Cars Section at HQ (evening)
Every Sunday	Morning working parties at Colney Heath (start 9.00am).

**NB: Please remember to notify all meetings, events & exhibitions, in advance, to Owen and Rachael Chapman, who act as Keepers of the Society Calendar and Tyttenhanger Site Events Co-ordinators.**

