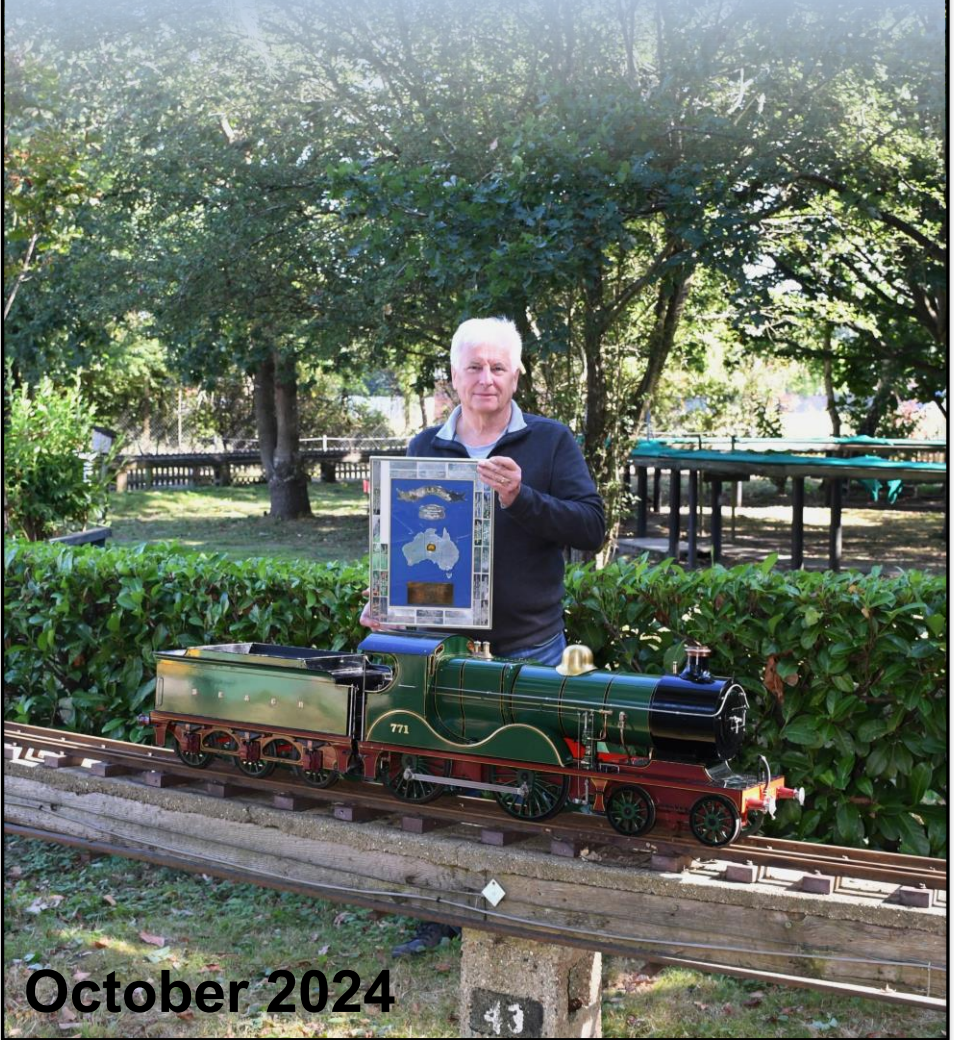


Issue No. 871

October 2024

The News Sheet

North London Society of Model Engineers



October 2024

You can see this News Sheet in
colour by visiting our web site at www.nlsme.co.uk

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Front cover; -

Les was awarded the Australian Association of Live Steamers Trophy at the recent FMES Rally for workmanship, finish and detail, including steam reversing gear, of his 5in. gauge SECR L Class 4-4.0 locomotive.

Picture by Mike



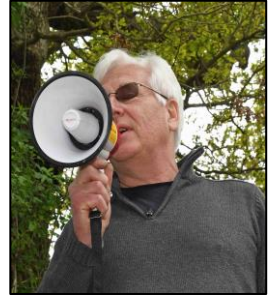
Your editor is very grateful to all those who have contributed to this edition. Your efforts are much appreciated by all the members of NLSME. This News Sheet would not be possible without you.

Articles long or short on any subject which would be of interest to members of NLSME will be gratefully received for inclusion in future editions. If you don't want to put pen to paper but have a suggestion for a topic which is of interest let the editor know and we will do the rest.

Chairman's Comments

Les

I attended two rallies recently. The Federation rally at Nottingham and the Curly Bowl at Cheltenham. Both were well supported by other clubs, with five NLSME members at Nottingham. Somewhat to my surprise my Class L was awarded the Australian Association Trophy. I have to say I am pleased with how the engine looks and performs but did not expect others to think the same. A previous winner was our own Ron with his 3½ inch gauge A4, I really do not consider that my efforts match his class.



Also, at the Nottingham rally it was most pleasing to see our Andrew running his Butch, inherited from his father who was a senior member at Nottingham.

Andrew had help from Paul who just days before the event made a new blastpipe for the loco which transformed its performance. A great example of how members help one another.



Photo by Mike

The Curly bowl was a lower key affair but with some interesting locos present including some LBSC originals. I was able to meet up with Eddie Castellan, author of the latest book on LBSC, and Mark Harriet, current owner of Curly's own Grosvenor. Also running was Curly's Olga which still retains the pristine paintwork our Geoff Cashmore applied when it was in his possession.

A noteworthy event at or own track was Alan completing three laps of the Cuckoo line on his diminutive 2.5" GWR 15XX, a miniature Speedy. Built by his uncle but never run, Alan had this in his loft for 30 years – see article in April news sheet. His perseverance and commitment to get it steaming and then running has been commendable and now justly rewarded.

The September running at Tyttenhanger has been well attended with locos, drivers and public. On Sunday last we had 155 persons through the gate, which

was a comfortable number for us to manage. The annual visit from St Marks Church was another success despite the rain. The Better weather held out for the Keech visit which also was well supported by members. Thanks to all members who helped out with these events.

General meetings continue at HQ from October, see separate note for these.

Finally, Terry has offered to be a key Hoder for the machine shop taking over from Ian Johnston. The six key holders are -

Terry - Graham - Malcolm

Nigel - Peter - Les

Remember that if you require use of the machines to contact any of the above.

See you at track or HQ.

Treasurer's Report

By Mike

A relatively quiet month on the finance front, although we have taken the opportunity to purchase two tons of anthracite beans, the size most popular with members. We have sufficient of the smaller grains in stock but note the price of both sizes have had to be increased. The old bags of beans were 25kg, but law requires that the maximum weight must now be 20kg and they will now cost £16.00 each. What ever happened to the days when cement came in one hundred weight bags (55kg) and we were allowed to lift such weights?

The public Sundays have been busy and our thanks to all drivers, stewards and the catering team for their efforts. Without tea where would we be?

It all means that we will have sufficient funds to continue with our projects this winter.

I look forward to seeing members at the final couple of open Sundays and most importantly at HQ on Friday 4th October for the all-important 'Work in Progress' meeting to start the winter season. Doesn't matter how small the project you are working on, just bring it along and tell us about it and the problems or tips you might have to pass onto the rest of us.

Keep safe and keep engineering.





Trains that pass – passengers riding behind a Class 47 on the ground level railway have an excellent view of Les's 5in gauge SECR L class 4-4-0 locomotive



FMES Rally 2024

Mike reports a very successful event.

The Federation of Model Engineering Societies (formerly Southern Federation of



Model Engineering Societies) promotes an annual Autumn Rally at various venues around the UK which this year was hosted by Nottingham SMEE. Nottingham SMEE shares a site with the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre at Ruddington. Very well appointed with a fine clubhouse and well-equipped workshop and machine shop, the Nottingham SMEE site features a dual gauge 3½in. and 5in. gauge raised alloy track some 2270ft. long and a 7¼in. ground level railway recently extended to about 3168ft.



The attractive Nottingham SMEE station area with club house and covered steaming bays in the background

Fully signalled, the tracks are equipped with all appropriate facilities. Garden gauges are catered for with a 240ft. gauge 1 track and a 16mm narrow gauge track currently under construction.

With their popular venue enjoying a convenient location and excellent facilities, members of Nottingham SMEE were splendid hosts for the 2024 event that thankfully enjoyed good weather. A catering team consisting mainly of ladies associated with NSMEE provided a hundred buffet lunches for visitors and NSMEE members acting as stewards and track marshals of whom there were plenty. Following the day's main proceedings, bacon and sausages were barbecued and served in cobs.



The FMES Rally provides an opportunity for model engineers, their families and friends to spend time together pursuing their chosen activity in good company. For some years now, participants with working steam locomotives in gauges from 2½in. to 7¼in. inclusive built to accurately represent any Commonwealth prototype automatically compete for the Australian Association of Live Steamers Trophy. Under similar rules, AALS members compete at their Easter Convention for the Federation of Model Engineering Societies Trophy. To provide a more generally accessible award, the Federation recently introduced an additional trophy for competition at the Autumn Rally for any example of model engineering participating in the event. Both trophies are awarded at the discretion of independent panels of Judges.

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Shirley enjoyed her run at the controls of her 5in gauge Metropolitan locomotive Sir Christopher Wren with husband George as passenger



Paul broaches the back straight with Bongo, his fine 5in gauge LNER B1 4-6-0 in much admired black livery

Sixteen clubs and societies were represented at this year's Rally including Banbury DMES, Bracknell RS, Brent House Railway, Brighouse & Halifax ME, Cheltenham SME, Harlington LS, Maidstone MES, North London SME, Northwest Leicester SME, Nottingham SMEE, Romney Marsh MES,

Rugby MES, South Cheshire MES, Spensborough MEE, Tyneside SMEE and Wakefield SMEE. Maybe not a record, but certainly an excellent turnout.

Thirty-three visitors attended with models including two 7¼in. gauge locomotives, nineteen 5in. gauge steam locomotives, five 5in. gauge battery-electric locomotives, four 3½in. gauge locomotives, two traction engines and a lifeboat on a trailer towed by a battery powered lorry. It is no exaggeration to say that the stewards and marshals managing the day's arrangements were kept very busy.

*FMES Chairman Bob Polley presented Les with the AALS Trophy for the workmanship, finish and detail of his 5in gauge SECR L class locomotive
(Photo C Harrison NSMEE)*



Following a thoroughly enjoyable day's activities, FMES Chairman Bob Polley expressed the Federation's appreciation of our hosts' considerable time and great effort involved in preparing for the Rally and making it run so smoothly. He then presented the awards to the successful participants. Les from North London SME won the AALS Trophy for his 5in. gauge SECR L Class 4-4-0 locomotive, Steve Bennett from Nottingham SMEE won the FMES Trophy for his AEC Matador truck and RNLI Clyde Class lifeboat and Andy Nash from Romney Marsh MES was awarded a glass tankard engraved with the NSMEE logo for travelling the furthest distance to participate in the event to run his 3½in. gauge Gresley A1 Pacific *Spitfire* - a return journey of some 410miles.

Much to Bob Polley's embarrassment, Tony Knowles presented him with an engraved glass tankard to celebrate an imminent birthday and another to NSMEE member Nick Harrison who had driven overnight from Italy to be present at the Rally.

Les's 5in. gauge SECR L Class 4-4-0 locomotive gained the AALS Trophy for fine workmanship, excellent finish and good detail including a steam reverser which he admitted had given him some headaches on the way to getting it to work as it should. Built over some 47 years with reference to works drawings



and as many photographs as he could find, Les explained how the valve gear is correct to prototype and set up according to Don Ashton's principles. The locomotive is fitted with a scale steam operated reverser situated on the right-hand running board augmented by a larger one beneath the

footplate which operates in parallel with the scale reverser. Both operate simultaneously from correct controls in the cab with cutoff indication by quadrant plate and pointer, also in the cab. The boiler is to LBSC's *Maid of Kent* design with a more representative backhead. Platerwork is scaled from works drawings and livery is according to an illustrated print of No. 771 in a 1914 edition of the RCTS magazine.

Steve Bennett's AEC Matador truck and RNLI Clyde Class lifeboat were awarded the FMES Trophy for workmanship and detail. The AEC Matador truck was built around an electric mobility scooter and the lifeboat is unusual in that it represents a cruising lifeboat designed for the crew to live on board rather than the more usual arrangement for the lifeboat to be launched for a rescue mission.



Andy Nash gave an interesting account of his 3½in. gauge Gresley A1 Pacific (4-6-2) locomotive. Built to Clarkson's drawings in 1934 as a Gresley locomotive

by G.W. Smith it was later modified to resemble a Greenly locomotive more suited to RHDR motive power. Rebuilt in 2013 and subsequently subject to major overhaul in 2022, Andy wishes to publicly express his thanks to all who have helped bring *Spitfire* to its present excellent condition.

Seen here at the regulator of his 3½ gauge Gresley A1 Pacific (4-6-2) loco originally built in 1934, Andy Nash from Romney Marsh



One time member of North London SME, Ian Murray, now Chairman of South Cheshire MES, had a good run with Ken Grubb's 5in gauge Britannia

Regrettably all good things come to an end. Locomotives were cleaned and loaded into owners' vehicles, farewells were exchanged, promises repeated to 'keep in touch' and visitors set off on their homeward journeys.

Martin Evans, Editor of Model Engineer magazine is taken for a ride by FMES Treasurer David Goyder in charge of his unusual, if not unique 5in. gauge Midland 4-4-0.



Ian Spencer (Tyneside SMEE) had a good run with his 5in. gauge V2 2-6-2 locomotive built to works drawings.

With repeated thanks to our hosts, it was generally agreed that this year's FMES Rally was one of the best we've had for a long time. For me, it was a great opportunity to catch up with long established friends and make some new ones.



Glyn Winsall (Rugby MES) enjoys a mug of tea while at the regulator of his elegant SR 2-6-0 U Class locomotive with Eileen, his wife, as passenger recording the run.



George Winsall (Rugby MES) with his 3½ in. gauge Hunslet 0-4-0T Lilla built to Don Young's drawings.



David Mayall (Bracknell Railway Society) had a good run with his fine 5in. gauge LMS 4-6-0 Jubilee in BR green livery, seen here with his wife Frances as passenger.



Martin Parham (Maidstone MES) with his 7¼in. gauge GNR 4-2-2 Stirling Single that was one of two visiting 7¼in. gauge locomotives to run on the ground level railway.

3.5" Gauge Running Day

By Martin

This year's event took place on Saturday 7th of September at our Colney Heath site.

It got off to a bit of a slow start with the first of our members arriving around 10:30. I had been on site since 9:00 but

that did give plenty of time to get things done i.e. walk the track, put the hoses out at Tyttenhanger Station, turn the signals on and above all get the kettles going.



Iris, a design not seen that often, did many laps of the track in the safe hands of John and Jack.

Tim's Hielan Lassie required a steam test on the day which was carried out by our chairmen prior to running his Juliet.

Dave spotted a loose driving wheel on his Britannia the day before the event, Loctite came to the rescue, and he had a faultless run on the day.



Another memorable day at Colney Heath.



List of the day's runners

- 2-6-0 Princess Marina (LBSC)
- 2-6-2T William (Martin Evans)
- 4-6-2 Britannia (LBSC)
- 0-4-0T Juliet (LBSC)

- 4-6-0 Black 5 (LBSC)
- 0-6-0 Iris (LBSC)
- 4-6-2 Hielan Lassie (LBSC)
- 2-6-2 Bantam Cock (LBSC)

Thanks to all those that supported this year's event.

A New Model Railway Project Part 6

By Paul

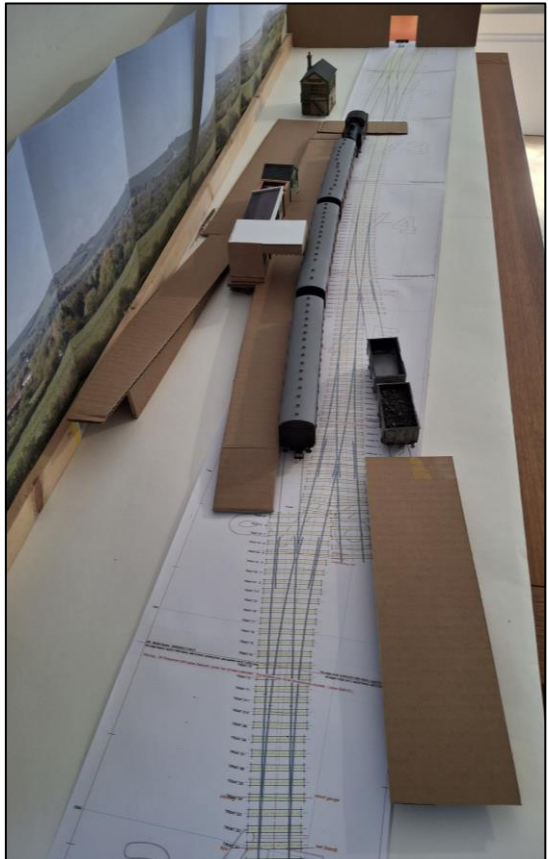
Mock up or ##### up?

I am beginning to feel like a one-man Model Network Rail team insofar as I have many ongoing modelling projects, including helping at least two friends with their layouts.

Thus, keeping up with reporting on progress of Widford is tricky as actual progress is slow. On the other hand, the monthly reporting is driving progress faster than I might have otherwise achieved. Happily, I have had a whole day on my own at home in which I have been able to review where I have got to, create a mock-up of where I hope to go with this layout and write about it.

Behind the scenes are many sub- projects, some of which I have mentioned including track building, 3d printing and the DMU I described in the last news. I have also been Drone flying, the purpose for which I hope to report next time.

I suppose one difference between modellers and model engineers is that model railways inevitably require selective size compression to fit the space available. This is a particularly acute problem when modelling a real place. Widford station was small in the real world but would need a lot of space if modelled true size in my chosen scale. To compress a model into a modest space, every dimension except track gauge and train vehicle size must be compromised in a way that fools the viewer into thinking it's an accurate model in every way.



In making Widford, I am compressing a station whose station limits were about 900 feet apart which, at 4mm to the foot, scales at 3600mm. My layout is 1800 mm long – only half the scale length and a smaller proportion of its width!

The trick, therefore, is to deceive the eye. My method for this is to choose the main “elements” of the station – those things that give a station its unique character - and ensure they are faithfully portrayed in themselves and in relation to each other. I trim out or reduce the lesser elements.

So, what are the main elements of Widford? A good indication comes from historic photos. Photographers tend to take pictures of the interesting things at stations, not the dull bits. They captured for posterity the elements noted below in italics and it is these that I will be incorporating. At the London end of the station is a *road overbridge* and at the other end a *goods loading dock*. In between are a *platform, with buildings, a flat road crossing to the goods yard and a signal box*. There is a hint of the *river Ash* too. Behind the station buildings is an *access ramp* up to the main road which is obscured by *trees* in all the photos I have seen. The track plan is basically *two lines* within station limits together with some *short sidings or spurs*.

On the day of writing this article, I had the house to myself, so I cleared the sideboard of objet d’art and set up a mock-up of my layout. I used actual models plus dummy card constructions to set everything out in test positions, using an old map as a guide. I have taken several photos of the mock up to study. The pictures may cause me to make adjustments although I think have basically got the layout plan positioning correct, but I know I need to consider the vertical plane a bit more taking the river surface as my datum.

I will leave you to judge for yourselves from the accompanying pictures.



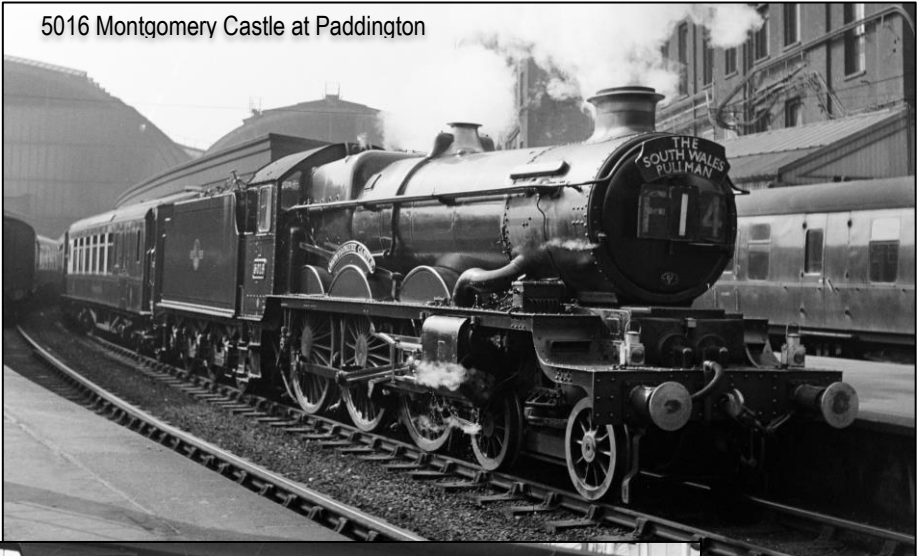
Footnote: the backscene shown is not destined for this (or any) layout. I just used it as background for now.

The Geoff Cashmore Photo collection

The Society has been gifted the photographic collection of the late Geoff Cashmore. It is a vast collection, prints, slides and negatives, mainly dating from the late 1950's to mid-1960's.

This month Geoff seems to have gone on a bit of a tour of the Western region during June 1961. Our pictures were taken on his journey from Paddington to Exeter and Cardiff on the 6th and 20th June. More from this trip next month.

5016 Montgomery Castle at Paddington



4955 Plaspower Hall alongside Southern Battle of Britain class Pacific 34064 at Exeter St Davids



4094 Kilgerran Castle at Swindon 20th June 1961 with 5069 Isambard Kingdom Brunel approaching the station



King George VI ready to depart Cardiff on the same day

Two pictures of the Royal train at Exeter St Davids on 6th June 1961 with Mogul 7333. The loco head code and class of engine would indicate it as assisting with only marshalling the train.



Gauge1 Report

By Geoff

As I write this, we are on the Autumn equinox and to prove a point the sun has disappeared, and the twilight is fast approaching. By the time you read your news sheet it will be dark by 7 o'clock. But we won't let this stop us from enjoying some nice warm sunshine.

Having missed a few weeks at Tyttenhanger due to holidays I have only been able to visit twice in September. But both days were good, albeit one was unseasonably cool. It's good to hear of other members travels and gain ideas of where to try and visit yourself.

The Gauge 1 group have acquired a rake of LMS coaches through the good offices of Council. And we are putting them to use. A rake of 8 bogie coaches, originally built by Malcolm Read, mostly from the collection of member Nick who has moved into a care home, plus a couple from Malcolm Read to make up the 8. These compliment the GWR set and can be used with many different locomotives. Coupled with the goods set it gives us 3 trains, one for each circuit.



Dave's Royal Scot hauling the newly acquired LMS rake

Michael's USA trains G scale model of a Norfolk & Western GP7 Diesel loco. The prototype was built by General Motors for hauling immense coal trains from the West Virginia coal fields.



Earlier this year we acquired a kit for a Great Western Goods Shed from a deceased friend's estate. Our capable member Norman has assembled and painted the model, and it can be incorporated onto the layout. Thanks Norman, a model well built.



New supply of bags of coal available for sale at the Colney Heath site.

Anthracite Beans in 20 kg bags at a **new** price of £16.00 per bag.
The size most used on our locos.

Anthracite Grains in 20 kg bags at a **new** price of £16.00 per bag.
Suitable for 3 1/2" gauge or those with very small fire-hole doors.

Contact the Treasurer, Mike

NOTE: - Regarding Oils, we are out of stock of lubricating oil at present until I source and order more.

Vintage Model Yacht Association Regatta.

By Peter

Well, Sunday 8th got off to a wonderful start. I got to Colney Heath at 9.00am, opened the car door and got instantly soaked by 'stair rod' rain. At least I was able to give the pond a couple of quick top skims before the event.

Unfortunately, due to Mrs S being recently post-surgery, I had to leave early to fulfil my duty as Nurse. Anthony Warren, from the VMYA, very kindly allowed me to crib his write up and photos.

Before I sign off, I would like to thank the 'Tea and Biscuit Boys' looking after us on the day. Also, to John for the brilliant job he is doing, keeping the pond in a fantastic condition.

Toy boat Regatta report, North London Model

Engineer's pond, London Colney. 08/09/24

By Anthony Warren

As usual the hosts were most generous with tea and biscuits and during a day threatening thunder showers all but one held off. The breeze was zero to light and the chat fairly constant.

The hosts produced a number of beautifully modelled scale ships and some intriguing old electric motors as well as a chunkily built, live steam *coal fired* gauge 1 4-6-2 locomotive reputedly designed and built by that post-war legend 'LBSCR'.



The mighty straight liner

Decently Andy Tribble wrote in to excuse himself whilst only 2 members of the VMYG made the Event. To keep things simple Grahame Davis brought a plethora of Stars and one delightful green and cream Alexander sloop. AW introduced a mighty steamboat now the property of Paul Drewett. She comprised a cycle pump pressurised custom paraffin burner and a considerable single flue launch boiler all made of copper. The working chimney carrying

exhaust steam fitted inside a cosmetic chimney on the superstructure. The hull and upper works were all made of zinc soldered and in places bolted.

She is realistically only launchable with two scaffolders and weighs a ton. The slide valve engine is beautifully built and with a gear driven feed water pump and the usual boiler fittings completes the set up. It is believed she was a straight runner complete with geared tiller and large propped, slow revving engine designed to beat competitors at maximum speed thru a gate at the other end of the lake.



One man and his boat

Our hosts' other scale boats included a patrol boat, fishing smack and an electric version of a reproduction Bassett Lowke Streamline. All were beautifully radio controlled with effects.

Steaming bay project

During the summer months the design for various aspects of the project including the new roof over the steaming bays, the repurposing of the old workshop and the design options for the swing out section have been further developed. The working group will be finalising these details in time for certain works to start at the end of the running season.

TRACK STEWARDS ROTA FOR 2024 And An Appeal

By the time you read this article in the News Sheet we will have only two more public running days left this year. You will notice that for the final public running date of 20th October there are only 9 track steward names listed, and we really need 10 as a minimum to make sure that the afternoon is a success.

As the person responsible for the allocation of names against dates it has on occasions been a somewhat challenging running season this year, so I am issuing an appeal for a member to come forward and volunteer to be a track steward on the above date. Whether you have been a member of the society for many years or you are a new member who has recently joined this would be a good time to come forward and volunteer.

You can rest assured that Keith – the Senior Steward on that date will take into account whether you have been a member for many years or if you are new to the society he will support you in the duties allocated on the day.

If you wish to volunteer or talk about what is involved, please contact either myself or Keith, both of our contact details can be found on the back of this copy of the News Sheet.

Nigel

On behalf of NLSME Council

6 October 2024

Derek – Senior Steward

1. David
2. Derek
3. Michael
4. Craig
5. Christopher
6. Timothy
7. Harry
8. James
9. Tim
10. Anthony Y
11. Ground Level Despatcher
Steve

20 October 2024

Keith – Senior Steward

1. Billy
2. David
3. Joe
4. Peter
5. Susie
6. Max
7. Adam
8. Andrew
9. Graham
10. .
11. Ground Level Despatcher
Steve

Bookworm Writes – **Back Room Boys* of Engineering History** Book Review - Thomas Brassey

By rights my next book review following the recent one on Mr Telford should really have been one of the great railway engineers, George Stephenson, I.K.B, Joseph Locke etc. However, having not yet had the pleasure of feasting on one of my owners most treasured volumes (he doesn't leave them laying about very often), does instead provide me with an opportunity to bring to your attention an important backroom boy of railway history without whom the afore mentioned engineers would have played with their sextants and dangled their 'bobs' for no good reason.

The Life and labours of Thomas Brassey – Biography (originally published 1894)

One of the most rewarding aspects of being a bookworm in the 21st century is now and again coming across a volume by some long-forgotten author. Thankfully for us when one of these old works is taken up by a modern publisher and reprinted another generation of bookworms is provided with sustenance and a new audience is given the opportunity to read first-hand or near first-hand accounts of some part of history.



Thomas Brassey (no doubt known as TB to his pals) was one of those people that history could well have overlooked if it were not for our author Sir Arthur Helps. Now, I wish here I could tell you that Sir A.H and Mr Brassey were inseparable mates and that's why he chose him to be the subject of this book, but I don't think so and a cursory look at A.H.s own back catalogue doesn't help us either as his previous subjects appear to have been an eclectic mix of personages. However, it is our good fortune that he did choose TB for unlike the great railway engineers, many of TBs contemporaries those who constructed our railways, are largely forgotten by history. I am sure that if I put before you names such as messers Benton and Woodiwiss, Joseph Firbank or even John Towlerton Leather to name but few, you would look blankly at me.... I rest my case. In fact, when you read about TB and what he achieved, you may wonder like your guide just how many other important people from the early days of the Industrial Revolution we don't know much, if anything about.

The Story Starts

After leaving school, TB was pupiled to a Land-surveyor and Agent who had been awarded a contract to survey part of the Shrewsbury to Holyhead Road being built by our old mate Thomas (*mines a flagon*) Telford. After progressing from the mundane tasks of cleaning and breaking-in his master's new boots, sharpening his pencils and sussing out the best ale houses to visit along their route, TB was eventually considered knowledgeable enough to step in as and when the situation demanded. A chance meeting later with George Stephenson when he came by looking to purchase some stone for a bridge he was building (as you do), ultimately led TB to becoming a contractor, a contractor destined to work thereafter pretty much exclusively in the building of railways.

Bookworm Note: Prospective readers should not be put off by the term Contractor, for I know it doesn't sound as sexy as Engineer, and indeed the author himself makes a similar observation in his introduction (though obviously unable to use such a description in Victorian England), but the resulting book does remind us that whilst the engineers may have got all the glory they would have been nobody at all without the likes of TB to turn the results of their deliberations, that is the pretty coloured plans and sketches they produced into something more solid; for as one less charitable observer succinctly put it, '*Any fool could build a railway with a quill*'.

Now in the nineteenth century when a railway scheme was proposed, the sequence of events to make it happen went something like this: The interested parties, who were sometimes local business men, sometimes local land owners and or *lads in the City** would come up with a proposal (a speculation) to make money from having a railway go from point A to point B to do work Z. Then having thrown some money into the pot themselves (aka pump priming) they would persuade other people to cough up still more gold sovereigns to get the idea off the ground and ultimately to get spades in the ground. An Engineer would then be engaged to work out a plan of where the railway was going to go and how without upsetting too many land owning 'Toffs', then a contractor (or contractors) would be engaged to bring in the muscle men* and build them a railway...on the face of it all straightforward stuff.

TB was one of the early contractors to become a big fish in an otherwise smallish pond and as such was able to offer what we might today call a 'One-Stop Shop' for anyone wanting to build a railway.

Once the contractor was on board (sometimes with other business Partners) the next stage was for them to decide who did what and when and what could be subcontracted out. Now the idea of sub-contracting we may think of as being a curse of the modern age, but it seems it was taken as read in the Victorian ultra free market era and was just the way you did things then. THE big difference between then and today perhaps is that having sub contracted or even sub-sub contracted (not fully approved of even then), the big cheese (isn't

English such a rich language) in this case TB, didn't just assume the work would happen and wait for the kudos and cheques to roll in, he chose his own Agents and Sub- contractors wisely and then made sure everything was done to the plan(s)he supplied them with by holding them firmly by their financials (no automatic payments then), until he was happy the work had been done satisfactorily. TB don't forget was someone who knew his embankment Planum from his un- trussed masonry so he knew what would be involved and roughly how long it should take to achieve – see there was a world before those with media degrees ran everything.

At this point in the review I should by rights whet your appetite by describing some of the projects TB worked on, but if I did that you will be robbed of the desire to find this out for yourself and frankly your coffee table will be poorer for it, but a cursory glance at the impressive list of projects TB undertook in entirety or part would include the following railways:

Woodford to Loughton - Epping and Ongar – Buckinghamshire - London and Bedford - London, Tilbury and Southend – GNR - Royston to Hitchin – Leicester to Hitchin – Kendal and Windermere - Severn valley – Llangollen - North Devon – Paris to Rouen –Orleans, Bordeaux – Le Mans, Mezidonn - Central Italian – Jutland – Queensland – Central Argentine – Delhi - Grand Trunk Canada

As the work rolled in and TB's reputation spread (as can be imagined from the above list) his fan mail started to arrive from all over the world, and like many before and no doubt since he would have been tempted to look for a bit of sun to banish the winter blues after battling through yet another cold December standing in the snow wind and rain in some unloved, unnamed remote valley somewhere in Blighty; so he decided to tender for a few jobs overseas - This decision was also perhaps made easier for him by some of his Engineer pals having already picked up a few nice sunny projects around the world for themselves and in so doing recommending him to do the spade work.

Here I really do need to pause to do a bit of historical flag waving. For it seems Britain in the mid nineteenth century had a well-deserved reputation for building good infrastructure and consequently many overseas countries were keen to tap into our knowledge when they too wanted something similar building. It was in fact overseas where TB along with his various financial partners undertook the bulk of the projects he worked on, and in this way, it is said, he was responsible for the construction of an impressive 6,500 miles of track globally.

Nothing daunted then, once on-board TB would roll up with his *boys** out there somewhere and be set-up before you could say, '*did you pack the factor 8?*' bringing with him valuable experience, plenty of equipment and a fair size British workforce. All handpicked lads eager to show their foreign counterparts how a railway really should be built by first impressing them with the size of their muscles, followed by the quality of their tools and finally demonstrating to them the latest in wheelbarrow skills, in much the same way a century and half later

lads would be showing off their latest skate board moves; all whilst introducing their foreign co-workers to useful assorted gestures and fruity language that their hosts would probably not have seen, heard nor understood since the Romans had left their shores centuries before leaving many a local lad no choice ultimately but to hold their arms out whilst shrugging their shoulders and looking puzzled.....a practice that is continued to this very day (you see even a bit social history is included).

Bookworms Verdict

As a conscientious guide and reviewer I should start my summary by reminding you loyal reader that this biography was originally written well over one hundred and twenty years ago when deference to the subject was a pre-requisite to its undertaking and when twenty words were often used where today we would use five (no comments please); but that said it ultimately does a sound job in telling us about TB the man, even when on occasion you do feel you may have been round the same block a few times to get there.

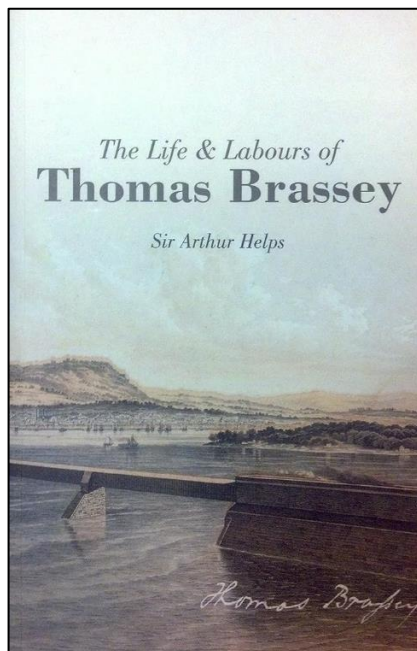
The other point to mention is that it was written when England was still pretty much top of the league table when it came to who had the most colonies and by the size of its Empire, so allowances should be made for the book's author and contributors when they show a bit of the prevailing attitudes of the time towards those from overseas and of using their labour. HOWEVER, I would have to say in its defence, in some cases (with the facts as presented) the views expressed do appear to be based on an honest assessment of the difficulties encountered at a time when undertaking work of this nature in a non-English speaking nation was not the norm and shows the breadth of the skills TB possessed in overcoming them. On the flip side it is also striking how some of the observations about the attitudes and qualities, strengths and weaknesses of British management, railway management and the muscle lads could have come from a period well into the latter part of the twentieth, if not the early twenty-first century.

It would appear that TB was universally liked by all who worked for him and for whom he did work, for all thought him to be a good chap and someone you could put your trust in, which in turn made it seriously good for business - just how good you will be surprised to read.

The size of some of the projects TB took- on can be gathered from one or two of the statistics quoted in the book, a good example would be from the time of building the line in Spain when it is said, he had such a massive workforce on the payroll that by pay day each month the company was holding one to one and half tons in weight of coinage – no wonder Bank Transfer was invented. These sums can also perhaps be better understood when our author tells us that in his working career TB was responsible for the spending of 78 million pounds on projects, which in the Victorian era I imagine is what many of his employees would have referred to as '*serious wedge*'.

Conclusion

I know I have not really done justice to this impressive individual in what must be a limited review, as to do so would require much more space than I am allowed (who said. *get on with it?*). I would therefore instead urge you fellow lover of the print, to pick up a copy of this excellent book and to immerse yourself completely in this period of railway development. As a bonus, like so many written snapshots of history especially reprints from a much earlier age, such books often inadvertently prove not only to be about the original subject but offer tantalising glimpses of other aspects of the period and subjects worthy of further research. I mean did the Argentine eventually turn out to be such a land of opportunity for Europeans after all and did TB really play such a large part in getting our lads out of Crimea in 1858...and so much more.



It's therefore so refreshing then to read of a time when it was thought that anything was possible to achieve if you had enough faith, muscle a decent wheelbarrow and access to plenty of quality shag (that's a type of tobacco to my younger readers – I always aim to inform).

A thought to ponder. Regarding the railways of England, bearing in mind TB was only responsible for the building of around 2,000+miles of lines (out of a total recorded mileage of around 15,000 in 1872) and putting aside the other names already referred to, surely begs the question, *who built the rest of them?*

Finally, whilst this book is somewhat light on exciting photographs (largely because Fox Talbot and Kodak were yet to get into their respective strides) and is not a written thesis on how to build a railway, it deserves to have a prominent place on your coffee table to impress your visitors with and will I am sure make a good conversation starter over the tea and custard creams this autumn.

I do recommend it to you.

The Life and labours of Thomas Brassey - By Sir Arthur Helps - ISBN 1-84588-011-0
2006 Reprint published by Nonsuch Publishing Ltd - Available from various respectable purveyors of second-hand books

*= Heritage expression precedent on identified stereotype

Guy's last trip and a big thank you

By Peter

How fortuitous that due to a mishap over our clubs Calendar bookings I rearranged my granddaughter's birthday party at the track from the 24th of Aug to the 25th of Aug, the 24th being club visits from Farham, Chingford, And Chelmsford. Unsurprisingly due to the inclement weather some of the visiting club did not make it as it rained for most of the day ironically only for the sun to peek out at the end of the day's proceedings. Fair play to the loco drivers who persevered and ran all day (oh to be young again) and to the club members who turned out to support our visitors and watch the rain!!

Sunday 25th.

"Chalk and cheese" the morning sun warmed the air and had dried off the dampness left over from yesterday's deluge!! Maid Marian was fired up for her first duty for some time due to her cab rebuild and some mechanical adjustments. The G.L. crew were in attendance to help me set up and entertain the screaming hordes of children shortly to be onsite expecting train rides all afternoon.

My first duty of the day was to remember the passing of a great model engineer and ex-chairman of St Albans club the lovely Guy Ellerby. At nearly 103 years old and with the help of his dear friend Derek still tried to model in his workshop. As a fitting tribute to Guy and in the time-honoured tradition his daughter and some friends were taken around the GLR track with Maid Marian in charge of the memorial train.

Just time for a bite to eat before the dear little soles arrived, we had a fine day no

incidents, accidents, or derailments the weather held and just as soon as I had adjusted myself to MMs new cab it was time to call it a day and steam the old girl down. It was extra nice to see Amy and new baby Freddie herself a junior member not so long ago.

A big thank you to all G L crew who helped on the day!



St Marks Church annual visit

About this time each year we have invited our neighbours at St Marks church to have an afternoon at Colney Heath to enjoy a picknick. We run the trains, and they have a great time. Last year the sun shone unfortunately this year it didn't. But true to form between the showers we didn't let it stop the fun. A couple of extra gazebos for shelter helped a little and the railway was kept busy giving rides all afternoon. They have accepted our invite to return again next year.



All pictures by Owen



A visit to the London Transport Museum – The Depot.

By Geoff

It is many years ago since I last visited the LT Depot at Acton.

Seeing an advert on Facebook of a four-day event in September (not just the weekend events which would clash with family arrangements) I just had no excuse not to make a revisit. It was well worth it. We arrived about 11o'clock and were chucked out at 5.00pm!



I recalled that the storage facility had space for some of the preserved tube trains and some buses, these being the reserve collection from the LT Museum in Covent Garden. I had forgotten how much was there. The operational 4 coach rake of 1938 stock, a rake of Q stock from the District line which is currently being restored to working order. Some of the old Standard stock and various other items including a District Railway coach from 1910 (in need of restoration).



Add to this about 15 buses, trams and trolley buses and there is plenty to keep you amused.

The small items collection is extensive with enamel signs from all parts of the system, some dating back till the early 1900's. Plus architects' models from various dates and a host of other items.

The last part we visited was the poster gallery where we were given an educational talk on some of the artwork through the years. There were different talks during the day and most coaches were open to walk through and talk to knowledgeable volunteer staff.

The museum is open about three times a year, so watch their website and go along.

I like the old timber escalator which were in many stations until the Kings Cross fire.

I particularly remember the St Johns Wood escalators complete with their uplighters.



My model-boat collection No 21

By Roy

This is an old Graupner model from 1956 called Condor. In those days I could not afford these kits, they were very good and came in from Germany so rather more than my pocket money could cover.

I was doing National Service the following year and was in the RAF and I was posted to Germany at the end of the year to work on air radar on Canberra bombers. Anyone remember the 'V' bombers? The Canberra's were the back up and the version I was trained on had the ability to carry an atomic bomb.

My first foray into the nearest German city, which was Aachen, was when the weather improved in the early spring. I had a map and knew of a model shop in the KlienKolne Strasse, and I went into visit. I had enrolled for German lessons when I arrived on the RAF camp and had settled in. So basic things, mainly like ordering beer and schnaps I was au-fait with.



The plans in a folder with building instructions as was the norm for Graupner

I asked to look through the plans of model boats that model shops in both UK and Germany had in stock in those days. Lo and behold there was the plan from the kit of the launch Condor. Just 3 D marks 70 pfennigs and we got a favourable exchange rate of 12 to the pound or 1 dmark was 1s/8d, so a good

price even then. I still have the plans as well. I bought a couple more and then left.

I decided to study them but not build as I now had a Veron Caribbean Coaster under construction. I was building this in the model aircraft club! In those days RC was new and expensive, so it was wait for the official flying to stop and then we were allowed out on the runway. There were frequent (model) crashes, and the less damaged bits were brought back and shoved up high on a shelf. After a few months and as I was now friendly with the members I asked if I could look at the bits.

I reckon there was enough there to make another aircraft! So, with a bit of fettling, I assembled a novel aircraft and one weekend went out to fly it. It flew really well and made a couple of the guys sit up and take notice! It had a small diesel engine, and I used a 'chicken stick' to flick it over. For free flying you trimmed the aircraft for gentle turns otherwise it was 'hail and farewell' and into the distant horizon!

But boat construction resumed, and I was coming up to 12 months service and when that comes you can do the requirements for SAC (Senior aircraftsman). There were exams to do, tests on operating aircraft auxiliary and practical work as well. My Chiefy knew I was in the model flying club and building a model boat, so he said bring it in for me to see. I did so and he said right that's your practical done, and I collected the 3 prop emblems sewed them on and I was an SAC!

I could now apply for the long (7 months) fitter's course on radar. Every Thursday I would call in the squadron office and ask if there were vacancies in this week's orders and after 3 months went by there were. "Come in lad" I was told, as previously I had just poked my head around the door and got a shake of the head. I signed on then and there for the course. This took me back to blighty and the dreaded RAF Yatesbury training camp in Wiltshire. I did many further electronic courses and my model boat building just stopped.

So, it was in June 1961, after I had left the RAF that I started building Condor, rather slowly, as I had to fit into a tiny area off the top of the stairs in my parent's home as my workshop. Then I came across the fair sex in a more serious way and more delays!

Condor finally got into the water with RC control in 1965. In between I had got married moved into a flat and we had had our first child. Back with the previous boat Caribbean Coaster she had early multi-channel valve radio. This was a stationary on the ground transmitter box with a plugged-in control unit and used tuned reeds for the 4 channels. The receiver was hung with elastic bands and suspended in place! The mechanical reeds vibrated from a transmitted signal and could not take knocks or external vibrations. In those days I was unaware of the radio interference of electric motors, so the set up was doomed to failure.

In the mid 1960's transistors were starting to be commonplace and circuits for construction were available and the voltages were as we know them today 12 volts max for the transmitter. I made several unsuccessful units they worked on the bench but failed at the pondside.

I finally decided to buy equipment guaranteed to work with electric motors. The company later became Fleet, but my units had the builders name Derek Olley. With capacitors on the motors to remove the interference it all worked a treat. This was before proportional control and required pulsing of switches to activate the controls in the boat. It also had a 'blue' frequency crystal so could be used with other boats with a different crystal. I recall sailing when another model boater had his boat in the water.

He had a reed receiver so was in the 500-700 cycles area for the mechanical reeds but mine were electronic and 1000 c/s higher frequency than the reeds. His boat went out of control, and he shouted at me, blaming me for the problem. But as the boat was sinking, he went in after it and found that the engine cooling water pipe outlet had come off and this was filling the boat. We operated the boats together and we did not interfere with each other, and this was a first, as normally it was just one at a time.

The cost was rather high for my radio at the equivalent of a week's income for the 4-channel set, which was not a happy situation for my wife, to say the least, but I got my money's worth out of it over several years operation. I never did like the Coaster, but Condor lives on and has had 2 re-fits in its long life.

The building sequence required a lot of cutting out of bulkheads etc and then plank on frame with 3/16ths square section balsa wood. No problems at all with strength but I have since inserted a hard wood strip at the bow where it took a few knocks. I went to town on waterproofing using wet and dry sanding and many coats of paint, each rubbed down when dry. I can recommend doing this at the beginning as apart from a bit of touching up, the original paint is still on showing the white although the lower part has had a colour change to green.

Failures were a worn-out prop shaft, my fault, as I had fitted a swaged aluminium one so there was no proper bearing surface. This was removed with a firm twist and then pulled free. But the other things were, upgrading the build and introducing a crew. The last change was an experiment to put in rudders to give more control in reverse. So, there are 3 rudders fitted and I have since found out that there was a better way of doing it! Too late now, my son ran the model a lot in his younger days, and he wants it the way it was when I shuffle off this mortal coil.

The current set up has a commercial electric motor so much cheaper than model designated motors. It runs on 3 sets of 3 cell batteries. These were brought very cheaply and were the remains of the doomed British Telecom's idea of a competitor to the then growing mobile phone network. This was where

you could only communicate on them if you stood under a BT pole erected for the purpose!

Although they are just 1 Ahr batteries the 10.8 volts drains off at about half an amp on a good speed.



Condor at the lake at Colney Heath.

Dave Lawrence – Letter of thanks

Dear Les,

Andrew and I would very much like to express our thanks and appreciation regarding the generous donation from the NLSME in David's memory and in support of prostate cancer research. The total amount is not yet available but at the time of writing the sum has topped £600 which has greatly exceeded expectation and we know how very pleased Dave would be that this has been achieved as indeed we are.

We would also like to thank those club members who were able to attend David's funeral on 22nd August, you all helped to make it special.

Kind regards,
Pat Lawrence.

Letter to the Editor

By Geoff

Following on from the "*How long can a Lathe get*" article in the news Sheet (August 24 Pg 31) I came across this - it may be of interest.

This lathe was built by Gage, Warner, and Whitney, in the 1850s. It was bought new by Noble foundry and Iron works in Rome, Georgia. At that time, it was standard practice for iron manufacturing to be done right where the ore was found, and the iron was smelted. Sam Noble and Sons built various machines there, including at least one railroad locomotive. This was just the sort of lathe to turn axle and wheel sets for that. The T-slotted carriage would have also allowed use for boring large steam cylinders.

When the "War of Northern Aggression" started, all across the south, shops such as the Nobles were put to work on the war effort. The foundry, and this lathe, were used to make cannon. The machine shop was powered by a steam engine and line shafts. It is to this day always called the "Cannon Lathe" although that's not what it was. There was a specialized lathe designed and made for that job, and this was not one of them, but it served the purpose. Needless to say, the manufacture caught the attention of General Sherman and his troops, and on their foray through Georgia, they burned the building down around it. - - - After the war's end, with iron ore supplies largely depleted around Rome, the Nobles moved 60 miles southwest, to present day Anniston, Alabama, then known as Woodstock, and reestablished their business in the 1950s and 60s, and it remains a machining center to this day.

The big lathe was left behind in Rome. It was later rebuilt, and put back to work, and actually used on occasion as late as the 1960s.!!!

Put out on display, it sits today in Rome, Georgia city park.



Club Dates for your 2024 Diary

<u>Every Wednesday:</u> G1 group meet at Colney Heath	
<u>Every Thursday.</u> A mix of RT & GLR Loco running when track is available, working groups, and general conversation	
<u>Every Saturday</u> Ground Level Rly at Colney Heath	
<u>Every Sunday.</u> A mix of RT Loco running when track is available, working groups, and general conversation.	
October	
Tue 1 st October	Council Meeting at HQ – 13.00
Fri 4 th October	Work in Progress - 8pm at HQ
Sun 6 th October	Public running day at Colney Heath
Sun 20 th October	Last Public running day of 2024 at Colney Heath
Thur 24 th October	Deadline for copy to editor for November edition
November	
Friday 1 st November	Gauge 1 section entertains – 8pm at HQ
Sun 3 rd November	Working Party at Colney Heath 9.00 – 12.30
Tue 5 th November	Council Meeting at HQ – 13.00
Sun 10 th November	Working Party at Colney Heath 9.00 – 12.30
Fri 22 nd November	Workshop meeting 8pm at HQ
Sun 24 th November	Working Party at Colney Heath 9.00 – 12.30
Advance notice of events in 2024	
Friday 6 th December	Christmas gathering – 8pm at HQ
Please notify our secretary of all meetings and other Society events for inclusion in the Society Calendar and also tell the news sheet editor. Approval for special events still rests with Council.	

A representative of any Section or Committee or an Officer of the Society shall, on request to the Secretary, be entitled to attend a Council Meeting as an observer and submit proposals thereat. If attendance is agreed the secretary will advise the member concerned. The Editor of the News Sheet shall be entitled to attend, ex officio, all Council Meetings.