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*This Month...*



# The News Sheet

**Chairman's Chatter, Treasurer's Report, Forthcoming General Meetings, 00 News, 2016 Steward List, The April General Meeting, Ken Simpson, Mr. Grumpy, Scribe's Scribbles, Marine News, The Steaming Bay Project, GLR News, Diary Dates, Club Contacts.**



## Chairman's Chatter



**Robin Thorn**

And yet another month goes sliding by, although we are now experiencing some very warm and sunny days it is still quite surprising to see the frosts on so many mornings and even snow trying to settle last weekend.

At Headquarters all the groups that are based there are continuing with their normal programme of events and running sessions. The 'library' of books that we were helping with the disposal of has decreased very considerably and hopefully our main meeting room will soon be back to normal. Hopefully we shall have sufficient space to accommodate a generous attendance of members for the forthcoming A.G.M. All

members are very welcome to attend so please come along on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

A new set of wheels for the Raised Track passenger cars has been received, courtesy of Joe Featherstone, and hopefully the team that regularly maintain this rolling stock will be able to set up an overhaul programme to replace the worn wheels with the new ones as time permits.

The usual complement of between 15 and 25 [sometimes a few more] staunch members that make up the Sunday Morning working parties have all been very busy with numerous tasks approaching completion; all those that wish to can continue with these working parties through the summer months as there is always something that needs to be done. Well done to all the regular attendees over the winter.

As I am sure you are all aware the first date of our public running season is rapidly approaching, the stewarding rosters have all been publicised, the Raised Track is all back in running order and the re-sleepering of the Ground Level Railway is rapidly approaching completion. In conjunction with this the grounds team, as usual, have been hard at work and apart from a bit of tidying around the car park area all is looking in very good order.

The G.L.R. tunnel, courtesy of Ted Kitchener and a few keen supporters, is now on target to possibly, but not guaranteed, to have the brickwork lining completed before we start public running. A true achievement when you consider all the work involved from the original concept of building a tunnel.

A reminder that we are welcoming the carers and their clients from **MENCAP** again this year and the date for your diaries for this event is **SATURDAY 10<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2016.** We hope that as many members as possible will be available on that date to either run their locomotives or act as stewards to ensure that this very worthwhile event runs as smoothly as possible.

Well, that's my bit for this month.

**Robin Thorn. Chairman N.L.S.M.E.**

## **Fetes & Fairs**

Once again the forthcoming season is going to be very busy and any help would be appreciated.

Our forthcoming bookings can be found on the 'Dates for your Diary' page in each News Sheet. Everyone welcome at any event.

Many thanks, Jim

**Jim MacDonald. Fetes & Fairs Section Leader.**

### **Visit to Fareham.**

The North London Societies visit to Fareham Model Engineering Society has been arranged for Saturday the 10th. of September 2016. Could members contemplating going please let me know so that I have some idea as to numbers. Thank you in anticipation.

**Mick Avery.**

## Treasurer's Report



**Mike Foreman**

Many thanks to the one hundred and fifteen members who have already paid their subscriptions for the forthcoming year. Keep up the good work please.

A reminder if any paid up member requires a Southern Federation personal public liability certificate for use when visiting other clubs or societies, please put a note on your yellow renewal form or phone or drop me an email.

A copy of the Annual Accounts for the last year are enclosed with this News Sheet and I look forward to seeing you at the AGM on Friday 6th May, with your

copy as I am sure many of you will put in an appearance.

**Now for something completely different.** The Gresley Society N2 tank engine and a fine Gresley coach from the Seven Valley Railway were in platform 8 of Kings Cross Station on the 5th April 2016 for the unveiling of the

SNR statue without appendage. It was very apparent that the engine's whistle was leaking past the valve. See YouTube clips of the event in particular one by 'Unseen Steam'.



Having been on the engine the following Sunday at the Epping and Ongar Railway, it was arranged that I would remove the whistle during the week and attend to the problem.



See photo on previous page, showing the deep pitting in the valve surface. The return spring was not up to the job of counterbalancing the weight of the operating arm, which did not help matters. A quick job in the lathe plus grinding in the valve together with a stronger, longer spring cured the problem. Next a steam test to ensure all was well before returning the whistle back to the engine. Photo on left shows my setup; it explains how to rig up a temporary connection to my V3 to test the whistle on 100psi. It worked but extremely loud in the confined space of the garage!

The month of May is upon us, so make the most of our railways at Colney Heath and enjoy yourselves. Good running.

**Mike Foreman**

**Photo on front cover.** The new tunnel on the ground level railway at Colney Heath. Not long to go now before completion. Photo taken on 24th April 2016. Ian Johnston.



**Ian Johnston**

## **Forthcoming General Meetings**

Unless otherwise indicated General Meetings begin at 8pm at our Legion Way Headquarters in North Finchley, usually ending at about 10pm. All members are welcome and we are always happy to see friends and family attending. We hope for a good attendance to support speakers. Please remember that many of the meetings depend on the club to provide the catalyst for a stupendous evening.

For more information please ring Ian.

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May. AGM. The Annual General Meeting.** This is a most important meeting where we summarize what great progress the Club has achieved in the past year. Where we plan for the future of the Club and where we elect members to take up various offices to run the Society for the forthcoming year. **Members only.**

**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June.** Chris will carry on from where Mike Gibbs left off at the recent 'Work in Progress' evening. Chris has been the senior restorer and rebuildler of the powerful ore and coal hauling 2-8-2T locomotive from the Woodham's Yard to Quainton Road and on to almost running order. Come and see what a determined team can achieve when the spirit is willing.

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July. First Aid Evening at Colney Heath.** Now the evenings have drawn out again we hope to entertain Verity Maclachlan at Colney Heath with our knowledge **of First Aid** and of course to be corrected by her expert opinions. Please make an effort to visit the track and see what goes on there. You never know when you will need that knowledge in an emergency; you could save a life!!

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August. BBQ at Colney Heath.** This year instead of tomato soup it is to be vegetable with sausages as before. Please come along and join in but try to let me know how many sausages you will need! Come for a nice sausage and some soup. Bring the missus to see what you get up to.

## '00' Section News

A pictorial update for your delight this month.

After our annual Christmas and New Year running session, which lasted into March this time, it was time to assess some minor damage to some point work at Seabrook Station. After being installed for about 35 years, the double slip on the main line was literally worn out and needed replacement. On lifting this, two other sets of points were found to be damaged and the decision was made to replace all three. Not a simple task as you would think, as over the intervening period, the size and design of the double slip has been altered by the manufacturer Peco. After, what sounded like a lot of cursing from Mike and Dudley, they managed to complete the relaying and, as a result, we are no longer suffering trains derailing in this area. The photo below shows the area and point work relayed.



I have previously mentioned the new turntable being installed within the loco shed. This has now been fitted in a semi-permanent state and electrically connected with the rest of the yard/shed, so we can at last turn our locos in the

correct manner. Pending the acquisition of a power unit, the table is turned using ones' finger.



Work continues on the loco shed itself and concrete surrounds have been installed and next will be the floor within the shed itself. The picture below shows an overall view of the front of the shed, with the concrete laid so far either side

of the various inspection and ash pits. Before you ask, no we have not laid actual concrete as that will make the baseboards far too heavy to transport. The effect is done using pre-coloured paper from a design downloaded from the Internet.



Also in the shed, some minor track repairs have been carried out, especially where it crosses over baseboard joints. In another spot, the track needed lifting a fraction of an inch in order to

remove a dip in the track, this being achieved by Jonathan with his trusty soldering iron (see photo on next page).



Last year saw the emergence of a new manufacturer in OO scale model railways. The firm of Oxford Diecast is already well known to us in their production of scale road vehicles of all types and time scales. They have now formed a subsidiary company, Oxford

Rail which has produced a quality ready to run model of the Adams designed LSWR '0415' 4-4-2T. First impression shows this to be a delightful little locomotive, but at the time of writing (19/04/2016), I've not seen it running with a load. Oxford Rail has already announced their next release will be GWR Dean Goods 0-6-0 tender loco, one which I'm sure will please all fans of said railway. No details yet when this will be available, but I wouldn't be too surprised if we see this in the shops before the end of this year.



The signal box bells have just rung to indicate the approach of the Thames Clyde Express, so I had better go and clear the signals for it to pass. Until the next time, happy modelling.

## **2016 Stewards list**

The stewards list for 2016 has now been adjusted to accommodate the changes that some have requested and to remove some names that could no longer act. Please look at the list and check whether or not you have been affected by the changes, some new names have been added and some swapped.

If for any reason you are unable to do the allotted date please come to an arrangement with another steward to swap duties and inform the relevant senior steward of the swap. The onus is now with members to ensure duties are carried out and not with the senior steward or me.

**Alan Marshall** (Secretary)

## **The April General Meeting.** **Military Tanks - David Render.**

Ian Johnston welcomed a thronged gathering of members and non-members to the meeting room at Headquarters. After the initial notices and the wishing of 'get well soon' to Graham Gardner who had just had a very successful operation at the General, the floor was open for David Render.

David Render is an old friend of the Club; many will remember his talk on racing cars a little while ago. That was perhaps why so many gathered at his feet to hear him talk. They were not disappointed. In fact just the reverse. The gathering hung onto every word that he uttered and were disappointed when David had to finish at a little time after ten.

David opened with a short history of the tank. They were called tanks due to wartime secrecy where the general public and German spies of course were expected to think that the Lincoln Ironworks were actually producing mobile water tanks. The first tanks were unsuccessful because they were unreliable. More soldiers were killed by asphyxiation from the exhausts in the tanks than by enemy fire! With the fitting of the American Christie suspensions the tanks were able to navigate ditches and trenches steered by a rear wheel and manned by RN personal but by then the war was almost over.

Between the wars most developed countries devised newer and more formidable tanks. The USSR developed the T-34 tank and built literally thousands of them. David described a tank battle between the Russians and the Germans. The Nazi tanks were superior to the Russian T-34 but the

Russians kept on pouring in wave after wave of tanks until the inevitable happened and the Germans exhausted their ammunition; where upon the Germans were swamped and defeated by the Russian tank regiments. The French developed quite superior tanks but they were deficient in the radio department and so with poor communication they were not particularly useful. In Great Britain several designs were produced but not in great numbers and so unable to make sustained attacks on the German vehicles. Cruiser Mk1, Crusader, Churchill, and Cromwell to name but a few. It was here that the American industrial might came into play. They produced Sherman Mk4 tanks by the thousand and it seems like the Russian tanks they were dispensable by means of their vast numbers.

This was where David came in, he had initial 'brutal' army training 'up North' and then at Sandhurst. He had elected to join a mechanised branch and found himself as a young 19 year old tank commander with a clutch of Sherman Tanks under his wing. He found that many of the men under his command were in their forties and so getting their respect and obedience took some doing. This was in the Sherwood Rangers, which was a Nottingham regiment. Such was the secrecy attached to movements that the first that David knew about going to France was when he boarded a LST (Landing Ship Tank) thinking that they were going for a jaunt round Poole Harbour but arrived on the Normandy beaches instead! It turned out that their wave of tanks was the third; the first two waves being almost wiped out by the Panzer tanks.

David developed some canny tactics fighting the German tanks. For instance he could tell where they were by observing the hot exhausts causing the air to shimmer above them. Then it was just a matter of lobbing a shell or two at them. By a parabolic trajectory the spot where the exhausts were could be hit and the rest is history because many of the Tiger tanks were petrol powered. The Tigers had over five inches of armour at the front so were no match for the Sherman head on so it was the tracks that had to be got at!

When approaching wooded fields the first thing accomplished was the destruction of trees where snipers could hide; the same went for church spires when approaching villages. Putting a helmet on a stick beside the commander often fooled the sniper and many helmets had several holes in them instead of the owner's head.

David's loyal troop advanced with the main force right into Germany and right out the other side! Such that they were attacked by both renegade German troops because by then the War was over and by the Russians for encroaching on their territory!

As Ian Johnston said at the conclusion of the talk, it was a great privilege to hear such a talk of bravery and leadership. Because it seemed that David managed his brood of tanks so well that they all survived the War, which was unfortunately not the case with other divisions. Nevertheless many of the Sherwood Rangers were killed and David has taken it upon himself to remember the widows by donating money to them at each Christmas. So David's honorarium and the product of the raffle went to that deserving cause.



At that juncture it was time to bid the group farewell and to thank also, David Lawrence, for preparing the teas and Peter D for selling raffle tickets.

**Ian Johnston.**

**Ken Simpson.**

Sad news this month, (March 2016), we have lost dear old Ken Simpson, he lost his long battle and will be missed by all who knew him up the track. A stalwart of the Ground Level and always willing to get on with things when there was work to be done. Ken ex RSM, Pub landlord, and Slaughter man was a tough sort of feller but you knew where you stood with him, hopefully his grand children may one day run the 5 inch Polly he completed not so long ago they will be welcome and given any help they may need.



Ken pictured here on the left of Brian seen knocking down the raised track supports in readiness for the New Land development about three years ago. Although unwell at this time he still turned out for his shift and no matter what the weather or anything else it was not going to stop him. A team player and good pal to the end.

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

## **Mr. GRUMPY'S BIT**

This month I am very pleased to be NOT so grumpy. Whilst away on our holidays an awful lot has been achieved at Colney Heath, maybe we should go away more often.

The painting teams have excelled themselves by sprucing up the full size signals around the site, the underside of the main station canopy is looking clean and fresh, Orchard Junction signal box, with its repaired door, is looking spick and span, the main gate is all black and shiny, plus many other items too numerous to detail. Smallford Station [although not to everybody's liking] is rapidly approaching completion. The raised track signals have all been cleaned and painted and checked to be in proper order.

A lot of effort has been put in to clear the excesses of rubble left in the hole for the base for the new location for the workshop. As work in this area is now progressing in this area it is vitally important that ALL items currently abandoned in this area are removed from site.

The scrap metal skip was full to overflowing by the time that it left site so we should hopefully see a sizeable cheque in exchange for this; even though at times there seemed to be more going out than going in! Many thanks to all who have contributed to filling the skip, not only by clearing the site of scrap but for all your donations brought to Colney Heath rather than your local tip.

Don't forget that all members of our Society are very welcome to attend any of our Sunday working parties, there is always something to be done.

In the meantime, thanks again to every one for their very hard work, all is greatly appreciated.

**Mr. Grumpy.**  
**Tyttenhanger Site Manager.**  
**[A.K.A. Robin Thorn]**

## Marine News

Will someone please tell the show organisers that there are 52 weeks in the year so stop putting shows on the same weekend. Torn between Peterborough Railway show and the Coalville Model Boat Show. Both were on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> April, with working party on 10<sup>th</sup> and not long to site opening, then Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> was the only date left. Scared stiff that I may end up with a garden railway loco so close to taking delivery of our second 5 inch gauge, we headed for the Boat show. Only couple of minutes off the M1 J22 in Hermitage Leisure Centre it was an easy run.



**George Cannon**

At first glance there did not look a lot but like all good things it turned out quality rather than quantity counted. Most aspects of model boat and submarines were on view from visiting clubs and because it was a small show, the stall holders were relaxed and had time to talk, so we picked up loads of small bits, all of which would have cost more in postage than the show day out, also including a replacement bronze propeller for my Midwest Fan Tail steam launch. Been trying ages to get one with a decent pitch for the slow revs. Now sorted and ready for the Toy Boat Regatta.



Talking of which don't forget the first Toy Boat Regatta is on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May when our friends in the Vintage and Toy Boat Society will be visiting to amaze us with a wide and varied collection of model boats including sail, steam and even the odd tin

boat with only the power of a candle to make it go. Great crowd of people with a wealth of knowledge, Join in or just come and have a peaceful day stirring up old memories. Kettle will be on and kept warm from about 10:00 to 16:00, might even find a biscuit or two if you're really lucky. Fresh back from the Doncaster Model Engineering show we will be glad to sit and recuperate.

Special thanks for all the work of clearing the old debris from the lake ready to

start this season, to Dave Hall, David Howarth, Gerry Ackroyd and apologies to any others who may have done so when I was not looking and I have therefore failed to name, it is really appreciated and should be easier to maintain throughout.

Shirley and I have every intention of making Sundays the day we leave the locos at home and only bring the boats out to play. Join us at the lakeside for a relaxing natter, chatter and sail throughout the open season 1st May to end October.

### **May model boat show dates :-**

20th to 22nd May. Doncaster Racecourse Model Engineering show.

[thedoncastershow.com](http://thedoncastershow.com)

28th 29th May. Wicksteed Park model boat mayhem. [modelboatmayhem.co.uk](http://modelboatmayhem.co.uk)

### **Who are the Toy Boat people?**

A few lines from their Treasurer Geoffrey Turner to explain.

We are known as the Vintage Model Yacht Group (VMYG) which was formed in 1986 by Russell Potts (our 1st Chairman - now our President). His vision was the finding, acquisition and refurbishment of vintage sailing yachts and their return to sailing as originally intended. The Group also seeks out and provides information about vintage yachts, their restoration etc. Although many of our members own yachts that are 100, or more, years old "vintage" in our context encompasses any boat that is no longer competitive against others in its class. We prefer traditional wooden yachts but also include early fibreglass boats of interest. Our membership is currently over 175 mainly in the UK with overseas members in Australia, France, Germany, Sweden and the USA.

Some years ago Trevor Smith, one of our members, attended toy boat sailing days at a pond in London but when this facility closed he searched for an alternative venue and found the NLSME at Colney Heath. Thus started our visits to NLSME but these were "unofficial" events organised by Trevor (not badged as VMYG) although there is a keen following amongst our members for clockwork, electric and steam power as well as sailing boats. Following Trevor's move to Somerset the VMYG contact became myself (Geoffrey Turner, VMYG Treasurer) our biennial visits have grown to three each year and are now recognised in the VMYG sailing calendar as "North London Toy Boat Regattas".

**George Cannon. Marine Section Leader.**

## Lineside 'obelisk'

On my occasional photographic forays to Potters Bar golf club I've noticed a stone 'obelisk' tucked away in the north-west corner by the lineside on top of the embankment by the ECML. It was usually in over-grown land and difficult to get at. I assumed that it was a war memorial or folly that had been moved out of the way. On a recent visit the area had been cleared and the course not yet open so had the chance of a closer look, the stone is about 4m high with some letters and numbers, on the side facing the line is a shield which I recognised as the City of London.

Asking a green-keeper he said it was something to do with tax – and there were more of them. An internet search soon revealed that these were 'Coal Tax Posts', any coal being taken through the City of London had tax or duty payable, so the posts were set-up on all railways, canals and roads etc. as a visible reminder of the tax due. Hundreds were set-up in a ring around London and many still survive, the figures on them refer the act and date they were set-up for. Having a background in history and archaeology I was a bit surprised I didn't know about these things before – but I've learnt something new!

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/thenorthernheights/25383689302/in/dateposted-public/>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/thenorthernheights/25476051526/in/dateposted-public/>

More info here:

<http://www.brookmans.com/history/projects/postspics3.shtml>

**Bill Bass**

## G.L.R. News.

## May 2016.



**Peter Funk**

Hi crew and avid readers sorry I cannot be with you at the track for the coming weeks, I know you will be missing me barking out the orders, but needs must and the call of the north is greater at the moment, if you can understand that you are a better man than me Gunger Din.

Before disappearing up north I had the privilege to attend the funeral of Mr Ken Simpson along with four other members. I got the feeling Ken was not too religious a man when the Padre reading his eulogy told the story of the African parrot he acquired after a trip to Australia, apparently the animal was known to swear in a broad Yorkshire accent, Ken when asked about this peculiarity said he couldn't understand how this was?

A particularly moving poem was read and the songs

Fields of Athenry and Wild Rover by the Dubliners were played, a lovely ending to the proceedings. I certainly will miss Ken and if I ever get to where he has gone I know he will have the track ready up and running for us to use, so goodbye and see you again pal. Personal thanks to Brian (pictured) in happier days with Ken on the left, for sitting in for me and taking the reins of the G.L.R. crew while I am away.

My thoughts and best wishes are with you Graham G. hope to see you soon.

As ever in the muck,  
**P.A.K. Funk.**  
**G.L.R. Section Leader.**



**NORTH LONDON SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS**  
**Officers, Council Members & Section Leaders**