

The Chairman's Notes

Initially I would like to send a get well message to both Bernard Lambert who as I write this is still in Northwick Park Hospital and Jack Edwards who has contracted a very nasty illness which will keep him out of things for the next couple of months.

The main subject of my notes this month concerns the Loco Section that is without a new section leader. At the request of the Track Committee I chaired the last Loco Section meeting at which we held an extensive discussion on why this unprecedented state of affairs has arisen.

Pressures on those in employment and longer hours may well be a problem for today's members. Perhaps parents share household and childcare duties more equally [My wife may well deny this]. Perhaps we are more used to being entertained and less inclined to organise the entertainment of others. There are all sorts of reasons why people cannot or will not step forward and commit themselves to, if you like, the service of the Club. But without such commitment this Club cannot survive and we need people to help run it now.

The Loco Meeting decided to spread the burden of work the Section Leader carries, to make it possible for the new head of the Loco Section to miss meetings or weekends at Colney Heath. To this end we started setting up a backup team to carry out many of the duties still associated with the Section Leader's role.

At this point while typing my notes I received a telephone call from John Caldwell who volunteered his services as Loco Section leader. I am delighted that "New Zealand John" has stepped forward. He is a first class model engineer and a relatively new member who may well bring in fresh ideas and invigorate us all. Now John has a young family and his time is limited. The new support team for the next Loco Section leader, which we discussed at the meeting, helped to decide John in this matter. So set out below is that support team and my thanks on behalf of all the Loco Section members goes to them for volunteering their efforts.

Keith Bartlam

Will where necessary deputise for the Section Leader with the Track Committee who organise the work parties at Colney Heath.

Brendan Corcoran

Will arrange the Loco Section meetings for the section leader.

Ian Johnston

Will arrange the track steward's rota.

George Case

Will take responsibility for keeping the site tidy and respectable. Also he will maintain the supplies of tea crisps etc. to the coach this summer.

Kate Reddich

Will continue to undertake the gardening which she does so well at Colney Heath.

Jack Edwards

Will continue to act as treasurer for the Loco Section.

Roger Bell

Will continue to report on Loco Section meetings to the News Sheet.

Frank Dell

Will maintain supplies and make teas at Loco Section and General meetings.

John Squire

Will continue to supply bulk materials for working parties at Colney Heath.

Many of these jobs have in the past been carried out by the Section Leader but by diversifying responsibility this support team does enable someone like John with a young family to take on the role.

The one outstanding problem area is fund-raising, which means organising and running parties and or fetes.

Tony Dunbar

Will book the coming year's parties.

Ian Murray, John Squire and Jim MacDonald

Will organise the running of parties this summer.

The present Track Committee has already decided to limit the number of parties we undertake to a maximum of one in any two week period and to increase the charges, however this has yet to be finalised.

The organising group intends to recruit support, locos and drivers for these events and are not intending to run the parties on their own. We need support to earn the necessary income for the Loco Section. The alternative would be to make some kind of additional supplementary charge for the Loco Section. This matter will not go away, it has to be addressed. Even if we scrapped some of our activities we would still need funds to operate and in my personal opinion it is through the expansion of our activities at Colney Heath that the Loco Section will thrive.

I call your attention to our garden railway project. When it started the question was asked, 'Who has 0-gauge and gauge-1 engines or even an interest in such small scales?' The Council in its wisdom allocated the money and a few of us built the track. This summer we have seen growing interest and the number of G1 engines being built within our society is now in double figures.

We need to raise money to pursue our activities and put in place good facilities and we need to complete our ground level railway. When this new railway is there and working we will find the locos and people to run on it and this in itself will engender more active participation in and attract new members to the Loco Section. Positive

development and activities promote interest and engage support. Negative retrenchment will in my view lead to a decline in our fortunes.

John Squire

P.S. To all Sections and members and their families I hope you
all have a
**VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW
YEAR.**



From the Secretary

- 1) The Society is to attend the Model Engineer Exhibition at Sandown Park. Organisation of the stand is between myself and Jim Macdonald – models and stewards are required. Please contact me if you are interested! (Exhibit a model and get a ticket!)
- 2) Birthday Parties – I am the contact point for bookings – several dates already taken.
- 3) Copies of the replacement TN3 are available for purchase from me (cost £5.95).
- 4) Offers (preferably sensible) are invited for the disposal of the caravan!

Tony Dunbar

P.S. Compliments of the Season.

Exhibition Manager

Here I am again, back in my old job.

Once again we have been asked to participate in the London Model Engineering Exhibition which is being held at Wembley Conference Centre. All the stands will be in one hall (unlike Picketts Lock which had two) with the largest number of trade stands for many years. I have also been informed that catering facilities will be greatly improved.

Maurice Cummins

The Woodside Terminal Railroad Co.

H.Q. Legion Way, Friern Barnet



Request the Pleasure
of
YOUR COMPANY
(friends and family welcome)

on the occasion of their
Annual Open Evening
on

WEDNESDAY 12th DECEMBER 2001-10-18
7.00pm till late(ish)



Mince Pies and other Seasonal Refreshments will be served

Special trains will run

Marine Mutterings

From John Morgan

I'm sitting in, at the keyboard, for Bernard while he is being held (against his will) in a North London hospital. He has received visitors and is able to make telephone calls so is being kept up to date on Club news, so I had better be careful what I say...We all wish him a quick return to normal, which should be before you read this edition.

The Section's winter plan, which was done before the season ended, has been disrupted by not having Bernard around. The shelter was to be the first project, the plans of which and the materials required are with our leader and not necessarily on paper. So instead, work has started on clearing part of the east side bank to take tables and increase the area available for boaters and visitors to stand.

The third project to be tackled this closed season is alteration to the bridge over the cuckoo line to make its removal and replacement manageable by one person. How this will actually be achieved has yet to be decided.

Finally, steps down from the bridge to the path by the launching pit are to be built, giving easier access to the east side of the lake.

As always, any help on Sunday mornings or Thursday afternoon's would be gratefully received and would ensure that our plans to improve the facilities will be achieved.

The next combined Marine and Garden Railway meeting at HQ is on Friday 21st December.

Video Group News

From John Old

The Video Group were well pleased with the attention shown to their display on the day of the Curly Bowl competition and thank Frank Hills and Jim Macdonald for their help in finding the bits and pieces needed to display our selection of vintage and modern cine and video equipment. Considerable interest was shown in the display of still pictures which were created by grabbing single frames of digital video and printing onto photo quality paper.

Several people have hinted that they would like me to do some prints for them but none have accepted our invitation to join the Video Group and learn how to do it themselves. One Loco Section member has since attended our evening on basic computer editing. He said he was impressed with the simplicity of it and that he had learnt a lot in the space of one short evening. We also have had an evening transferring old cine film onto video tape; another occasion when people want us to do it for them but are reluctant to do it themselves. If only they knew how easy it can be. With a bit of practice, results can be just as good as taking it to a shop and paying a fortune to transfer a few minutes of film.

I would like to thank Malcolm Old for helping me in setting up the display and manning the morning shift and Dave and Andy Lawrence for taking over the afternoon stint.

The run up to Christmas is a relatively quiet time filming-wise but the new year should bring forth a rush of activity to get next year's competition entries up to an acceptable standard. With new ideas under consideration and scripting and actual filming under way, now is a good time to come along and join in our Wednesday evenings in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Not all our evenings are held at Headquarters so check first if you are contemplating a visit.

I would like to thank the Finchley Royal British Legion for granting us the use of their premises to film part of one of our productions, as well as being a nice place for a nightcap after our Club meetings. If anyone wants to buy me a drink I will only be too pleased to accept your most gracious offer!

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR
From John Old and the Video Group members

Combined Marine and Garden Railway Evening Friday 16th November.

By John Morgan

I'm sure that all will agree that our first combined meeting was a resounding success. The numbers swelled to no less than 17 before the start.

Derek Perham, who did a very good job standing in for Bernard, started the proceedings by drawing attention to the proposed changes to the constitution published in the November News Sheet. Present was John Squire, who was able to expand on the detail behind this. The prospect of this subject taking the whole evening was avoided (there are obviously some strong views around) as there was going to be a full discussion at an A (or E) GM.

I now have reservations on the original plan devised for the lake shelter, which was for Bernard to purchase the materials, then to construct the panels and transport them to Tyttenhanger. I feel that this should be changed in the light of Mr. L's problems. I know that Bernard was concerned about having to use the platform as a work area, but he should not be left to do this work on his own in his garden. All those present agreed and John Squire said he would be able to purchase the materials and have them delivered to the site if he can be given the shopping list. The alternative is for us to go mob handed to his home and help there. Please take note Bernard!!!

Mike Collingwood then gave us a very entertaining talk on the experiences from his canal holidays. Starting from the mysterious sinking of two boats at their moorings, both younger than his own elderly craft and after a survey gave one of them a clean bill of health, leading to why, following his own survey (using a different surveyor!) his own bilges, after years of being "dust dry" then started to fill up with water. Very good Mr C. We look forward to more tales from the canals...

Young Sam Skuse gave us a talk on his IC hydroplane, purchased at one of the London ME shows. Originally designed for electric power, it was modified for an Irvine 20 glow plug engine to run at St Albans. It would appear that Sam soon learnt that there was more to think about than just the power plant, when changing the method of propulsion. Items like the supplied prop coupler, which would now break if the engine was turned up to full power and there was a general sign of disapproval from the floor on the decision to keep the plastic propeller! Still, the boat did run, for up to 20/30 minutes, which is not bad for an IC. Thanks Sam.

After a break it was the Garden Railway men's turn.

Their projects for the winter are to lay more track and sidings, convert the paths to gravel for additional safety and to build a fence around the steaming table to improve appearances. No doubt they can do with more help should anyone have a free Sunday morning... There are places on the garden railway where there is interference to the radio control of trains and they can go out of control. After some discussion it was thought that if the track was earthed, this would help to suppress the problem.

John Squire continued with an insight into the complicated world of scale on garden railways. I do hope I have got this right!

O Gauge - 1 1/4" or 32 mm.

7mm equal to 1 foot for standard gauge (4' 8 1/2")

16mm equal to 1 foot for modelling narrow gauge.

Gauge 1 – 1 3/4" or 45mm.

10mm to a foot (UK) or 3/8" to a foot (Europe)

Narrow gauge "gets difficult"!!!

Gauge 3 – 2 1/2"

A new gauge...?

Commercial models of narrow gauge locomotives have adjustable gauge wheels to they can run on either O or gauge 1 track. However, the use of true scale track adds a further complication in that rolling stock is not generally capable of running on both, particularly through pointwork. Thanks John (I think). For anyone taking up this hobby, it might be worth asking some questions before opening the wallet!

Finally, John West showed us his Accucraft "Excelsior" 0-4-2 tank locomotive costing £485 It was dual gauge (see above).The driving wheels could be moved on their axles and the pony truck replaced with another supplied with the loco. The body was made of brass and steel with a single flue boiler of copper. The fuel was gas which was designed to run out before a boiler full of water. There was no gauge glass but a clever system of self regulating the water level guaranteed that you always started with a full boiler. Running time is 25 minutes. The valve gear only gave a degree of timing, not reverse which was accomplished by reversing the flow of steam by a valve, which made the system for radio control very simple. John is very pleased with the model. Its well machined using good quality materials. Its strength has already been tested by a derailment that sent it down to the ground without serious damage. The only downside was the poor painting, it rubs off if cleaned too vigorously. We all agreed it was a nice looking loco. Thanks John.

The winter meetings have started at a very high standard, which we now have to keep up!! Next meeting is Friday 21st December.

Diary Dates

Friday 21st December 8:00pm Combined Marine and Garden Railway Section Meeting (subject to be announced). HQ, Summers Lane, Finchley.

Editorial

Well, it's that time again when we try to 'doll up' the News Sheet to make it look festive and say to all members of the Society: A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS AND ABOVE ALL HEALTHY NEW YEAR: From the News Sheet team; Myself, Jill Prior, Ron Thorogood, Maurice Cummins, Marcel Bolle, Ken West and Dave Lawrence.

Here's hoping that Santa brings you what you wish for.



Grahame Ainge

Tyttenhanger Gazette By Roger Bell

The November Loco Section meeting was a 'Work in Progress'. There were only two models on the table, possibly as the subject of the meeting was not advertised in 'Dates for Your Diary' in the News Sheet, although the business side of the meeting did take us up to tea break.

John Caldwell had brought along his 3 ½" Shay locomotive designed by Kozo Hiraoka. It was based on a prototype from the 1920s. The loco has two four wheel bogies and the front and rear axle on each bogie are connected together by bevel gears and a propulsion shaft. A three cylinder vertical steam engine mounted amidships on the right hand side drives each bogie with propulsion shafts. The chassis frames are not very deep and were strengthened by tie rods. Since we last saw the loco, John has added the boiler, smokebox and cleading. There was no insulation under the cleading on the basis that it is better to have a larger boiler without insulation than a small boiler with insulation.

The brass cleading had a small kink in it and John asked the meeting how to remove it. It was suggested that without annealing the brass it be rolled back the other way, then back again. The design has a dummy Westinghouse compressor on the left hand running board but John will make a working water pump in its place. John also asked for more information on the valve gear and was advised to refer to the Austin Walton 'Twin Sisters' design of about 1954.

The model was superb. It was almost like watch making in its detail. The brake gear had levers to provide equal braking on each axle, the small diameter rods and clevises all looked to scale. It even had a working bell on the top of the boiler. It was a joy to look at. One problem we all have is finding a spanner to fit the nuts. Those nice looking Britool spanners are for fasteners made from imperial hexagon bar whilst manufacturers use metric bar. John found the solution is to use a grub screw and cap

head screws for the hexagon recess and fit a handle on the end; he has made nut runners in 6, 8 and 10 BA sizes like this.

At the beginning of last running season, Brian Kennedy lent Sam Skuce his 3 ½” gauge Doris 44932 and whilst undergoing repairs at Brian’s premises was badly damaged in a fire there. The tender was elsewhere at the time and was not affected. Sam is now restoring the loco and he described his progress so far, which included making new pistons and piston valves. Two of the old driving wheels were cracked, so a set of 3 ½” gauge Duchess wheels were modified to fit. The axles were re-turned and some old Loctite 603 bought at one of our auctions for 50p along with other items, was used to secure the wheels to the axles. Sam is now about to re-work the cylinder drain-cock mechanism and then the lubricator.

Standing up at the ‘Work in Progress’ meetings in front of up to 60 older and more experienced members can be a daunting task. Having to remember what one was going to say without being overcome with some unknown fear that can grip one on these occasions is quite a challenge. Our subject is highly technical and difficult to describe and what we are talking about is too small for all to see. There are many solutions to the same engineering problem and whilst talking constructive criticism may be levelled at the speaker. Whilst this is welcome it has to be accepted sometimes that we could have improved on our work: Everyone expects high standards of the Society’s members work, all of which adds to the challenge of talking about ones model.

I thought that Sam did a superb presentation of his model in a clear and confident manner, and as a junior member of some 17 years, with such great enthusiasm it was a joy to watch.

Brassed off by Brass **by Keith M Smythe**

When I first joined the HO Section of the NLSME I used to long to be able to justify spending my hard earned cash on some of those beautiful brass locos other members were able to acquire. There’s no doubt most of them are of museum quality in detail and finish and I can understand the attraction they generate amongst model railroad enthusiasts.

However, that soon changed when I witnessed the frustration members were experiencing trying to get these wonderful models to perform the simplest of functions.....run round the layout without derailling or stalling. Such is the skill of the manufacturer in achieving authenticity that tolerances are very tight and you have cases of bogies constantly derailling because there’s insufficient side play in the wheel sets, similar problems with long wheelbase driving wheels, and details such as steps and drain cocks fouling the pony trucks.

Now, if I’ve just forked out hundreds of pounds on my heart’s desire, I expect her to perform perfectly and that applies to my locos as well. What point is there in owning one of these models if it will only run on perfectly laid track and great sweeping curves? Sure, you can dismantle parts of it and try to effect a cure to the problem, but

that may not always work and there's the risk of creating more problems than you solve. Some would argue that therein lies the challenge, but would anyone seriously invest in say a personal computer and then find you had to strip it down just to get it to work? I don't think so!

So, have I changed my mind about acquiring brass locos? The simple answer is yes. Maybe if I inherit a fortune I might be tempted to dabble, but then I'd be buying a mansion where my ideal layout would feature ideal curves and hand laid track. In the meantime I'll stick with my good old reliable plastic bodied locos which are easily repaired or replaced as the case may be, and continue to commiserate with the model bourgeoisie as they get their knickers in a knot over their latest brass acquisition. Ah, the beauty of other people's frustrations. Happy railroading!

Ponder Over These – they're no worse than cracker jokes!

- Do infants enjoy infancy as much as adults enjoy adultery?
- If a pig loses its voice, is it disgruntled?
- If love is blind then why is lingerie so popular?
- Why is a man who invests all your money called a broker?
- If you take an Oriental man and spin him round several times does he become disoriented?
- "I am" is reportedly the shortest sentence in the English language. Could it be that "I do" is the longest?
- If people from Poland are called Poles, why aren't people from Holland called Holes?
- Do Typhoo Tea employees take coffee breaks?

The Comrie Railroad By Bernard Lambert

I was asked if I could write an article about the ex-St.Albans loco. *William Thrale*. On thinking a little about the subject I soon started to think about Colin Sears who ran *William Thrale* with me and I decided to change the subject – William Thrale can wait for another article another day!

Now Colin was a good friend of mine and was also a great contributor to the St.Albans Society and, later, to the North London Society. When he retired and decided to settle in Scotland we all missed his cheerful presence and I determined to visit him once he was settled down.

After a period of searching Colin hit upon Comrie as a fine place to live but as yet he had no knowledge of the Comrie Railroad. This was a pleasure still to come as a result

of reading about local activities and events. An Open Day at the Comrie Railroad was advertised.

In due course Kay and Colin invited Jeane and myself to go up and spend a few days with them. This was an invitation that could not be missed and we were soon on our way – all 430 odd miles of it. The journey was well worth it and we enjoyed the company of Kay and Colin exploring Comrie and having days out in the Scottish countryside. I could write more about this but we are a Model Engineering Society and I must return to the subject.

One of the Comrie Railroad open days coincided with my presence in Comrie so we piled into Colin's Jeep and went in search of the Railway. On arrival at Comrie Station we saw a busy passenger hauling 7.1/4" railway with American outline locos. working in beautiful scenery.

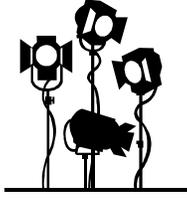
We resisted the temptation to ride and found our way behind the scenes to have a look at the Engine Sheds and Workshops and to have a chat with the members working in the background. We were made very welcome and soon had mugs of tea in our hands – all gatherings of model engineers are much the same! The storage and workshop facilities were very impressive as was the enthusiasm of the members. After the usual talk about engines we were told of the Herculean efforts involved in building the railway on a site based on rock and far from flat.

The Railroad started life as quite a small circuit making use of a relatively flat route naturally available to the tracklayers. Ambition for a decent length of run resulted in some surveying work the result of which would have struck fear into the hearts of most Clubs. The survey showed the need for cuttings through solid rock, embankments and two viaducts before track could be laid. This work was embarked on and took several years, I never found exactly how many, to complete.

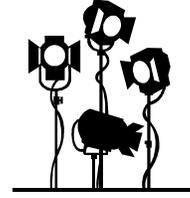
The outcome was a track that offered a most spectacular ride with some interesting gradients and the most magnificent scenery.

In due course, when public demand was dying, Colin and I rode for a few circuits and enjoyed every minute of it. There is something fascinating about a big loco working hard and we could have put up with this for much longer. We were even offered a drive on one of the smaller locos but fear of doing something foolish caused us to politely reject this kind offer on the grounds of our own relative incompetence. Better to be a coward than to damage someone's pride and joy!

All in all we had a very pleasant day out with a very hospitable Club. The Comrie Railroad is well worth a visit if you are in the area when they are running. Colin will, doubtless, have this information and I certainly intend to try for another visit.



Spotlight on Bert Mead Part II



I was of course a modeller before I joined the Society in 1944 and before the War I was building a Southern Maid. It was an outside cylinder engine. Although I completed it I never painted it and I ran it only a few times. A member in the Society (whose name I can't remember) went with me to a West London track where we ran the engine.

During the War LBSC designed two gauge 0 engines: a 4-4-0 based on the Schools Class he called the 'Bat' and an 0-6-0 tender engine which he called the 'Owl'. I built the 'Bat' and just to be a bit cocky instead of slip eccentric valve gear that LBSC specified, I built it with full Stevenson's valve gear. Unfortunately I have not got a photograph of this loco.

The site we occupied at Arkley we knew was always earmarked for a reservoir and we knew eventually the Water Board would build it and we would have to get off the site. Well the time came and the period of the move to Colney Heath co-incided with my forthcoming retirement from the police when I wanted to do my house up and sell it. We wanted to move back down to Salisbury. What with the work on the house and shift work in my job I didn't get up to Colney Heath much in the early days.

The hobby was progressing. I had built in 0 gauge and 2 ½" and everyone seemed to be building things like Flying Scotsmans, Royal Scots etc but I wanted something different and decided to build a Drummond Paddle Box, a four cylinder loco in 3 ½". I had no drawings so I contacted the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and they had a drawing in the Locomotive magazine and let me visit them and examine the drawing. It was a side elevation. No cross section and no tender were available. I then advertised in the Engineer and got drawings from a bloke in Berwick on Tweed! I got an 0 gauge cross section drawing and a double 0 drawing for the tender which I drew out in 3 ½" gauge. Later I wanted to go bigger and LBSC brought out the Maid of Kent although at that point I didn't have time to start it. Later when he published the outside cylinder variant I built it and ran it for several years. But then of course one is never satisfied and again I was after something new – something bigger and better and I started the Saint: But more of that later.

Eventually we moved to Salisbury. I knew there was a nucleus of a club there because there was a very big school in the district called Bishop Wordsworth's and on the door leading into the School there was a notice mentioning the local Model Engineering Society. They did not have their own site although they did have a meeting place. There were a lot of villages around the area and they of course had fetes. I felt if we could build a portable track and visit the fetes we would get well known and things might grow from there. However no one seemed to do much and I realised afterwards that wages in an agricultural community were not like they were in London and so people couldn't afford to indulge their hobby as much as they'd like. Anyway I managed to get some steel angle from a scrap merchant to build the 'A' frame part of

the portable track. It came from metal frame beds and he gave us about 50 lengths and delivered them to us. I made the first 'A' frame as a pattern so that if I was not there for any reason on a Club day the others in the Club could work on making further ones. But it so turned out that if I were there they'd work on the job but if I was not, nothing got done. In the end I decided to go to the Southampton Club that was about 22 miles away. I was made very welcome there and I ran there on a Sunday.

We had bought a detached house in Salisbury and I had a job with the Army at the Southern Command Headquarters. I sat the establishment exam and became an established civil servant. My wife's home was not too many miles away. We met up with old friends from our younger days and life was lovely. After about 2 ½ years Phyllis became depressed and nothing the doctors could do could relieve it. Eventually I realised she was missing our only son and wanted to be back in North London. In the end we packed up and came to Southgate. Of course financially we were worse off coming back because of the difference in house prices. We'd moved down to Salisbury in 1963 and moved back in 1966.

But I was lucky. I got a job in Enfield Council as enquiry officer and I was able to transfer my three years service for pension purposes. Most of us in the office were ex-coppers. I had a very good boss and I really enjoyed my time there. We worked in the office in the mornings and in the afternoons we went knocking on doors chasing up rate arrears and checking on empty properties to see if they were occupied for rating purposes. Inspecting buildings to see if extensions had been made affecting rating valuation was another of our jobs. At the start, my job was partly as a bailiff. In the job the Council liked to employ ex-coppers because we were not likely to be intimidated by the defaulters we had to call on.

There was an occasion once when we got mixed up in an attempted wages snatch. At the back of our main building there were some prefabs and as I was going round into the office I heard these shots being fired. The next thing I knew this bloke came running round and knocked me down and I fell over some dustbins. He hurtled on and I ran after him. When I got round the corner he was lying on the ground. What had happened was that we had an ex-CID man on the staff in charge of security. (I didn't in fact know his history before this). The Head of Security had chased after the villain and one of the villain's mates had tried to shoot the ex-CID man with a sawn-off shotgun but had hit his mate instead! We both got a letter of commendation from the Council but were told not to do it again!

Back to model engineering and the 5" Saint which most of you will have seen. Well being a Southern Railway man years ago, I wished afterwards that I'd built a King Arthur. Anyway it took me 22 years before I finished the Saint in the summer of 1984 although because I moved house twice etc. it represented about 12 – 14 years of work. I tried to put as much detail on it as possible making it as correct as I possibly could and of course that takes a hell of a lot longer when you build to scale. On the first run in September 1984 it blew a gasket and I had to take the boiler off to get at it! For a number of years it ran with the tender from the Maid of Kent whilst I was building its proper tender. Eventually it was sold to Len Johnston who made a new funnel for it (I think when they first came out they had a different funnel to later years) and a new front footplate.

Unfortunately in 1987 my wife Phyllis had a stroke, to be followed during the next six and a half years by four more. The last was in my car at the track in October 1996 from which she died in Chase Farm Hospital. I can't however complain; we were married 63 years and she was nearly 92. During those last six and a half years I looked after her and ran the home and eventually sold the engines as I wasn't running them and I thought other people could enjoy them.

I started a gauge 1 4-6-0 but got fed up with it and sold it and now I just look and admire other people's efforts which is just about all I'm fit for at 90! Incidentally, I was a bad bet for the Metropolitan Police financially as by last September I had been drawing my pension for 38 years, having served in the Force for only 31!

50 Years Ago

By Grahame Ainge

Part II

Affiliation Day

The forerunner of our present 'invitation days' was suggested early in 1951. It was to be a SMEEA affiliation day. SMEEA stands for the Society of Model and Experimental Engineers Affiliation. The day was planned to be held at Arkley and would be the first one the Club had staged. 'It is high time we organised such an event if we are to uphold our reputation as a progressive body,' said the Editor Alf Bradley. 'We should be ready to entertain as many societies as are pleased to come and make each visitor individually welcome.' Presumably in order to become affiliated to SMEE a society or club had to stage one of these affiliation days. Exactly how affiliation worked is not clear from the News Sheets of 1951, so if any member has useful information on the workings of it in those days please write and let us know.

Anyway, the event at Arkley proved a great success with visitors from many Societies attending. Each Section put on a display and Mr Reed, Secretary of the SMEEA seemed well pleased.

Boats and Yachts Section

March 22nd 1951 was a sad day for the Boats and Yachts Section since it was becoming apparent that there was very little support for the Section. A 'cabin meeting' should have been held to work out details of events for the coming year. 'Only three jolly (not very) sailors put in an appearance: Skipper Drayson and a couple of hands - ARW Pinnock and HV Tankard: Very poor show!'

At the AGM on 4th May, so poor was the support that no leader of the Section was elected and it was declared defunct. Despite the demise, the Society as a whole was still committed to holding a regatta at the Verulamium Lake as a joint effort along with the St Albans Society of Model Engineers. An association with the St Albans Club goes back a long way. It is a measure of how dependent members were on public transport when the buses and Green Line coach that connected North London with St

Albans were detailed in the News Sheet. The regatta was ultimately a great success on 15th July and was attended by a large crowd.

The 1951 AGM

The AGM was held on 4th May and Ted Moon was elected Chairman of the Society. He had spent the last three and a half years as Leader of the Loco Section during which time it had gone from strength to strength. Leader of the Loco Section was now to be Rolleaux Wuidart.

The demise of the Boats and Yachts Section was an important area of discussion at the AGM and it was felt that the lack of suitable water for sailing was the main cause of the Section being 'in the doldrums.' Out of 163 members, 60 had intimated on their application forms that they were interested in boats so it was bewildering to the meeting that the Society could not now form a Section.

Elm Court Association Field Day

The Society visited Elm Court (also the regular meeting place of the Miniature Railway Section) in June and displayed model cars and the 00 layout. An aircraft control-line flying display was provided and Ted Moon, Rolleaux Wuidart and Bert Mead provided engines for operation on the Club's portable track.

The Society Exhibition, 1951

The most important exhibition in the country in 1951 was of course the Festival of Britain, built on a large bomb site on the south bank of the Thames in London. A smaller exhibition, but just as important to Club members was the Society exhibition held between 31st August and 8th Sept inclusive. Although attendance was not quite as good as anticipated, it was a success. Bert Mead together with Ted Moon and Rolleaux Wuidart again had locomotives in steam giving rides. The gauge-1 Model Railway Society ran a layout and members thought 'what a grand railway in this scale could be laid in a garden.' Fifty years later the Society realised this ambition when the present garden railway started running at Colney Heath.

A model in '000' (2mm scale) by Mr 'Dot' Sherwood was claimed to be the smallest steam locomotive in the world. It was a freelance design to English loading gauge of a 2-6-2 tender engine. The cylinders were 0.118" bore x 0.175" stroke and firing was by means of a petrol blowlamp.

The Tramway and Light Railway Society had a stand and it 'came as a shock to realise that some of the youngsters visiting the Exhibition had never seen a tram.' Fifty years later the same comments are heard about the steam locomotive, which just goes to show how things keep changing.

The Radio Society of Great Britain stand with its transmitter was sited in the same room as the Recording stand and unfortunately their 'noises off' interfered with the Recording Department and these two 'would be better kept apart in future!' Incidentally, at the same time as our own exhibition was having these transmission and recording problems in Barnet the BBC was having success on a nationwide scale

with their first tests of VHF transmission and Deutche Grammophon had produced the first 12" LP recording.

All the members on the Model Cars section Stand appeared very impressive in smart white overalls, especially 'before their pristine glory was dimmed with oily spots.' Part of their report of the Exhibition is reproduced below:

During the Exhibition there were a number *of* mishaps and unrehearsed incidents. We recall one *of* our youngsters who put his car on a rail that was already occupied and did not remove his band in time! Then the car which left the rail climbed Mr. Cockman's arm and landed back on the track setting off in the opposite direction between rails! Another car left the rail and had a pick-a-back on the car which happened to be passing!

The number of derailments was not surprising, *for* the track is just about worn out. Damage was sustained by the cars of nearly all operators.

Before the end of the year, however, the Section was able to replace Nordromo when they assembled their new track for the first time.

Dangerous Flying in the Mud?

During 1951 the Aero Section was still searching for a site to fly their planes although in November an event was held at Arkley:

A CONTROL-LINE team race has been held at Arkley between Hatfield M.A.C. and N.L.S.M.E. Aero Section. This was very exciting, and we regret our power of description does not allow us to give readers an adequate picture of the scene. Imagine several control-line operators working from adjacent positions near the centre of a common circle, and planes flying at speeds in the region of 60 m.p.h. with operators ducking and weaving them over each other's heads. On this occasion the field was practically waterlogged-as the member can vouch who fell "in" it. The contest ended with N.L.S.M.E. occupying second place. Nothing daunted, we look forward to a return match at Hatfield in the near future. On the next available week-end, we intend to try out the Society's "Rudder Bug," the radio-control aircraft built by the Aero Section. This will take place at the De Havilland Aerodrome at Hatfield. Mr.Parfitt has produced an experimental receiver. Tests will be for lift and trim.

Away from Arkley, big things were happening in the British aircraft industry. The first V-bomber, the Vickers Valiant made its maiden flight which was a source of great interest to aero modellers of the day.

A New Member

A new member by the name of Geoffrey Cashmore joined the Society in 1951. He was a very fine model engineer and showed at the November 1951 Loco Meeting the boiler barrel for a 5" gauge 'George V' he was building. As time went on Geoff Cashmore was to become a prominent member of the Society and although Geoff is no longer with us, happily his 'George V' is still running within the Society and is much admired today. (See top photograph page 14)

Red or Blue?

The Loco Section held their usual monthly meeting at St John's Hall about a week before the 1951 General Election. The meeting was very well attended and the table was decorated with miscellaneous locomotive parts. Amongst those who attended were two ladies:

After declaring the meeting open, Mr. Wuidart welcomed those present and proceeded to deal with the agenda. It soon became clear that the ladies were a little perplexed, and Mr. Wuidart enquired if all was well with them. It then became known that they had been under the impression that they were attending a political meeting. On being enlightened, the two ladies blushing murmured their apologies and retired.

The General Election of 1951 was memorable for two other reasons. Winston Churchill, who in 1945 had been rejected as a peace-time leader, was returned to power, even though he was 77, at the head of a Conservative government and the youngest Tory candidate in the election was a Miss Margaret Roberts.

A Visit to Tyttenhanger

In November some members of the Stationary Steam Section went to the Water Pumping Station at Tyttenhanger where a steam bell crank pump installed in 1911 was soon to be replaced by turbines. They could not have foreseen the day when part of the site was to become available to us through the kindness of the Water Company. Nor could they have foreseen what an impressive facility members would in the future build there, complete with workshop, pond, garden railway, ground level and raised level track and catering and toilet facilities.

Cash-Flow Problems

In December the NLSME Council faced a growing problem of income vs expenditure and it was felt that inflation had reduced the value of the income from subscriptions. Something had to be done about the Society's finances!

The biggest single commitment of the Society was the News Sheet and it was reluctantly agreed that cuts would have to be made. It was shown that News Sheet costs, which included printing, envelopes and postage amounted to about half of each member's subscription and 'as a result in 1952, the News Sheet is to be cut to a bi-monthly publication.'

It's reassuring to know that by comparison, the News Sheet costs today are about 1/5th of members' subscriptions and for that we don't get a mere four pages, as was the case 50 years ago, but 19!

The End



Letters Page

Thank You from Jack Edwards

Thank you to all the people who have enquired after my health. I have received so many 'phone calls and good wishes from Club members and so many of you kept me up to date with the latest news in the Society which was very important to me. By the time you read this hopefully I will be back to Sunday mornings at the Track.

Many thanks to you all.

Jack Edwards



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