

## The Chairman's Notes

Firstly may I invite all members to attend the next General Meeting at our Finchley HQ when there will be a short talk followed by wine and nibbles and I hope convivial chat in anticipation of the festive season. There will be a raffle and the Club Christmas cards will be available.

I regret to say that some vandals stole our little three-wheeler dumper-truck last week. On the following Sunday the young men of our Society conducted a search and found it ditched in a river down a 12-foot embankment and we rescued it. That is to say Jim MacDonald, John West and I watched these fit young men rescue it in a supervisory capacity. It appears undamaged and was driven home where it is now locked away.

Mike Chrisp has very kindly taken over the arrangements of the General meetings and I am sure that his program of events will prove to be of interest to all members of all sections, **SO PLEASE SUPPORT US BY ATTENDING THE GENERAL MEETINGS.**

Time marches on so may I wish you all.

**A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR**

*John Squire*

## Secretary's Snippets

The Society has received a copy of The Bedford Model Engineering Society's News Sheet, 'The Coupling'. This will be placed on the notice board in the carriage at Colney Heath.

There was a general feeling from our members of the Council (and Society) that the General Meetings should not be amalgamated with the Locomotive Section meetings. These meetings were regarded as a social gathering of like minds for those who attend. Mike Chrisp has offered to organise these meetings and has produced a format for 2004 and 2005. We thank Mike for his offer and his efforts, and thank those members who made comments to Council members on this matter. The Council encourages all members to attend these General Meetings - the size of the meeting is only limited by the number of seats available - so come early for a seat!!!

*David S Harris*

# **Marine Mutterings**

## **By Bernard Lambert**

Nothing to report on the Marine front apart from working party progress.

I am still rather sad about the demise of evening meetings at H.Q. and could easily be persuaded to call the occasional meeting if there is any demand – if any of you want the odd Marine and/or Garden Railway meeting at H.Q. please let me, John Morgan or John Squire know.

### **Working Parties**

Every Sunday until Easter starting at 9.00 am. (or as early as you can make it!) - Marine working party at Colney Heath.

We have had reasonable turnouts so far – my thanks to all concerned – and have made good progress on removing the mound. Please keep up the good work as there is plenty left to do.

Enjoy the working!

## **Treasurer Twittering**

Nothing special to report this month. We are in the season of paying our bills and diminishing our funds until subs become due next year. The non-routine expenses have still not happened apart from a small spend on the new Colney Heath kitchen but this won't last much longer!

*Bernard Lambert*

## **From the Membership Secretary**

Membership now stands at 242 comprising 156 Full, 41 OAP, 17 Junior, 17 Country and 11 Honorary Members.

### **New Members**

This month we have one membership application to approve.

**Grahame Gardner**

*Bernard Lambert*

# General Meetings – Comment, Arrangements and Schedule by Mike Chrisp

We are very fortunate to have two excellent venues at which to gather to pursue and enjoy our particular interests. We have a fine Headquarters building in Finchley and an unrivalled site in Colney Heath. Perhaps because of this, we are a flourishing society with a healthy membership and have organised ourselves to support and promote a wide range of model engineering and allied interests.

However, it seems that many of us tend to be more supportive of our ‘sections’ than of the Society as a whole. It is for convenience that our ‘sections’ meet separately, at separate times and in separate places. We should not forget that we are all members of the Society, not just of the ‘section’, which promotes our particular interest. Every member is welcome to join in with any or all of the activities in which the Society is involved.

It could be embarrassing if all 250 or so members decided one evening to attend, say the HO ‘section’ meeting; it would be difficult to get everyone into the Headquarters, let alone into the track room! However, as members of the Society we are all automatically members of each and every individual ‘section’.

Regular meetings have been a traditional feature of the Society throughout its existence, and in 2004 this will amount to 60 years. Clearly members will wish to get together to enjoy specific activities, but monthly General Meetings are an important aspect of Society life. While accepting that some may have to travel an appreciable distance to reach the Finchley Headquarters, a great many live conveniently close.

Is it not reasonable to expect members to support the Society at these General Meetings? By that, I don’t mean turning up to be entertained, but participating in order to learn what is currently going on in the Society and to offer assistance and expertise when things need to be done. That said, I appreciate that not everyone can attend every General Meeting; we all have other calls on our time. I also realise that a journey to Finchley maybe just to talk among ourselves is not likely to attract a very enthusiastic audience. The time has therefore come to ‘Do Something About It!’

For my part, I have decided to grasp the General Meetings by the scruff of their neck and attempt to set up a programme which I hope will appeal to most members. With any luck and a following wind, this will lead to a growing attendance at Headquarters on the first Friday of most months. We can comfortably accommodate about fifty or so in our main meeting room, and there was once a time when such numbers were not uncommon.

I have put together a schedule which includes talks from knowledgeable speakers and participation by our own membership. In my experience, ‘Work in Progress’ evenings in which members bring along their current project are very enjoyable. We have also had some excellent meetings when those involved with one of the ‘sections’ of the Society show us what they get up to.

We must leave space for our Annual General Meeting, and it has been demonstrated that evenings discussing particular aspects of our activities are usually well received. With all this in mind, I submit the following outline scheme for General Meetings throughout 2004. I hope that members will understand that I need a little more time to confirm some of the arrangements and to fill in the details, but these will be forthcoming in good time for advance information to be published in these pages to allow members who have to travel any distance the opportunity to do so knowing what has been arranged.

<b>5 December 2003</b>	<b>Anecdotes and Reminiscences with Seasonal Refreshments</b>
<b>2 January 2004</b>	<b>John Marsh: Archive Railway Films</b>
<b>6 February 2004</b>	<b>John Beesley: Restoration of a Hunslet 0-6-0ST Locomotive</b>
<b>5 March 2004</b>	<b>A Section Entertains</b>
<b>2 April 2004</b>	<b>On the Table: Work in Progress</b>
<b>7 May 2004</b>	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>
<b>4 June 2004</b>	<b>Derek Brown: CAD is Easy!</b>
<b>2 July 2004</b>	<b>Forum: Measure Twice, Cut Once!</b>
<b>6 August 2004</b>	<b>Stationary Steam Section Entertains at Colney Heath + Barbecue</b>
<b>3 September 2004</b>	<b>Preparation for our 60th Anniversary Celebrations</b>
<b>1 October 2004</b>	<b>On the Table: Work in Progress</b>
<b>5 November 2004</b>	<b>A Section Entertains</b>
<b>3 December 2004</b>	<b>Anecdotes and Reminiscences with Seasonal Refreshments</b>

I have a similar outline schedule for 2005, but if anyone out there has a helpful suggestion for a topic for a General Meeting, I would be very pleased to hear about it, especially if it is to offer services! I am also happy to receive constructive comment concerning these proposals.

### **Locomotive Section Meetings Move to Third Fridays**

It has been suggested both at Council and at the November Locomotive Section Meeting (and no-one has yet objected) that from and including the January 2004 Locomotive Section Meeting at Headquarters these meetings will move to the third Friday of each month. So please don't turn up on the second Friday because you'll be lonely! Details of these meetings are published elsewhere.

### **General Meeting 5 December 2003: Informal Christmas Gathering**

With apologies for the short notice, we plan to kick off the Christmas Festivities with an opportunity to mingle and chat while enjoying a Finger Buffet with accompanying alcoholic and non-alcoholic liquid refreshment all organised, created and masterminded by John Squire (without the aid of a safety net, but no doubt with the help of others who prefer to remain unnamed).

To get us into an appropriate frame of mind, the informal evening will begin with a session of Anecdotes and Reminiscences by our very own members who are certain to amuse, entertain and educate all present.

The meeting, which will take place at our Headquarters in Downway, North Finchley, is scheduled to begin at 8pm and finish around 10pm.

Next month (2 January) John Marsh will present an evening of Archive Railway Films.

See you there!

### **General Meeting 2 January 2004: Evening of Archive Railway Film**

To follow a Christmas and New Year period during which we have all been very busy enjoying ourselves and beavering away in our workshops, I thought it would be 'A Good Idea' to ask John Marsh to show us some more of his excellent Railway Films.

Those present for his previous visit all thoroughly enjoyed his presentation and were keen for more! In his inimitable style, John will bring fresh images of a bygone age to our screen accompanied by an informative commentary.

The meeting, which will take place at our Headquarters in Downway, North Finchley, is scheduled to begin at 8pm and finish around 10pm, with refreshing tea and biscuits at about 9pm, courtesy of our own Frank Dell.

The next month (6 February) John Beesley will regale us with the Trials and Tribulations of restoring his (12in. to the foot) 0-6-0ST Hunslet locomotive.

See you there!

### **General Meeting 6 February 2004: Restoration of a Hunslet Locomotive**

John Beesley is the owner of a full size steam locomotive. A Hunslet 0-6-0 saddle tank engine with 16in. cylinders, it was built in 1945 and was purchased by the National Coal Board. Following many years' very hard work, the NCB returned it to Hunslet in 1974 for a complete overhaul to as-new condition.

John bought it in 1980 and has run it at Chinnor since. The time came for another overhaul and this evening's presentation is all about the problems and pleasures of working on a full size locomotive.

The meeting, which will take place at our Headquarters in Downway, North Finchley, is scheduled to begin at 8pm and finish around 10pm, with refreshing tea and biscuits at about 9pm, courtesy of our own Frank Dell.

The next month (5 March) we will be entertained by members of one of our Sections. Details have yet to be finalised, so please watch this space!

See you there!

## **News from the Tyttenhanger Committee**

### **By Donal Corcoran**

The Tyttenhanger Committee held its November meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November and it was an opportunity to reflect on the season, which has just flown by. Nearer the start of next season we will highlight some of the more important rules and regulations, based on past experience.

The Committee would like to thank all of those who attended their duties at Colney Heath during the summer. The season could not have been as successful without you. Those of you who did not do their turn can make up for it by attending work parties this winter. Also a big thank you to Ian Johnston for arranging the stewards rota for 2003.

We would like to thank all those who helped out on our Halloween night. There are too many to name so I won't attempt to for risk of forgetting someone, but I will say a good time was had by all who attended.

On Halloween we had some unwanted intruders at the end of the night, so can we take this opportunity to remind members to check the site when they are at Colney Heath.

Lastly the Tyttenhanger Committee would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

## **The North London Society of Model Engineers 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibition**

**by Donal Corcoran**

The year 2004 sees the North London S.M.E.'s 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary and along with our presence at national exhibitions through the year, it was thought that we should hold our own celebrations in view of this momentous occasion.

In the past ten years the Society has arranged two large-scale events; firstly our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition combining the LBSC Memorial Bowl Competition and lastly our exhibition at Barnet College in 1997. These were two very different events and it is an event like our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition, which took place at Colney Heath in 1994 that we intend to organise.

This means that over the weekend of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September 2004 the Colney Heath site will be transformed into an exhibition of all aspects which the North London S.M.E. represents.

The aim right now is to keep everyone in the Society up to date with the plans, which are going ahead for this very important event. As I write this it is mid October. Apart from the date for the event, there is very little which is cast in stone. Therefore I would like to show you what I envisage for this event.

If you were at the Society's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event you will already have an idea of what the weekend may look like. It is intended that we will hire-in marquees as we did in 1994. These will be very important as there is no better way of displaying the Society's interests and providing shelter from the elements. (We will be praying for good weather, but you can never be sure.)

I am in the process of contacting each of the individual sections of the Society to ask them to supply exhibits, which will hopefully include portable layouts, but at the moment I will be looking for information as to how much space they will be requiring so that a site plan can be agreed nice and early.

This event is going to be an opportunity to trumpet the hobby which we all enjoy as well as the Society. Both days of the weekend will be open to the public. It is hoped that we can have all the railways at Colney Heath running as well as activity on the Boating Lake, as well as giving traction engine rides.

Well that deals with the days in as much detail that we have sorted so far. As for Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2004 we intend on bringing in caterers to provide food in the evening when the site will be closed to the public and only members and invited guests will be on site.

I hope this has given you all a rough idea of what we are proposing, and I will write again in the New Year to keep you all informed, and be prepared for a request to help sometime next year.

## **Halloween Night Delight**

One small 4-year old boy - name of Martin - was almost but not quite speechless during the Halloween celebrations at the track on 31 October. And not only Martin, but his mum & dad too and their friends, were absolutely amazed at the ingenuity and effort that had been expended on making the whole place such an truly wizard place to be!

Martin is most anxious that "Those Responsible" should please take great care of all their special effects ready for Halloween 2004! He even wants to be a Junior Member so he can help you!

Seriously, Martin's mum & dad are very good friends of ours and often bring Martin to the track on Sunday afternoons which they always greatly enjoy - but Halloween was an altogether different evening for all of them, so thank you everyone for making at least one little boy blissfully happy.

*Mike & Beryl Collingwood*

## **Editorial**

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the News Sheet team, which I understand, consists of a larger number of members than ever. Even I do not know how many are in this happy band and who they all are! But certainly Maurice C. is involved and Ron T. still mans the printer.

I am soon to lose the services of my daughter, Jill Prior, who I am happy to say is expecting triplets in the not too distant future. As soon as I heard the news I asked her to train me in the jobs she did. I have to say I am beginning to get proficient at it now so soon I will be a fully-fledged News Sheet editor. Thank you Jill for over four years of work doing that desperate job of compiling on the last day.

Yes, it is over four years now that I have been editor of this little journal and I often wonder if it is time to step down and let someone else have a go. If anyone in the Society would like to take it over please let me or the Chairman know.

Thank you everyone who has contributed reports, articles, photographs, jokes and suggestions over the past year – as always the News Sheet cannot exist without your contributions. Please keep on sending them although sometimes there may be a delay before they can be published.

I only have one problem that occasionally arises and that is with images. As many will know, basic hotmail does not provide a very big capacity and a few images sent to me in a few days of each other can block my account. Last summer I came back from a two-week holiday to find so many E-mails in my in-box that it was blocked (What it is to be popular!). When this happens following E-mails cannot be accepted and I know that at least a few last summer did not arrive. At present all images for the News Sheet are non-digital and a hard copy is the only form in which they can be used so please send any images by post in that form. There is normally no problem with text and of course all written contributions are much preferred in electronic form but don't let the absence of a computer or a even a typewriter stop you sending me material.

As usual this year, can I remind you that there will be no News Sheet in January since the work involved in its production would mean the team would have to work over the Christmas break?

Once again, Happy Christmas and have a successful New Year in all you do.

*Grahame Ainge*

## **Tyttenhanger Gazette** **by Roger Bell**

Our speaker at the November Loco Meeting was Martin Dawes, a Methodist Minister from Biggleswade where he looks after nine churches. After seven years in the Ministry one has a nine-month sabbatical where one is free to pursue an interest of ones choosing. It was during one of these sabbaticals that Martin researched and wrote his book 'The end of the line' which covers the story of the railway service from Kings Cross Funeral Station which is just north of Gasworks tunnel to the Great Northern Cemetery Station at Colney Hatch. The service began in 1861 and the seven and a half-mile journey took fifteen minutes. One needs to take a look at the history of the time to understand the need for it and also to ask the question often asked of Martin 'Why research such an obscure subject'?

His inspiration came from an unpublished British Railways book listing all the stations and stopping places on the national rail network, many of which are not in the timetable. It was the name 'Kings Cross Funeral Station' and Colney Hatch Cemetery that led Martin to investigate further.

The need for a railway and a cemetery was due to the overcrowding in the London cemeteries due to the vast growth of the metropolis. In 1801 the population was 818,219 and by 1851 this had risen to 1,886,576. The area of the land available for burials remained stable at 220 acres.

Graves for the lower classes were thirty feet deep and would contain eighteen coffins one above the other, children being buried in the gaps between the boards. The whole lot was not covered up properly until the last burial had taken place, the top coffin being two feet below the surface. The graves were so close together that as a new grave was dug the coffins in the neighbouring graves were exposed to the air. The graves were rapidly re-used, sometimes within fourteen years and the remains of the previous occupants were removed and the bones and partially decomposed remains being reburied elsewhere or left scattered on the ground. At the cemetery at Stepney bones and teeth were found on the surface, the bones would be sold for fertiliser production and there was a market for second-hand coffin furniture, the brass plates, handles and even nails being re-used. The stench arising in warm weather from poorly buried remains made many parts of the capital unpleasant and this led in itself to disease and death.

In the 1840s corpses were retained in the family home, which would only have one room in which the family slept, washed, cooked, ate and sat, it was considered irreverent to bury ones loved ones in haste. The undertakers were often too busy to arrange a prompt funeral and at five pounds this money would take some time to raise. As the body decayed others would become ill and die as a result.

The passing of various Acts of Parliament led to cemeteries being built on the outskirts of London such as Brompton, Highgate and Kensal Green. The Great Northern London Cemetery Company (GNLC) was formed to establish a cemetery just north of Colney Hatch Station in the parish of East Barnet and to have a Great Northern Railway connection to the Capital and the main line. GNLC and GNR were entirely separate companies despite the similarity of their titles.

The GNLC's 1855 prospectus states that its intention was to provide burial space, especially for the poorer classes, but their pricing revealed a lack of understanding of the real depth of poverty that existed at the time. There were different classes of funerals as follows: -

First class: in a catacomb or brick grave. 20 s.

Second class: in a grave not bricked, but held in perpetuity. 10 s.

Third class: in graves not held in perpetuity and not paupers. 5s.

Fourth class: Paupers. 1s.

Infants under 10: one third of the above rates.

Kings Cross Funeral Station was built in the popular neo-gothic style as Kings Cross and was 150-ft long and 25-ft wide with a tower with a wedge shaped spire adding another 20-ft at its Northern end. It had two floors and as the station was built into the side of a cutting the upper story was at street level.

There were two entrances at street level one of which was for mourners, servants and attendants that led to a hall where the tickets were issued. Waiting rooms were provided allowing a measure of privacy to each of the mourning parties. The other entrance was for the coffins, which were lowered to platform level with a hydraulic lift. One question asked at the meeting: - 'Was a single ticket required for the deceased?' Apparently the deceased travelled as part of the overall funeral package. The mortuary there was a large room and like the rest of the building it had stained glass windows and ornamental brickwork. Ventilation shafts were provided and continuous upward current of air was maintained by the use of gas jets which were constantly lit.

It must have been an attractive spectacle for passengers at night to leave Gasworks tunnel and be greeted by a long row of illuminated stained glass windows as they passed by the funeral station on their way North.

The cemetery had a smaller station and waiting rooms with a chapel.

The GNR had one coffin carriage, possibly converted from a 'tranship van'. It looked similar to any other covered goods van but the sides consisted entirely of four pairs of double doors. The inside was divided into four sections accessible from both sides, these were subdivided horizontally to form eight separate compartments. The four-wheel fifteen-foot van could carry eight coffins across its width.

The locomotive was a 2-2-2 built by Sharp Bros. Of Manchester in 1846 which became known as 'little sharpies'. In 1850 they were extended to increase the wheelbase a further 3-ft 1-inch to 15-ft 9-ins allowing a 420 gallon water tank and a small coke bunker to be added.

Whilst it was usual for the coffin carriage to travel at the front of the train, it was photographed on one occasion at the rear. The carriages were all 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> class and were fitted out so as to be of 'suitable appearance for the conveyance of mourners.

The service was not as well used as anticipated and it eventually closed in April 1863 due to not being profitable.

Martin continued his talk about the subsequent development of the land and buildings, but sadly the only remaining part is the outside perimeter wall of the cement works which now occupies the site.

Whilst we all view the railway from the engineer's standpoint, this talk put a humanitarian face on Victorian life which had boundless energy, inventiveness and determination to change things for the common good.

We thanked Martin for giving us his talk, which was compelling to listen to, as he was such a good speaker. His book entitled 'The end of the line' was on sale, which

despite the macabre subject makes a good read. I bought one signed by Martin for £7-50. It would make a good Christmas present to a railway buff; the ISBN number is 0-9513342-5-5.

## **Understanding Engineers**

**An occasional series of lessons supplied by Mike Avery**

### **Lesson Three**

A man in a hot air balloon realized he was lost. He reduced altitude and spotted a woman below. He descended a bit more and shouted, "Excuse me, can you help me? I promised a friend I would meet him an hour ago, but I don't know where I am."

The woman below replied, "You are in a hot air balloon hovering approximately 30 feet above the ground. You are between 40 and 41 degrees north latitude and between 59 and 60 degrees west longitude."

"You must be an engineer," said the balloonist.

"I am," replied the woman, "How did you know?"

"Well," answered the balloonist, "Everything you told me is, technically correct, but I have no idea what to make of your information, and the fact is I am still lost. Frankly, you've not been much help so far!"

The woman below responded, "You must be in Management."

"I am," replied the balloonist, "But how did you know?"

"Well," said the woman, "You don't know where you are or where you're going. You have risen to where you are due to a large quantity of hot air. You made a promise which you have no idea how to keep, and you expect people beneath you to solve your problems. The fact is you are in exactly the same position you were in before we met, but now, somehow, it's my fault"

.

# 50 Years Ago

## by Grahame Ainge

### Part Two

1953 was a year with several events which are still relevant today like the first use by two American scientists of frozen human sperm for fertilisation, a procedure still used today and now extended to in-vitro fertilisation. Fred Sanger at Cambridge finished analysing the structure of a protein after eight years of work. The protein was insulin, a vital compound in the body, although a cure for diabetes still eludes us.

Alongside such things to celebrate, music lovers everywhere in 1953 were saddened by the death of one of Britain's greatest singers. The lass from Lancashire, Kathleen Ferrier, died at the age of 41 from cancer. In a very short career she had become world famous – a singer whose voice, like Callas', had made men cry.

### Coronation Year

It was coronation year in Britain with the Eastern Region of British Railways celebrating by changing the name of the *Capitals Limited* train to *The Elizabethan*. The NLSME marked the event by contributing to the Finchley Coronation Hobbies Exhibition with a passenger-carrying track in the vicarage grounds by Christ Church Hall and the Miniature Railways Section ran their 'OO' layout. The Aero Section gave a display of control-line flying on Barnet playing Fields as part of the local council's celebrations.

### Life in Canada

At the General Meeting in July Mr Baird, who had emigrated to Nova Scotia five years ago, was visiting the UK on holiday and addressed the meeting telling of life in Canada. It seemed that for model engineers Canada was a lonely place with the nearest society to him being 800 miles away and his efforts to form a local society meeting with no success. The Society did not have an exhibition of its own this year but considered itself fortunate in 'obtaining' a stand at the annual Model Engineer Exhibition! Contrast this with the position today when exhibitions have trouble in getting clubs to present a stand.

### More from the Loco Section

The Loco Section had an excellent day out at the beginning of August as guests of the Watford Society at their Chipperfield track – one of the finest in the country at the time. EC Hobday, J Grover, A Marchant and GM Cashmore ran locomotives whilst Mr K Stockall of the Harrow Society attended with his Maisie and Mr and Mrs Black kept the kettle on the boil for tea. Geoff Cashmore's *Helen Shorter* refused to make steam although Mr Marchant's *Titch* excelled by remaining in steam for over two hours and dumfounded everyone by her amazing performance!

In June Mr Hobday reported that, 'only 100ft of concrete work has to be completed at the Arkley track.' Geoff Cashmore, reporter for the Loco Section' announced that the 'Section had agreed to proceed with Mr Hobday's suggestion of laying the track on timber sleepers, approximately 500 (surely this was a misprint!!) of which will be required. Mr Hobday kindly offered to obtain them.' Members will be aware that this method of track construction was employed on the Colney Heath raised track and still gives good service today.

An interesting little report of the July Loco Section meeting is reproduced below:

The July meeting was well attended, and lively discussions took place on a variety of subjects. A review of the track days at fetes was given by our Leader, and we are glad to report that all has run smoothly this summer, the only casualties being the dresses of a couple of little girls, which caught up in the passenger truck wheels. Loaders please note little boys are to act as guards in the future!

The track at Arkley is now ready for tie bolts, and we would all like to express our thanks to Mr. Black for his outstanding efforts in helping Mr. Hobday, and no less to Mrs. Black, who provided tea for the workers at about one-hour intervals!

### **Ed Hobday's First Year**

With all the work Ed Hobday had been doing for the Club in 1953 it will come as quite a surprise to discover that he was in fact a new member as the report below shows:

## **One Year Old**

By E. C. Hobday

**T**HIS September brought to a close my first year's membership of the N.L.S.M.E., so I thought a few impressions of a very happy year would not be amiss

My first feeling upon becoming a member was to the effect I should be without friends, a stranger in a strange camp, and I must confess I felt very self-conscious at the first general meeting, but it soon became evident that I was with a grand lot of chaps who were just as shy of me as I was of them. This being so, it was up to me as much as anybody to "get settled in."

Since then I have got to know quite a lot of you, and I hope you like me as much as I like you, which is quite a lot.

One thing which struck me in particular as being both courageous and just a little sad is the effort of some members to produce work

from nothing or hardly anything; the kitchen table being the only workshop in some cases.

I should say these chaps are just about the best fellows the Society could have as members, and I only wish I had the means to give you all a workshop.

I think a personal note about the track under construction at Arkley is due here as I have had quite a few pats on the back from various members about progress, so I would like to make it quite clear that I have done only my share for very selfish reasons. I have two locomotives, with a third on the way, with nowhere to run them. Just put it down to selfishness.

I have also been quite impressed by the standard set at the general meetings and the Loco Section meetings. I cannot speak of the meetings of other sections as I have never been to one-time will not allow me to and to build locomotives as well-but I quite expect they are on the same high level.

I have been asked to ventilate any criticisms I may have, but, quite honestly, they are few.

One is the lack of transport for members' heavy stuff to various events, but I cannot see how it can be done any differently because of expense. A small car is highly desirable, otherwise the Society's facilities are pretty good.

Another criticism is that "Boats" Gordon is not allowed to talk and has to be drawn out by Mr. Flanagan's pumps.

I don't think that almost a whole general meeting should be devoted to the question as to whether we have a fish-and-chip dinner or a top-hat-and-tails dinner. I think a social committee is needed here to settle these problems and to take the thanks or blame (they will get both, anyway!).

I also think a committee should be formed to stop our Chairman being *over generous* and *overworking*, even if he does call me a "clumsy clot" for tripping over a track section.

Other great experiences for me in this first year were the locomotive track events. With the kind use of Bert White's and Geoff Cashmore's tracks, and helpful advice, my two locomotives were in use throughout the season.

Here, I feel I must say how much I appreciate the help and sympathetic guidance of the track leader, Ted Moon. Everything goes without a hitch when Ted is there, even to climbing up 5 in 90 at one event. Happy days these, long to be remembered.

I feel, too, now that I know more of the Society, that it is too modest, and also that with such members as Bert White and Mr. Sparey, to mention only two experienced authors, providing such good material the publication of a grand book is within the Society's powers.

The book could be in the form of many photos of all the members' work, with short descriptions and photos of the members in alphabetical order, and then the history of the Society, etc. To be done properly it would be expensive but if we were able to get it on all the bookstalls we would get a large sale and it would really put the N.L.S.M.E. on the map. Bigger things have started from smaller beginnings.

Our stand at the Exhibition proved just how good we can be. I was amazed at the interest shown by visitors the day I was there (on guard) and I felt proud to be in such good company. If we had had those books aforementioned then, I am sure that we could have sold the lot.

May I conclude by thanking you all for having me, and just a word here for anyone, past or present, who is lukewarm. It is your own fault. The facilities are there with a grand set of blokes thrown in. I hope for many more years with you all.

### **Satisfaction in Club Activities**

Towards the end of the year the Model Cars Section felt it really had something to celebrate:

## **Calling All Cars**

By J. Watts

THE most important thing that has ever happened to our car section occurred during the Model Engineers' Exhibition. Whilst preparing our stand for the opening of the exhibition Mr. Thorpe and Mr. Weaver had rail cars available, and upon approaching Mr. Hays for a trial upon his track were hospitably greeted and allowed to run. The cars started readily, and within a matter of seconds proceeded really to race around the beautiful laid-out circuit.

Little was thought of this until the Thursday evening, when Mr. Thorpe received a request for all mobile members of our Society's car section to present themselves with as much haste as possible to the Model Engineers' Exhibition and help Mr. Hays to show the public that rail cars do actually run. Unfortunately, we could not muster full force until Saturday afternoon. Then we had Mr.

Weaver's "Yellow Peril," Mr. Thorpe's M.G., Mr. Dowell's KK 120 and also a freelance car, and Mr. Hammersley with a Cooper Bristol, ably supported by two mechanics, Mr. Abbott and Mr. Battams. These five cars really did put on a fine show, although, unfortunately, the rail section of the track was rough enough to cause several derailments. The fastest lap was made by Mr. Hammersley's Cooper Bristol in six seconds.

The track, 190 feet of it, was handed over to the N.L.S.M.E. members for a session of their own, and, despite the complaints of various stallholders, due to loss of trade, we had some grand racing.

The climax came later in the afternoon, when a final match race between the KK and the M.G. really had the crowd on its toes. The M.G. shot away from the start like a guided missile, but the "Jag" relentlessly pursued it and lap by lap slowly gained until it passed the M.G. in front of the grandstands. A perfect ending to a perfect afternoon's sport.

Thank you, car section, for showing the way. The one c.c. engines are still unbeaten.

Thinking of the enjoyment that members had at our Mencap day this year I cannot leave out this charming article from the November-December issue of the 1953 News Sheet.

## **A Worthwhile Trip**

**O**F all the functions attended by the North London Society during the year, none could have been more successful or happier than the visit by the Loco Section to Chequers Mead, Potters Bar.

Chequers Mead is a children's home run by the Middlesex County Council and managed so beautifully by Mr. and Mrs. Seldon and their staff. It is the place to which the Society gave "00" equipment and a donation towards their miniature railway.

On Saturday, 3rd October, we were blessed with perfect weather, and, arriving at the house in the morning, 125 feet of track was erected on the terraced lawn overlooking a farm. The 25 boys and girls of ages ranging from five to fifteen years were only too anxious to help, and by lunch-time all was ready for an early start after the meal.

Some of us without sandwiches had the privilege of lunching with the large family in the house. This was a grand experience, and we marvelled at the good manners of all the children and the

happy atmosphere that existed—a sure tribute to our host and hostess who sat at the tables with the children.

Meanwhile, Bert Mead (“Paddle-box”) and Ken Stockall (“Maisie”) raised steam, and after grace, said by one of the little ones, a rush to the garden ensued, and before long heavy loads were being pulled. Within an hour every child had taken a turn at driving, the girls proving their capabilities in no uncertain manner. The cattle in the field beyond decided they must see what was afoot and amused us all by standing in a row with their heads over the railings chewing the cud!

After an hour and a half Ted Moon, with “Susie,” and Ed Hobday, with “Antimeticulous,” lit up and relieved the other two. Immediately fresh requests to drive were made, and all went well until young Jimmy opened “Susie’s” regulator instead of closing it and nearly finished up by dispersing the cows, but Ted just saved the day by an application of the emergency brakes!

All this time there was no shortage of passengers or drivers, most of whom insisted on wearing the engine driver’s hat (over their ears!).

Mr. and Mrs. Seldon and their helper, Miss Nicholson, each took a turn on the footplate, which raised a cheer from the children.

For the last three-quarters of an hour before tea Arden Marchant and Geoff Cashmore, with two small engines, “Tich” and “Juliet,” completed the day’s running, and at 5.30 p.m. we all returned to the dining-room for tea, where we sat among the children.

Needless to say, the conversation was on only one topic, which we are told is likely to be for some time to come.

After tea three rousing cheers, which nearly raised the roof, were called for by our host, and we departed wondering who enjoyed themselves most, the children or the Society members!

We promised to come again next year, and perhaps we could persuade our friends in the Car Section to bring their track. We can certainly assure them of a thoroughly enjoyable day out.

The report below just about sums up the satisfaction felt in the Loco Section in September:

## **Loco Section**

**Leader: J. E. R. WUIDART**

**A**T the September meeting arrangements were made to manufacture the track for Arkley during the winter. Mr.

Wuidart, with his usual generosity, has agreed that the work will be carried out at his factory. Volunteers will be needed on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings, and a programme will be fixed at the next Loco Section meeting. The first session, however, was on Saturday, 10th October, at 2.30 p.m.

The highlight of this month's activity was the second visit to the Watford Club's track at Chipperfield on Sunday, 20th September. Seven locomotives from the Section were there, and a large number of members and their families turned up during the day. Those with locomotives included Bert White ("Arthropod"), Ed Hobday (two Pacifics), Alf Pinnock ("Iris"), Ted Moon ("Susie M"), Bert Mead ("Paddlebox"), and Geoff Cashmore ("Juliet"). We started steaming about mid-day and continued until about 6.30p.m. All locomotives put up a good show and, although there were one or two minor mishaps, a thoroughly good day was spent.

To round off the proceedings our host, Mr. Peter Bartlett, brought along his 5in. "Eva May" and gave us a fine display of high-speed passenger hauling.

All thanks are due to him and his club for a really good day out. We hope to have the pleasure of reciprocating when our track is complete.

And by the end of the year 50% of the Arkley track had been completed.

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