

At the moment I have not decided how to display the news sheet so this is just a trial. I have to consider page loading time and time spend producing it each month; So over the next few months there will be a number of different styles until I have found the best.

Peter F. Web Editor

July 1998 / Issue 583

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WORDS OF CHAIRMAN DELL

Things are well under way at the track now - the grass is well cut, edges strimmed and on my last visit, I heard the Cuckoo. I also saw members who I had not seen since the last running season. May I say to those absent members, that you could become an unsung hero. An unsung hero is someone who gets on with a job expecting nothing in return other than the satisfaction of doing something useful for the Society. Obviously, this applies to all Sections. Unsung heroes that I can call to mind are the two members who maintain our track during the winter and summer, so that you can have a smooth and safe ride when driving your loco.

Many jobs are waiting to be done, and being British, we tend to moan a bit, quite right too. When someone moans about something, lets say *Fred H* doesn't like the colour the fence is painted - in future it would be good if *Fred* said, 'I don't like the fence painted white - I think it should be green - and I am prepared to paint it.' What I am saying is that, if you want to moan, either do it yourself or play a part with other members whom you have organised.

Another unsung hero is the member who writes the Tyttenhanger Gazette to keep members abreast of what's going on, either at HQ meetings or at the track. He has done this for more years than I can remember.

Every club, from Ocean going yacht clubs to stamp collecting societies have unsung heroes. We have our fair share - I could mention many more who do useful things for the Society. I myself have managed to secure for myself one of the more interesting jobs - I empty the toilet bucket behind the workshop. I don't say that you could reach these

dizzy heights overnight, it can be quite dunny on a hot summer day. I am quite prepared to stand down from this plum job - get your application in early as I am expecting a rush for this vacancy.

I've just re-read what I've written and it seems like a good old moany piece, which it's meant to be - in the nicest possible way.

Frank D

Off The Cuff

How I wish I could say we had been on another enjoyable train outing but nothing so pleasant has happened in recent weeks - instead somewhere out and about I must have made passing contact with another person who was incubating chicken pox and hey presto! down I went with shingles. Not to be recommended as part of the condition is a general debilitation, exhaustion and a touchy emotional state! All this meant I missed the June Council Meeting (well I couldn't risk bursting into tears or losing my temper, could I!) but *Jack E* "volunteered" his services and produced an excellent set of Minutes from which I will now produce some notes for your passing interest. Seemingly I was the only absentee: subject to a correction the May Minutes were approved and signed: and an extensive Matters Arising list was comprehensively dealt with. The Chairman reported that work had started paving round the boat pool, the Open Day had been very successful, the Bring & Buy raised approx. £100, and the Society had purchased an Electric Class 37 engine which should make passenger hauling instantaneous. Correspondence had been at a low ebb apart from a lot of leaflets from SMEE publicising their September Exhibition at Brunel University, Uxbridge. The Treasurer tabled several applications for membership which were approved: a Corporation Tax bill had been paid: and the St Albans Society had written thanking us for participating at their recent Exhibition.

A purge is due to take place at Headquarters in the third week of August to clear unused or surplus materials including old exhibition materials, and I understand two old Gestetner machines have already been disposed of. **Questions:** are the wax stencils still obtainable, and are these machines still used nowadays? I clearly remember how the wax coating on the stencils always clogged the typewriter keys! Brief reports were made by some - but not all - Sections.

Here endeth my synopsis. Sorry for the brevity and lack of other chit-chat.

We're off to the Isle of Man on the 20th for a week of steam trains, horse drawn trams, and other amusements, and will be visiting the local Model Engineering Society's Rally where we expect to meet up with *Terry B & Family* with their traction engine and 5" gauge Isle of Man steam loco.

Beryl C

Tyttenhanger Gazette

The June Loco meeting was a barbecue at the Track. It was a bright, cool evening, and many people came along to this informal event. It was a good opportunity to spend time talking amongst friends. A couple of battery electric locos were going round the track, a Hunslet dockyard shunter and a somewhat larger class 37, which has been bought by the club from Cyril Rylatt's bequest to the Society. It was bought at a slightly reduced

figure as it was an ex-demonstration model. A nameplate is to be made stating, "Cyril Rylatt - benefactor to NLSME. The loco was marketed by Compass House Tools of Rotherfield near Tunbridge Wells, and is powered by four 24 volt motors, which draw about 60 amps pulling away and 30 amps along the flat. It has the 4QD NCC120 control system, which has a maximum rating of 135 amps.

The manufacturer applies a very stringent test to the controller's circuitry. It is connected to a car starter motor which is locked with a spanner so it cannot turn. The controller is then put on full and the current measured with test meters, so it is literally stalled and drawing maximum current for nearly one minute. It is rated at 100 amps for one minute without overheating.

The power comes from two 75 amp hour leisure batteries and it should run for three hours before needing re-charging. The batteries drive the front and rear wheels on the two, six wheel bogies. Two tone horns are fitted, which originated from an Italian motor car.

The control system is fitted with regenerative braking, a system where, as the controller is turned down, the motor works as a generator and charges the battery, as it does on golf trolleys and invalid cars. I took the opportunity of driving the loco around the track several times and found it most pleasurable. The control was very smooth and progressive, and it made a realistic whining noise whilst pulling under load. It did a good speed at half regulator, so it would pull a large load. It is available for members to drive. **I must remind you that junior members under the age of 16 are not allowed to haul passengers.**

Roger B

Loco Section News

Rod P is reporting on our very successful Open Day so it just remains for me to thank in particular *Angela and the Ladies and Gents* who worked so hard in the coach, also those few members who turned out on the preceding Saturday to cut the grass and clear up the site.

We have received a letter from *Colin H* on behalf of Romford M.E. thanking us for an enjoyable visit. He also mentions that they have informal running on the third Saturday of July and August. If you would like to go, contact me for directions.

The Colney Heath School fete suffered from inclement weather with steam lorries threatening to sink into the mud. *Tim J* likes driving small traction engines in the rain!!! And they don't sink into mud, so all was not lost.

I missed the barbecue (being married to a musician means you have to go and listen or else). However I am told it was a great success with lots of visitors from St Albans M.E. and that the new club loco was tested almost to its limits.

Another enjoyable Ascot visit is reported elsewhere by those what went. Don't forget the visit to Malden on Sunday 11 October.

I have had no response to my search for missing tools as yet. Please remember that if you use Society equipment and it breaks down, please let me know, so that it can be put right. Both band saws were left out of commission. On a final personal note, I shall be standing down as Loco Section Leader at the end of September. I think it is time that someone with fresh ideas took over. *Ian* is prepared to continue as joint section leader, in particular organising the Stewards Rota and meetings, as before.

John S

Next month it is hoped to publish a list of jobs to be done at Colney Heath. They will be

jobs that can be done both in summer and winter. In fact, some of them would be better done in dry summer weather. Some of the tasks will be quite large and some small, so that members can choose what they would like to do depending on their expertise and their willingness to work on their own as a personal project, or with a group of like minded fellows.

The list will be duplicated in the workshop at Colney Heath with spaces for members to attach their names to signify that they plan to undertake a specific task. Members from all sections are welcome.

Ian J

[Model Railway News](#)

When we exhibited "Bath Green Park" at Barnet College last September, many of us (myself included) were far from happy with the control and operation of the layout. Many problems arose during that weekend - too many to list here - and we did not consider the layout to be as successful as we had anticipated. After much discussion and heartsearching, it was agreed that a major re-wire was needed and this was to include the replacement of numerous multi-pin plugs and sockets previously obtained secondhand, with new ones. So great was this task that we did not complete it until the end of April. In the latter stages we were grateful for the assistance of *Rod P*, who helped us assemble the new connectors, which included crimping connecting pins to many hundreds of wires. In addition, a number of points on the 'main' lines were converted from manual operation to electrical, which involved the installation of more wires.

Whilst this was being done, those not directly involved with the electrical work were able to continue construction of the numerous buildings. These include the S & D loco shed, water tanks and treatment plant and the main station roof.

With an exhibition fast approaching, it was agreed to test the layout on each Saturday during May, together with the Bank Holidays. As suspected, numerous faults still came to light and some, when rectified, seemed to generate other problems. After more headscratching, much cursing, burning of the midnight oil and a lot of work with the soldering iron, the layout was finally declared operational.

Over the weekend of 6/7 June we were the guests of the Reading SME at their Model Railway Exhibition, and we completed a successful weekend. Although it is still far from complete, we received numerous compliments from members of the public, many of whom instantly recognised the model from the original station and loco depot. Looks like we got something right!

However, during the course of the weekend, a number of gremlins re-surfaced and started to give us operational problems once again. Most are, I suspect, simple matters to correct, but others will take longer and will more than likely involve yet more headscratching. Some of us are losing more of our hair as a result of this - I think we've all still got our sanity (?). A list of faults, together with many proposed alterations needed on the control system has now been drawn up and work will be scheduled on this in due course. Before doing so, we are dusting off the main club layout and playing trains for a few weeks.

Geoff H

[Stationary Steam](#)

We have had some good rallies this year: Whipsnade Zoo, a 3-day event, sunny but a very cold wind, attended by the 2 Johns and myself. *John S* took his model Burrell and caused a lot of interest - people were bypassing huge leviathans and making a beeline for John's engine. Which proves that size is unimportant. Next rally was over Hertfordshire hills to the Chequers Inn at Gadstone, a 7 mile run. *John W* and I and *Terry and family* attending a brilliant day. When we arrived we were met by the landlord with coffee, then at lunch time, sausage and chips and as much beer as you could drink - all free of charge. Next we attended the Enfield Pageant, a 3-day event. *John W* and myself attended the Leighton Buzzard rally. It was very well attended and glorious sunshine. *John S* came too and, once again, creating much interest running from about 10 am to 6 pm pulling many children on both days. *Terry* went off on his own to Sellenge and then Aylesbury to fly the flag for NLSME. At Sellenge about 30 models attended. *Terry* was quite pleased with himself when he towed another McLaren up a steep incline - about 1 in 7. At Aylesbury, 25 models attended. 15 engines went off on a road run to the local pub, just over a mile away, and a good time was had by all.

Frank D

Bill Camp - An Appreciation

The most obvious comment from anyone who has ever met Bill, is that he was a CHARACTER. He would never have got far in the diplomatic corps, nor, I suspect, would he have wanted to. He was what he was, what you saw was what you got. Unfortunately I have not been able to ascertain the exact date at which he joined the Society but I know he was there in the winter of 1970/71 as he was the first to do a circuit of the just completed extension with his "Butch", "Bluebell". Everyone present on that memorable Sunday morning clambered aboard. We made the back straight o.k. but it was too heavy a load for the bottom curve and most of us detrained to allow Bill to complete the circuit. My guess is that he joined sometime in 1970, possibly 1969. I remember that he had a "Maisie" initially but being Bill he was soon looking for more power. He acquired the late Harold Pill's 3 1/2 in. "County" and 9F, but "Bluebell" was the first loco that came close giving him satisfaction. She was followed by a Maid of Kent named "Ruby", and then the ultimate, "Jupiter".

Although Bill was never interested in winning popularity contests, he was always helpful to those who needed it. His work at the track will stand as a monument to his hard work. His repair and preservation work on the tunnel, "Camps Cairn", and the embankment below the bottom curve. Those who did not see that curve in its original state will not appreciate how high above ground it was, at least four feet at its highest point, possibly more, pretty scary to cross when you can't touch the ground. Bill and his team, and quite often, just Bill, carted earth down there until they had built up an embankment to the present height, concealing the pillars which had been cast to bring the track up to the required level.

I had not known, until I attended the funeral that Bill had been a vet before the war, but after leaving the forces he found that the requirement for veterinary practice qualification had overtaken him, so he opened a bicycle shop in Palmers Green which he ran for many years until he retired from business. He was also of mixed English and French parentage, which possibly explains the beret which he almost always wore. Combined with a pair of ex-RAF Mk VIII goggles he looked the epitome of a French engine driver. In the summer he was also wont to wear a pair of lederhosen, I am not quite sure what that signified but he certainly looked colourful.

Until he became infirm, he was always much in evidence at the track in the running season and at working parties in the winter. I wonder how many children he gave rides

to. I particularly remember one Open Day when we had a surfeit of 3 ½ in. locos and the only visitor with a 5 in. didn't want to pull passengers. Bill put on "Jupiter", three trucks and a guard, and ran all afternoon non-stop!
He may have been gruff, but he never stinted himself, he will be sadly missed, but not forgotten.

Jim R

[Open Day - 7 June 1998](#)

Our first open day of 1998 held on Sunday 7 June attracted 13 visitors with 14 locos (6 x 3 ½" gauge and 8 x 5" gauge) from 7 clubs. Despite a poor weather forecast, which certainly proved to be correct during the morning, with 3 or 4 heavy showers, the afternoon was much better, with no rain and a very thankful absence of the predicted thunder storms.

The clubs represented were Ascot, Cambridge, Chingford, Colchester, Harlington, Ickenham and Vauxhall. Our first visitor arrived, steamed up and was running by 10.35 with a very nice 3 ½" gauge 2-6-0, which continued to run until 15.35, which, at 5 hours, was the longest single running time of the day.

All of our visitors had steamed and had a run by 14.30, with 2 coming back for a second run a little later in the afternoon. The last of our visitors to finish was a 5" gauge 4-6-0, which came back onto the steaming bays at 17.30. This gave us a total of 6 hours and 55 minutes of continuous running, and by my poor maths!!, means that the average running time per locowas 2 hours 26 ¾ minutes.

The afternoon also saw what was so far probably our biggest attendance by the general public, who provided very good support for the raffle and made extensive use of the catering, provided by the ladies and their helpers.

With our next Open Day due to be held on 13 September, lets hope that the weather will be kind to us.

Rod P

[A Day at the Races](#)

Monday morning again. The joy of being part of a great organisation, dedicated to the promotion of modern broadcast technology, is suppressed only by the excitement of believing that next week I'll win the national lottery.

OK then. What did we do at the weekend ? The question asked every Monday morning. Royal Ascot I replied. Eyebrows raised. *Jim*, Royal Ascot, he knows nothing about horses, or racing, what was he doing at Ascot. It took a few moments, then they realised there was no racing at Ascot on Saturday.

So an explanation was requested. Yes, I really was at Ascot racecourse on Saturday as a guest of the Ascot Model Engineering Society. A fine group of friendly people (in the entertainment industry the word friendly can take on more than one meaning so I decided to give a more thorough explanation).

After explaining about Model Engineering and the running of miniature steam locomotives, I began to reminisce on what can only be described as a "Perfect Day".

Ascot Model Engineering Society invite many guest Societies each year to run on their extensive Ground Level Track. The North London are privileged to be one.

For me the event started on Friday, (a welcome day off work) and a good chance to prepare and test the locomotives we intended to take.

Saturday morning came and the car was packed, two working locos, coal, charcoal, blower, tools, ground level driving truck and current boiler certificates. Oh yes, and room had to be made for *Tom L*, *Tim B*, *Peter* my son and myself.

A very pleasant journey around the M25, so good we missed the turning to Ascot, but soon recovered and arrived at the track at approx 10.20am.

Apart from North London, Chingford and the Isle of Wight Societies were invited, and true to form the furthest away arrived first (Isle of Wight) and were well on the way to steaming up as we arrived.

The first North London member to enter service on the Ascot Main Line was *Brian A* with his Maid of Kent.

When a driver is satisfied all is in order, assistance is given to load the loco and driving truck onto the traverser. It is then taken from the steaming bays to the turntable approach line. Once on the turntable you are directed to one of four platforms you will occupy at the station. On pressing the button at the end of your platform you indicate to the signalman you are ready to leave. Semaphore signals lower to tell you your road is clear and you may depart from the station complex. Once you have negotiated the points and crossings it's plain running all the way down to the main Line Loop some 200 yds further on. A whistle is required as you approach the Main Loop and you run along adjacent to the Main Line for some time before joining.

Trains can run around the Loop as many times as the driver wishes. One problem for locomotives with small tenders or tanks, is that the lack of watering points in the loop. This adds to the enjoyment of driving on this track and tests your ability and judgement as an Engineman. Especially on the first lap after a smooth run down from the station, it is easy to overlook the fire. A combination of No water and No fire is very embarrassing. With careful use of the blower and injector we should be able to avoid this. At some point you have to leave the Main Line and tackle the long uphill gradient to the station. Half-way along the haul back is an emergency siding with water tanks for those who didn't quite get it right, and thought they could make just one more lap. After passing this siding it is a good straight run to the station. A distant signal appears just before the station approach. A sharp blast on the whistle usually attracts the signal-man's attention, failing that you must draw to a stop and press the button just before the signal. When permission is given, you may pass into the station complex, passing two sidings on the left (very popular with drivers at lunch time). You approach with caution the platform set for you by the signal-man.

The second North London Locomotive to run on Royal Rails that day was "Dotty", built and owned by our Vice Chairman *Tom L*, and driven initially by myself.

Although I have visited Ascot before, a courteous lap to refresh my memory was advised. But first you must sign the guest running book and all details of the loco are checked including the boiler certificate. Now we are ready.

With a successful lap completed I decided to return to the station for water. No chances taken as the total length of this track is in excess of 3000ft. Once replenished with water, the fire checked, drivers are required to pull forward on the approach to the turntable and indicate their readiness to continue with a sharp blast of the whistle, electric locos struggle at this point but are eventually recognised when all steam locos have departed. The turntable is brought around to your road and the operator gives instructions to approach with caution. When on the turntable a platform is selected and you are required to drive slowly along to start the process all over again. Up to 28 locomotives can be catered for on this track.

Members were beginning to arrive thick and fast at this point. *Bill M* and his Stirling Single was followed by *Mark J* and his wife, who brought both the newly painted "Lionheart", splendid in its new livery, and his ever popular electric locomotive, especially with the junior members. A few minutes later *Derek P* with his speedy was steaming up while *Mike C* with "The Lady Beryl" was preparing for an afternoon run.

Both, I believe were very successful.

As I approached the station for what must have been the seventh time, I spotted *Mike* and *Angela F* having lunch at one of the many tables positioned around the station area. This seemed a good idea as the tables were all positioned to give an excellent view of the track.

By this time the juniors had learnt the road driving Mark's electric loco, and they suggested that if I'd like some lunch, generously provided by our hosts, they were quite prepared, for a small fee, (usually 50p to buy chocolate bars and crisps) to look after "Dotty." After consulting with the owner and a detailed instruction to each on the finer points of driving, they were dispatched. (Didn't see "Dotty" again, well not until 4.30pm). By the time I had been around the track with the juniors, *Mike F* had gone to steam up his Rob Roy, and handed his Class 20 over to junior *Ian R*, who'd brought his parents along for the day, as a special treat for them.

Next to arrive were *Donal* and *Keiron C* with their Dad's No.8, the only North London 7 ¼ loco to run during the day, and run it did, all afternoon with all the 'C' family driving. *Pam* and *Brendan C* arrived a little later with the excuses that the traffic was bad on the M25, (later it was pointed out that there's a good view of traffic jams on the M25 from a certain pub quite close to Ascot).

About 4.30pm *Tom* suggested that I take "Dotty" for a final run. This I agreed, but while chatting for too long at the station, I neglected the fire. This combined with a steady run to the loop, forgetting the blower and putting too much water into the boiler. I had the shame of being pushed back to the station by my own son with Mark's electric loco. Just as well, we were about to pack up.

The weather was perfect, the conversation revolved around model engineering and the company pleasant with new friends made.

After inviting our hosts to a return visit the following weekend, the visit ended with a fond farewell to all at approx 5 pm and with a good journey home a splendid time was had by all.

After this short but detailed explanation to my colleagues, someone suggested, if this week was Royal Ascot, next week could be Buckingham Palace.

Now that's an idea . I wonder if the occupier has considered a portable track for one of her Garden Parties. Cheap rates could be arranged for a block booking.

Well it's another Monday, The Spice Girls (all four of them) will be prancing around in Studio 4, Gazza will probably be crying in studio 5 (sport for all who can't afford SKY) and Blue Peter will still be using sticky back paper in studio 1.

Another week begins, but there's always next Sunday to look forward to, it's Open Day at our Track, where we can return the hospitality so generously given to us.

Jim M

(Our man at the BBC - Ed.)

BBQ & Fun Run - 24 July 1998

On Friday 24th July

The Loco Section will be holding a special event at Colney heath.

A Barbecue and Fun Run

Not a jog but a chance to prove your supreme driving skills.

Show how many times you can circumnavigate the track without firing your engine.

We used to have a lot of fun with daft competitions on the track so we're going to do it again.

In the coming weeks see posters at HQ and the Track for more info as the excitement builds.

We're Wired

I am pleased to announce that the Nothe London Society of Model Engineers' new web site is now up and running.

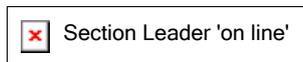
(Obviously as you are reading this - Ed)

The address is:- <http://www.comports.com/nlsme>

The club's e-mail address is:- nlsme@comports.com

Each month an edited version of the News Sheet will be available. Any enquiries please contact Peter F at Bluematter@netlane.com Any section leaders wishing to have any photographs in their section's photo gallery, please don't hesitate in sending them to me.

Peter F



"Our illustrious Joint Loco Section Leader getting 'on line' without leaving the driving seat"

If anyone can think of a better caption, (the best of which will be included on the NLSME web site) please write it down and give/send/email it to Peter F.

The opinions and views expressed in this News Sheet are not necessarily those of the Society or editor.

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