

The Chairman's Notes

Firstly may I thank the members for voting me in as the chairman of this club for a third year. This was our fifty-ninth annual general meeting and next year, our sixtieth year, will mark another milestone in our existence, which the new Council hope to mark in an appropriate way.

I should like to welcome the new members of the Council, Frank Dell and Chris Platford. Both of these new Council members are long standing members of our club and have been council members before. We have one new officer of the Society in that David Harris is now our Hon Secretary.

On behalf of you all I should like to thank Tony Dunbar and Keith Bartlam who this year stood down from the Council. Tony has put a lot into our Society having been Chairman, Secretary and H0 Section Leader during its formative years and now that he has nothing to do I expect to see a certain 9f puffing around the track soon.

Keith doesn't give himself a high profile but he is one of those members that do a lot for our club. He is still an active member of the Track Committee and together with Jack Edwards he has been instrumental in making and laying our new ground level railway. Even as I write these notes he is whiling away his summer Sunday mornings working on the pond loop.

Thank you Tony and Keith for your time and efforts as Council members.

We will shortly be publishing updated rules and regulations for the Tyttenhanger Site and I would like to thank the members of the Track Committee for the considerable amount of hard work that they have put in to produce this very necessary document.

George is standing down as coach supplies officer. Thank you George for performing this unsung but vital role and thank you to Frank Hills for taking on the responsibility.

On a final note, a group from the H0 Section and our wives are going for 'Slate Shunt' on the Ffestiniog although I'm not to sure how much shunting our wives will be doing. I know that a group of members are off for a rail tour behind one of the larger preserved steam locos and the slot car boys will probably take their usual trip to the French bars in the vicinity of the Le Mans 24 hour race. It is nice to see members taking part in social activities within the club and long may it continue.

John Squire



Hear ye; hear ye

**Marine Section
Open Day**

**Sunday 27th July
2003**

10:00 to 17:00

All invited. No boat? No problem as we have the Club boat available...
For information contact Bernard Lambert or John Morgan.

Please note, the Site Committee has agreed that for the convenience of our guests, the bridge over the Cuckoo Line will not be raised on this day.
The line may be used, but as an "up and down" line only.

Treasurer Twittering and Subscriptions

Your Treasurer was able to report on a healthy end to the financial year at the A.G.M. and we should be able to handle the sizeable expenses that are likely to arise in the next year or two.

Subs are also still rolling in but a significant number are still outstanding.

I can accept payment at Finchley, Colney Heath and by post. If you post your Subscription please send a stamped and self-addressed envelope if you want your Membership Card and/ or receipt returned by post.

Bernard Lambert

Secretary's Snippets

At our May Council meeting John Squire welcomed two new members of the Council, Chris Platford and Frank Dell: Frank said that he was being 'recycled'.

Additional coal supplies will be delivered by Saturday, 17 May and therefore should be available by the time you read this.

It is hoped to produce a long-term events diary for the year in the next couple of months.

Just a reminder that it is our 60th Anniversary next year; your Council intends to celebrate it in style. So put on your thinking caps for ideas and pass them on to John Squire.

David Harris

From the Membership Secretary

This month we have two new members to welcome.

Robert Oldfield, Peter Sheen,

Bernard Lambert

The Chairman's Report 2003

This is my report on the last twelve months activities of the NLSME.

Last season as usual was very busy and to ease the pressure the Club acquired a second battery powered locomotive, which has been a great success. Frank Hills refurbished our first such loco so there are now many opportunities for members without locos to become involved in driving passenger trains at Colney Heath.

We were well represented at two community activities at Colney Heath. The first was at the Village Jubilee celebrations with an excellent Club stand from the Marine Section, a portable railway track, rides behind a miniature traction engine and whistle blowing on a full sized steam whistle attached to a small steam roller. The second event was the Colney Heath School PTA annual event where we provide rides every year in support of the School Funds.

The Slot Car, Video and H0 Sections visited Colney Heath to see how the other half live and get a little bit of steam oil in their blood. In their turn the Slot Car and H0 Sections entertained the club at general meetings this year and all of these events were most enjoyable to those that took part.

We entertained the Autistic kids from Child's Hill School. We have done this twice before and my contact at the school tells me that this visit is looked forward to all year. I certainly have never seen children enjoy themselves more and I know that other members who support this find it as rewarding as I do.

We also entertained the Three Valleys staff and children and Mencap. Again both these events were well supported by the members who enjoyed their day as much as the visitors.

This Christmas we had a social evening at HQ with wine and nibbles and a talk about traction engine building. I hope to repeat this event next year with perhaps a non-engineering theme.

Our visit to the St Albans organ Museum could have been a disaster as they had got their dates wrong. However all was saved and we had a very entertaining evening culminating in a surprise performance on the organ by my better half, who I might add normally, requires at least three gin and tonics prior to such activity. She got them afterwards.

Great foresight was shown in holding the Bonfire party the night before a large tree blew down and smashed the track, which demonstrates the advantage of forward planning.

In the absence of a report from the Track Committee I shall simply say that work is progressing on the Ground Level Railway around the Cuckoo Line and that the working parties beavered away on the site maintenance all winter

The Garden Railway Section have eased radii on the Gauge 1 track and added more passing loops and storage. Gauge 0 has one less storage loop but there are new plans for a dedicated line for the junior club members. We are having an open day for G1MRA on the 24 May and hope to see some interesting visiting models using our railway and perhaps attract some new members to our Club.

Stationery steam did well at the Jubilee event at the Colney Heath football club but failed for the Colney Heath School event. A bit of blower fell down the chimney of my little Burrell. We found this after we had scoured the tubes dropped and remade the fire and were contemplating a complete rebuild. It finally made steam in time to put it away. Who likes steam engines? The loco section saved our bacon by giving rides on a portable track and we were very, very grateful.

The steam-roller attracts an ever bigger team of club members on its various trips, which we mostly enjoy. However after a lovely shadeless day in the 90s and an eleven mile drive to Colney Heath on an overheated sulky steam-roller with temperamental injectors it was available for £5 ono. Since then it has forgiven us and we have forgiven it. British machines are designed for nice cold wet windy summer weather, as are we.

The Marine Section activities prove a little more popular each season. The pond is always in use on Sundays and Thursday afternoons and the new shelter has become the place of choice to sit and control the boats or, sometimes, to sit and chat! The younger visitors to the Lake put the Club boat to great use and we hope it will bring more juniors into the Marine Section.

Once again John Morgan organised two open regatta days. The July event was very well attended while the September one was somewhat quieter but equally successful. Winter evening meetings at H.Q. were combined with the Garden Railway Section.

The evenings were very pleasant with no lack of volunteers to stand up and talk about their boats and locomotives. The working season at Colney Heath was spent grubbing

out small trees and levelling areas around the Shelter and the 'Chester' seat to provide grassy areas for relaxing around the Lake. They look forward to an even better 2004 Season.

The North American section continues to develop the permanent layout and to take interest in the technological developments of the hobby. It remains impressed by the efforts of the North American Model Railway Association {NMRA} to ensure common standards among HO model manufacturers. At least two of the members expect to attend the NMRA Convention in Toronto in July.

Through NMRA contacts from time to time we receive guests from North America both at HQ and Colney Heath. When visiting North America members have been welcomed into model railway clubs there, spreading the word of our Society further afield.

The scenery and other aspects of the permanent layout are constantly improving and in places trains run through scenery, which approaches the standards of the model locomotives themselves. The branch line is now arranged so that it can run trains using DCC {Digital Control} or the conventional cab-control set-up. This is initiating us into the realms of sound effects.

The Society was represented at the Derby Exhibition in April with our Young Street Yard layout. Once again the fact of having car floats (train ferries) drew considerable attention. However a twenty-year-old layout does show its age when standards have progressed as much as they have, and a new exhibition layout is being built. This will be shown at the Tring exhibition in the autumn of 2003. It will be operable using conventional control methods as well as Digital Control.

The 00 section has had a pleasant year digging out old and seldom used locos, running goods trains of full prototypical length and updating the scenery and wiring. I have frequently observed that they keep poor Dudley Willen underneath the track every Wednesday and I had thought that this may be the sin bin for jumping red signals but it turns out that Dudley has been re-wiring a lot of the layout. They will miss Peter Shewry but welcome Mick as a new active member.

I haven't received a report from the Slot Car Section. However I do know that they have had a successful season. They went to the Le Mans 24 race, had a good day at Colney Heath and entertained club members very successfully in February. They are currently refurbishing the race-track. The small slot car track they ran at our Three Valleys event at Colney Heath proved very popular.

On a personal note I have now been Chairman for two years and provided that I am still Chairman at the end of this meeting I shall stand down on the completion of my third year in this office. So start looking for a new candidate now.

We have had a busy and successful year. I am looking forward to driving trains around the pond and playing on the new Young Street yard layout.

The Gauge 1 and 0 layout has been a success with model engines built since it started two years ago already running and more in the pipe-line. Even as I speak work is

progressing on new catering facilities at Colney Heath so as you can see we are a thriving busy Society. My message to the members this year is to get involved. Take part in the activities of more than one Section and take the plunge and get involved with running the Society.

John Squire

Chairman of The North London Society of Model Engineers

June General and Locomotive Section Meetings

Both June meetings will be held at the Colney Heath site as bring your own food and booze **Barbecue Evenings**.

The date for the General Meeting Barbecue is **Friday June 6th** and for the Loco Section one; **Friday June 13th**. We hope the weather is clement for what should be excellent evenings.

Ian Johnston.

Tyttenhanger Gazette by Roger Bell

The May loco meeting was a 'Work in Progress' and as David Jones unboxed his 9F, a gauge one 'Evening Star', one could hear a gasp as so much detail was packed into such a small size, it was designed by Roger Thornber. At the St. Albans Exhibition the only adverse comment was on the size of the lumps of coal in the tender. David spoke not about making the loco, but of painting and driving it.

The loco was taken apart and all the pieces code stamped, bearing areas were masked off and the chassis and motion were powder coated commercially, this operation is done at about 190 degrees C so cannot be carried out on soft soldered parts, white metal mouldings or with some Loctite's. The smoke box was sprayed with an aerosol of 'Plasticoat', it is barbeque paint that requires no undercoat and ordinary paint cannot be applied over the top of it. The green was sprayed with a two pack self etching primer.

The lining was very accurately done with a Bob Moore lining pen, the lining was in bands of orange 008" wide, green, black .020" wide and orange. Much testing and practising was done first. The pen is very sensitive to the viscosity of the paint. If the black was sprayed first, then that leaves only three bands to line. The boiler was held in a framework for rotating a complete loco; a wire was wound around the boiler band to act as a guide for the pen, which runs astride the wire. As the boiler was rotated the pen ran around the guide. The pen had to be flushed out every thirty seconds, which was enough time to line one band. Matt paint was used but it should have been gloss. The corners are the most difficult part and a technique was demonstrated for this. The

loco' has run on radio control but the control gear is difficult to hide, so when the motion is free it will be run without.

David had also bought along a coach that he is making from a kit; this one is the standard B.R. Mark 1 type, which has sixty-four seats. The loco will be hauling four coaches in all, one being the composite type of a guards and a passenger's compartment. With the use of plastic card, partitions have been added, together with seats and overhead luggage racks. David asked what colour the partitioning would be; he was advised that it was wood and that the particular coach number should reflect its livery at that time.

Peter Badger was the next to speak and described some angle plates that he had machined from iron castings. A vee block was in the process of being machined. He is to add the customary groove in the bottom of the vee. A mandrel is also in the making that will be used as a drill and connected to a motor with a flexible drive.

The L.M.S. 4F that is a 0-6-0 with a six wheel tender also in gauge one was the work of Roger Woolett. It was completed at Christmas and has now been painted, this one is not going to be lined. Two spirit burners fire it. The Gauge One Association published the design in a very well written book; the loco' is called 'The Project'.

The intricacies of the steam reverser have been occupying Les Brimson's workshop time, it is as near to scale as anything he has ever made and it will sit on the running board of his class 'L' loco'. When the loco' is notched up or put in reverse steam is admitted to the reverser which adjusts the position of the weigh shaft, the mechanism is then locked hydraulically. Originally it worked but then leaked oil so it did not lock. It is difficult to fill so this one will be a dummy. Les spoke of another one he has made of a more practical size and design, which will fit under the footplate. Bert Mead recalled that the steam reverser often would not lock in full size practice.

Mike Hodgson has been refurbishing the drain cocks of a full size traction engine made in 1926; one of the cocks had been tightened up hard against a steel washer making it almost impossible to remove without damage. An enormous amount of heat was applied to the cylinder with a propane torch to allow the cock to be unscrewed. The cock has a tapered shaft turning in a tapered hole, unless they are badly worn they do not leak, yet there is no spring holding the shaft onto the taper, this seems strange so Mike intends to fit a spring. An example of a sprung loaded compressed air tap of some fifty years vintage was shown. Mike made a trial taper to establish what the angle was; it fitted with a five-degree taper, ten degrees included angle. The five-degree angle had to be the same on the shaft as the bore; this was achieved by setting the lathe top slide to five degrees and machining both parts at the same setting. Having turned the shaft, the five degrees was the wrong side for boring so the boring bar was turned upside down and machined from the far side.

The next few loco meetings will be held at the track with a barbeque.

Birthday Parties

I have recently been phoned by one or two members kindly offering assistance for birthday parties for which I am most grateful. All volunteers (whether driving locos or not) are welcome. Please let me know if you would like to go on my rota as I am trying to spread the load and not continuously call on the usual stalwarts. Remember also that the parties generate funds for the Loco Section. Personally I find the parties more fun than Sunday afternoon running as many of the youngsters have not been before and their pleasure is a real tonic. (See the letter from Diane Shawe on the Letters Page.)

Ian Murray

Marine Mutterings By Bernard Lambert

Not much to report this month.

There has been plenty of casual activity on the Lake with a lot of sailing craft in evidence. The number of members using the facility justifies the effort put into improvements during the winter and will lend encouragement to next winter's working party.

Enjoy the boating

Bernard Lambert

Collett's Folly

Not So Much a Postscript – More a Late Introduction

22Degrees?.....That's a Bit Steep Or Why the ill-designed Prototype, No 5600, Failed at Swindon Even Before it Moved

by Peter Kearon

Something in Collett's Folly struck a chord with Brendan Corcoran; he thumbed through his library, found a copy of the 20-year old *Great Western Locomotive Design* by John Gibson, photocopied a dozen or so relevant pages and posted them off to me. Thank you Brendan.

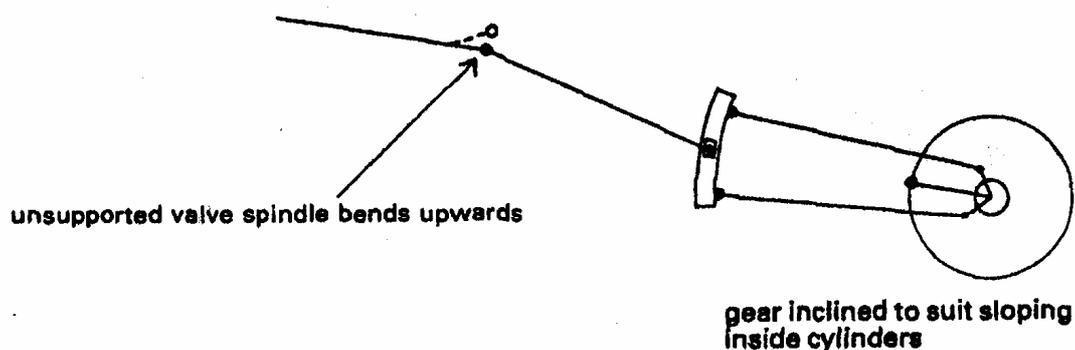
Gibson began an engineering apprenticeship at the Cirencester Works of the MSWJR in 1921 but on that company's absorption by the GWR was transferred to Swindon

where Collett was already in charge. He did not work on Newbuildings and heard this information at a later date from a member of the 5600 Newbuilding team – Hurry Riches, grandson of Tom Hurry Riches, famous (to me) as the long-serving locomotive superintendent of the Taff Vale railway.

John Gibson writes with some authority and is happy to praise where he feels praise is deserved. Daniel Gooch and the Armstrong brothers pass the test but he writes that Dean, who produced almost nothing special, apart from his 0-6-0 goods, lost his mental powers. It is of Collett that Gibson makes the strongest criticism; ‘a difficult man to work with, devious, narrow in outlook, secretive and unreasonable.’ These words make my own impression seem almost charitable. Even the great Churchward receives some deserved criticism. But as it is said, ‘Even Homer nodded.’

The Collett 5600 design unashamedly used the excellent Saint design of Stevenson’s valve gear but there was a difference in that the piston valve chest of the new class was pitched much higher than in the Churchward engines; in consequence the extension rod from the die-block to the valve spindle had to be angled upwards by as much as 22 degrees. The same rod on a Saint, which operated a swinging link, needed only 12 degrees elevation. It would have been thought that Swindon draughtsmen were taught at night school the angular limitations imposed on universal joints. Perhaps they weren’t.

Let me quote Gibson. ‘Officials came to see the trials of this prototype. Full forward gear, lubricator set to give a generous flow of cylinder oil, a shrill on the whistle and the regulator opened carefully. The engine moved forward a few yards with fearful groans and screeches from underneath.’ It was soon clear that the unsupported valve spindle could not resist the upwards thrust of the extension rod, bent upwards and jammed in the stuffing box.



The unsupported valve spindle arrangement on the first 56xx 0-6-2T, showing why it bent upwards

Gibson relates that Collett walked away from the disaster leaving all responsibility with the drawing office; a modification had to be produced but quickly. It would perhaps have been reasonable to have added rocking levers, which would have aligned the drive exactly with the valve spindles. There were examples to follow, notably the slide valve class A TVR engines and, dare it be said, Gresley’s new N2 radial tanks which used piston valves. Instead it was decided to use a support to take all vertical loading off the valve spindle and this was a dished tray, fitted between the

frames where guides located a small three bar crosshead attached to the valve rods by a cone and cotter arrangement. This set up did nothing to reduce the 22 degrees angularity but, so far as I know, gave no trouble in service. With this modification the engines were sent off to South Wales to meet instant failure of a different kind.

Although Brendan's findings are not shown in strictly chronological order, does it matter 75 years on? They do go some way to supporting the assertion that Collett's 5600 class was an unthinking, ill-considered design.

As a new apprentice at Barry Works this 20-year earlier modified construction was normal. It was at Barry loco sheds that I had reason to notice its existence. A routine job there was to pull out 56 class piston valves for cleaning and unless the engine had been left over a pit access to the connections and glands was over the frames, under the boiler while lying on this filthy oil-soaked tray. Quite clearly a job for the apprentice. Engine cleaning at Barry, apart from a cursory rub over the tank and cab sides, was not an option.

Having removed hard carbon from the countless grooves of the four heads using that universal tool, a broken hacksaw blade, and passed the foreman's exacting examination the valves were replaced and lined up with the small crosshead while working blind under this cursed tray. Finally the glands were repacked, each taking only two turns to seal the exhaust pressure. The tray was now a little cleaner; overalls correspondingly filthed. How near did Charles Benjamin Collett ever approach the valve gear of a 56 class engine? Probably no nearer than a drawing office window.



Letters Page

28th April 2003

Dear Ian

Jack's Birthday Party – 19th April

I just had to put my thoughts down on paper, firstly to say that Jack had a wonderful birthday and really enjoyed his party. Many parents have since stated that their children (or themselves) had also had a super time despite the rather chilly weather.

I appreciate that the North London club members put time, effort and energy into this event for it to have gone so well, particularly as it was before the running season had actually started. Therefore I write to express my sincere thanks to all those involved on the day. It goes without saying that the club did us proud.

Please pass on to the club members our heartfelt thanks, by sharing this recognition that you all deserve.

Best Wishes
Diane Shawe

Au Revoir from Peter Shewry

This is just a note to wish everyone well. And thank you John for your kind words in April's Chairman's notes. After all my years of ill-health the medics have come up with a suggestion to increase my life-span: Go to another place and start again! Seems rather strange to me with all the hassle of selling and moving.

I enclose another ditty. Afraid it will be my last. I expect by now all my 'anons' have been sussed out.

For this year I've become a Country member and I've been in contact with the local society in Suffolk who seem to be a happy lot who have got a fair sized area of track and are at this distance seemingly welcoming. Little do they know!

With Apologies to the Walrus and the Carpenter

The time has come the Colney tea-boy said
To head for pastures new
I've left the Burco boiler off
Work-parties have had my last good?? brew.

My health aint good. I've been missing quite a while
I'm told to go to get a longer span of days
My choice of things to do is short
There aint no other ways.

I'm sorry to leave but needs must be
It seems so short a time
I've been a member of NLSME
It's been a life in tea.

I know at times I've been miserable
But that was just my way
I know you've got another bod
To help you make your day.

If his coffee's cold it's your hard luck
I think I've done my best
To help you through cold winter days
To make the Colney nest.

It's a wonderful site it really is
So keep it really good
With lots of real hard work
I know you really could and should.

So goodbye all you've been nice to know
I'm sorry to leave this way
When I join another society I'll come again
To see you all one day.

Peter Shewry

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