

The Chairman's Notes

I am writing this late, as I understand from John Squire this is a requirement of the Chairman. That being so I would not want to do anything wrong so early in my tenure.

Having given serious thought to my contribution, well five minutes during the exam I sat this morning, it occurred to me I did not know what to write. Then it hit me; we have a new Chairman. Perhaps I should be polite about our past Chairman, John Squire, but then I could not think of anything polite to say!

Seriously though John Squire did a great job as Chairman and has set up many section visits, which I intend to promote similarly to John. It is my belief in the same way as John's that I am not a member of a particular (or should that be peculiar) section but I am a member of the Society as a whole. Remember the sections only exist to enable us to administer certain aspects of the Society better.

I think again as a Society we should take this opportunity to thank the out going Chairman, Officers, and Council members for the effort that they put in during the past year. So John Squire, Dick Payne, Bernard Lambert and Frank Dell, thank you for your efforts and give yourselves a pat on the back from all of the Society.

I would also like to thank Jean Chrisp for stepping in when Bernard felt that he was unable to carry on. The Society as a whole and the Council in particular owe you a debt of gratitude, which cannot be repaid in one sentence.

Onto more serious matters; for those of you who were unable to attend the AGM in May your new council is **Chairman:** Donal Corcoran, **Vice Chairman:** Tony Dunbar. **Secretary:** David Harris, **Treasurer:** Kieran Corcoran, and the **Council Members:** Mike Chrisp, Mike Foreman, Adam Gorski, Chris Platford and Ken West.

It has been suggested that members of the Council if not the whole Society should wear nametags to identify themselves to anyone and everyone, so if you see one of us wearing a funny badge, laughing is allowed but we may get our own back!

Considering I could not think of anything to say I have gone on quite enough so I will close by stating that the Society still needs a Loco Section Leader and a Safety Officer, so you may have avoided a place on the Council, but you can still help in other ways.

Donal Corcoran

General Meeting 4 June 2004: CAD is Easy!

Engineers and other folk of a practical disposition will know that the word 'CAD' has entered the language with a specific meaning concerning computers and drawing or drafting.

CAD is to drawing what Word Processing is to writing. CAD provides us with a means to prepare 'perfect' drawings, but to be effective requires a level of understanding and expertise.

Our very own expert on the subject is DAG (Derek) Brown who is travelling from Rutland to Finchley to show us that CAD is Easy!

The meeting, which will take place at our Headquarters in Legion Way, 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 following month's meeting (2 July) will be all about techniques for Marking out and Measurement, and is an ideal opportunity to discuss problems.

See you there!

Mike Chrisp

Chairman's Report 2004

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

Once more we have had a busy and active year which has seen the completion of one major project at Colney Heath, the near completion of a second and the commencement of a third. Two of the Headquarters Sections have completed major tasks and a third Section is about to commence a new layout.

2004 is of course our 60th Anniversary year and we will be celebrating our birthday with a display of our club's many and varied activities. This will take place at Colney Heath on the 4th and 5th September when I look forward to seeing all our Sections represented.

This year saw the passing of Martin Evans a fine miniature locomotive designer who will be greatly missed by many model engineers throughout the world. Sadly we have lost a long time member, John Shaw, who as a member of the then water board had a great deal of influence in our move from Arkley to Colney Heath and we send his family our condolences.

On a brighter note, our magazine editor became the proud grandfather of no less than three simultaneous grandsons and it was my very happy duty to send Grahame and Anne our congratulations on your behalf

Once more we entertained the children from Child's Hill special unit and Mencap at Colney Heath. We were represented at two local events one at Colney Heath School for their PTA Fete when we gave rides on Jim's portable track and Ron T's splendid 4" Burrell.

The other was a charity fund raising event at the Plough, Tyttenhanger where we gave rides on Jim's portable track and entertained the crowds with one Steam-Roller and one Showman's Engine and a vintage tractor. Both these events were sunny and successful.

We exhibited at Sandown Park and Wembley and maintained our usual high standard of display. Of particular note was the award of a silver medal to Richard C for his "Butch" Congratulations to Richard for his fine workmanship. We also had a stand at St Albans' ME exhibition, a club with which we have close links.

The H0 Section took its new switching layout to the Model Railway Exhibition at Alexandra Palace. This was a great success and was operated by a team of members from the H0 and 00 sections with great skill and aplomb.

The HQ building has received some attention to its outside appearance. However it is with regret that I must report that the club strimmer provided for HQ use was stolen from the premises before we had a chance to use it. We have been put on a water meter, which should effect a saving. Thanks to Bernard Lambert for sorting it all out and Peter Precious who helped Bernard to fix the manhole. The kitchen area is being refurbished with new units fitted and plumbed in this week with more improvements to follow shortly by Dunbar Kitchens, fitters to the Gentry.

Our meetings at HQ have taken on a new lease of life thanks to Ian Johnston and Mike Chrisp. The programmes are published well in advance and the subject matter is ever more varied ranging from a somewhat down to earth [or lower] talk on life in a cemetery, to a micro-light Dave Lawrence floating around on wings of polystyrene.

I come now to our section reports and on the basis that the more the hot air the less the actual achievement I shall attempt to keep it brief.

At Colney Heath the Marine Section have been busy. We have seen the mound by the side of the pond replaced with a very smart wooden Gazebo, the refurbishment of the Chester railway seat and a general on going tidying up of the pond area. As a result this hard work it has never looked better. There have even been a few boats floating about in between all this effort. Both the Marine Section open days were a great success and the vintage model boats were a delight. We can all look forward to this season's forthcoming events with two visits by the lovely vintage model boats as well as two Open Days.

The Garden Railway section, known to some as "Friends of the Bad Back", has improved the layout of the G1 track and eased the tightest radii. A turntable has been constructed and will be installed this summer. The Section is now working on the 0 gauge track and a gravel path has also been laid inside the 0 gauge section of the circuit. Members of this section have taken part in many events during the year and have scheduled two Open Days for this season. These are perhaps the smallest gauges

that allow for model engineers to build practical live steam engines and our layout is continuing to attract more new members in this expanding area of interest.

The Loco Section has completed the ground level circuit of the pond and built a splendid carriage shed. It has started to lay the new track on the raised line and reports so far are most favourable. There are new anti-tip rails at Dingley-Dell, the outside of the Coach has been overhauled and our new kitchen is nearing completion.

The running season was a very busy one with plenty of birthday parties raising funds for all these activities. The dry weather did cause us to remind drivers to tighten up fire prevention by making sure that steam loco ash pans were in order. The season was rounded off with our most spectacular Halloween night yet.

We did sustain two break-ins, but although the Yellow Peril three-wheeler truck was stolen and dumped in the river, we recovered it undamaged. The site has been extensively tidied and the new fencing controlling queuing passengers and protecting the path to the lavatories is all in place and working.

The 00 Section has devoted most of its efforts to running their layout this year although there have been some modifications to it. It is almost as crowded on running nights as the H0 Section. I can see a point when both sections will become a solid mass of model railway enthusiasts with no room for trains. This Section has completed plans to construct an extension to the existing layout which can also be used as a separate exhibition layout and it has an initial grant of funds allocated to get them started.

The North American H0 Section continues to maintain ties with the American model railroad fraternity, receiving guests at our club layout and in turn visiting NMRA conventions, the next being in Toronto this year. The new Young Street Yard layout has been a great success and has gone out to two exhibitions and more are to follow in the coming year. They have a very smart sign identifying our club and are a credit to us all. One great advance in technology this year has been the advent of sound systems in these tiny little locomotives. Bells, squealing brakes, whistles and lots of chuff. Conversation is now impossible on running nights so members stay chatting for at least one more round in the bar: a vast improvement.

The Slot Car Section have successfully completed the race track improvements at HQ with good effect. They continue to be very active in organising events and had 52 visitors at one event. At the recent UK Championships in Strath Peffer, Greg Mathews won the UK Sports Car Championship and all three Mathews brothers reached the national finals. Ian Fisher also made the saloon car final. They continue to attract new members and remain a force to be reckoned with in the world of slot car racing. They are now in the process of refurbishing their portable race-track for our anniversary celebrations.

The Video Group has been going through a quiet phase. However they have purchased and installed a DVD player, which gives an extra dimension to our already excellent facilities. After nearly ten years John Old has decided to stand down and is on the lookout for a new Section Leader to replace him. The Section enjoyed a good

evening out at Colney Heath this year and together with it's report has sent a message of thanks to all the officers of the NLSME for their efforts in keeping the Society running and best wishes to the incoming volunteers.

Stationery Steam has seen some of our now less junior members who have licences steering the roller on the road and jolly well they did it. We had some successful road runs and entertained lots of members who visited us at the rather damp rallies this year. Our last road run was of a more romantic nature when we made a special run for the young lady of one of our stalwarts. I hope it worked for them. My own adored wife maintained that she was shaken but not stirred on her only ride on the footplate. So, no romance for me!

Here we are then; after sixty years we are still a busy club, going about our business and enjoying our hobby and long may we continue.

I would like to thank all the many individuals who keep our club going and have kept it going over the last three years while I have occupied the chair. All the officers, the Council members the people who produce the News Sheet, the track committee members, the section leaders, the people who organise all our exhibitions, the painters, the kitchen fitters, the turn table builders, the track layers, the grounds-men, the plumbers and electricians, the roofers, the tea makers, the coach suppliers, the cake makers, the stand in track stewards, the meeting organisers, the lighting engineers, the bridge builders, the Christmas card makers, the signal systems engineers, the signal refurbishers, the Gazebo builders, the pond dredgers the fencers and even the creosote men. In short all the many members whose combined efforts make this Society what it is and keeps it running.

It has been a privilege to be the chairman of this club for the last three years and I wish our next chairman every success.

John Squire

Young Street Yard By Rai Fenton

The North American HO section have recently taken their Young Street Yard layout to the two-day London Festival of Railway Modelling Exhibition at Alexandra Palace. We were ably assisted by the British OO Section, who helped us in both operating the layout and returning it to the club.

This was its second outing since being almost entirely rebuilt; the previous occasion being at the Tring club's show at Berkhamstead. The layout attracted a great deal of interest, particularly the working rolling bascule drawbridge, the turntable and the ferry. The layout performed very well and a lot of leaflets about the club were distributed. A description of the layout now follows.

Young Street Yard portrays an industrial area on reclaimed water-side land, linked to the "mainland" via the rolling bascule drawbridge, the line then passing over a grade

crossing, between a shopping district and local park and beneath an interstate highway. At the other end of the yard the freight car ferry operates to other rail yards around the waterway.

The local rail-served industries include a grain elevator, a brewery also receiving malt from the elevator, a meat packing plant and an oil terminal. Each of these industries utilises one or more specialised types of freight cars which, together with the usual boxcars, gondolas and hopper cars from railroads all over the U.S. & Canada, provide an ever changing display as they are switched to their correct spots. Local passenger services to a harbour-side depot provide connections to shipping and carry a small amount of head-end traffic.

The layout does not portray a particular railroad or geographical area as the section members have interests spread across North America, but it is set in the 1950s and 1960s, i.e. at the time that steam gave way to diesel. It has been built to National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) standards in HO scale (3.5mm/ft) and gauge (16.5mm). All track-work is Peco code 75 with Electrofrog points and all rolling stock uses Kadee style couplings and NMRA standard RP25 profile wheels: thus the numerous makes of locomotives and cars employed are all compatible with each other and the track-work.

Multi-cab control (12Vdc) is employed via three home-built controllers that can each control trains anywhere on the layout. Points are controlled by wire and tube under the baseboard using Peco adapters and switches for powering the frogs.

Marine Mutterings

By Bernard Lambert

The boating season is well under way. We have enjoyed a fine turnout at the first Vintage Toy Boat Regatta (covered separately by John elsewhere in the News Sheet) and are looking forward to the first North London Regatta on the 23rd May.

We have also decided to have a few Marine evenings at Colney Heath on the fourth Friday each month (see dates for your diary) and hope to see many of you there with your boats.

Do not forget our major event:

Sun. 1st. August – Vintage Toy Boat Regatta

Enjoy the boating -

Dates for your Diary

Fri. 25 th . June	Marine evening - 7 pm at Colney Heath
Fri. 23 rd . July	Marine evening - 7 pm at Colney Heath
Fri. 27 th . August	Marine evening - 7 pm at Colney Heath
Fri. 24 th . September	Marine evening - 7 pm at Colney Heath

The May Vintage Toy Boat Regatta

By John Morgan

As we have come to expect, the weather was set fair for the first of two visits from the Vintage Toy Boat Club. The VTBC is not a club as we know it. Their members are scattered all over the country and meet up at “third party” sites throughout the year. Colney Heath has been added to their list.

Invites were sent out to local clubs which led to two local collectors of vintage boats bringing their models along. They joined the VTBC and will now, hopefully, participate on a regular basis.

I was late on site (don't tell the boss) and the banks were already taken up with dozens of vintage models. George Case caught my attention almost before I was out of the car claiming he had already made two pots of tea for our guests and I was to note it down now! It transpired that he had remembered my article on our last Open Day of 2003 when he was chastised for being on holiday and unable to do his duty. Seriously, thanks George; it really helps to have assistance on these busy, important days.

And so, on to the models. Even more this year I counted 60, then lost where I had got to. Makers included Triang, Star, Penguin, Triton, Playwell, Sutcliffe, Schuco, and Veron using tin, plastic and balsa. In addition to wind, steam, and clockwork power, we had a new (to us) type power on show - rubber bands – large rubber bands. It transpired that a challenge had been issued to members to produce a completely “environmental friendly” boat.

I have to say that there were varying degrees of success and even the best failed on its third run when its owner, when winding up the bands, did not stop at the turn before breaking point. The rubber just shredded and that was that.

One of the new members now joined in. It seems that he is an ex-plane man and he has all the tricks of the rubber band power hobby up his sleeve. He had produced two boats using this technology - one a submarine that actually dived. As the interested parties gathered round he explained how it is done. The 2 or 3 bands are wound in the opposite direction to that for running, about 200 turns are put on and they entwine amongst them selves before being anchored into the boat. This gives “latent” or stored power. When the boat is prepared, the first 200 turns unwind the bands, thus when fully wound to go you have more turns available for traction than you would starting with the bands slack. Clear? Good!!!

To make the point his boats had an endurance of 9 minutes, three times that of the others. Yes, they still allowed him to join their membership. There was so much torque that the boat sailed in an arc for part of the time, which could be fixed by the use of a rudder. The boat-men took delight in telling the flyer that!

The day proved to be a great success. The banks were always busy with boaters and viewers throughout the day. Their next visit is 1st August. Before then we have two regatta open days, 16th May and 25th July. Yes, I know by the time you read this the

former would have happened, but put the July date in your diary and come and support us.

Slot Car News

By Steve Francis

All of the brave souls that made their way to the frozen wastes of northern Scotland have now returned. The three Harwood brothers and Ian Fisher made the trip north and it is good to report that Greg returned as Sports Car Champion for 2004. Full results are on Chris Frost's website. Talking of which, if you have ever wondered what slot racing was like when everybody raced in shirts and ties take a look at Chris's site for the complete history of North London tracks. It is a very interesting and informative article of how slot racing started and developed at North London. You can access it via: [Slot Racing with Chris Frost](#) and follow the link.

The Society had its A.G.M. last week at which John Squire stood down as chairman. Thanks go to him for an excellent job over the past three years and especially for letting us slot racers loose on the various steam powered monsters at Colney Heath last year. Good luck to Donal Corcoran who takes over as Chairman.

The Society is 60 this year and a weekend of celebrations will take place on the 4-5th September at Colney Heath. We will be doing our bit by providing our recently acquired portable track. A fair amount of work needs to be done to make it usable so volunteers will be needed soon to help work on it and to run it at the celebrations. Stick the date in your diaries.

I am sure this does not apply(!) but if anyone hasn't paid their subs yet they were due on April 1st. Look elsewhere in this News Sheet for a) how much, and b) where to send them if you havn't.

On the 29th of this month (May) we are throwing our doors open for a retro event for 1/32nd cars. Old cars and nostalgia are mandatory, shirt and ties are not. I will report on the event next month providing I recover in time from the annual Le Mans trip!

I have started populating the stands opposite the pits recently but it is still looking a bit sparse so if you have some old spectator figures lying around somewhere bring them to fill it up. Also some more mechanics and cars for the pits would be good as well. I know this is hardly relevant in the high speed world of modern slot racing but it does create a good impression to visitors and potential new members that we can spend time on the modelling aspect of our hobby as well as being speed crazed lunatics. Don't panic, even though my Thames barge is about 32nd scale I wont be trying to fit a pond on the track as well. Hmm... where did I put those pictures of Oulton Park

Calendar for June

3rd 32 Enduro

10th Saloon
11 th Scalex
12-13th Le Mans
17th Fl
24th Sports
25th Scalex

A Younger Colney Heath **By John Mills**

I would like to recommend a book which was published in 1970 by MAP. It is called *Outdoor Model Railways* and was written by the late Martin Evans. Our Society features large in it and there are many photographs of both Colney Heath pre-1970 and a few members who were 30 years younger than they are today! It's a fascinating book showing our old method of track construction which is now starting to be replaced and even the old GNR signal which has been so beautifully restored last winter. To be so prominent in the book must mean we were in the forefront of the design and construction of raised level 3 ½ and 5 inch raised tracks. As Geoff Wren said in his Spotlight article, Loco Section members set out to make the best track in the Country at that time.

I think it is long out of print although your local library may be able to find a copy and it may be available from second-hand booksellers.

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

