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Thoughts of Chairman Dell

I've just returned from the Trent Park Steam and Country Fair. This is one of my favourite events as it involves a road run of some 12 miles. We left Colney Heath at 8.15 am and arrived at 12 noon and it rained all the way. Those who were on the footplate were OK but if you were riding on the bowser it wasn't so good, as the blast from the exhaust dislodged all the rain from the trees and you got a continual heavy shower. When we arrived at Trent Park and put the roller away, John discovered that we had leaking tubes, some nine all told. This was bad news as we still had to make the journey back. I had visions of hiring a lowloader to get us back, which can be quite an expense, so I started to ask other drivers if they had a tube expander with them. After several tries, somebody had a selection of expanders which, as he was going home that evening, he would bring with him next day.

So on Sunday I set to expand the leaking - not a nice job at the best of times, but so much worse if it is pouring with rain. While underneath the roller we had a real cloud burst and as we were on a sloping site, a torrent of water cascaded down the hill like a small river in flood. After about two hours I managed to seal all the tubes and the sun came out and things started to feel better. We lit the fire around 1 pm and all the tubes held.

We decided to head for Colney Heath at about 4 pm and after several attempts, go out with the aid of a tractor. By this time John West had gone home as he was quite unwell - this now left us with a crew of three. In the excitement of packing up, we failed to fill the bowser to its full capacity and the coal we had was just enough to get us home (we hoped). Peter Badger was steering and John Squire was driving. Peter gave us a lesson in low pressure roller driving - we never had more than 90 lbs on the clock, yet seemed to roll along in a smart manner by judicious use of the damper and careful application of coal. We arrived back at Colney Heath with coal and water to spare.

As you know, Angela is standing down as Editor after four years. Thank you Angela for all your hard work. We now need another Editor as soon as possible or the News Sheet will not continue, which would be a great shame after all these years. Country members who live some distance away rely on the News Sheet for all information. Somebody must have a few hours a month to take on Editorship, so come on form an orderly queue all you volunteers. Personally, I'm very sorry Angela is standing down, but I look forward to working with the new Editor.

We had a very good Council meeting in August. Among things discussed were fetes. As

you know, a Fete Section has been formed to run fetes in the Millennium Year. So far, there are 26 members. Tim Joiner presented a very strong case, so much so, that the Council were unanimous in giving the go ahead. It is being organised in a very professional manner, and I'm sure we all wish Tim and his team every success. It involves an awful lot of work and will completely transform the way in which we have managed fetes in the past. Anyone who wants further information, please contact myself or any Council member.

And finally as Autumn nears and meetings resume at HQ, we need speakers. Can you give us a short talk on any subject, or do you know somebody who can? We cannot just have 'Bring & Buy' Sales and 'Work in Progress' evenings, as interesting as they are. I have given three talks to the Society, so if an old f**t like myself can do it, it can't be too difficult.

Frank Dell

Off the Cuff

A large number of topics were discussed and various reports dealt with in the first hour, with the next 1 1/2 hours being devoted to considering the formation of a Fetes Section and how that Section proposes to provide new track, trailer, passenger trucks, safety fencing, etc., availability of engines, and what observance and enforcement there would be of necessary health and safety standards.

However before we reached that stage the meeting was pleased to learn that through a generous donation of a Duplex test gauge by Mrs Edith Sherman (many Loco members will no doubt remember her late husband) which, when allied to other necessary items being made by Ron Price, will provide new boiler testing equipment for the exclusive use of the boiler testers in their periodic approval testing.

The policy regarding the use of Club locos by membership was discussed at some length and is still under review by members of the Track Committee.

It is not only the model engineering fraternity who are seeing quite marked changes in the ways they can and cannot do things as most leisure pursuits are being hemmed in by the need to be aware of the litigation trap which consequently is making people become more cautious when pursuing their varied hobbies and activities. Warning notices may not have legal impact but they do emphasise an awareness of possible problems, and fairly soon now when you visit Colney Heath you will see a large "hazard" sign - not put there for members but more for their families, friends, visitors and Mr & Mrs General Public.

The bi-annual external survey of Headquarters has recently been completed by Tony Dunbar and the list of remedial work is not over long, much of it of a fairly minor nature, with a couple of jobs which will require the services of an experienced builder. The report will be distributed to Section Leaders with a request that "volunteers" be sought to undertake a bit of painting, gutter cleaning, weeding, etc.

Our Chairman was strangely reticent this month but perhaps he is saving himself for his last Chairman Dell contribution in our (so far as we can see) LAST NEWS SHEET - which is where you will read his offering. As it is still "summer hols" time my postbag was fairly light. The Treasurer reported 30 outstanding subscriptions and "last chance"

reminders have been sent to all of them - so if you enjoy being a member then pay your sub. He gave us one change of address, one resignation, and one new member. There were no reports on activities from Slot Cars, Marine, and North American Sections. For Cine, John Old reported a couple of members had treated themselves to the latest video camera technology (Is the Section going to change its name? Secry). They have started filming a documentary, and enjoyed an evening of past Triangle entries, and the new projector screen is now in situ. Finally and regrettably, no members from other Sections joined their recent coach outing. Ken West reported that the 00 Section had been invited to take a working layout to the Model Engineering Exhibition at Alexandra Palace which unfortunately they had to decline as they have insufficient members to man it every day for 5-days, but hope perhaps they can do it next year with help from other Sections. The Loco Section were looking forward to a busy weekend with several visiting Clubs expected, some possibly staying overnight. Some of the Stationary Steam & Traction Engines members enjoyed a wet weekend at Trent Park and had to be pulled off site by tractors.

We were now almost at the end of Council business which concluded with the Chairman expressing his appreciation of the sterling work carried out over the past 4 years by Angela Foreman producing an excellent News Sheet on a monthly basis. It would be an enormous pity if the Society should now suffer the loss of this important monthly focal point which is the sole link for most Honorary Members, many Country Members, and a lot of Retired Members. Out of 200+ members we do not appear to have ONE person prepared to devote some time and effort to keeping the News Sheet going.

Tim Joiner arrived promptly at 9.00pm and distributed his document in support of fetes together with its accompanying risk assessment and gave us a breakdown on all the headings. We sought some more detailed clarification and followed with a Question & Answer session.

Having convinced most of the Council that adequate enquiries and costings had been made and the market potential had been investigated, it was finally agreed the new Fetes Section should go ahead with their proposal. For some of the Council one of the major concerns centred on the statement that the Section have 26 members who have literally pledged their help, but throughout the presentation only some 5 or 6 names were mentioned. It was pointed out to Tim Joiner that this level of support was all we had ever had in the past, sometimes even less, and it was likely to be insufficient. We have in the past, in all good faith, accepted fete bookings and on the day have found ourselves seriously short of help. But drawing Tim's attention to these sort of things was in truth part and parcel of our playing Devil's Advocate and trying to highlight where the Section could have weaknesses in the future. There were also aspects of the risk assessment and its requirements which could prove problematical in the future if proper attention is not always paid to the documentation. The Chairman, I believe, will also make reference to this topic in his contribution to this - THE LAST - News Sheet.

Beryl Collingwood

Workshop Nights

Here we are again with the first evening meeting only a month away. This winter's meetings are going to be more of the traditional type of discussion and demonstration, with ourselves showing and talking about how its done.

My year has been very productive model engineeringwise with several new skills which have been mastered, so do come along and give the NLSME membership attending our meeting the benefit of this year's experiences in your workshops.

The last two years of workshop meetings have been a little on the stale side with only a small response from the floor and the effort to keep a meeting going without feedback from yourselves is a difficult task for me to keep up for two hours, so after the last meeting in March 1999 which, for some unknown reason, was perhaps the best meeting we had achieved for a long time, I came to the conclusion that we need to get back to what the title infers "Workshop Nights". That is, how we do these almost impossible tasks and somehow get the right result, even if it takes perhaps a little longer than we all reckon when we start.

My rest at the Christmas week 1998 from making boiler fittings for my locomotive which were nearly driving me mad is still an ongoing project - eight months to date. What a rest. I've done more than I could ever have imagined it took to make wagons, but it will make a good subject for discussion. More of all that on our winter meeting nights.

The first meeting this winter will be started off with Jim McDonald giving us a safety video and short discussion on electrics in the workshop. If you have any safety ideas, then do bring them along.

Our second meeting will be our "wizard" of metal work Ron Price, with his demonstration and short talk about moving metal. Ron has done this demo before, but it is really worth another look and listen.

The next meeting, in the new Millennium, will be January and on the 28th of this month we have a very interesting talk and video about investment casting by Chris Hoskins who visits many companies with his products which should be a good evening of an art used by the ancients of Egypt and China before the Millennium bug was ever thought of (!) or perhaps you know different.

Come along and participate in the Workshop Evenings See you all at HQ at 8.00 p.m. on October 22nd, that's the fourth Friday of the month. All meetings will be on the fourth Friday of the month, except December 1999 which will not be held of course, as there are other things to do that night.

Meetings and dates are in the "Dates for Your Diary" section of your Newsheet. That's all for now.

Derek Perham

At the August Committee meeting, the Fetes Committee made a presentation outlining their reasons for wishing to restart attendance at fairs and fetes in the year 2000. The following are some of the slides which supported the presentation.

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

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