

THE BALLENY BLAST



Dave Beaman's 5" Gauge I. O. M. Locomotive

[Issue 56](#)

[Spring 2005](#)

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N.B. Should you require the services of a boiler inspector, please contact one beforehand. Please do not simply arrive at the ground and assume that there will be one available.

COMMENT

The changing face of model engineering

Model engineering, as a hobby is one of the world's great leisure-time pursuits. It covers a very wide range of interests and is enjoyed by a vast number and variety of individuals around the world. Because it is such a dynamic hobby it is naturally going to evolve as it grows, and some of that evolutionary change is now becoming apparent (to this writer anyway).

Traditionally, we have tended to think of model engineers as people closeted away in their workshops building models of steam locomotives, traction engines and stationary engines — with the emphasis always on steam. Many of us grew up with steam and have fond though sometimes romanticised memories of it. There are probably not many of those very much younger than myself do not have these memories; they only know a gradual increase steam from what they see in museums, books and on film. Over the last couple of decades, as these younger ones have matured and come into the model engineering world, we have observed in the number of petrol and electric locomotives and a growing interest in other IC engines — because these are the technologies with which they are familiar.

Now we are seeing the beginning of the next wave of interests evolving which revolve around computers and modern electronics. Over the past few years, there has been an increase in the number of computer-centred activities, computer controlled models and even computers used in the workshop, particularly with the operation of lathes and milling machines. At the same time, there has been a comparative decline in the number of steam related models being produced. It's not surprising really — this is the emerging face of the next stage in the long history of model engineering.

I know there are many who are not that impressed by this trend, but I think that is a shame. These new pursuits require the skill levels equal

to, but different from, the traditional ones. Personally, I have to admit that when I look at some of these "new fangled" ideas I sometimes have difficulty understanding them but I am impressed with what they can do and how they perform. My knowledge of the computer world does not extend much beyond what is needed to produce this magazine, (with a considerable input from Steve Hodgetts!), so I subscribe firmly to the idea that if one is having difficulty with some electronic wizardry, one needs to have a computer literate person or teenager on tap. The upcoming crop of teenagers seem to be born with an extra gene that allows them to automatically understand computers and electronics. Think how they will further change our hobby in another decade or two. If our hobby never evolved we would probably still be turning out the basic (and sometimes crude by modern standards) little engines of the mid to late 1800s as made by our forebears. Who says evolution is not exciting!

Garry Tyso.
Editor.

TREASURER'S REPORT

I don't wish to sound like a whingeing old miser, but could I please ask all members who use Balleney Green facilities, to try to be economical with the use of electricity.

N-Power have recently virtually trebled the monthly Direct Debit (from £22.00 to £62.00). When I first discovered this, my immediate reaction was to protest or appeal against it. On investigation, however, I found that the old rate had been set at least three years ago, before the North East Corner building work commenced.

When you consider the amount of electrical power output consumed in the store/workshop, I think we have to admit that the increased tariff is probably justified. So please, TURN OFF lights, machines, heaters etc. as soon as you have finished using them.

Chris Greene

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

The Society's year is coming to a close, with the AGM in 7 weeks time on 14th June.

Membership subscriptions were due by the end of March.

Voting forms for election to the Board of Directors can be obtained from the Secretary and should be returned to him by 28th May.

I hope you will attend the meeting to voice your opinion of the running of the Society.

Balleney Green will soon be looking its best – trees in full leaf, and the smoke and steam from the locomotives running round the track. If only the Members were there to see it.

Some Sundays we have more visitors than members – one 5 year old boy came three times before members were there who could drive an engine.

George Weedon

BOARDROOM NOTES

The North East corner project is now nearing completion with the approval for purchase and subsequent installation of a roller shutter door for the carriage storage area.



There now remains various ‘tidying up’ details to complete. Approval was given for the purchase and installation of new carpet tiles in the lounge, following the removal of the fixed seating. This has now been completed.

In April, Stuart Harrison addressed the Board with his proposals for new bogies, an article about which appears in this issue.

Also, Barry Kefford attended the same meeting to express his concerns regarding the direction, or lack of it, that the Society was taking.

Eric Davies continues to report on matters horticultural, with particular interest in the removal of the mole population at Balleney Green.

Birthday parties continue to be as popular as ever, despite the recent price increase. Terry Dell has offered and been accepted as organiser of these events, and has been co-opted onto the Board.

One side effect of the price increase is that we are now getting combined parties.

Ongoing problems with the tractor mower have resulted in the proposal that a new machine be purchased at the end of the season, or earlier if necessary, and the old machine be kept with cutting gear removed and used solely as a tractor.

It has been proposed that the dump truck be disposed of.

Eric Davies and Jim Hill are looking into the possibility of obtaining a grant from the National Lottery Fund.

The 50% discretionary Rate Relief has been granted by Lichfield Council.

Neal Harrison is currently looking at lodging an appeal against the new rating assessment.

Club Bogies

On each Nov 5th we are assisted by drivers who are not members of our society, who bring their own stock and locomotives. After the last one in 2004 a number of were in the clubhouse having a final cuppa, I asked Roger Greatrex about rail track bending, he explained some vital details on the subject but then said “**I think you have got your priorities wrong, your track is ok, its your rolling stock you should be paying attention to**”. I had been involved in this subject starting with bogies about 6 years ago along with Dave Moseley, but we had abandoned it for political reasons at the time, obviously the time had come to start again. The prices and quality of a number of the products, catalogues of which I previously accumulated a large file had not impressed me. How about manufacturing our own bogies?

Obviously there is no point in re-inventing the wheel, why not try and manufacture to an existing good design? I measured up and made out drawings of a bogie from Weston Park which Brett Rogers was doing some maintenance on at home, I had frames laser cut to a standard which astonished me, bearings were obtained, I manufactured various other parts and Brett donated a ring of cast iron brake shoes and suspension springs. Now we enter a land of myths: - Various people had implied over time that wheels could be sourced for just a few pounds each, what I found was quite different. Two companies were not interested in orders less than at least 100, three other replies quoted between £27 and £80 **EACH WHEEL**; ouch! Well why not manufacture our own wheels?

I obtained four EN8 steel blanks at £5.50 each, I immediately discovered that profiling a wheel is not easy, however I have invented a tool which is effectively a second top slide for my lathe so that I can profile in two directions at the same time, (material for another article). Other expensive items are the brake cylinders; costs can be reduced here by careful selection of products, now arises the question of how much braking power do we need, firstly, the price of a bogie without any brakes is approximately £120, one then has the option of putting all of the braking power onto one bogie or splitting it between two bogies, thus we have: -

A basic bogie before adding brakes £120
A bogie lightly braked (one cylinder) £215
A bogie heavily braked (two cylinders) £285

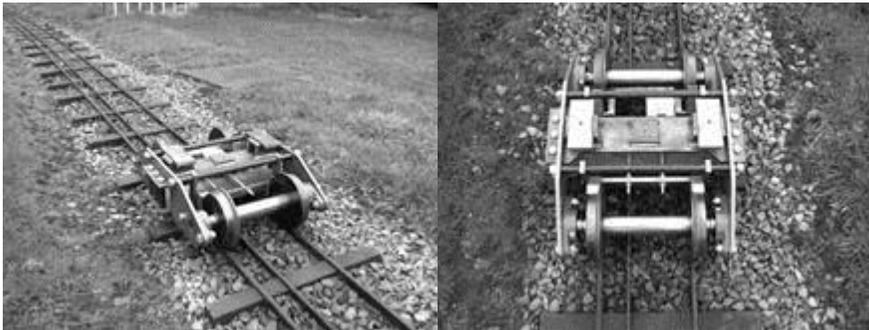
Although my prototype was intended to have two brake cylinders fitted, it can just as easily be changed to only one cylinder, Peter McMillan and others I have spoken with say they would prefer that the braking is spread between bogies, thus we would get: -

Two bogies with heavy braking on only one bogie £405
Two bogies with braking shared £430

Roger Greatrex also tells a story about a company who he had made a locomotive for, they had an accident (nothing to do with him, or the coaching stock), HSE were called in and said: - “We know nothing about railways, we will call in the Railway Inspectorate”. They visited and asked: - “Where are your brakes?” On being told that they did not use brakes the reply was: - “You’re banned from carrying passengers till you fit brakes”

Stuart Harrison





Photos: S. Hodgetts.

NEW RAIL PROGRESS

Over the past few months, considerable progress has been made with the tooling for the new rail.

Dave Moseley and Steve Hodgetts have produced and tested the press tools for the rail clips, together with drill jigs for the drilling of the rail ends for fish plates.



Raising Tool for 5³/71/4" Track Clip

As this edition of the Blast closed for press, the Rail Bending Rolls had been completed and about to be tested.

In addition, steel for the clips has been ordered following the decision to use 16g mild steel spun galvanised in preference to 18g stainless

steel which was not only extremely expensive, but also harder to press and heavier on tool wear.

Soft wood, tanalised, sleepers have been sourced, and a quantity ordered, and a few random lengths of rail are to be obtained from the rollers prior to a batch sufficient to complete the section from the station throat to the junction of the inner and outer loops is ordered together with fish plates.

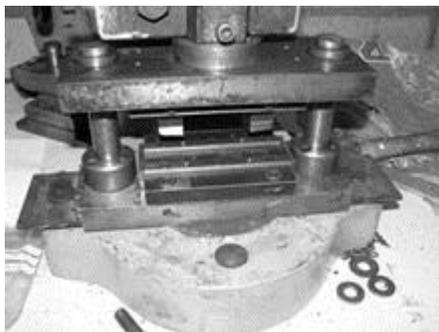
Track fixing screws have been sourced and a batch ordered together with fish plate bolts and nuts.

There now remains to manufacture drill jigs for the sleepers, and an assembly jig for the track panels.

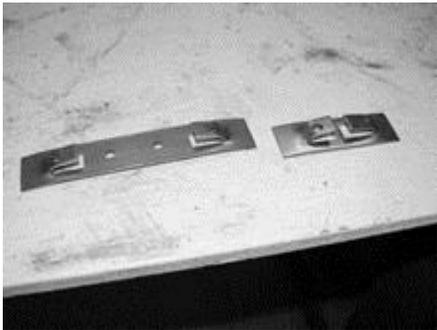
As soon as these items are completed, it is hoped that the new rail will start to be installed.

Roger Timings has volunteered to drill the pilot holes in the sleepers during his continuing convalescence from his recent operation.

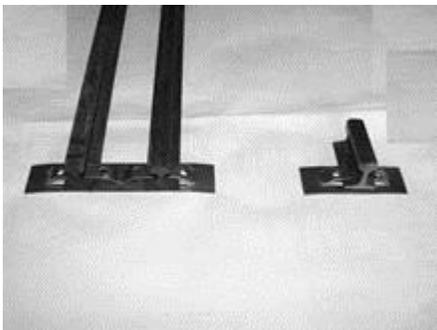
More volunteers are required to produce the clips, and also assemble track panels in the near future. Contact Dave Moseley or Steve Hodgetts if you can help.



Pierce/Raising Tool for Double & Single Track Clip



Finished Double & Single Track Clips.



Track/Clip Assembly.

THE TUESDAY "HORTICULTURAL & MAINTENANCE" TEAM **SPRING REPORT**

It is some four months since I produced the last report and quite a lot of work has been done in that time. After bonfire night our work changed from the routine mowing, strimming, trimming and jobs to keep the site looking good; to essential work that can only be done when the trees, shrubs, hedges and other plantings have died back and are dormant for the winter. We've completed sorting out all the hedges round the site and given them their first trim, removed the odd tree stump and laurel bush, attended to tree's in danger of coming into contact with the high tension overhead cables, cut back the laurel hedges, sorted out the cherry trees and many other maintenance items I'll not bore you with. The 'Goat Hedge' is probably the most successful thing we've done – just have a look at all the new growth

and see how well it's thickened up. The others will take longer because of the very poor state they were in.

Now its back to the routine mowing, strimming etc, etc, etc. We will be obtaining and starting to plant new trees in and around the site over the coming months, some old English (but not as historic as Silver Birch) and ornamental species along with continuing to make improvements where appropriate.

I hate the phrase 'Global Warming' that is trotted out as an explanation for all things but it is a fact that winters, over the passed few years, have been less cold and brought with them consequent changes to all wildlife.

Yes, I miss the lovely cold clear frosty days and the beauty of the landscape covered in a blanket of pure white snow but the other side of the coin has many good things that I enjoy -- better? For example, not shivering when I get out of bed in the mornings, not having higher heating bills, not having to clear snow from the paths, not having to defrost the car every morning, not having to wear thick heavy coats or rap up warm for months and in the garden winter pansies and primroses that bring colour to our gardens. However, the changes mean that the wildlife is much more active and it is, therefore, essential that all work likely to affect habitats is stopped well before spring is sprung so to speak. Yes, spring has clearly arrived and you only have to look round our site to see just how much has changed during the last few weeks.

The little robins have been very busy along with blackbirds and thrushes. Whilst we tend to think of them nesting in the trees and hedges we've had a thrush and blackbird nesting in the clubhouse canopy and engine bay roof respectively over the last couple of years – watch that space.

At the back of our minds all the time is the need to ensure that our best efforts are made to maintain and improve the site in the short and longer term. The longer term is the difficult one; we are all getting older so it's essential to reduce all maintenance, as far as possible, to that that can be done by

members. Having to get in contractors to do maintenance would be expensive and have to be paid for out of subscriptions -- not a thing I wish to see.

The 'other' Tuesday team(s) and members have also been working very hard with administrative tasks, completing the Maintenance Store, installing all the hardware in the store, installing the door to the carriage shed, altering the seating and decorating the club room together with many other tasks.

At Balleny Green members are working and playing, loco's steaming, birds nesting, rabbits burrowing, fish & frogs spawning, foxes littering, bees buzzing – a hive of activity. So please come and enjoy this wonderful asset you have on Sundays or Tuesday evenings, even Tuesday mornings to assist with the work that is on-going or needs to be done. The workers coffee

break is free but Ivor, or Ray on occasions, do charge for the soup and french bread/rolls at lunchtime.

Eric Davies

Tuesday Horticultural Team

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The closure of MG Rover is yet another nail in the coffin of Engineering in the West Midlands, and indeed the UK.

As a nation, we have not encouraged our children to take up engineering for many years, and the knock-on effect is that Societies such as ours have no potential members on which to expand, or even sustain our numbers.

The younger generation are no longer interested in steam but are more interested in computers as outlined in the editorial comment in this issue.

The outlook for our Society, and others like us, is bleak to say the least, unless we act **now** to prevent our sliding into oblivion like the dinosaur. The question is, however, what do we do.

There is no doubt that leisure time activities have altered considerably over the past decade – people are more affluent, the motor car, and cheap air travel have expanded everybody's horizons, and an afternoon at the club is not now so appealing to many.

Fewer steam locomotives are being built, largely because of the time they take to complete, the skill required, and indeed, the machinery required.

Kits would seem to be the obvious answer, but they can be expensive, and we all know what happened to many would-be locomotive constructors/owners with the Winson fiasco.

Although many of our members frown on kits, or diesel outline locomotives, the writer feels that the latter is the only way forward – they are relatively simple to construct, need not cost the earth, do not require much in the way of tools to construct, and provide instant satisfaction.

There is no raising steam, you just unload, put it on the track, switch on, and you're off. Nor is there hours of work cleaning them down after each run.

Perhaps the time is now right to organise a diesel weekend where the public and Trade are invited not only to view, but also to **drive** diesel outline locomotives. There is nothing like being "up front" and in control of a train!

Another option would be to widen our appeal to a larger audience – what would be so wrong in having an LGB, Gauge 1 or 0 gauge layout at Balleney Green and encourage people to bring their locos to run. Going even further, why not increase the scale range further by making provision for table top railways – we could offer Z gauge to 7.1/4" gauge at one site.

Perhaps we should consider a merger with a similar Society?

One thing is for sure, if the membership as a whole continues in its current apathetic state, Balleney Green will not exist in 10 years time. One regular criticism of the Society is that it is "becoming a railway Society".

But hasn't this always been so? The original site at Lea Marston was a field with a ramshackle clubhouse and a raised level railway track.

Balleney Green gave the opportunity to expand the Society's horizons and embrace all forms of model engineering, including a custom built boating lake for steam and electronic R/C models. This, sadly has not taken place, largely because those model engineers interested in other forms of the hobby have not either shown the interest or the enthusiasm to create facilities for their particular interests.

Successive Boards and committees have always been blamed for not looking after these people, but this is not so.

It just happens that the large majority of the members are interested in railways. They need track to run their models on and some are prepared to put in the effort to create a facility on which to run their models.

They surely cannot be criticised for their enthusiasm.

Other members spend long hours maintaining our ground, whilst others put in considerable effort into building our infrastructure.

What a pity that all our members do not show such commitment to **their** Society.

It is time to stop moaning and criticizing the few who do put a lot of effort into the Society and get down to Balleney Green and support them, after all, when joining the Society you all signed and agreed to help.

One of our illustrious past Chairmen used to irreverently refer to the majority of the membership as “passive parasites”.

Your Society needs **you and your ideas - now!**

The Model Engineering Society as most of you knew it is **dead.**

We must look to and embrace the future, or we too will go the way of the dinosaur. *Garry Tyso.*

WORKSHOP PROGRESS

The workshop in the North East Corner is now in use, the lathe and milling machine having been used for jobs on site and also by members to machine components for their models.

Any member is welcome to use the machinery, but remember, **YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO OPERATE MACHINERY ON YOUR OWN.**





THE POND – ASSET OR EYESORE ?



What do you think? Letters to the Editor please.

KEEP DRY – BE SEEN

Stirling Barsley has kindly donated 3 High Vis/Waterproof jackets for use by Society members in inclement weather conditions. There is now no excuse that “Rain stopped play”!

The coats are to be found in the North East Corner Complex, and should be returned there after use, in the condition in which they were found, i.e. **clean!**

At no time are the coats to be removed from Balleney Green.

SUTTON COLDFIELD RAILWAY SOCIETY MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION.

The Weekend of 23rd and 24th of April saw some of our members at Bishop Walsh School in Sutton Coldfield, not for some further education, but to exhibit their models at the Sutton Coldfield Railway Society model railway exhibition. This is, and has been for some time, a regular date in the S.C.M.E.S. diary, and is vital to the promotion of our club and hobby. It is amazing how many people, who live on our doorstep in Sutton, have never heard of us, let alone visited Balleney Green.

The event this year was back at the usual venue after building works forced last years show to move to Bishop Vesey Grammar School, also resulting in a substantial drop in numbers. The attendance was back to normal and the models throughout, were of the usual high standard, making for a very enjoyable exhibition.

Saturday 23rd, saw my long suffering partner Suzanne, dropping me off at 09.30 at the school. My locos were taken there the previous evening and I was going to spend the two days on our stand, hopefully arousing interest in our hobby.

A fine display of model engineering by S.C.M.E.S. members in various gauges and states of construction, greeted visitors in the entrance hall. Anthony Holme- Barnets 5” gauge, Ransome Rapier steam crane was

praised by many who, were amazed at the amount of rivets that were being fitted and, the amount of patience it must take to fit them! Stuart Harrison's 7¼" rolling stock bogies, were also attracting a lot of attention. More than a few people were surprised when it was explained to them, the reason for the heavy duty construction was, a fully laden coach can weigh in excess of half a ton. Many don't realise how powerful our little locomotives are! Whilst talking about Stuart Harrison, I would like to thank him for the loan of his compressor, enabling us to run a variation of stationary engines on air for the weekend. There was a lot of interest in the stationary engines, I lost count how many times I explained "How a steam engine works", using one of those not in use.

The S.C.M.E.S. stand was manned by a few of our members over the two days and we met up with a few old friends including Tony Miller and Martin Cousins, as well as making some new ones.

Older members will remember Martin, as he was building a 7.1/4" Gauge HST powered by two 2HP 3 phase electric motors, supplied by an inverter driven by a petrol generator. Both Tony and Martin are possibly re-joining in the near future.

I think a good time was had by all, chatting about railways etc, in gauges ranging from N, through model engineering scales to the 12" to the foot scale. I certainly enjoyed my two days and Sunday evening pack up came too quickly. Even so, it was nice to retire to a local hostelry for a sit down and a glass or two of the amber nectar.

It gets harder to provide a display of new models for the stand so, regular visitors, (and there are many), see a different display every year. Have you got a model we haven't seen somewhere for next year's exhibition? Maybe you could come and man the stand for an hour or so, either way, I am sure you will not be turned away.

Peter McMillan and Stephen Hodgetts were taking pictures, I am looking forward to seeing them on the S.C.M.E.S. web site, showing our stand and I hope, some of the model railway layouts.

Just to finish, thanks to all that provided exhibits and to those that came and manned the stand with special thanks to Peter McMillan for organising it. I'm off the workshop now to try and make something for next year....



SCMES STAND EXHIBITS AT 2005 SCRS EXHIBITION

5”G SHELLMEX BP TANK WAGON c1898

5”G SQUARE TANKWAGON 1907

VERTICAL COLLIERY STEAM ENGINE

VERTICAL STEAM ENGINE (STUART-TURNER No.10)

STUART-TURNER S50 STEAM ENGINE

Anthony Holme-Barnett

Anthony Holme-Barnett

Dave Beaman

Dave Beaman

Dave Beaman

HORIZONTAL MILL ENGINE	Peter McMillan
5”G L&Y Rly CLASS OF 0-4-0ST (PUG)	Dave Beaman
2” Scale RUSTON PROCTOR TRACTION ENGINE	Graham Jones
MOVABLE ANGLE PLATE	Jim Bayliss
MATCHED “V” BLOCKS	Jim Bayliss
TOOLMAKERS CLAMP	Jim Bayliss
CENTAUR GAS ENGINE	Graham Jones
TENDER FOR “SWEET PEA” LOCO	Terry Dell
2” Scale ALLCHIN TRACTION ENGINE	Bill Coleman
BEAM ENGINE	Graham Jones
3½”G 0-4-0T “TICH” LOCO	Roger Addenbrooke
ROTARY TABLE	Mark Bradley
3½”G “SHAY” LOCO	Graham Jones
5”G STEAM CRANE	Anthony Holme-Barnett
3½”G 4-4-0 DERBY CLASS 2P	Graham Jones
3½”G 4-6-0 BR STANDARD CLASS 4	Neal Harrison
5”G 2-4-0 ISLE-OF-MAN LOCO	Dave Beaman
5”G 0-4-2 “LION” LOCO	Graham Jones
RAIL, SLEEPERS AND CHAIRS FOR PROPOSED NEW TRACK	SCMES
7¼”G BOGIE DESIGN & COMPONENTS	Stuart Harrison
NAME PLATES	Bill Hall
HOT AIR ENGINE	Mark Bradley
KNURLING TOOL	Mark Bradley

(Entries in bold are builder and owner, otherwise owner only)

Sutton Coldfield Model Engineering Society Ltd

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS & EVENTS FOR 2005

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject / Title</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Venue</u>
Sun 8th May 2005	Birthday Party		BG
Sun 22nd May 2005	Birthday Party		BG
Mon 30th May 2005	Bank Holiday Monday Steam-Up		BG
Sun 5th Jun 2005	1st Sunday of the Month Steam-Up		BG
Tue 14th June 2005	Annual General Meeting	7.45 PM	WGL
Sun 26th June 2005	Second City Sounds Party		BG
Sun 3rd Jul 2005	1st Sunday of the Month Steam-Up		BG
Sun 24th July 2005	Members Family Party Jim Bayliss		BG
Thur 28th July 2005	S.C.R.S Visit to BG	7.30pm	BG
Sun 7th Aug 2005	National 2½" Gauge Association Rally		BG
Sun 21st Aug 2005	Garden Party		BG
Sat 08 th Nov. 2005	Bonfire Night (Provisional)	6.30pm.	BG
Sun 04th Dec. 2005	Santa Special (Provisional)	11.00am	BG
Sun 11 th Dec. 2005	Santa Special (Provisional)	11.00am	BG

Key to Venues

WGL = Wylde Green Community Hall

BG = Balleny Green

AND FINALLY.....

The Editor would like to express his sincere thanks to **Steve Hodgetts** for all his efforts in the production of this edition of the Blast. **Steve** is also responsible for all the photographs.

Please send in **YOUR** photos – on floppy disc or CD - of models (leggy females if you wish!) or of scenes at Balleney Green for possible use in future editions of the Blast.

Please note that any opinions expressed in this edition of the Blast are solely those of the Editor, or the contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Board.