



# Steaming Ahead

[www.scmes.freemove.co.uk](http://www.scmes.freemove.co.uk)

## Chairman's Chunter

During the last month progress has continued on the ground level track replacement project. The point giving access to the carriage-shed area has been completed, as have many track sections.

Looking ahead, the route for the new outer loop, which has been marked out for some time, has had the turf removed resulting in the proposed track line being very easy to see.

As well as the turf being removed it has been necessary to fell two birch trees, which was done very efficiently by the 'hort' group. Well done, gents.

A friend of David Moseley has ground the stumps below ground level.

I am sure David has passed on our thanks for a job well done.

Late in the month it had been decided to lay the new track from the carriage shed point, around the curve towards the station approach. This was started early on Tuesday morning and by the close of play, after a great deal of hard work, the required new section had been well laid.

The link onto the original track was done over the next couple of days. If you care to view the work I believe you will agree a particularly good job was done. I am sure the efforts of all concerned are appreciated by those not involved.

If you have access to the society web site there are some good photos and video to be seen.

More recently, the new station approach has been started. Many of the track panels have been built and the new point is well on its way. It is unfortunate that the points are quite complex to build and very time consuming which restricts the progress of the project.

Early in March we hosted Bethan's birthday party. I understand Bethan and her friends had a good time. Everyone appeared to be enjoying themselves.

I believe the members present also had a good time especially when the bacon butties were dished out, thank you Bethan.

We were treated to a very pleasant and entertaining evening presented by John, a director of the Ammerton narrow gauge railway. Unfortunately

the evening was not well attended so many members missed out on a good event.

I wish to thank Steve Whitson for his efforts arranging these meetings. I feel the society could make the effort worthwhile with better attendance.

Lots of tasks go on around the site which are never recognised, sweeping leaves, washing up, general maintenance etc. etc., therefore I wish to thank all those responsible.

Looking ahead, the society has a busy schedule over the spring and summer period, which require staff. I am appealing to all members who are able to assist to make themselves available so as the load is spread as much as possible. Keep an eye on the events calendar.

The society is a great social facility, therefore, for it to remain so, use it.

All the best,

**Allan Leary.**

## Events This Month—April

Sun 05 April 2009	Steam Up & Birthday Party
Mon 13 April 2009	Easter Monday Steam Up
Sat 18 April 2009	Steam Up
Sat 25 /Sun 26 April 2009	Sutton Coldfield Railway Society's Annual Exhibition

## Dates for Your Diary

Mon 04 May 2009	Bank Holiday Steam Up
Sun 10 May 2009	Birthday Party
Sat 16 May 2009	SPRING STEAM EVENT—Tickets required
Tues 19 May 2009	Steam Up & Faggots & peas night
Sun 24 May 2009	Birthday Party
Mon 25 May 2009	Bank Holiday Steam Up

## Your help needed for a Birthday party 5th April

### FEBRUARY 2009 --- "HORT" MAINTENANCE & OTHER NOTES

The first two weeks of the month started with winds, rain and snow; consequently very little could be done on the hort side. Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> the ground was very wet and water logged following the snow, however, Grenville managed to plant the 15 or so remaining hawthorn, blackthorn and hazel saplings.

While Grenville was finishing off the hawthorn I planted five Leylandi which will be allowed to grow freely to provide a sun screen in the south east corner along the 'goat hedge'. It's not going to be an immediate solution for the drivers to the low level sun, since they will take a while to achieve a suitable height.

We then checked the new tree's planted a fortnight previously and were concerned to find that rabbits had attacked and stripped the bark off four young holly trees. To stop this we've put metal grill panels round them and around other adjacent ones. We believe it was because of the frozen ground and snow covering that the rabbits eat what they could get at easily.

The intention had been to have a turf cutter last Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> February, but because of the weather Garry put it off until Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>.

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> saw a lot of activity on the site with a good turn out. John (W) was first and opened up, followed by me and then Grenville. We had planned to clear the two silver birch trees in the new inner track alignment requested by the board. So while I went to get the tractor, trailer, tools, ladders, electric cable and plenty of rope, Grenville sorted out the chain

saw and other bits before joining me by the trees.

We had just completed putting 7 or 8 large balks of timber across the track for protection when Bill and Vic arrived. Bill brought his professional gear and petrol chain saw; just as well in the event as the club electric saw gave up on the first cut. With guide rope in place and directional 'V' cut Bill commenced the final cut as we took the strain on the guide rope. The tree came down cleanly with no damage and was soon cut up and taken to the bonfire.

After a break for coffee and a breather we were joined by Chris and John (R). The same well tested procedure followed for the second and taller tree. Allan (L) and Dave with his team were checking the track panels and new height for the S/E corner as we took the strain on the rope for the second tree. Looking down the field we could see a line of figures waiting and watching events as we brought the second tree down.

Grenville took over cutting up whilst Vic myself and John cleared up and moved the rubbish to the bonfire. All the work and clearing up was completed by 11.15am – just two hours.

Two stumps, about 18-24" high, were left to assist with clearing the base and roots. However, Dave (M) has come up trumps with a neighbour who has a tree stump grubber and owes him a favour. On Sunday (22<sup>nd</sup>) Dave and I dug out as much soil from around the roots as possible in readiness for Bill to cut off the remaining tree stumps at ground level on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>.

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>, a very busy day and a very good turn out. The turf cutter that Garry ordered arrived at nine and

the delivery driver explained how to work it. Grenville put his hands on it to be shown how to use it and we all took one pace back!!!! Consequently, Grenville did a great job turf cutting all the grass along the new track bed alignment, from the point by the level crossing, right round to 'Ted's Hut' where it will be joined up to the new track replacing the old outer in due course.

Peter, John (R), Fred and Mark worked hard and picked up/rolled up/shovelled up around 300-350 metres of the turf cut by Grenville. It was loaded into the trailer and taken down to the S/E corner where it was spread to increase the ground level and contain the new track ballast. Its bit uneven and will be levelled with good soil and seeded in due course but for the moment needs to be allowed to settle. Without the turf cutter the job of clearing the new track alignment would have taken for ever, so to speak, instead it took just one day.

While we were busy with the turf Bill got to work on what remained of the two tree stumps. They are now ready for Dave (M's) friend 'the man with the stump grubber' next Tuesday (3<sup>rd</sup> March).

Meanwhile, in the S/E corner the track team got busy lifting the old track and replacing it but see elsewhere for words by Garry and/or Allan (L). In the carriage shed Stuart and John (W) continued work on shelving for the guard truck chargers.

All in all a very good day's work by everyone with a lot of progress made and more of the same on today, Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>, completing the work in time for the birthday party on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March.

*Eric Davies 25<sup>th</sup> February 2009*

### Copy dates for future news letters:-

Tuesday 28th Apr for May

Tuesday 26th May for June

Tuesday 30th June for July

Tuesday 28th July for Aug

### This Months Quote:

Rome wasn't built in a day but at least it was built

Editor : Steve Whitson Phone 01543 675852 Mobile 07976944171

email [steve@casprint.co.uk](mailto:steve@casprint.co.uk) **Newshound : Neal Harrison 0121 378 3992**

# Your help needed for a Birthday party 5th April

## Signalling

The signalling for the new track is still on-going. As drivers will have noticed the signal lamps are brighter as they have been changed to L.E.D. lamps. We are about to install new track-detection devices for trial purposes.

A cabling joint at the end of the station is to be remade, as there is some water ingress at this joint. The rest of the cabling is generally satisfactory.

## Point-Motors:

We are adopting the design by S. Harrison, as one of these point-motors has been in operation for many years at the entrance of the line into the station and has proved satisfactory. The building of the motors is in progress as most of the components have already been manufactured by S. Harrison.

Mike Brophy



**SUTTON COLDFIELD MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY**  
INCORPORATING LITTLE HAY MINIATURE RAILWAY

## SPRING STEAM EVENT -- MAY 16TH

There will be a variety of locomotives in operation and as stationery exhibits, subject to weather and availability

Steam Engines
Diesel Engines
Battery/Electric Engines
Traction Engines

And by popular request:  
The SUTTON FOLLY "OO" model railway layout in the marquee.  
*Operated by the SUTTON COLDFIELD RAILWAY SOCIETY*

ALL TRAIN RIDES FREE.
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

GROUNDS OPEN 11.00 AM - 4.00 PM  
 ALL TRAIN RIDES FINISH PROMPTLY AT 4.00PM  
ADMISSION BY PRE-BOOKED TICKET ONLY.

**PRICES** All tickets £5.00 each (2 yrs and over)  
**TICKETS** PLEASE WRITE ENCLING A STAMPED, ADDRESS ENVELOPE TO:-

Mr C Greene 7 Terry Drive, Walmley,  
Sutton Coldfield B76 2PT

**TICKET REQUEST** PLEASE REMEMBER TO ENCLOSE A SAE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

No. of tickets required:  I enclose a cheque for and SAE: £

Picture from last years L & NWR visit thanks to S Hodgetts



## Your help needed for a Birthday party 5th April

### MARCH 2009 — "HORT" MAINTENANCE & OTHER NOTES

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup>** another busy day and a very good turn out. The turf cutter was due to be collected today but Dave (M) had identified an additional area of turf in the track alignment that required clearing. Grenville again did a good job and with John (R), Peter and me working well the turf was soon moved to the S/E corner, continuing the build up of the ground there.

Around 10.00am Dave's friend Andy Hill arrived with the tree grubber and got ready to start. The first stump was completed fairly quickly since it only needed to be grubbed a few inches below ground level. However, the second stump, with a lot of surface root showing, needed to be grubbed down some 20" as the new track alignment will cross the area. The stumps were in the point 'V' between the run into the station and the track continuing on up the field to the S/W corner.

While that was going on Garry arrived in his van loaded with a new supply of sleepers and galvanised rail clips. These were unloaded and are now stored in the maintenance store ready for use.

It took until nearly lunch time to complete the 'grubbing out', clearing up the area and loading the equipment back into Andy's van. Andy was very interested in the site and after Dave had shown him round he joined us for a cup of Mike's soup at lunch.

The turf cutter was collected and Andy left mid afternoon. The amount of work these two things pieces of equipment saved is tremendous – many hours of very physical work and allowed the teams to concentrate on more important aspects of the project. With all the turf cut it's easier to see the shape of things to come but there is a lot of soil to be removed from the new alignments, in order to achieve the gradients that Dave is aiming to establish, before

track laying.

Next month I should be able to tell you how we got on – the plan is to hire a mini digger and dumper for a week. It will, all being well, enable us to complete the digging out of the new track bed and if I'm lucky a chance to use them on other areas and work on the list of 'things to do'.

Stuart and John (W) continued with things electrical and sorted out a reported failure with one of the brake truck chargers. John tells me that the fault was quickly traced and rectified – a small lever on the socket was moved to the 'on position'.

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>**. Started as a lovely sunny morning but deteriorated later to cold and wet. However, the anticipated work for this morning had already been done by Dave and Allan (L) on Wednesday and Thursday. Dave showed me what they had done; they had moved the soil from where the stumps had been grubbed out to the S/E corner, dug several holes in the new track alignment to get the levels and set out strips of old track to establish the profile for the new panels. We then got a wheelbarrow and spades and dug out two further holes for the same purpose by the roadside hedge and new point near the entrance level crossing.

In the S/E corner Chris, Mike (B) and later Dave worked adjusting and assembling new track panels while in the steaming bay Rob Bates had brought his 5" 1502 for boiler test; passed by Neal and witnessed by Jim. Seeing Rob reminds me that I need to say thanks to him for again sorting out Mr & Mrs Mole, so a big thank you. In the maintenance store Peter worked drilling the new sleepers while Stuart was busy elsewhere.

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>** was again a wet morning with the usual early group in the club house drinking coffee and discussing planned work etc. The rain eased around 10.00 am and we were able to get on with the mornings work. The 'hort team', all three of us this morning tackled cutting back the three holly bushes in the road side

hedge.

Holly, whilst it makes a good green hedge, is a bit invasive and can spread hence dealing with it in the front hedge. While Grenville and Bill started cutting back I got the tractor and tailor and took the branches and cuttings to the bonfire. With the work finished the three of us joined Dave's team digging out the new track bed either side of the traction engine level crossing to establish the levels and alignment with the holes referred to above.

Those of you who have and or use chainsaws may be interested in the following.

*At the Board meeting on Tuesday 10th March the Health and Safety Officer raised issues concerning the use of chainsaws in the company. The HSE notice on 'Chainsaws at work' sets out the requirements over eleven pages, within the 'PUWER 98' requirements.*

*The 'hort team' has used the SCMES electric chainsaw frequently over the past six years without any problems whatsoever and while I agree that that's no guarantee, it is a measure of the care we take and have taken with its use. When necessary Bill has been good enough to bring his more powerful petrol models for some of the heavier jobs and uses approved protective ware.*

*Whilst the HSE notice gives guidance, it specifically refers to and states 'portable, hand-held, petrol-engine chainsaws' and refers to 'top handled chainsaws' and their 'aerial use' in particular. It requires that all new operators since 5th December 1998 must have a certificate of competence when working with chainsaws on or in trees **unless**:*

- \* it is being done as part of agricultural operations (e.g. hedging, clearing fallen branches, pruning trees to maintain clearance for machines); **and***
- \* the work is being done by the occupier or their employees; **and***
- \* they have used a chainsaw before*

# Your help needed for a Birthday party 5th April

*5 December 1998.*

*Whilst the notice does not mention electric chainsaws they are machinery and have similar risks. Consequently the board decided, and I agreed, that chainsaws whether petrol or electric should not be used without the approval of the Board.*

*The information is available on the internet – put **HSE chainsaws** in your browser and select from the returns. If you don't have a computer then I can let you have copies of leaflets on "Using petrol-driven chainsaws" and "Chainsaw clearance of windblow".*

**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup>.** On arrival I tried to get rid of the accumulated and growing pile of rubbish on the bonfire. However, whilst there was no wind when I initially light the fire within ten minutes there was a breeze blowing the smoke towards the first cottages in the village. I, therefore, decided that the fire had to be put out and with John Woolly's assistance ran out the hose and put it out. It will now have to wait a further week.

In respect of the use of chainsaws Mike, Bill and I sat down and discussed the Little Hay situation. Bill confirmed he has and does use protective clothing as required under the existing HSE rules. It was agreed, subject to Bills agreement to undertake any work, that I will submit the ground maintenance requirements where/when it is considered necessary to use a chainsaw to the board.

Bill and I then walked the grounds discussing what needs attention and where it was considered that a chainsaw would be beneficial and or necessary to carry out work. I'm now in the process of drawing up a list of work and will be submitting it in due course for board approval.

Also at the board meeting, the type of point to be used with the new track was discussed regarding the pro's and con's of the two types the society is interested in, namely 'moving frog' and 'floating blade'. With operational safety paramount they are being

evaluated and will be discussed at the next board meeting and with Garry on his return from holiday. In the mean time I agreed to produce a 'Risk Assessment' for the two types for discussion at the next board meeting. This has been completed and passed to the Chairman, Secretary and Safety Officer.

The assessment has to cover both types, although floating blade type have been in use for some 30 years, because an assessment has never been done and they will be replaced with a new build and rail profile.

Dave's team has done a lot of work since last week and continued building track panels in the S/E corner before moving to the station approach from the point adjacent to the 'goat hedge'. Allan (L) with Dave (S) continued work on the replacement facing point to the station approach; a moving frog type the same as the new one next to the entrance level crossing.

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>.** Well 'spring has sprung' so to speak with buds 'busting out all over' and the daffodils looking very good this year but there is still little hort work although within the next week or so we will starting mowing operations. In the mean time the current small team of three has been providing assistance to Dave in the form of limited clearing of the new track bed.

Following the unsuccessful attempt to burn the large pile of rubbish last week, this week was successful. We now have a large pile of ash and rubbish to be moved to the lower copse when completely cooled down.

Finally, these notes end here as I'm on holiday until early April and going to enjoy lazing in the warm Cyprus sunshine coupled with testing the restaurants and bars in Paphos!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

*Eric Davies 24th March 2009*

## Sutton Coldfield Railway Society's Annual Exhibition

Sat 25th & Sun 26th April

We need exhibits and your help please, contact Peter McMillan, set up will be on the Friday evening and as usual staff will be required to cover the two days and then pack and clear up at the finish on Sunday after noon we will also be handing out leaflets for our Spring Steam Event.

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Saturday Steam ups both Feb & March were well attended and the weather was very good to us BG is a lovely setting when the sun is shining and the aroma of steam is in the air, all washed down with tea and biscuits. Where were you ?

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## PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS & EVENTS FOR 2009

Date	Event	Event Co-ordinator	Time
Sun 05 April 2009	Steam Up & Birthday Party		1-3pm (party)
Mon 13 April 2009	Easter Monday Steam Up		10am onwards
Sat 18 April 2009	Steam Up		7:30pm
Sat 25 April 2009	Sutton Coldfield Railway Society's Annual Exhibition		
Sun 26 April 2009	Sutton Coldfield Railway Society's Annual Exhibition		
Tues 28 April 2009	Tuesday Meeting—CANCELLED		
Mon 04 May 2009	Bank Holiday Steam Up		10am onwards
Sun 10 May 2009	Birthday Party		2-4pm
Sat 16 May 2009	SPRING STEAM EVENT—Tickets required	Eric Davies & David Smith	
Tues 19 May 2009	Steam Up & Faggots & peas night		6pm
Sun 24 May 2009	Birthday Party		2-4pm
Mon 25 May 2009	Bank Holiday Steam Up		10am onwards
Sun 07 June 2009	Steam Up & Barbers Shop Singers Visit		10am onwards
Sat 13 June 2009	AGM & Steam Up & BBQ		10am onwards
Sat 14 June 2009	Erewash Valley MES		10am onwards
Sun 21 June 2009	Birthday Party		2-4pm
Tue 23 June 2009	Traction Engine Night & Jacket Potatoes		6pm
Sun 28 June 2009	Birthday Party		
Sun 05 July 2009	Steam Up		10am onwards
Sat 11 July 2009	Steam Up & SCRS Meet		1pm onwards
Sun 19 July 2009	Midland Fed Rally		9am onwards
Tues 28 July 2009	Stationary Engine Night & Buffet		6pm
Sun 02 August 2009	2½" Gauge Rally		10am onwards
Sun 16 August 2009	Garden Party—Tickets Required		11am onwards
Sat 22 August 2009	Steam Up		1pm onwards
Sun 23 August 2009	Visit from North Holt Model Railway Club		10am onwards
Tues 25 August 2009	Steam Up & BBQ		6pm
Mon 31 August 2009	Bank Holiday Steam Up		10am onwards
Sun 6 Sept. 2009	Steam Up & Birthday Party		2-4pm
Sat 19 Sept. 2009	Steam Up		1pm onwards
Sun 20 Sept. 2009	Birthday Party		2-4pm
Tues 22 Sept. 2009	Steam Up with Fish & Chips		6pm