

March 2013

Steaming Ahead



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Sutton Coldfield Model Engineering Society

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Directors

David Smith
John Cope
Mike Bentley
Peter Robinson
Stuart Harrison
Bill Colman

Events This Month

SUNDAY	03-Mar	STEAM-UP	10am onwards
TUESDAY	05-Mar	BOARD MEETING	7.30pm
SATURDAY	16-Mar	STEAM-UP	1pm onwards
TUESDAY	19-Mar	Tuesday Evening Meeting	5pm onwards
SUNDAY	24-Mar	BIRTHDAY PARTY (AVAILABLE)	2pm-4pm
FRIDAY	29-Mar	GOOD FRIDAY BANK HOLIDAY	10am onwards

Events Next Month

MONDAY	01-Apr	EASTER MONDAY	10am onwards
TUESDAY	02-Apr	BOARD MEETING	7.30pm
SATURDAY	13-Apr	STEAM-UP & WAKEFIELD SOCIETY	10am onwards
SUNDAY	21-Apr	BIRTHDAY PARTY (AVAILABLE)	2pm-4pm
FRIDAY	26-Apr	SET-UP SCRS EXHIBITION	5pm onwards
SATURDAY	27-Apr	SCRS EXHIBITION	9am - 5pm
SUNDAY	28-Apr	SCRS EXHIBITION	9am - 4pm

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Press Date is the first Tuesday of the month

Front Cover: Allan's Garratt makes a fine sight on the SM32 circuit

All help welcome at SCRS exhibition!

Chairman's Chunter

Due to a short spring holiday I've not spent a great deal of time at Balleny Green over the last month but as always it's obvious the development, maintenance, repair and horticultural work soldiers on. Positive progress continues all over the site.

At last the winter and poor weather, which seems to have lasted since last Easter, seems to be breaking and we can look forward to using our great facilities to their full potential. It is inevitable that effort and work is part of that deal but to be honest many members would be lost without that work and effort no matter what some would have you believe. For me, work fascinates me- I can sit and watch it all day.

A project not mentioned before which is very near to or even completed is the rise/ fall track section just before the steaming bay turntable. This contraption addresses the problem caused by a section of rising incline track meeting level track unfortunately on a slight bend. This caused locomotives fitted with a pony or bogie, on occasions, when approaching the turntable to de-rail. The mechanism is both clever and simple. It overcomes the issue by the loco being stopped on the rise/ fall section and a lever is pulled causing that track section to rise at one end bringing it level with the turntable enabling the engine to go forward without issue.

As mentioned in the last issue the Great Northern refit is continuing well, probably better than expected.

Over the next few weeks and certainly before the next publication a new building will be in place. This will be the high level track storage facility which, when in service will have its own hydraulic lift traverser, another asset making our society more attractive for both existing and future members. I often stand back and look at our facility and know I am pleased and proud of my membership.

Mindful of membership may I remind you to ensure your yearly subs are paid by the end of March. I believe it needs to be said our subs are great value, let's face it if we paid weekly it would be around £1.00 per week.

Concerns have been raised that so far this year we have only three birthday parties booked. These are a necessary yet relatively easy form of income. The issue has been debated and as a result we have introduced a five option booking scheme depending on the number of children attending and the number of trains to be in service. In recent years we have charged a flat £175.00. Future bookings, under the new scheme, will be subject to a minimum fee of £140.00 and a maximum of £210.00. Hopefully this will fill a few spaces in the calendar. It has been suggested we advertise but I'm open to offers on that one.

All help welcome at SCRS exhibition!

Events in earnest are to start very soon. We have invited the Wakefield society, along with Blackgates Engineering to spend a day with us on 13th April so if you would care to meet Phil & Jackie from Blackgates ensure you attend, I'm hoping to forge an ongoing relationship between our societies.

I think I've chuntered on long enough so I'll save your boredom and end here.

Best wishes to all and to those whose health isn't as good as it could be I hope you get to feel much better soon.

Allan Leary

The Crossing

I've read Bill Colman's comments in last month's Steaming Ahead and feel I have to comment. I was one of the members who wrote to the Chairman and others who had the temerity to express concerns regarding the proposal to erect Network Rail type crossing barriers. My concern was that the principle reason for the dangers were not being addressed, 'WHY' the need?

It's the 'WHY' it's dangerous that needs addressing before deciding on the 'HOW' to solve it. The 'WHY' is primarily that pedestrians wishing to cross from either side cannot see or hear approaching trains because of the very high and thick conifer hedge completely blocking all sight and sound before stepping out. Equally for the same reason drivers and guards are unable to see any pedestrians intending to cross the track. I believe that if, instead of the hedge, fencing the same as round the club house and station was installed it would remove the visibility problems and dangers.

However, if the hedge is retained then I agree with the need to improve the crossing which has served the society very well for nearly 30 years. Bear in mind also that the new footbridge, when completed, will significantly reduce the pedestrian problem. The decision is yours at the AGM

Eric Davies

Grounds Maintenance Diary

TUESDAY 5TH

A fine very cold sunny day with short snow showers and not good for working outside, so the mug of coffee and tea's were the first thing this morning.

Together with Roger and Ron we looked at Mr Moles activity – just one of the five traps set by Bob on Sunday appear to have gone off. After that it was to look at the traction engine track up the goat hedge side of the field where the concrete edging creates a serious risk of injury if anything should go wrong.

All help welcome at SCRS exhibition!

From there it was back for another warm coffee/cup of tea before feeding the fish and the Robin. After that a discussion with the Safety Officer about the traction engine track and other line side items, again those likely to be a risk in the event of an incident.

Welcome mugs of soup were made by Mike Brophy who also did a very good job of tidying, clearing and washing up after everyone.

TUESDAY 12TH

Another wet day and a little that could be done except by those in the maintenance store. However, Peter, Mike, Stuart and John did some work on the new steps the other side of the footbridge. Rod worked collecting up the mole hill soil for the waterfall rockery.

TUESDAY 19TH

Rod and Stuart had open up and I was quickly followed in by Grenville and Ron. It was a lovely still frosty morning – look for Garry's picture on the web looking down to the pool signal box, into the sun.

After a little of putting the world to right we got the tractor, trailer and tools to clear a dead shrub and fir tree in the lower copse. That done we went round the whole site collecting up the wind blown debris from the trees and leaves from the track and station area. We'll have to go round again to clear the last of the leaves but not today, with most of the remaining ones frozen to the track.

TUESDAY 26TH

Back to a dismal damp morning that prevented burning the rubbish collected over the passed weeks. So instead it was down to the maintenance store for Grenville, Ron, Roger, Rod and me to clear out our bay and give it a good tidy up.

I tried to start the lawn tractor but the battery needed a charge not having been used since late last year. So I put it on charge while the others finished off putting the final tools away. That done it was time for coffee/tea to clear the dust and consider the next task. Grenville, Steve, Ron and I walked the boundaries and agreed that next week we would start grass cutting and cut back the laurels by the tunnel exit – weather permitting.

Lunch time. Thanks are due to Mike Brophy for again making the soup and washing up before and after the thoughtful members who leave their mugs for him on the table and in the sink. Thank you Mike.

Roger and Rod worked clearing the mole hills, using the good soil to finish off their work on the waterfall. Now looking very good and ready for planting up.

Finally, having left to pick up Jane from Sutton I called back to Little Hay to take the lawn tractor off charge and put it and the other tractor away. However, Garry, Dave M, Allan D and Chris had done the job for me – thank you.

Eric Davies

Last month in Pictures ...



Mike and team clearing the ground for the new high level carriage shed



The clubs new SM32 carriages get an outing

Last month in Pictures ...



Rod at work on the pond. Another fine project nearing completion.



Work on the loco leveler continues apace and will be completed soon!

All help welcome at SCRS exhibition!

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