

March/April 2015

Steaming Ahead



WWW.SCMES.CO.UK



Sutton Coldfield Model Engineering Society

Sutton Coldfield Model Engineering Society

President Allan Leary
Chairman Bill Colman
Secretary Vacant
Treasurer Chris Greene

Directors

Brian Clarke	Mark Bradley
Mike Bentley	Mark Dale
Peter Robinson	Chris Greene
Stuart Harrison	John Cope

Events May 2015

Sunday	03	Steam Up	10am
Monday	04	Early May Bank Holiday	10am
Sunday	10	Driving Experience Day	11am
Saturday	16	Steam Up	10am
Sunday	17	Birthday Party BOOKED	2pm till 4pm
Monday	25	Spring Bank Holiday	10am
Sunday	31	Special Charity Fun raising event	1pm till 4pm

Events June 2015

Sunday	07	Erewash society Visit & SCMES Steam Up	10am
Saturday	13	AGM & Steam Up Day	10am
Sunday	21	Birthday Party BOOKED	2pm till 4pm
Sunday	28	Driving Competition & SCMES Steam Up	10-30am

Editor:

This edition—Steve Kesterton

Future editions—Steve Whitson and Mark Bradley

Press Date is the first Tuesday of the month

Front Cover: Bill off for a spin on one of three battery locomotives kindly donated to the club by John Hadley

Don't' forget the driving competition on 28 June!

Chairman's Chunter

Firstly I have to relate the sad news that Bob Payne died recently after a long illness. He joined the Society only about a month ago with his brother David. Bob was a keen model engineer and was looking forward to spending time at LH. David told me he was not as experienced as his brother but hopes to rebuild his father's old loco with our help. His father was a member of the Society many years ago.

The event that has dominated the minds of the Board recently is the EGM which was held last week. This is fully covered on a separate paper, circulated with this Steaming Ahead, to club members.

Apart from that we hosted two successful Birthday parties and the Easter Monday Steam Up was well supported. Tony Chritchley arranged for his U3A technical group to visit us on Monday 20th. I talked to them about railway signalling in general and then focused in on ours. This was followed by rides on Allan Leary's steamer and the club locos. It was a beautiful morning and I believe all of them really enjoyed themselves and I found it most rewarding.

The main active projects in the club are the Workshop refurbishment, the L & B loco construction and the SM32 extension. I am pleased to see the progress on the Workshop and the L & B projects.

I was beginning to think we would never get started on the L & B but suddenly it has burst into life. There are components everywhere in different stages of machining. It is heart warming to see members like Chris Greene with less engineering experience than some having a go at milling and turning. The object of this project is to get members involved at all levels of expertise. We can worry about how suitable it is for our long term running needs later on. It is gratifying to get a real ME project going and to see the enthusiasm it has generated.

There is equal excitement with the SM32 civil engineering project. There are bits of viaduct arches everywhere. They are coming out of the moulding factory at a rate of about three a week and look absolutely splendid. One day I will turn up at LH and find the whole lot installed but I don't know when.

The bad news is that we had a burglary and all our Stihl garden equipment was stolen along with some power tools. Damage was done to locks and doors. Hopefully we will at least be partially compensated for their loss by our insurance company.

We want to try to smarten up the site and are looking for helpers to paint and decorate both the exterior and the inside of the club house. Please come along and help. The refurbishment of the two signal box bases is underway.

Bill Colman

Don't' forget the driving competition on 28 June!

Birthday Parties at Balleny Green

Birthday parties take place between March and October at the rate on one per month making a total of eight. They run on Sunday afternoon between 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. They are booked through our website which directs emails straight to me.

The booking form gives parents the choice of size of party for 15 children to 40 children. The price starts at £140 and goes up to £210. The marquee is available at a cost of £50. Dates for this year:- March 39th, April 12th, May 17th, June 21st, July 26th, August 9th, September 13th and October 11th. As I write we have only July and October still available.

I would like to take this opportunity to that all the members that give up their time to help me and give a lot of children a wonderful day. Parents too.

I send out a man power planner to those members that have volunteered to be involved and try to change the jobs around a bit for them for party to party. Jobs include being a marshal, sorting car parking, being a guard, station staff, signals, driving, s.m.32.....

The March birthday was very wet and windy. The April birthday was just very windy. I hope the May event will see the sun. The events give us the chance to share our good fortune with the public and hopefully start a love of trains and engineering in some of the children. We may even get new members. We also make much needed funds for the club.

If you would like to join the helpers we can never have enough pairs of eyes around the track keeping everyone safe. Thank you.

Mike Bentley

Lynton & Barnstable Project Update

The target is still to have the chassis on wheels by the time of the AGM in June. The frame has been corrected for alignment and the horn blocks are being machined to size. Frame weighshaft bearing location modified to use pillow bearings. The modification to the rear end of the frame has been completed. The cylinders and steam chests are complete waiting assembly and matching to the frame. The cross heads and runners are completed together with the valve guides.

The main and return cranks are completed. The axles have been rough machined waiting finishing. The axle boxes are 90% complete and waiting fitting to the horn blocks. Most of the motion parts have been profiled ready for machining and the finishing. There is still a design issue concerning the motion slide that needs to be resolved.

Brian Clarke

Don't' forget the driving competition on 28 June!

Membership News

Since the last issue, we have three new members who have joined the society on the introductory programme. They are Len Yates, Vic Allen and David Payne, all from Tamworth. Welcome to all of you. We hope you enjoy your time with us and will be happy to become full members in due course. David's brother Bob also joined us but was not in good health and, as Bill mentions in his chunter, sadly passed away recently.

The board last month approved the application of former introductory member Ed Briggs to become a full member. These recent joiners mean that the club's membership had reached 115 members of all types by the end of the membership year, the highest for many years.

Membership renewals for the new 2015/16 year have been coming in well following the letter sent with the last issue of Steaming Ahead. There are still a handful outstanding. If you are one of those, please take this as a gentle reminder

On a different topic, can I please mention that we are still trying to get email addresses so that we can issue bulletins in between issues of Steaming Ahead to keep members more up to date with events.

In this year's subscription renewal letters, I informed those members who had previously given us an email address, but not given permission to use it. If you are in that group and have not replied, please let me know by emailing MembSecSCMES@pobroadband.co.uk

John Cope

Grounds Maintenance Diary February 2015

TUESDAY 3RD

I wasn't able to be with the team today following an appointment at Good Hope Hospital. However, Grenville and Ron planted 100 new hawthorn whips -- they've filled all the gaps, in particular from the level crossing to front gate and strengthen other areas like adjacent to the maintenance area.

While they were doing that, Bill took down one of three trees growing too closely together, which was hampering the proper growth of the other two. With the tree down and the hawthorn whips planted the team have almost completed the work on the hedge. All that remained was for Rodney to burn the rubbish on the bonfire, unfortunately the material from the hedge was too wet and following a change in the wind blowing smoke towards the village, there was no alternative but to kill the fire.

The team have done an excellent job and can now turn their attention to tackling low dangerous branches around the site, finishing trimming the laurels and shrubbery. Seems the bonfire is going to get bigger before we are able to finish burning the large pile it has become.

Last month in Pictures ...



Neal undertaking a boiler test on David's '1500'



Rod and Mark building the 'raised bed' for the SM32 extension

Last month in Pictures ...



Andy Walton and his new loco recently paid a visit



Paul machining axle boxes in the workshop

Don't' forget the driving competition on 28 June!

TUESDAY 10TH

Having picked up Mr Diesel on the way I parked by the bonfire and was joined by the others. Grenville and Ron said they would take the mowers round the site and Rodney, having dropped off waste wood, went off to sort out the fence adjacent to the maintenance area.

I piled up paper and wood on the bonfire and then piled on all the part burnt remains of last weeks attempted bonfire. Bill arrived and whilst he went to get the blower and pitch fork I put best part of a gallon of Mr Diesel over the prepared pile and set it going. By the time Bill got back it was going quite well but the blower is just great in the absence of any wind.

Mark (B) arrived and asked Bill and I about the lawn tractor transmission and changing the oil. He then went off to change the oil and charge the batteries on the tractors. Roger joined me helping with the bonfire and Bill went off to look at signalling matters. The fire burn quite well with encouragement and we all stopped for a well-earned mid-morning coffee/tea break as usual.

Mark came up the field and said that he had changed the oil in the tractor(s) and topped up the oil in the mowers, Grenville and Ron having finish mowing.

By that time lunch was approaching and, with the bonfire just glowing embers, it was time to adjourn fort lunch. Before that though I walked down to the maintenance area to see how Rodney had got on – he'd done a very good job clearing the old fence and installing new posts and two strands of barbed wire.

By then it was time to get back to the club hose for hot mugs of soup prepared this week by Mike Brophy. After lunch Roger and I did a final check of the bonfire, which by now was just a pile of very hot ash, and called it a day.

TUESDAY 17TH

A nice frosty morning, no wind but lovely warm sunshine – just ideal. Only Ron, Len, Roger and me this morning – Grenville enjoying a cruise in the Caribbean. Ron and Len planted the final (hopefully) last 100 hawthorn whips in the Myatt hedge and new length being worked on by Rodney. Roger and I used the tractor and trailer to move all the bonfire ash and spread it around the new and old hawthorn hedges, mainly down the Myatt hedge, to help the new whips.

A good mornings work and next week hopefully a start on the tree low branches and those where they interfere with the growth of others.

Don't' forget the driving competition on 28 June!

TUESDAY 24TH

A cold morning with Ron, Rodney and Len waiting by the gate for me to unlock. Once that was done Len helped Rodney unload wood and tools to continue work on the fence he was building.

We were all pleased to see Steve arrive back at Little Hay. After a quick chat it was decided that Steve would help Rodney and Ron and Len would work clearing fallen, low and dangerous branches around the site. Roger arrived and joined them clearing the rubbish to the bonfire.

We were all pleased when Ron (F) rang the bell for lunch and enjoyed his steaming hot soup.

Eric Davies

Grounds Maintenance Diary March 2015

TUESDAY 3RD

When I arrived today around 10.15 the team were having a well-earned break. Rodney and Steve continued work on the fence on the boundary at the bottom of the field erecting the new fence.

Grenville, Ron, Roger, Len and Tony had cleared low branches, cut the remaining of the last laurel hedges between the tracks, front hedge (SW corner) and were tackling the trees and bushes by the front gate when I joined them. It never ceases to surprise me just how much effort clearing the final cuttings, leaves and debris from autumn and winter takes. Now we have another growing pile on the bonfire.

It was good to have a team of eight working and enabled a lot to be achieved - although sunny it was very cold working in the wind and we called it a day for lunch with soup made by Ron. Next week more of the same.

TUESDAY 10TH

Frost first thing but then a lovely warm sunny morning with a team of seven on site. Rodney was helped unload his car; more wood for the fence by the maintenance area. He, together with Steve, worked cutting, painting and fixing fancy diagonals and made very good progress by the time lunch came.

Len got the blower and did a good job clearing most of the remaining leaves from the station area, tunnels and tracks around the site. Meanwhile, Grenville had started trimming the laurels, by the tunnels. Ron brought up the tractor and trailer and with Roger worked clearing and carting the cuttings to the bonfire. I initially worked cutting back low branches hanging over the tunnel exits and then around the lower copse before, together with Len, helping the other three.

Don't' forget the driving competition on 28 June!

A good morning's work which has enabled us to finally catch up with the all the work originally planned and take a slightly earlier lunch sitting on the patio enjoying the warm sunshine. Most of the team left after lunch but Rodney went back to finish off work done this morning. I attended to a member who wanted to pay his subs, accepted his cheque and saw that Chris had it safely. I left about 2.0pm having checked all our work areas were tidy and safe.

TUESDAY 17TH

The team worked well and cleared a lot of the low, dangerous, dead, those restricting the growth of others and not least branches within the danger area of the high tension power line. Roger cleared weeds from the pool and again blocked up the rabbit burrow – persistent rabbits!!!!

Rodney and Steve continued building the fence; looking 'posh' according to one of our members.

At last, signs of spring with daffodils in flower, crocuses eaten by the rabbits but all the hedges showing signs of life. In particular I was very pleased to see that the new hawthorn whips in Myatt's hedge and elsewhere were also showing signs of coming into leaf. Given another month of warming weather and all the hedges and trees will be looking good. Finally, thanks to Bill for the use of his long reach cutter and to Ron for the lunch time soup.

TUESDAY 24th

The team on site early today and finishing off the winter work with a rather large bonfire; finally dry enough after the last 4/5 days of dry and relatively warm weather.

Our work on the rabbit burrows seems to have been in vane – Roger showed me that the two blocked up last week were open again and additionally another 2/3.

The rabbits are causing quite a lot of damage round the site – in particular digging up the grass/moss on either side of the tracks and in the course of that, spreading soil into the ballast. Does any member know of a ferret keeper who would like to get in some practice with his/her pets????

Rodney, with Steve's assistance, is getting on very well with the fencing, by the maintenance store, and it's looking very good.

Don't' forget the driving competition on 28 June!

TUESDAY 31st

Well, last Tuesday of the month and the finish of another report but what a way to finish it. When I arrived there was Ron, Len and Steve sitting in their cars/vans waiting outside in the road but as I had changed my car I didn't have keys with me and no sign of Stuart who's usually early. So we sat and waited; Grenville arrived followed shortly by David Moseley who opened up at about ten past nine.

Because there was not director with keys to the wall safe, for the maintenance area, there was nothing that could be done except have nice hot cuppa's and chat. Allen arrived a bit later and got the maintenance area key; that was when we found the society had been burgled. Six of the locks had been broken off and all the sheds accessed except the maintenance building. Club house intact.

The thieves took all the ground teams' petrol tools, e.g. leaf blowers, strimmer's, hedge cutters, long reach pole saw and hover mower from the wooden shed and from the new metal shed 3 battery hand drills and 2 angle grinders. Total items and cost yet to be confirmed but will be approaching £4000.

Allan rang the police and late afternoon we had visit from the local policeman and then the official policewoman arrived; took details and was shown round the area's before giving Chris the necessary incident number for the insurance company. The society has cover and Walker Midgley are sending a claim form to Chris, but it's a matter of waiting for the answer from them.

As I said 'what a way to finish the month'.

Eric Davies

Thank you

As this is the last edition of 'Steaming Ahead' that I will be editing, I would just like to thank all members for their submissions and support during my 3 1/2 years in the editorial 'hot-seat'.

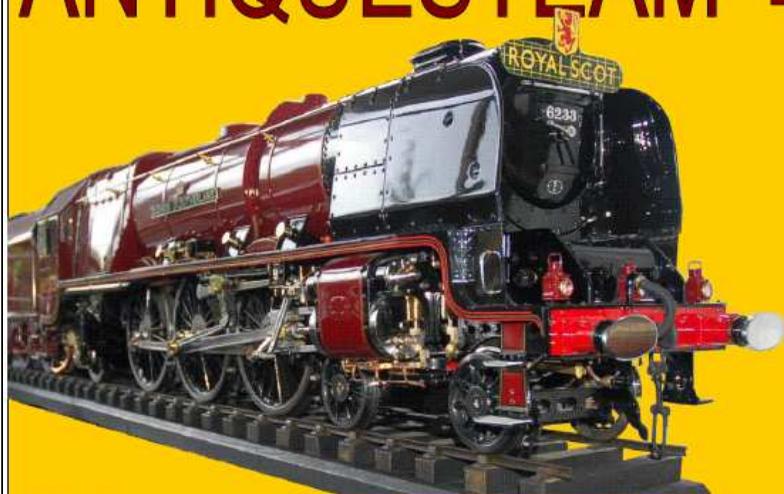
Please continue to support Mark B. and Steve W. as they take over the editorial role.

It has been a pleasure to work with everyone and I wish you all every best wish for the future,

Steve Kesterton

Don't' forget the driving competition on 28 June!

ANTIQUESTEAM Buy



All live steam coal burning model locomotives in gauges 3½", 5" & 7¼"

Also model traction engines from 1" to 4" scale.

Completed and part-built models bought and especially Exhibition Quality models and collections.

Complete and part workshops purchased

For a friendly professional "nationwide" service please telephone:

Graham Jones M.Sc. 0121 358 4320

You will find my models for sale on

www.antiquesteam.com

