

May / June 2016

Steaming Ahead



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Sutton Coldfield Model Engineering Society

Sutton Coldfield Model Engineering Society

President	Allan Leary	Chairman	Bill Colman
Secretary	Mark Bradley	Treasurer	Chris Greene

Directors

Brian Clarke	John Cope	Mike Bentley
Mark Dale	Peter McMillan	Chris Greene
Dave Osborne		

Events May 2016

Monday	2nd	May Bank Holiday Steam Up.	10-00am onwards
Sunday	15th	Birthday Party.	2-00pm - 4.00pm.
Tuesday	24th	Bits & Pieces / Your Latest Projects Evening.	7.30pm
Monday	30th	Spring Bank Holiday Steam Up.	10-00am onwards
Tuesday	31st	Branch Line Society Visit.	6-30pm

Events June 2016

Sunday	5th	Visit by Erewash Valley MES Members Steam Up.	10-00am onwards
Saturday	11th	Visit by Sutton Coldfield Railway Society	11-00am onwards
Sunday	12th	Birthday Party	2-00pm - 4-00pm
Tuesday	14th	Stationary Engine Night	7-30pm
Saturday	18th	AGM	10-00am onwards
Sunday	26th	Midlands Federation Rally	10-00am onwards

Events July 2016

Saturday	5th	Visit by Wolverhampton MES Members Steam Up	10-00am onwards
Sunday	17th	Garden Party	11-00am - 5-00pm

Editor:

Dave Edwards E Mail address scmeseditor@gmail.com

Press Date is the second Tuesday of the month.

Front Cover: Men of Steam

CHAIRMAN'S CHUNTER

At last some better weather has arrived. I hope this means that we will see more steaming activity and more visitors at Little Hay. We are getting ready for them by starting our driving tuition courses which will increase the number of qualified drivers in the club without them having to purchase a steamer. We will then be able to have duty drivers every Steam Up Day and hopefully every Sunday. Both Paddington and Bridget are now available to drive.

The L & B is on its wheels and Brian is beginning to think about the motion. The hydraulic lifter has been fitted out to accommodate the loco. At the same time work is starting on the branch line that will be required to take the L & B from the workshop onto the main line through a new door in the workshop wall. I think it will be a fair time before it is used for the L & B !

The main signal box windows are rotten. The Board have agreed to use a professional joiner to get new frames made and fitted. Although this is expensive we cannot find an alternative with an acceptable appearance. We are taking the opportunity to improve the design of the opening window to try to prevent water ingress.

The CCTV system has been installed and is working. The quality is impressive employing 4M pixel cameras. This is twice the definition of HD television but there are one or two loose ends to be tied up. The display on the club house wall is not suitable to be driven by the new system. The Board has agreed to purchase a low cost 50" TV that can be used for the CCTV, The Signal Display, and for club presentations and videos.

Our safety has been improved by re-laying and extending the entrance to the club house patio so there is no steps or inclined areas. I think this has greatly improved the appearance as well as safety. We have decided not to invest in a new permanent first aid enclosure this year. For the Santa Specials we will create a private area inside the marquee dedicated to first aid.

Our programme manager, Peter McMillan, has been trying to reintroduce Tuesday evening activities and we spent an enjoyable evening hearing about the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM). Peter is still looking for a member who is prepared to help him in this role. Please contact him if you could assist.

We are having a special day on Sunday 5th June to celebrate the completion of the SM32 project. This coincides with the visit of the Erewash Society. We hope to have a BBQ and a fun party. Please come.

As most of you know this is the last Chairman's Chunter that I will write as I am retiring at the AGM having completed six years on the Board. It is the end of an era and I shall step back to being an active ordinary member who will support the new Board in any way I can. I want to sign off by thanking everybody that has supported me so well through some difficult situations. At all levels of the club you have been superb making my time in office enjoyable and so much easier. I am particularly grateful to the Board and the President for all their help. I would like to wish the new Board and its Officers the greatest success in the future.

Bill Colman 07.05.16

MAY 2016 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE REPORT

What a difference a month makes on the growth and change of the Balleny Green areas.

With our reduced team the tasks do not get any easier.

The mowers are now out in force and soon the strimmers will be needed on the humps.

The hedge growth is coming on and it is pleasing to see that 75% of the Hawthorn whips planted last year are still with us and have some leaf growth. A good return for the hard work of planting them.

A large wind broken Silver Birch branch overhanging the lower level line has been removed without any problems and added to the bonfire.

Some of the gaps in the hedges are being in filled with bush shrubs to add a little more variety and attract bird life. We still need more hedging plants like Hazel and Blackthorn.

Nesting materials and Fat balls have also been left in convenient locations, and are regularly refilled.

It has been noticed that the wooden shed roofing felt has come off, and as a priority will be repaired ASAP.

Rodney Hodge
Part- time Hort team leader.

Lynton and Barnstable Project

19th of April 2016 was a red-letter day for the L&B loco project. That was the point at which we were able to mount the loco frame as a rolling chassis onto its own purpose-built cradle.

Now that the frame is turned right way up, and on its wheels, it will be much easier for the casual observers to monitor progress. We have also screwed a white board to the wall alongside the loco in the workshop to remind ourselves of any unfinished detail work, or to inform interested parties what the next step will be.

Hopefully our rate of progress will improve, as the loco is now at a more convenient, and adjustable, working height. Today I modified the spring hangers to facilitate lubrication of the axle boxes, while Brian trial fitted the steam exhaust ports and the brake-shoe hangers. Also today, we were visited by Mrs Horsfield and her son, from whom we bought the bare bones of the project just over two years ago. They appeared to be quite pleased with what we have achieved so far.

Personally, I have derived a great deal of satisfaction from my involvement in this project. Before I joined the society, the full extent of my metal-working experience amounted to little more than wielding a junior hack-saw. Even that was not always successful! With instruction and the guidance of several experienced members, I am gradually learning various techniques on the lathe, milling machine, angle grinders etc. The downside to this is that occasionally a member might see what I am doing, and then tell me I am doing it all wrong. What he actually means is that he was taught to do it differently!

My hope now is that as the project develops, a few more members might get involved. From the outset the intention was to create a club project in which any interested member could join in, rather than just doing his own thing, largely at home in his own workshop.

Inevitably, some members will always remain sceptical of the project. It was good to see, today, that a few members who have so far had little to do with it, have started looking at the prospect of track access to a proposed second hole-hole-in-the-wall for loco entry into the workshop.

We all know that it will take a couple of years to see an end result, but I am optimistic that one day the Society will have an asset to be proud of.

Chris Greene

Sutton Coldfield Model Engineering Society.

My participation during the last 41 years. (Part Three)

Now again a member of the board my first task (for which I volunteered) was to take care of the Society's membership list; this was done on an old word processor. I made up a database using Word 6, this enabled me to both to give a better visual result and also use the information to print labels for any newsletters or official communications. Previously all envelopes were addressed by hand. A problem arose when we asked all members if they would permit information about themselves to be issued to all other members. This is in line with the Data Protection Act. The results of this were horrendous, some do not wish to have any information made public, some want only their name and telephone number given, others want only name and address given. This resulted in me working with two databases, one with full information, and one with limited information, this I found was not acceptable. Consequently I had to start again with one data base using the "Access" program which I had to learn by taking a course at Lichfield College.

Being always a worker I was next heavily involved in updating the club's electrical system. When first installed it was done with what electrical equipment could be afforded or scrounged and was available at the time. It was rather out of date when the regulations were consulted. As well as having to update electrically, we fitted items such as latest state-of-the-art water boiling tank in the kitchen, central heating controls, and hygienic paper towel dispensers in the toilets. It is very rewarding and complementary when we have visitors from other Societies who comment favourably on our excellent toilet and other facilities.

Our biggest challenge in a way was still to come. We applied and were given outline planning permission to build a store in the bottom corner of the field for all the equipment which a Society such as ours owns. Originally it was all stored in a giant transit container, for which we only had temporary planning permission. The reason for this is that a couple of years ago, a sit on mower and much other valuable equipment was stolen. This is now a problem at any site that does not have 24 hour security. After reading a particular article in the Lichfield Mercury about a break-in at a sports ground in Shenstone, I decided that the building standards of our proposed new storage area in the north-east area of the site needed to be revised.

The original design, was to use four standard pre-cast garages, this would have been viewed simply as storage area. However, from the security point of view it was totally inadequate, I made the point to the committee, that by wearing my industrial "To-Tector" boots I would be able to kick my way through the garage door. If a stronger than normal door was fitted, then I would look around the site for a suitable piece of wood or metal and simply knock in the side of a garage. It is a simple matter to then remove what I wanted, within a few minutes several thousand pounds of the club's equipment would be off site.

I arranged an appointment with a local Crime Prevention Officer for a site visit. She agreed with me that in our situation in particular, being at an isolated site, greater security than was considered normal, was required. I showed her my roughly revised proposals with which she agreed. I was instructed by the committee to develop my proposals further and seek a meeting with an official of the planning department. This I proceeded to do.

I had proposed that instead of the four pre-cast garages, we build the same storage volume stage by stage, as four garages, built with pre-cast concrete blocks, double skinned and with steel reinforcing mesh in the 4-6 inch cavity. When the wall reached roof height, liquid concrete would be poured in to form an almost in penetrative mass. The roof would be pre-cast concrete beams, the door of the area used for storing the mower, would be a fabricated steel sandwich, again liquid concrete would be poured into the cavity. The whole door would be a sliding one on steel rollers. The other three storage rooms would be added sideways in stages; they would have only one high security door between them to the outside.

I contacted a council planning department official who had an on-site meeting with me, she fully agreed that we had a security problem, she also agreed with my solution. She said that we would no doubt be granted permission to change our previously approved design (later verified in writing), provided that we submit another application. This I was later informed was a ruse to get the council another £100+ fee for simply rubber stamping an agreed situation.

Stuart Harrison

Membership News

Not much activity on the membership front this month. We have one new junior member, Adrian Linnecor's grandson Toby Scott. Also the board this month approved the application of former introductory member Simon Deeley to become a full member.

There are still a few of you who have yet to renew for 2016/17. Please let me have your renewals

John Cope
Membership Secretary

SM32 Official Opening

On Sunday 5th June we are officially opening the extension to the SM32 Garden Railway. This coincides with the visit of the Erewash Society who will be bringing some smaller locos along with their big ones to run with us. In the afternoon there will also be a BBQ.

Please come along and join us and bring any friends interested in garden railways.

Mark Dale

SCMES Programme of Events

Having voiced some concerns at the lack of planning and notice given for some of the events held over the last 2 or 3 years, my arm was twisted to take on the role of Programme Co-ordinator (come-uppance I think they call it!). As a result you will see that we now have a full programme of events for the current year at Balleny Green, and I have also re-introduced some Tuesday evening meetings.

If anyone has any ideas about subjects they would like to see arranged for Tuesday evening meetings or other events at Balleny Green, then I would be very keen to hear from you. I am now starting to work on events for 2017 so your suggestions or thoughts on content would be welcome.

Events coming up over the next couple of months are :

Tuesday May 24th (7.30pm) – Bits & Pieces

- introduce or update us on progress with your latest project

Tuesday 31st May (6.30pm) – Visit to Balleny Green by the Branch Line Society

- no doubt they will want to travel over every inch of available track!

Sunday 5th June (10.00am onwards) - Visit by Erewash Valley MES to Balleny Green and Grand Opening of the SM32 layout.

- as well as the Erewash team, any other visitors interested in SM32 are welcome to attend. A barbeque is arranged for around lunchtime.

Saturday 11th June (11.00am onwards) – Visit by Sutton Coldfield Railway Society to Balleny Green

- their annual visit to us

Tuesday 14th June (7.30pm) – Stationary Engine Evening

- compressed air supply will be available for those unable to run on steam

Saturday 18th June (10.00am onwards) - Steam Up followed by AGM at 3.00pm

Sunday 26th June (10.00am onwards – Midlands Federation Rally at Balleny Green

-a gathering of local model engineering societies for their annual rally. Cups to be awarded if sufficient entries (see <http://www.mfmes.org.uk/>)

Saturday 2nd July (10.00am onwards) – Visit by Wolverhampton SME to Balleny Green

- another annual event in our calendar

Saturday 17th July (11.00am – 5.00pm) Annual Garden Party at Balleny Green

- another annual event in our calendar

Tuesday 26th July (7.00pm onwards) – Evening Run and BBQ

Sunday 7th August (10.00am onwards) – National 2½” Gauge Society Midlands Rally at Balleny Green.

I have also been informed that between 8th to the 10th July the Hereford MES are holding an “Open Weekend”. They have facilities for 7¼”, 5”, 3½ and 2½” gauges and a Garden Railway of 45mm gauge, plus a pond for miniature boats. If anyone would like to attend then please contact Bill Hall on 01600 719600.

Peter Mc
08 May 2016

JOHN HADLEY

Over the past 18 months, we have lost two of our most valued senior members who were stalwart supporters of our Society's activities. John Hadley lived locally all his life and started work as a draughtsman at Dunlop. He then took up a post at Aston University on the Building Services team. He had a keen interest in things mechanical and his hobbies included cycling and car maintenance. John joined our Society in 1990 and was "always there" when things needed doing. He and his wife Rosemary very much worked as a team leading to Rosemary becoming a member in 1995. Rosemary became one of the regular kitchen team displaying expert use of the kettle and teapot. She also had a wonderful repartee with "her customers" and was particularly renowned for her Victoria Sandwich. John had a keen interest in non-steam locos and went on to build both 5" and 7¼" gauge battery-electric locos. His pride and joy was his finely detailed 5" gauge model of a Metropolitan-Vickers Bo-Bo electric loco which is often on display in our clubhouse. John was never a great party-goer, but word got out that it was their Golden Wedding anniversary in November 2000 and so an impromptu celebration at Balleny Green was arranged - although the bonfire and fireworks display afterwards were coincidental!

Rosemary passed away in August 2014, John passed away on 26th February of this year aged 89 following a short illness.

Peter McMillan
May 2016



John and Rosemary November 11th 2000

PADDINGTON



Dave working on Paddington



Paddington back in steam

SCRS Exhibition 2016

Thanks to all the members who loaned models for our stand at this years' exhibition. Each year sees new exhibits that have not been displayed before, and this year was no exception – an encouraging sign that our members are an active lot! Being right inside the exhibition entrance, the array of models created quite an eye-catching display as the visitors entered the show.

Outside, John Cope's 2¼ inch scale traction engine was in steam and taking the occasional foray around the car-park. Peter Mc had his vertical boiler in steam driving a selection of stationary engines. Also, Dave Beaman had his Isle of Man loco in steam running on a rolling road, this generated a lot of interest from the visitors. Although both days were somewhat on the cold side, each day passed by very quickly as we all seemed to spend a lot of time talking to the public and explaining "what was going on".

I would like to thank Chris Bassett for stepping forward and volunteering to manage our display at this years' event. I would also like to thank those members who gave up their time to do stewarding on our stand and those who helped with the setting up and dismantling of the display.

Peter Mc
8th May 2016



Garden Party

Our annual Garden Party is to be held on Sunday 17th July. It is the event I look forward to most with the hope of lots of happy visitors and members enjoying the summer sunshine. As well as train rides we try to organise other attractions for children and adults to keep our visitors entertained and to help club funds.

John Cope and I have been asked to organise the event by the Board and to do so we would like your help.

You can help in three ways:-

1 Joining us to form an organising group.

2 Giving us your ideas for attractions, games , entertainment and contacts that you may have to help with the above.

3 Helping on the day with general organisation or running a stall, games and some kind of entertainment.

In the past we have had a face painter, bouncy castle, band, table railway.....

Please offer you help in any way you can to make it a great day.

Contact us at the club or via my mobile. 07773592400.

Thank you in anticipation.

Michael Bentley – Safety Officer / party organiser.

LittleLEC 2016 At South Cheshire MES on 25/26th June

Hello to all my fellow model engineering enthusiasts. I hope that by now you will have become aware of the LittleLEC competition, but if not, let me give a few details.

The competition was first run in 2008 on the raised track at the Guildford Model Engineering Society. The name is a partial acronym of Little Locomotive Efficiency Competition, and as the name suggests is for small locomotives. The maximum limit for entry is a dry weight of 50 pounds, dry weight meaning without coal and water. Of course, the model must be steam powered! Gauges are normally 3 1/2" and 5", and if the host society has a suitable track then 2 1/2" gauge models can also enter. There will be a call for entries in Model Engineer magazine in issue dated 4th March.

The efficiency results obtained in the competition are meaningful, and are calculated using track characteristics, load, distance run and coal used. Nevertheless, there has not yet been a contestant who has not thoroughly enjoyed the event, nor gone away without learning from other entrants, such is the spirit in which it is run. Full details of the competition and how it is run can be found on the LittleLEC web site.

<http://www.littlelec.co.uk/home/index.php>

So far the event has been run in various parts of England and Wales, and this year it is being hosted by the **South Cheshire Model Engineering Society** at their site at Willaston, near Nantwich. The society has two tracks, a longer (1/4 mile) one having 3 1/2" and 5" gauges, and a 600 foot one having 2 1/2", 3 1/2" and 5" gauges. To meet demand we are hoping to make use of both tracks, as necessary. If you are interested in entering, please get your request for an entry to Stewart Hart at the address that will be published in Model Engineer 4th March issue, as soon as possible.

There is a reasonable amount of car parking on site, and if you choose to stay at the Premier Inn 'Peacock Hotel', which is only about 50 yards from the club site, then you would be able to use their car park.

LittleLEC is sponsored by Model Engineer magazine, who provide a first prize of £50 plus a one year subscription to Model Engineer, and a second prize of £25. Warco award a third prize of £20 in vouchers. The winner will also receive the Small Locomotive Challenge Trophy, donated by Station Road Steam.

Peter Langridge (LittleLEC Organiser).
peter.langridge@ntlworld.com

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