

SOUTHERN FEDERATION NEWS



MARCH 2010



The cover picture shows a good line up on the steaming bays at Leeds. Something that perhaps can be bettered at the Spring Rally.

The top picture on this page shows that the enjoyment of riding on their track is for people of all age groups, and not only the driver.

This traction engine picture gives the impression of a fairly quiet day, probably due to a shower or two, as depicted by the person with the umbrella in the background.

Other pictures from Leeds appear elsewhere in this edition, around the centre pages.

Thanks to Geoff Shackleton (Leeds Secretary) for supplying them.



Southern Federation News



MARCH
2010

Editor
Stan Bishop

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Federation Web Site Is At
www.southernfed.co.uk

Views and comments expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies

EDITORIAL

Following a year of trials and tribulations, we seem to have come through without too much additional worry to the hobby. I expect there will be some amongst us that will find some room for complaint/comment, and of course they may have a valid reason, I would like to suggest that they may also like to consider the time and effort that is devoted to the hobby by committee members of all the major Federations/Associations and others, before they make their comments. Many of the issues that have been faced during the past few years have been brought about by outside bodies and not the 'hobby' itself, The time spent trying to secure a better deal, with sometimes a complete reversal of the 'demands', has been bourned by these committee's up and down the country.

Those amongst us that feel they have something to say should of course bring it to the attention of whichever group they belong to, (Federation/Association), by doing this means it will be dealt with as quickly and honestly as we can.

The weather throughout 2009 did of course do the usual thing, provide some with good conditions while others suffered very bad conditions, both at their events and on a personal level. We can hope that 2010 brings some better and more stable conditions during the 'running season', allowing us all to enjoy the hobby and friendship that prevails. Rally Events and Club Open/Invitation Days are always a great place to meet and chat with others, I am sure there are many, like me, that will make that extra effort to travel a bit more this year.

Take care out there, but above all else, enjoy yourselves. Stan Bishop (Editor)

Items for inclusion in the
JUNE 2010
edition should be with the
Editor by
APRIL 30th 2010



FROM THE CHAIRMAN – March 2010.

Welcome to another rendition of 'From the Chairman' written a few days after the Alexandra Palace exhibition; it was a pleasure to meet up with so many of our friends during the weekend, whether it was just a hello, goodbye or a longer chat on topics of a mutual interest.

The exhibition itself was well supported as ever throughout all three days, and Meridienne Exhibitions deserve a 'pat on the back' for a well organised event at an interesting and historical venue. There were plenty of exhibits to be admired in a whole range of disciplines that caught the eye.

Within a few days of you receiving this edition of our Newsletter, another Annual General Meeting will be upon us, as ever, at a very interesting venue. This is a very important meeting in the Federations calendar; I look forward to meeting as many of you that can make the journey.

Whilst on the topic of Annual General Meetings, have you, or any of your members considered standing for election to the Federation Committee, we have two vacancies to fill, we would very much like to hear from some of our younger members, we are all getting a bit long in the tooth now.

One area of Federation business that continues to give cause for concern is the fact that Clubs/Societies are not updating their mailing lists when advised of changes to the Federations administration. Almost eighteen months ago, you were all advised that Mike Leahy had tendered his resignation from the Federation Committee, and that Maurice Bennett would take over the responsibility for the boiler register, although we had a temporary newsletter editor for two editions Stan Bishop returned to the editor's chair from the 2009 AGM.

May I make another request, would you **PLEASE** make sure you have the correct details in your mailing list and in addition make sure your members are aware as well, all the necessary information can be found elsewhere in the newsletter.

The Federation's sales stand will be in attendance, and in addition will be supporting the following events before the next Newsletter is due in June.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Harrogate Exhibition | May 7/8/9 |
| Federation Spring Rally – Leeds S.M.E.E. | May 15 |
| Leeds S.M.E.E. Open Day | May 16 |
| Vale of Aylesbury T.E. Rally | June 5/6 |

Brian Thompson.

DIRECTORY SUPPLEMENT UPDATE – MARCH 2010

CHANGE OF SECRETARY.

City of Newport Model Engineering Society

Sec: Mr. R. McKean, c/o Woodbine Cottage, Brockweir, Monmouthshire, South Wales. NP16 7NS
Tel. No. (01291) 689274

City of Oxford Society of Model Engineers

Sec: Mr. N. Lawson-Smith, Gainfield House, Gainfield, Faringdon, Oxon. SN7 8QQ
Tel. No. (01367) 700550 Email: nls@cisitd.com

Crawley Model Boat Club

Sec: Mrs. C. Monk, 10 Deerswood, West Green, Crawley, West Sussex. RH11 7JW
Tel. No. (01293) 535854

Guernsey Model Engineering Society

Sec: Mr. K. Hunter, Masfield, Les Vardes, St. Peter Port, Guernsey, Channel Islands. GY1 1BH
Tel. No. (01481) 720860 Email: kevin.hunter@cwgsy.net

Isle of Wight Model Engineering Society

Sec: Mr. A. Cole, 104 Newport Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight, Hants. PO31 7PS
Tel. No. (01983) 279338 Email: sunnycabbarbo@msn.com

Kirklees Model Boat Club

Sec: Mrs. P. Reffin, 79 Carr Bridge Drive, Leeds. LS16 7LB
Tel. No. (0113) 267 5790 Email: stan.sreffin@tiscali.co.uk

Liskeard Model Society

Sec: Mrs. J. Field, 5 Morview Road, Widegates, Nr. Looe, Cornwall. PL13 1QE
Tel. No. (01503) 240312

Milton Keynes Model Engineering Society

Sec: Mr. R. James, 65 Eastfield Crescent, Yardley Gabion, Northants. NN12 7TT
Tel. No. xxxxxxxx

Norwich Model Boat Club

Sec: Mr. T. Beare, Tiletops, Church Road, Yelverton, Norwich, Norfolk. NR14 7BP
Tel. No. (01508) 492761 Email: Tiletops@vmbeare.wanadoo.co.uk

Ramsgate and District Model Engineering Club

Sec: Mrs. J. Knight, 161 Margate Road, Ramsgate, Kent. CT12 6SX
Tel. No. (01843) 592650

Reading Society of Model Engineers

Sec: Mr. A. Day, 1 Goldthorpe Gardens, Lower Early, Reading, Berks. RG6 4AR
Tel. No. (0118) 9611 370 Email: andrewday@ntlworld.com

Southend Model Power Boat Club

Sec: Mr. D. Wiggins, 35 Oakhurst Road, Southend on Sea, Essex. SS2 5DT
Tel. No. (01702) 610548

West Surrey Model Traction Engine Club

Sec: Mr. T. Dezell, Berewick House, Green Farm Rise, Froxfield, Marlborough, Wilts. SN8 3YD
Tel. No. (01488) 684983 Email: thedezres@btinternet.com

Winchester Model and Engineering Society

Sec: Mrs. J. Slatter, 23 Lawn Road, Eastleigh, Hants. SO50 4GT
Tel. No. xxxxxxxx

SECRETARY'S CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Alexandra Park (Hastings) Miniature Railway

Sec: Mrs. J. Leonard, 27 Kings Avenue, Rye, East Sussex. TN31 7LU
Tel. No. (01797) 226905

Five Counties Steamers

Sec: Mrs. P. Alfred, 'Woodpeckers' New Road, Zeals, Warminster, Wilts. BA12 6NA
Tel. No. (01747) 841556

If time and space allows for it, amongst other constraints, it may be possible in the future to place up-dates such as these on our web site.

The plan for a possible 'Area Map' showing the grouping we use countrywide, along with a directory of club/society web sites is still in a 'planning stage'. Until a formal and verified database is available it is being held over.

The web site is however being supported in a more regular manner than previously so it is a good place to check to see if there is any more up-to-date news or notices.

SOUTHERN FEDERATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS - MINUTES

Committee Meeting held on the 24th November 2009

Introduction.

In order to provide more space for Club and Society matters, it has been decided that the Minutes will not be published in full in future Newsletters: rather a summary will be given under each Agenda Item topic. The Minutes relating to any particular issue can be made available to individual Societies on application to the Secretary. AGM Minutes will continue to be published in full.

Review of the Minutes of Previous Meeting.

The Minutes were agreed to be an accurate representation of the business carried out at the previous meeting (Proposed Wally Pearson, seconded Clive Young). The Chairman signed them accordingly, and they are now on File.

Secretary's Report.

Correspondence

A number of items of correspondence had been received: -

Change of contact details from the Northampton, Northolt, Ramsgate and Scunthorpe Clubs. These have been passed to the appropriate Committee Members. The Committee were sorry to note that the change at Northampton was as a result of the sudden death of their Secretary.

- Enquiry re Clubs in the Croydon area - answered
- An enquiry relating to Vetting and Barring - answered.
- Various Newsletters - passed to Mr Bishop. Senders advised of change of Editor
- Enquiry re Clubs in the Southampton area - answered.

The Secretary has learnt that Worthing intend to hold a 2-day Southern Locomotive Rally over the same weekend as the Federation Spring Rally - he had contacted them with a view to possible de-confliction. (Post Meeting Note: - Worthing had considered the clash when planning their Rally, but unfortunately could not re-schedule.)

Treasurer's Report.

The Treasurer distributed his report and details of the Federation's end-of-year financial status. Details were much as expected. The Accounts are due at the Auditors shortly. The Chairman observed that the Directory was due for its 5-year update, and more "Blue Cards" were also needed. The Chairman would be talking to the printers shortly. Mr Rogers (and The Committee) sanctioned this expenditure. The Chairman would report if the costs were significantly more.

The Treasurer recommended an increase in Affiliation Fees. He also commented that £5 was a more realistic figure, but, in view of the large reserves, he could live with £1 (the maximum permissible without AGM approval). An increase from £22 to £23 pa was proposed by Clive Young and seconded by Norman Rogers, agreed unanimously. This would be notified in the Renewal Invitation Pack to be sent out in January.

Insurance Report.

SFed/FJ Liaison Meeting

The latest SFed/FJ Liaison Meeting took place on 3rd November; Minutes have been previously distributed to The Committee and FJ.

FJ Report

The FJ Report had been previously distributed to the Committee.

Discussion

High speed tethered hydroplanes were discussed. One Society had wanted to put a protective safety fence around their pond, but this had been vetoed by the local authority. It was noted that one affiliated society ran model hydroplanes in the local park - what were their insurance arrangements? The Chairman undertook to investigate the topic.

New Applications/Membership Update.

Renewals

No further renewals had been received.

Some 255 organisations are affiliated to the Federation, and Mr Walker had calculated that the total membership of clubs (but excluding associations) stood at 14,664. It was not possible to break out individuals who belonged to more than one society, but this could well be balanced by association membership.

Renewal Invitation Packs would be sent out in the first week of January 2010.

New Applications

No new applications had been received.

Interest had been shown by a new Society, and an Information Pack had been provided to them.

Safety Report.

Design Code Meeting

Mr Pearson reported on the recent meeting at the Focus group that preceded this Committee Meeting.

A number of issues had arisen at the Focus Group. These had been referred to the full Committee, and are summarised here for convenience:

- When the Minutes are formally published, a (half page) summary would be published in the following Newsletter, and the Minutes published in full on the Website.
- The Federation would publish the DfBIS correspondence.
- Mr Pearson would respond to individual queries.
- The Blue Book needs further updating, and it was also felt that a Code of Practice should be produced to supplement it. Mr Pearson recommended that the Committee wait until they had received the Minutes of the Group's meeting before deciding on the course of action.
- A well-respected Federation Member had previously offered to contribute to the Design code. The Code had a pre-determined format, and Mr Pearson would supply this for onward transmission by the Secretary to the potential writer.
- There is no indication of when the next meeting might take place.
- Following recent correspondence in the Model Press, it was agreed that both EIM and ME should be supplied with the Bulletins relevant to CE marking.

In reply to questions, the Secretary updated the Committee on the Boiler Test Seminar, to be held at The Fosse on 24th April 2010. Application Forms had been on the stand

at Leamington, and a preliminary Calling Notice would appear in the December Newsletter. The Application Form is also on the Website for downloading. A reminder would be sent out with the Renewal Invitation Pack.

The Seminar would be presented jointly by Northern and Southern representatives, and details would be finalised at Alexandra Palace.

To date, no applications had been received.

Boiler Registrar.

Mr Bennett had previously circulated his report.

Boiler Slips continue to flood in; there are over 600 now. There had also been the usual few enquiries which had been resolved, so everything is in order.

Bulletins.

Mr Walker advised the Committee that he would be issuing a replacement Page 1/2 for Bulletin #11.

2010 AGM (13th March 2010)

Status

The Gaydon Museum had been booked. They had supplied 80 free entrance tickets, which The Federation would offer to Delegates on a "first come, first served" basis (ie as they signed in). The Secretary expressed his reservations over this approach, rather than concessionary arrangements for all Delegates.

Committee Member Intentions, 2010/2011

Mr Young and Mr Norman advised the Committee that they would not be seeking re-election next year. The Membership would be advised of this fact before the AGM.

Newsletter/Website.

Newsletter

Mr Bishop had received an offer from Mr Ashton to publish his Valve Gear Design information on the Website. This was accepted by the Committee.

Mr Bishop also reported that following receipt of recent information, work on the geographic breakdown would proceed.

Finally, Mr Bishop reported a communication from FJ (Raybould) to their Southern Federation Partners, describing a proposed link for the Website. The Committee were asked to review this.

Mr Bishop had previously expressed his concerns over the release status of documents for the Newsletter and Website. It was agreed that policy documents would be circulated to The Committee for their comment, but the originator would be responsible for ensuring that the material supplied to Mr Bishop would be the official version.

For his part, The Secretary offered to supply Mr Bishop with redacted Minutes for publication, in addition to his usual full set.

Website

Liaison with Messrs Dalog remains good. The latest items to be added to the Website will include the geographical breakdown and the Bulletins.

Traffic details as at 17th November follow. The figures for w/e 15th September are given in parentheses.

Visits

Cumulative Total..... 7,069 (6,568)
 Average per Day 7 (9)
 Average Visit Length ... 3.39 (2.09)
 This Week.....52 (62)

Page Views

Cumulative Total..... 33,230 (30,379)
 Average per Day 31 (35)
 Average per Visit4.2 (4.0)
 This Week218 (245)

Rallies and Exhibitions.

The Chairman thanked those who had supported him at Leamington. He had received a letter from Chris Deith, thanking him, and also advising him that the next show was planned for 15th - 19th October 2010.

Manning arrangements

The arrangements for Alexandra Palace (22nd/23rd/24th January) were discussed, and entry pass requirements and attendees identified.

Future Events (2010)

- Brighton Modelworld 12th/13th/14th February
- S/Fed Spring Rally (Leeds) 15th May
- IMLEC (Bournemouth) 3rd/4th July
- Birmingham Locomotive Rally 11th/12th September
- S/Fed Autumn Rally (Rugby) 18th September
- Midlands Show 15th/16th/17th/18th/19th October

Any other business.**Mileage.**

Following the recent increases in fuel costs, it was agreed that mileage rates should be increased to 30p/mile for cars, and 35p/mile when towing, effective immediately.

Model Engineer Exhibition, Sandown. Mr Chris sought clarification to the background that had led to the decision not to attend this show. The Chairman replied that he had not received a formal invitation. Mr Chris expressed his disappointment.

Date of next meeting.

The date of the next full Committee Meeting, to be held at Keen House, 4 Calshot Street, London, N1 9DA, is Tuesday 26th January 2010, commencing at 18-00 sharp.

Help us and help yourselves as well

Further to comments made by Brian at the start of this newsletter, I had already compiled this piece as requested at the last Committee meeting, so it remains in place.

.....

For several months the Committee has heard of many instances where information that has been sent in to the Federation has been directed at the wrong person.

Most should be aware by this time that there has been a change of details for the guy who would like to receive newsletters and items for the newsletter, this change took place at the Annual General Meeting back in 2008, when Mike Leahy gave up the 'blue pencil' and Brian Thompson stood in until the Annual General Meeting of 2009, when I took back the task of compiling the newsletter for the Federation.

However, since then it has come to light that some that send the information in to us have used one of any four wrong addresses to send to, such as Mike Leahy, Brian Thompson, Norman Rogers and even Ivan Hurst.

The address you should be using is mine, which is.....

Stan Bishop. 3 Queens Walk. Ashford. Middlesex. TW15 3JG.

Will everybody please take note and alter you system to accomodate this information. Valuable time and news is lost due to this error, some clubs are even failing to get a mention because they are sending to the wrong person. (Please read other comments about the newsletter elsewhere)

***The other issue over addresses is in relation to our
Boiler Registrar Maurice Bennett.***

Again the boiler registration slips we complete, when finalising a boiler hydraulic test, are still being sent to the wrong person.

Maurice still has envelopes handed to him that contain several at a time that have been sent to the wrong person, once again causing delays in him entering the details as required.

All completed boiler registration slips should be sent to Maurice at.....

40 Suckling Green Lane. Codshall. South Staffs. WV8 2BT.

BOILER TEST AND DESIGN GROUP.

You may be aware that the Miniature Railway Liaison Group (MRLG) is no longer in operation. However a sub group was set up to deal with specific subjects related to boiler testing and design. This group is formed of representatives of the Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies, the Northern Association of Model Engineers, the Midlands Federation of Model Engineering Societies, the 7¼ inch Gauge Society, the Miniature Steam Road Vehicle Society and Insurance brokers.

The group meets at various time intervals to review and update the data related to boiler test and design. The minutes of the last meeting held at Bedford on 4th November 2009 are presented on the Southern Federation web-site at.....

www.southernfed.co.uk

The reason they are not published in this Newsletter is purely down to their size.

MORE HELP NEEDED

I have often made a suggestion to the readers of this newsletter that there are ways to ensure a piece about your own Club/Society is mentioned in the relevant section of the club news.

To this end, once again, can I suggest we almost make a plea, that any Club/Society that already submits their own newsletter to us makes an effort to cobble together a specific piece, instead of sending the whole newsletter in. This would give a direct mention of 'your news' and not a collection of words that I personally feel worth printing, which may well lead to an important part of your news being missed out. Additionally, this method would also save postage/printing etc if your contribution could be electronically sent to me. I could then of course just download and insert the piece in the correct place.

I do of course have other more personal reasons for raising this, mainly because it would cut down on the amount of reading I am currently having to do, it would make putting together this newsletter that much less time consuming, and by each club writing their own piece it would give more up-to-date news in each of our editions.

Bearing in mind I am getting newsletters from clubs/societies that are out of date even when I first receive them, some weeks before I want to use them.

Your article could include important news about your own club/society, up to date diary of events to which others may be invited, special shows/exhibitions along with work in progress that would be of interest to all of our readers.

Before anyone asks, my 'other spare time' is spent trying desperately to finish a repaint of our 'Simplex', finish a 5" gauge 'Britannia', find time to work on a Don Young Class 2 (been on the stocks for over 15 years) and also keep house and home together, find some time for 'a life' oh and before I forget, find time to sleep!

So you may appreciate any direct help to make the time go further would be welcomed.

Each 'piece' ideally would be between 150 to 200 words long, if any photographs were submitted they suit me better as .jpeg file format and as I am on broadband, as I keep telling people, size is of no consequence.

I have two 'e' mail addresses, stan-bishop@lineone.net or stanleybishop@tiscali.co.uk

Thanks for your support on this (hopefully)

Just a couple of Obituaries

Fred Matthews, a member of Ickenham and District Society of Model Engineers for well over 40 years, died in early January just before his 86th birthday.

He first visited IDSME in 1967 to give a talk - the first of many - on his British Railways work as a development engineer working on new electric trains but it transpired that he had a life-long love of steam and was building a miniature locomotive.

So Fred joined IDSME and soon his loco, a 3½" gauge 'Juliet', had its first trials there. 'Juliet' was followed by another '3½" engine 'Romeo', based on a LMS 0-4-4T built at Derby where Fred had served his apprenticeship. For his next engine, Fred adapted the smaller 'Rob Roy' design (Caledonian Railway 0-6-0T) to 5" gauge.



Then in the early 1980s; with retirement beckoning, Fred surprised many by choosing a Great Western loco as his next project, a 5" gauge model of a unique locomotive, 4-4-2T No. 4600.

As well as IDSME, where at times he served on the committee including a spell as Chairman, Fred was also a member of the Society of Model and Experimental Engineers and in later years Harrow and Wembley SME.

Another Fred, this time Fred La Roche passed away during December 2009 having just made it past 90 years of age.....Fred was a well known figure at many of the Model Engineering Shows, for many years, well known for his engineering skills and outspoken nature. He was able to gain a fourth place as a contestant at an I.M.L.E.C. event back in 1971 at Southampton, he drove his 5" gauge L.M.S. 0-6-0 tank locomotive. Another first here was that the picture of his locomotive at the event was the first time such a picture had been used on the front cover of Model Engineer showing an 'I.M.L.E.C.' locomotive.

I chose to put this piece in because, although I did not know him directly, several of our older members, themselves now deceased, spoke highly of him to us 'youngsters'. I do recall seeing him at various events and others pointing him out to me, others who no doubt had dealings with him over those by-gone years.

The original piece was gleaned the Welling & District Newsletter No 123.

While these two obituary's have appeared here it does not follow there will be a regular concession granted to others. It follows that if we were to run a short piece on every deceased model engineer from the catchment area of our affiliated societies, there just would not be room for any other items. Just imagine, there are in the region of 250 affiliated clubs/societies with something over 12,000 members between them, even at the rate of 0.1% each quarter leaving this mortal coil it would more than take over from the main purpose of this publication.



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Whatever your model engineering needs, from nuts and bolts to locos, it is probable we can supply. See us at exhibitions and rallies or find these and other items in our :

Supplies Catalogue £1.75 posted UK. \$5 worldwide
Polly Loco Kit catalogue £3 Stuart Models Catalogue £5



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MASTERCARD

The Leeds Society of Model & Experimental Engineers. are hosts to the Southern Federation Spring Rally 2010. Saturday May 15th.

The Southern Federation Spring Rally 2010 is to be held on 15th /16th May at Eggborough, the track site of the Leeds Society of Model and Experimental Engineers. Although originally based in Leeds itself the present track is now sited some 15miles east of Leeds within the grounds of Eggborough Power Station. The power station is located on the A19 near Whitley Bridge not far from Junction 34 of the M62.

The first SMEE was formed in the City of Leeds in 1899 although the present Society was formed in 1935. The first permanent track was built in Temple Newsam Park to the east of Leeds in 1960. Vandalism became an increasing problem however and forced a move to a new home.

In 1978 the Society relocated its facilities to within the grounds of Eggborough power station close to the power station Sports and Social Club.

Situated in pleasantly landscaped grounds, there is a fine raised track, over 1000 ft. in length, catering for 3½" and 5" gauge locomotives. Here, locomotives can be easily transferred from vehicles using either manual or hydraulic lifting tables. The well equipped steaming bays provide compressed air and 12V d.c. for steam raising blowers. Hand operated and pneumatic traversers enable easy access to the track from the steaming bays. The railway track is solidly built on reinforced concrete beams and pillars and is roughly kidney shaped with a minimum radius of 75ft. The track incorporates a tunnel, footbridge, station building, carriage shed and has track circuits linked to signalling to provide safe operation. The Society has recently installed horizontal anti-tipping boards around the track and visitors are encouraged to use Leeds S.M.E.E. riding cars. Visitors using their own tender trucks or riding cars must ensure that the vertical distance from rail height to bottom of footrest does not exceed 11¼ ins. Located centrally to the track the Society has a Club House with modern facilities attached to which is a well equipped workshop.

In addition to the raised track, the Society operates a portable ground level track with 5" and 7¼" gauges. This is mainly used to support local charitable events in the summer months.

Members meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 7-30 pm throughout the year. During the summer most of these meetings are devoted to social activities and maintenance and improvement of the facilities.

Regular running days are held on the 2nd Sunday of every month from March to October with additional running days during June, July and August.

Other events include our two day August Rally, inter-society visits and the annual outings to London, Leamington Spa and Harrogate for the model engineering exhibitions.

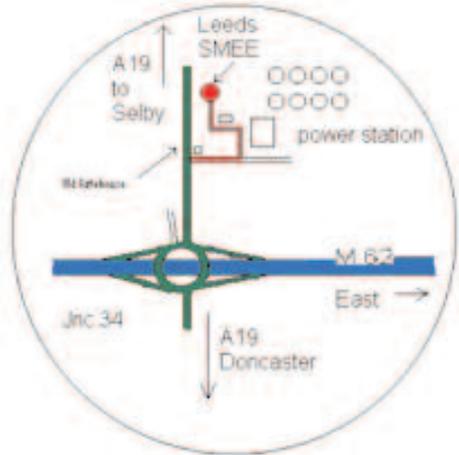
There are currently 80 members who enjoy the benefits of being with Leeds SMEE. Visitors to the Southern Federation Spring Rally can be sure of a warm welcome. There is ample parking at the site but if bringing a caravan please book this in advance by contacting Leeds S.M.E.E. by phone or e-mail.

Our website may be found at:
<http://sites.google.com/site/leedssmee>

To contact the Society for more detail
 or to book caravans then
 e-mail: leeds.smee@virgin.net

or telephone 01977-798138

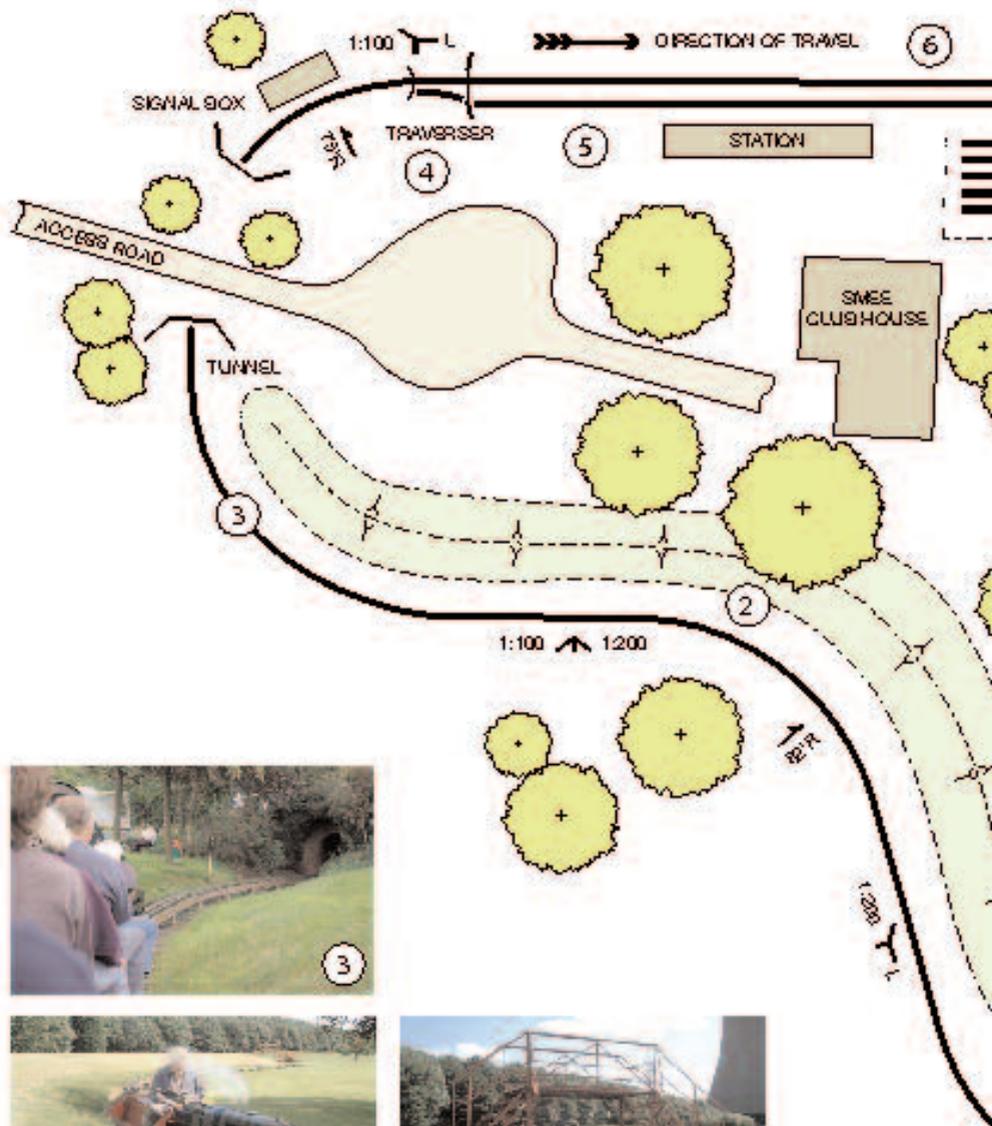
Pictures below, and on following
 pages, show some of the views of this
 track.



Driver tuition takes place prior to an enjoyable run at Leeds.



LEEDS SOCIETY OF MODEL 8



EXPERIMENTAL ENGINEERS





While some sit and chat over a 'cuppa', probably reliving old times and the like, others are busy preparing a locomotive for a spin around this track at Leeds. If the weather plays ball these scenes could be repeated at the Spring Rally in May this year. Go along and enjoy the weekend!



AROUND THE CLUBS

THE NATIONAL CLUBS



Some new models are expected from the home of the **Maxittrak Owners Club** suppliers Maxittrak. A 'scrappage scheme' is being introduced for anyone wanting to trade in an older Ruston locomotive for one of the new Planet's. No 'Rustons' will actually be scrapped however, just taken in part exchange. Business is looking good, with a batch of 25 Alice class Hunslet's being delivered and sold almost directly. Several visits take place during the year with a return visit planned to the Leicester and Norwich Clubs and other visits are on the cards for the Brockwell Park Miniature Railway near Herne Hill and the Frimley Park Miniature Railway. An Open Day is scheduled for September to the factory that will include the AGM. More details of this and other news from their web site at www.maxittrak.co.uk

Following some attention to an internet web forum operated by one of the well known providers, and being inundated with adverts which are both intrusive and make the system slow in operation, it has been suggested that if somebody has the time to set up one dedicated to the group, then the revival of the 2½" gauge fraternity would benefit. Well that was almost what was suggested in the 'Coupling Rod' from the **National 2½" Gauge Association**, hope I have not got that many points wrong! I do know how these forums get

over loaded with spoof and spam; make you feel as though the whole world of advertising has descended into your life. Judging by the amount of interest shown to the model at Sandown Park recently there is still a huge following to this side of the hobby. Many types of these smaller locomotives are being built with the able assistance of the many members that have the experience to pass on.

Memories of a fine end of summer garden party were shown on the front cover of 'The Journal' from the **Society of Model and Experimental Engineers** presented to readers in November 2009. Couple Ann and Gordon Hatherill opened their garden up for this event, and it appears it was supported by a good number of members, somewhere in the region of 30 plus in fact, counting from the picture. Obituaries for a couple of well known model engineers, Malcolm Stride and Ian Cornish were written in this issue I have, both men were well respected and will be missed by all that knew them. One event that was being supported by members from this group was the Karlsruhe Model Engineering Exhibition; this was the event that took place at Sinsheim until recently. There will probably be a full report on the event in their next Journal. Following a good amount of refurbishment at Marshall House members can expect to see a big

difference when they next visit. One huge benefit is an up to date fire alarm system, this along with other Health & Safety improvements will make being there a lot better. Interior decorating was the thing to be decided recently. A proposal that professional contractors should be engaged for this had been discussed and agreed on.

One of the presentations made at the Usk Show, an event supported by the **MSRVS** last year was the presentation of the John Haining Memorial Trophy. This was pictured on the front cover of the December 2009 edition of their newsletter; it shows Anne Haining presenting the trophy to Pete Burton from Leominster. Pete gained the award for showing his 1½” scale Portable Engine (to the Bill Hughes

design) along with a 1½” scale Garrett Thrashing Drum, and a Stationary Baler & Water Cart to the John Haining design. Pete was the first winner of this new award that will be presented each year at the Usk Show. An interesting evenings discussion took place with speaker Graham Clifton giving a talk about Bell (the church type) manufacture, restoration, hanging and repair. One interesting aspect was that when a bell is cracked it can be repaired by welding, although this does take a while it is practical. The whole bell has to be heated to around 650 degrees C, then welded using a TIG process and “bell metal” filler rods on the previously prepared crack. The bell is then allowed to cool slowly over a period of between three and four days depending on the size. This process was pioneered back in the 1960’s

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND



The **Beamish Model Engineering Group** are probably the only group that have a ‘cog railway’ as part of their features, forming just a part of the entire site it provides something different when operating. Looking on their web site it can be seen to provide a good climb up and over the track that has apparently a 1:10 gradient to contend with. Some renovation work was being completed on the passenger cars her; a comment was that they were being made wider in some cases; thoughts were that the ‘public seat’ appears to be getting wider. Steaming events are run alongside the museums ordinary functions and combined they must make the whole affair seem

worthwhile.

Many will already know that the Southern Federation Spring Rally will be hosted by the **Leeds Society** this year. Work was progressing well with the installation of an anti-tip rail around their entire track. Plans were it should be completed by then, let us hope the bad weather of late has not held things up too much. Problems with their web site provider have meant a change may be needed, or in fact has been made. Issues with photograph up loading and sizes were of some concern. It was said a new provider might be the best and quickest way around the problem. The Federation

Rally will be covered elsewhere in these pages so I will not go on too much about it, other than to say everybody will receive a warm welcome from this auspicious group over the weekend of May 15th & 16th. Another chance to visit this group will take place on August 7th & 8th when they will be holding their own 'Autumn Rally'.

Some concern is shown at the **Kirklees Model Boat Club** about new and faster electrically propelled boats. This concern arises from the fact that new electric brushless motors are producing more power and more speed than conventional motors. Local council safety rules must be followed so some restriction on these boats may have to be put in place. A follow up note said they were not trying to eliminate these boats but that they must be seen to be acting responsibly towards the concerns. However it seems from their December newsletter that a vote was taken and they have been added to the ban, which excludes i/c powered boats already.

A quick mention is that the fortnightly meetings of the **Hull & District Society** now take place at a new location, this is the New Walton Club at the North end of Walton Street in Hull. Information and a map can be gathered from this www.finnaj.karoo.net/hdsme.html this information came via their Meetings Secretary Tony Finn.

An 'e' mailed version of a newsletter for January 2010 came in from the **Ryedale Society** recently. In it there was mention that the wet weather had put a dampener on work and events at the time, December was particularly draughty by all accounts with a quick repair being needed to the temporary roof covering of their new building. Fortunately the local Building Inspector approved the work to that date and they were given the go ahead to proceed with roof work. Sadly what with the cold and other aspects the roof was not finished in time for the end of the year, however lighter days and evenings should see work rapidly get up to speed once again.

THE MIDLANDS AND EASTERN COUNTIES



A colourful presentation always appears from the **Birmingham Society**, the issue for October to November 2009 was no exception. Unfortunately inside is a little bit gloomier with reports of the loss of three members during the latter half of the year. Due to the nature of their illnesses the management of this Society have decided to run two days for support of

Cancer Charities as opposed to the normal one. One of the colour photographs on the front cover of this particular newsletter shows the prize winning 'Royal Chester' taken at the Fosse back during October last year, builder was of course Peter Wardle. A good amount of work was planned for this winter, new bearings for the ground level turntable,

new main gates to the grounds, and the gradual replacement of the raised track sleepers to name but three. Following a perennial problem of oil on the track it was proposed that a special 'track cleaning' car be built, this would ideally be self-propelled. (Something a lot of clubs could do with I would think ED)

The added attraction around the track of the **Kings Lynn & District Society** is, what is best described as a, 'poly tunnel'. The framework was erected and covered by heavy-duty black plastic sheeting and a net over the top of that. The idea is that suitable climbing plants can be grown alongside and they will form a good covering for their 'new tunnel'. Decorative end pieces have already been put in place ready for the growing season this coming springtime. Several new passenger cars have been finished and now for the major means of passenger hauling. Members are told it may be in their own best interests to use the as they seem far more stable than any previous designs.

Following their own successful season for 2009 the members of the **Bedford Model Engineering Society** have been presented with a list of jobs that are outstanding at Hayes End. Quickly looking through it there were some fairly major ones, along with plenty of easier and smaller ones, mind you I expect a lot of members will be concerned about the quantity and wonder if they can ever get through them. Probably the biggest is or was to do with their 'garage building'. This, I think, follows the three break-ins when some of the site support equipment was stolen; an idea to replace the doors with something stronger was put forward as a suggestion. Poor old Ted (Jolliffe) seems he has had enough of trying to organise the social events side of life, feeling he was getting stale and perhaps not pleasing

everybody. Due to his being aware that some evening speakers were costing a lot he tended to use 'in house' talent, he is now however pleased he will not have to take along any items of his own to fill the gaps, so to speak. He quotes that just 10% of members is the average attendance figure for these meetings, he wishes the new social secretary all the nest and hopes he can encourage the numbers to rise to 50%.

During the year 2009 the **Chelmsford Society** recorded a most successful 'Clubs Open Day' in June when 23 people from 7 Societies visited them with 12 locomotives in 3 gauges. Another event that was recorded was the Santa Specials day, for some 200 children and about twice as many adults. Members constructed a very strong canopy over the main ground level station, keeping waiting passengers out of the sun and rain; new passenger vehicles have been built so allowing for longer trains when needed. The feeling was that the 'Media publicised Staycations' of the present have contributed to higher takings at the ticket office during their general Sunday Running programme. This year, 2010, the Club Invitation Day will be held on Saturday 19th June from 10-30am until 4-30pm.

The year of 2009 saw the 50th year of occupancy of the Fulbrooke Road site by the **Cambridge Model Engineering Society**. At the end of June they held a special two-day anniversary rally, which by all accounts was a great event to be at. A track extension had been put on hold during last summer but at the end of September the workforce was re-motivated and work began again. A new carriage stowage and track construction shed was nearly completed soon after work began, the basic building being

donated from the Museum of Technology in Cambridge, finishing touches were completed once the unit was re-erected. Following work was to include a traverser and a number of steaming bays for the larger locomotives.

Comments from the Editorial of the **Norwich & District Society** reflect a view, often spoken by other groups, that although it is an 'old bone of contention' Health & Safety keeps raising it's ugly head. Despite that members here are asked to observe the rules when ever visiting or working on site at the club. Good support here on the days when they raised money for Charity has meant a worthwhile cheque was sent off to the BBC appeal 'Children In Need'. Increased lengths of 'sidings' off of the main turntable have already proved successful and useful. Other working parties will be working on other jobs during the winter months, although hopefully by the time this is in print many jobs will have been finished and the season almost ready to get underway.

Since August last year and the start of 2010 there has been a lot of work at

the home of the **Saffron Walden & District Society**. Much, if not all of this work, involved the building of a new club building. At the start, once the ground had been cleared and shuttering in place they needed 20 tonnes of crushed hardcore and 8 cubic metres of concrete to finish the base alone. Then followed delivery of their new wooden building and a period of bolting bits together. Their aim was to complete the job by at least the New Years day steam up, which I think they probably managed to achieve. Internal fittings are probably still undergoing installation but at least they have a waterproof building to call their own. Loads of work has been completed by members on all aspects of finishing the building, from plastering, tiling, wallpapering, painting and outside ground works which included paving at the entrance. Indoor fitments have also been obtained from various sources; with some purchased and others donated. All in all it looks a fine addition to their assets. At the New Years Day steam up there was a record turnout of fifty members, friends and families, the new clubroom really came into its own and could have easily accommodated all of these who wanted to stay in the warmth.

LONDON & SOUTHERN COUNTIES



Good to see the **Welling & District Society** are still enjoying running at their old track. News about the 'Santa Run' made headlines in the magazine numbered 122 that I have before me. A great deal of planning was given to this event and a visit by a crew to a well known toy chain store saw an enormous amount of 'presents' being bought for the event.

Without going into too much detail it should suffice to say that a final cost up in the four-figure range was spent. We shall probably hear how well the event was in their next newsletter. Up until the time of writing there was no further news on a track move, already put on hold, so maybe there is a chance they will be there for another year or so.

Tracking down to smaller scales there is some news from the **East Surrey 16mm Group**, they have their 'home' generally at the Merstham School, but are often spread far and wide at other events in that part of the country. As if to tempt providence the cover picture on their December 2009 news was of 'Polar Bear' at Amberley Museum, in a full snow laden picture. Little did they now what was to follow this January! This particular group seem to be thriving, what with all the various shows they attend with different 16mm gauge layouts. Members of the public are often surprised to see that live steam is being run on these tracks, as did happen at the show held at the NEC (Warley Show).

Members that support the **Canterbury & District Society** were pleased to set up a display at the recent exhibition at Sandown Park. Representing something of a milestone for this society it all turned out a worthwhile exercise and their thoughts have now turned to the future and Alexandra Palace in 2011. Another event set to publicise their club activities was the Invitation Day last September. Some thirty members from four clubs attended and enjoyed the hospitality and track. One very different locomotive to appear on their tracks recently is a model of a Bulleid "1CoCo1", apparently only three full size ones were ever built, with the first two being assembled at the Ashford works during 1947, and the third at Brighton works a little later. With power to spare from its eight axles (six being driven) it looks a formidable beast and should prove a unique crowd puller (in more ways than one perhaps).

A photograph shown on the cover of the newsletter from the **St Albans & District Society** shows the scene around the building of part of the London

Underground. At first you would imagine it was a railway disaster, but it is in fact a picture of an exhibit at the London Transport Museum in Covent Garden. No disasters at the St Albans track, although several sleepers were missing in inspection, this resulted in a programme of re-sleeping the parts that needed doing. Systematic work has resulted in their fleet of passenger cars being fully serviceable for this next running season. Worn axles and seized bearings seemed to have been the main cause of subsequent withdrawal of these vehicles from service last year. Support from members made for a good display at the M E Exhibition at Sandown Park, just one comment was that a track to run smaller locomotives on and a pool for boats would have been great.

The year of 2010 will see some celebrations taking place at the home of the **South Downs Light Railway** situated at a garden centre down in West Sussex. They will be celebrating their tenth anniversary, and are asking if anyone has any photographs taken during these last ten years that can be used in a special publication. A 'steam gala' day back in 2009 was a mixed bag regarding weather, it seems that down on the coast it was a terrible day with not nearly as much rain at the track site. The results of this gala event was recorded as being 'a really good weekend', this event included a splendid exhibition of models and model layouts. Driver training sessions at this group prove successful and members are encouraged to try their hand whenever a chance becomes available.

Part from the usual rigours of autumn and winter leaves etc, clearing up around the present home of the **Gravesend Model Marine & Engineering Society** was accomplished with the normal amount of tea drinking

taking place. One major job has been the repositioning of the steaming bay fence and gate to a new location. All of this was to gain some extra room within the area of the steaming bays. Passenger numbers were showing an increase during last season, one aspect noted was the way the children developed a liking for one particular locomotive or even a particular colour, when it came to taking a ride. In the event the popularity of steam over 'diesel outline' was fairly equal. A couple of younger members have shown an interest in becoming drivers on Sunday's, this does of course bode well for the future of this group at least.

An unusual (perhaps) debate is raging; **A**t the home of the **Sutton Model Engineering Club**, this revolves around car parking. Due to ever increasing use of their land around the track for additions etc the space for cars has been reduced, with stringent regulations about cars parked in close proximity to the track this has contributed to the issue. One scheme afoot is to have the surface of their existing car park resurfaced to avoid any of the muddy areas. Normal running days during the last season were recorded as being lucky weather-wise and it was noted that the updated LED signal lights the Bonfire and Night Run were a great benefit through the steam and mist. The month of August last year proved to be one of their busiest it seems, Different events and visits came around almost every weekend. Probably one of the most enjoyable was the day at the Tonbridge Society, a 'perk' for running locomotives and pulling passengers was the lunch provided. Also some comments such as 'oh look, they have some new engines' were probably as a result of the public seeing the same engines each time they visit.

The **Harrow & Wembley Society** are of course a well established group to the west of London, having enjoyed their location for a good number of years. During the operating season of 2009 their records for passenger rides in total were almost at the 10,000 mark (actually 9926) with an average of 320 rides per week. You have to quantify this figure a little by the fact they run each Sunday during the season. Much deserved thanks are offered to everyone that gives up their time and energy for the support of these events. A 'new feature' here will be the tunnel, currently being 'grown' over a wire mesh framework it has, up until writing at least, survived intact and drawn a lot of interest and comments from visitors. Both 'Open Weekends' last year were well supported and with the dates for the two weekends in our diary it hopefully will be the same for this year.

Harlington Locomotive Society members are always pleased to see new faces. Their visiting clubs day this year is set for Saturday June 19th, always a good track to visit despite some interesting gradients in hidden places. Busy times also when they run their 'Charity Day' on May 23rd, this year in support of the Diabetics Care section at Hillingdon Hospital. Many will already know that this track is built in the grounds of an old orchard and has some twists and turns to catch you out. No worries here at the moment about the future of their site, despite to forecast that a third runway is still under review to be built at Heathrow Airport.

Typical of many (most) other clubs around the country wintertime is a time for working parties. No exception is made at the **Reading Society**, with a good list of 'things to be done' in a recent newsletter. Following their appearance at Sandown

Park in December, and after taking two awards for member's efforts, they have been invited to take part in the same show later this year. Normal passenger days have been generally good with support from the public, and a note was made that children must not ride in front of the driver when members of the public are being carried. This is a group that run special 'birthday party' events during the year, already nearly all of the slots available for 2010 have been sold, with no resistance to an increase in the fees charged. Mention should be made that this year it is the 100th anniversary of this Society, well done to all.

David M Boughen writes in the newsletter titled 'Criterion' from the home of the **High Wycombe Model Engineering Club**, that it has been 25 years since he first took up the pen as Editor. Some things, he says, have not changed over those years and the club life is no different, with the general appearance and size of the track and site remaining the same as when first built. However maybe this year will see some changes to the size of the station, with platform length being increased to allow two trains in at the same time. This will almost be the first major rework of this established track. Other longer-term views are that the steaming bays need to be reviewed to accommodate more locomotives when the need arises.

The ongoing project of the new clubhouse at the track of the **City Of Oxford Society** lead to a reminder to members that the appeal fund is still open. Extra work and costs have become apparent due to initial test bores of the ground not quite living up to what they had shown, which has led to more expense with the hire of more machinery and skips. There is no doubt the project is still very

much alive, although the final finishing touches may have to wait. The editor at the time of writing, Joy Brown, mentions that a good year was enjoyed here, with the two best weekends being the Dreaming Spires Rally and the Southern Federation rally, sliding about in the mud at other times doing your bit on the building site was not always the most enjoyable, although she says 'some of us learned a lot about building and our fellow men!

Southampton Society members still enjoy the friendly atmosphere at their home in Riverside Park, along with all the visitors they have at times. Hospitality is once again extended for visitors to their 'Open Weekend' scheduled to happen over the weekend of April 17th & 18th this year. An 'Electric Day' will then follow on Saturday June 19th. Contact can be made to Mrs Mollie Giles on 023 8033 5108, please respect it is a private phone line with due regard to time etc. Anyone with a road vehicle can also take part with tarmac pathways of about two miles length in the park. (RTA Insurance will be required to enjoy this part of any event)

Members of the **Worthing & District Society** will be making things ready at their track for the special event in May this year. The event is to be a 'Southern Railway Rally' and will take place over the weekend of May 15th & 16th. Anybody with a 'Southern Railway locomotive and rolling stock' is welcome to attend. Contact should be made in the first place with co-ordinator Charles Weatherley on (01903) 268061. Postcode location for the track is given as BN13 1NP. Several groups come up with discussions and answers on rising or falling membership numbers, no different here either. One comment was that despite how ever members you have in a group there will probably only be 10%

of the total prepared to do any extra work. Having said that another comment by the club CME suggested that although the level of engineering work has been 'quite intensive' the outcome is not very visible. A good amount of work has taken place replacing and repairing their passenger car fleet it would seem. Electrical safety features under a heading 'Electrical Safety & the ¼" Whitworth Fuse', this relates to incidents when checking pieces of electrical equipment elsewhere. Investigation on one such item found that a normal 13 amp fuse had been replaced by a piece of studding. It was estimated that the 'fracture current' of this might have been as high as 600 amps.

It seems a long time since we had anything from the scribes of the **Pinewood Miniature Railway**. However to hand is a copy of their 'New Pinewood Express', bound in a nice shiny cover with a very nice photograph of 'Haileybury' built and run by member Derek Tulley. This locomotive was serialised in Model Engineer as Neville Evan's 'Stowe'. Derek apparently collaborated in proving the first castings and is thought to be the first builder of this design to have successfully completed and run the locomotive. Sadly this railway suffered at the hands of wanton vandals at the tail end of last year, several concrete pieces originated from the cover of signal post S15, these were shown spread along a section of track, signalling wires were also pulled out of the ground. Although repaired the challenge now is to see if there is a way of preventing anything similar happening again. Following some excellent publicity in a local paper, the passenger numbers increased to a point when the need for a new station layout was discussed, with the urgency to accommodate longer trains. Founder member Jim Rough was present at a family day, he spent time looking

through and making historical comments about photographs taken right back in the early days of this group. (Good to see you looking as well as you do Jim)

Crawley Model Engineers enjoy the surrounding countryside down in southern England, although I expect they were no better off than many during the early weeks of January. In fact it was mentioned that at one point the town had about five inches of snow deposited on it, so any thoughts of working at the track were quickly forgotten, although one member did turn up with welding rods to do some work but quickly turned away. 22 members enjoyed a Fish & Chip supper in early December last year; presumably the food was 'delivered' as the event was held at the club's HQ. One small incident when some flooding was noticed along one of their cuttings. One member tracked the flowing stream and found the water was coming through a hole in a wall that surrounds some new houses. A park supervisor told them a householder had removed the bricks to save his own courtyard from becoming flooded too deeply.

A small change of committee at the **Romney Marsh Society** has put member Maureen Mills in the hot seat, John Wimble (I think) has been Secretary for a number of years and for his dedication and effort he received a vote of thanks from Maureen. Members also had the chance of two selected visits last year, firstly they were able to visit the 'Hitachi' depot at Ashford and explore the vast workshops. It is here that the new 'Javelin' trains are being put together. Almost unhindered access was allowed so giving them all a chance to see just what is involved in the building process. That visit took place during August last, following that they were able to visit the RH&DR

workshops by invitation during September, again they were able to examine in great detail the under works of locomotive Dr. Syn which was in for major overhaul. Even these workshops are producing parts that would be the envy of most model engineers; these events proved very popular with those that took part.

A good and colourful picture of members and a locomotive adorned the cover of the November 2009 issue of the newsletter from the **Frimley & Ascot Locomotive Club**. This picture was however taken on a visit by several members to the railway at Bolebroke Castle, it is said the weather was gorgeous and the hospitality outstanding, along with the superb lunch laid on for them. The picture shows the train at the highest point on the track circuit, Bluebell Summit, almost 100 feet above the height of the main railway. Meanwhile back at their own track approval was still awaited for permission to carry out the proposed work. A section of new double track is in use as we speak, along with a cut off loop. This loop provides an alternative to running the full circuit, very handy when running a locomotive that is just being tested as it saves having to go all the way around. General track maintenance was put on hold due to the inclement weather of the early New Year. Some work did however get done in readiness for the raised track and carriage shed.

Some time has elapsed since I saw a copy of the news from the **Maidstone Society**, however, this loss was made up for by the colourful cover of the Winter 2009 edition. One picture shows a bunch of happy members while the cake was cut celebrating their 80th anniversary last year. They were joined on the day by visiting club members, who all appeared to enjoy the day and the festivities. A 'potted

history' gives information that the first beginnings of this club arose from two schoolboys with an interest in old 'tin plate' railways and models built from Meccano sets, this was all back in the past around 1929. Comments at the end of this article from the writer suggest 'the Society is going from strength to strength – mainly due to you, the membership'. In 'Sues Spot' there is mention of ongoing 'attacks' by vandals, apparently when she stood and surveyed the immediate vicinity, it made her feel they must be in a poor inner city slum, not a glorious park that deserves to be enjoyed. Despite these problems the membership are still able to enjoy a well maintained track and a well-organised bunch of members.

Travelling west again I see from the January newsletter from the **Bournemouth & District Society** that they were blessed with 'two Santa's' at their event for the children of the area. This event was well attended by the members, who made extremely light work of both setting up and breaking down, despite the weather at the time being cold. A local newspaper was there; taking a good selection of pictures that led to a good mention just before Christmas. 2010 promises to be a busy year here, what with the 'Polly Rally' and IMLEC being but two weekends already booked for the track. A 'lifting (hydraulic) table' has been donated to them and this will be installed in time for the new years running season, this should make life a little easier for all concerned. (The dates for these two events are mentioned in our diary page at the back of this edition) One photograph shown is of a trial run with a 5" gauge Rebuilt Merchant Navy class locomotive. It was run to see how many passengers it could comfortably handle. In all it pulled eight carriages and a total of 24 passengers, giving them a good idea of things to come with IMLEC.

Last but not least is some news from the **LStaines Society**. Following a successful season last year there are hopes they can achieve the same results this year. An increase in subscriptions, after many years of 'leaving the figure as it was', did cause some concern about loss of members through it. However just one member decided he did not want to re-join, but then along came two new faces, so all in all there was no loss. At least the Club has not got to go through the trauma of Health & Safety checks this spring, as they did last year, it appears the checks that were made last year last for five years in

total. Two specially prepared 'guard riding vehicles' were being constructed just after Christmas, with the view they would provide a safer and more comfortable ride if they are need. Also on the cards is for a portion of the track to be cut out and replaced with a removable section, this would allow access with heavy articles without the need to step over the track, always a little dodgy when you get beyond a certain age, An 'Open Day' is planned for August 7th this year, with a 'Charity Day' on June 20th. This latter event is to raise as much money as they can for the Charity Help For Heroes.

WALES & THE SOUTH WEST



Sitting here with the skies grey and Shaving just recovered from the extreme weather of early January it is a pleasure to see a photograph of a sunny and happy scene. The picture is on the front cover of the 'Oily Rag', the magazine from the **Taunton Model Engineers**. A scene taken from an event titled the Taunton Flower Show Running 2009 it shows the locomotive 'Jasper', with driver Gordon Roberts and a happy looking bunch of passengers. The magazine this image is taken from is in fact their 100th edition, with comments about the group going from strength to strength and membership now standing at around 130. Despite this there are still some concern that the same regular hard core of members offer the support they need now they run virtually two tracks. Increasing activities in various aspects of the group are perhaps to blame along with, very politely put comments, about the

increasing age profile of some members. I suppose this is a fact of life with many other groups around the country. One early event to suffer from some of the effects is the exhibition for 2010, which has now been cancelled, due to reasons members that have attended recent meetings will know of.

The situation of the **East Somerset Society** seems settled for a good while yet. There was or is talk of them suggesting an extension to their ground level track to their landlords the Bath & West Showground. If allowed it could add almost a mile to the track, possibly making it the longest 7¼" ground level track in the country. The planned extension and marshalling yard would also give them some security over any further building plans for the site, such as a supermarket. New immediate projects include a new locomotive lift; larger carriage shed, a new

level crossing and some safety rails by their steaming bays. One fly in the ointment was when they owned up to not reading their electricity meter for 5 years, a substantial bill has almost wiped out any reserves they may have had. Envy may not be the correct word to use, but certainly it just shows how a good landlord can help a group develop into something more than just a simple circuit around a public park.

The feel of winter and Christmas prevails on a newsletter from the **Plymouth Miniature Steam** group. Like a lot of other groups this one is quick to point out that 2009 was a good year as far as fund raising went, what with good weather and possibly an increase in support from visitors their Treasurer is probably feeling okay at the moment. A usual share of vandalism did cause some repairs to have to be made and the decision to move their exhibition from its previous July date to September proved successful as well. Looking forward to 2010 members would have been pleased that subscriptions have been held steady at the moment. Some movement within their committee has prompted a plea for a couple of members to consider becoming part of that committee and take a more active part in the running of this club. With membership now running at around the 100 plus figure their committee wisely conceded that they are all 'old duffers' and that there should be more encouragement to younger members to take an active role in club matters.

Part from a missing second page, the newsletter from the **Winchester Model & Engineering Society**, came complete with a pretty good overall impression that things are still fine at their Society. As the main sources of their income are the various fetes they attend

around the area, it was good to see they managed last year to complete the programme without any hitch. I may be forgiven if I am wrong in this but I read they only have 18 members, yet attend seven or so fetes during the summer, and manage to run their locomotives at other events, you wonder how they keep the activities going with a small number such as this.

Newton Abbot & District Society members were praised in their Autumn 2009 newsletter for the work that went together to make the opening ceremony of their track an enjoyable occasion last summer. Comment that followed shortly after was, so what do we want to do next, always difficult when you have already had a good run at things. Some ideas were a competition; endurance event, barbecue and/or a mid-summer steam up. Some work did start almost as soon as the word was printed, namely the base concrete work for the footbridge was poured, with the construction of the bridge a job for the winter months, there were plenty of other tasks for members to get their grubby hands on.

Two very brightly coloured front covers are before me as I write, both on newsletters from the **Bristol Society**. The November issue shows a very nice looking 'Likamobile' trundling along while appearing at this groups exhibition at Thornbury last year. Driver Eric Lindsay is shown at the helm with passenger Cherry Trotham looking as though she is enjoying every second of the ride. Interesting ideas on boiler tube failures were written about in this edition. A theory of why this member's boiler-tube's had in fact rusted away was suggested by the boilermaker that had repaired it. (I imagine from the wording it was a steel boiler with steel tubes Ed) The theory is that with the water

surging back and forth when running the top row of tubes sometimes are not covered with water, hence the overheating and subsequent 'rusting' taking place. The writer then makes mention of the matter of 'steam tests' and the procedure of testing the safety valves with the steam blower turned full on. His words are that 'professional boiler inspectors would not dream of having the blower full on, with roaring white hot fire and safety valves blowing off'. Normally he says we would have shut everything down long before it got to that state. The second cover was from the January edition and shows the normal greetings and best wishes for the New Year. If the events and passenger numbers are anything like those of 2009 they are in for a busy year again.

News from the **Newport Society** comes via their newsletter headed 'The Mandrel'. Three copies landed on my doormat, dated June 2009, September 2009 and December 2009. Most noticeable on the front cover of the latest copy was a piece about the 'Bistro Belles'. These are obviously the group of ladies that look after the catering arrangements, very often on a Saturday at lunchtime. Main comment from them was there had been 'no complaints whatever', the writer suggests that the good natured banter we engage in gives us a lot of pleasure, and there are very few complaints (they dare not) Outdoor events during 2009 earned them a good amount of much needed money for their funds, not without a considerable amount of effort when running their portable track they say. (A problem a lot of groups are having, especially with the fact you need able-

bodied members to set the thing up satisfactorily.) On their main site work is or was continuing on the finishing of their ground level track station. There was reported to be enough work to keep their members busy for the majority of the winter programme.

Rather more prestigious news comes in a fine book published by the **Cardiff Society** titled the Cardiff Messenger. In this edition I have there is mention of the new clubhouse being built. Anyone that has visited this club will know they did have a nicely arranged set up, albeit with smaller rooms than they really wanted, well now they will have added a new building over the old and made a very good meeting place for their members. Pictures I have show a set of steelwork just arriving at the club and later a picture that shows the roof timbers almost complete and ready for the outer covering. Hopefully by the time this gets published it will have been completed. This building will of course allow for more members to get inside giving them a two storey dormer building which includes a workshop, kitchen, public area on the ground floor with a lecture room and library on the upper floor, some extension! They very cleverly erected the new steelwork and major building over the old and then dismantled the old once the exterior was weatherproof. Not sure if the outer walls have gone from the old, but certainly the inside was stripped out and opened up. One of the bonuses of this club is that they have a lease with 80 years remaining on their site, making any major changes worthwhile.

*Items for inclusion in the JUNE 2010
edition should be with the
Editor by APRIL 30th 2010*

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Mike Chrisp. David Mayall. Roger Griffiths.

(John Norman has said he will not be seeking re-election. Please see web site for an up-date)

INSURANCE CLAIMS & INCIDENTS

All claims and reports of incidents should be notified to Footman James in the first instance.

FEDERATION SALES

Available from Brian Thompson.

FEDERATION INSURANCE BUSINESS is now managed by:-

Footman James & Co Ltd. Waterfall Lane. Cradley Heath. West Midlands. B64 6PU.

Tel: (0121) 561 6210 - (0121) 561 4196 - 0845 330 1662. Contact is: Angela Orford.

FEDERATION WEB SITE

www.southernfed.co.uk

EVENTS DIARY 2010

MARCH

13th.* FEDERATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon, Warwicks.)

APRIL

17th/18th. Southampton Society. 'Open Weekend' (all welcome) Rail & Road.

25th. Isle of Wight Model Engineering Society. Annual Rally 2010.

MAY

2nd/3rd. * Vale of Aylesbury Miniature Railway Gala

7th/8th/9th. * Harrogate Exhibition.

15th. Bournemouth Society. 'Polly Rally Day'

15th.* FEDERATION SPRING RALLY (Leeds S.M.E.E. Eggborough Power Station)

16th.* Host Society (Leeds) Open Day

15th/16th. Mainline Rally at Gilling. (Ryedale Society)

15th/16th. Worthing & District Society. 'Southern Railway Rally'.

29th/30th. Peterborough Society (Thorpe Hall) Miniature Locomotive Rally.

JUNE

5th. Amnerfield Miniature Railway 'Electric Open Day'

5th/6th. Vale of Aylesbury Traction Engine Rally

12/13th. Sweet Pea Rally (Fareham & District S.M.E.)

12th/13th. 19th Welsh Locomotive Rally (Cardiff M.E.S.)

12th/13th. Harrow & Wembley Society. Open Days. (Road/Rail/Marine & Traction Engines)

19th. Southampton Society. 'Electric Open Day'

26th/27th. M.S.R.V.S. Traction Engine Rally (Tewkesbury)

26th/27th. LITTLE LEC. Birmingham Society @ Ilshah Heath.

JULY

3rd. Amnerfield Miniature Railway 'Steam Open Day'.

3rd/4th.* I.M.L.E.C. (Bournemouth & District S.M.E.)

10th/11th. * Guildford Traction Engine Rally and Exhibition.

17th/18th. Peterborough Miniature Traction Engines at Sacrewell Farm & Country Centre.

AUGUST

7th. Staines Society. The 'Three Gauges' Open/Invitation Day (Steam-Electric-Internal Combustion)

20th/22nd. Bristol Model Engineering Exhibition (Thornbury Leisure Centre)

28th/29th/30th. Harrow & Wembley Society. Open Days. (Road/Rail/Marine & Traction Engines)

28th/29th/30th. Mainline Rally at Gilling (Ryedale Society)

SEPTEMBER

11th/12th. National Locomotive Rally (Birmingham S.M.E.)

18th.* FEDERATION AUTUMN RALLY (Rugby M.E.S. Olney Lane, Rugby.)

19th.* Host Society (Rugby) Open Day.

OCTOBER

15th/19th. * Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition (Warwickshire Exhibition Centre)

Note!! Dates and events marked thus* the Federation "Road Show" will be in attendance.
Other events and dates will be added as invitations are received.

