

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF LIVE STEAMERS TROPHY 2016



Presented to
Ivan Hurst

Winner of
***The Australian Association
of Live Steamers Trophy***

*With his 5in. gauge
Southern Railway U Class Locomotive*

*At the Rally hosted by
Guildford Model Engineering Society*

September 2016

U (Rebuilt River) Class Locomotive (Southern Railway)

Notes by Ivan Hurst

The model is of the Southern Railway U Class locomotive, designed by Maunsell, as running on BR in the early 1950s. It was one of the (originally SECR) K Class 2-6-4 tanks, the entire Class being rebuilt by SR as 2-6-0 tender locomotives following the Sevenoaks disaster in 1927. For convenience, the Southern put them into their own U Class category, but the two Classes differ in a number of areas.

The model was the first steam locomotive I had built, and was to Martin Evans' *Ashford* design, but modified where possible to more closely represent the original. *Ashford* was a typical Evans mongrel, being a mixture of U, N and River details. However, having said that, Evans' designs always steam well, and his valve gear is very efficient.

The *Ashford* tender was a long way out, consisting of a 3,500 gallon tank on 4,000 gallon under frames. Fortunately, this was realised before cutting metal, and a 3,500 gallon tender built from measurements taken from one on the Watercress line, but using the Evans design and build methods as a basis. This tender was eventually passed on to my Q Class, and a new (4,000 gallon) one built, based on works drawings, and is as accurate in outline as it could be. This tender was my first attempt at design from scratch.

(Incidentally, the transfer of 3,500 gallon tenders to the Qs was reflected in real life.)

I learnt a lot from the exercise (and from advice generously given by a number of well respected model engineers), which stood me in good stead for my next two locomotives, the Q and the S&D 7F.

The locomotive has worked many miles of passenger hauling at Bracknell Railway Society, and is a consistently reliable performer. It was also the first locomotive that at least five newcomers to BRS had ever driven, so I hope it has done its bit to encourage the next generation.

A footnote. Why 31795? I said it was a Rebuilt River tank. Being a Gillingham lad (Shed 73D), and a Man of Kent, it could only be 795, *River Medway*. Following Sevenoaks, and their rebuilding, they lost their names.



Peter Squire, Southern Federation Secretary, drove the locomotive for several hours continuously. He had not driven it before but it just kept going - one of its most endearing features.



Mike Chrisp presented the Trophy to Ivan Hurst, Southern Federation Vice-Chairman. Standing in for the Federation Chairman unable to be present, Ivan had had a tiring day!



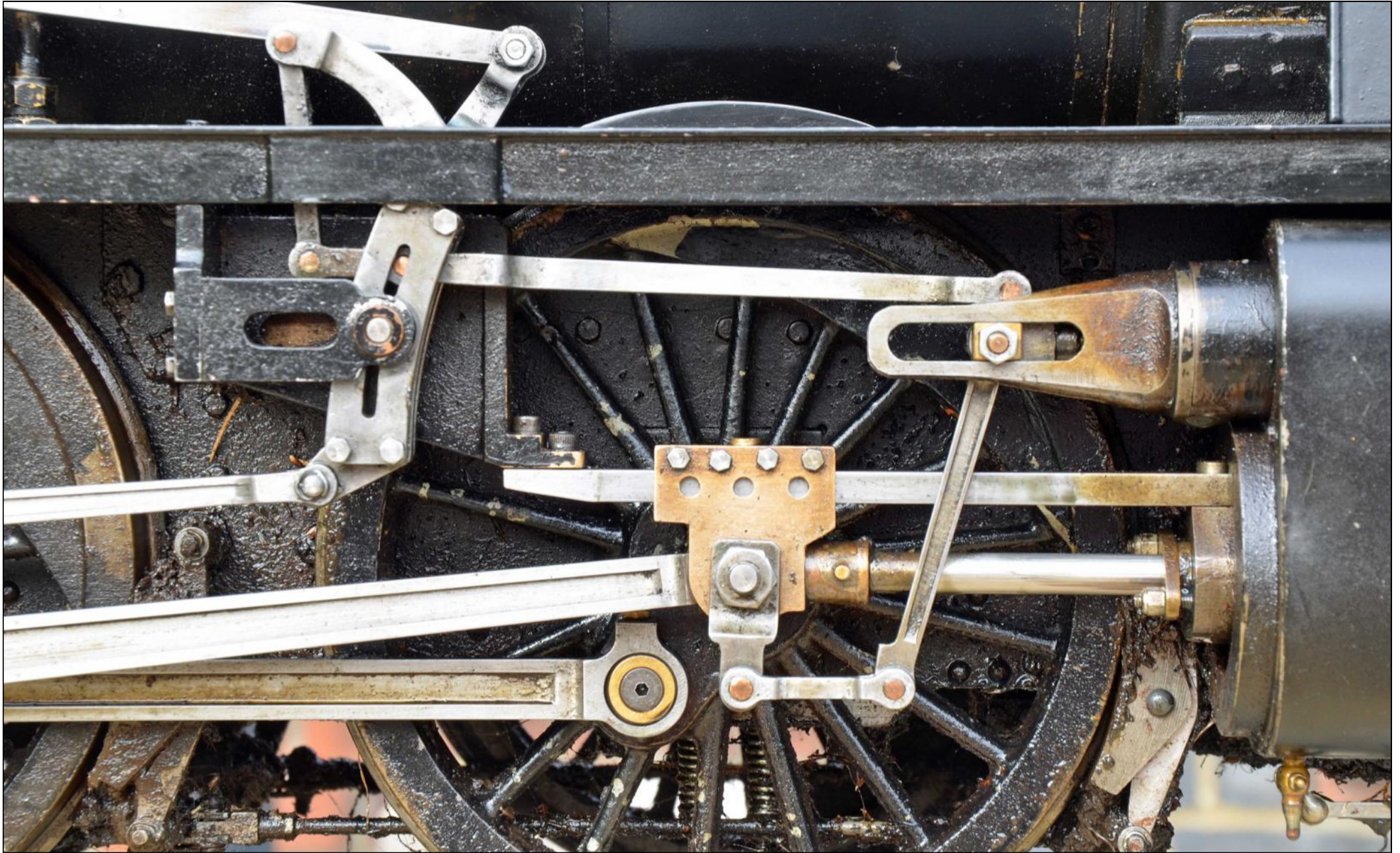
Proud owner and builder with the Trophy and the locomotive. In full size the U Class were attractive, solid, reliable, no nonsense workhorses. The model captures this spirit, as is fully apparent when used for public passenger hauling.



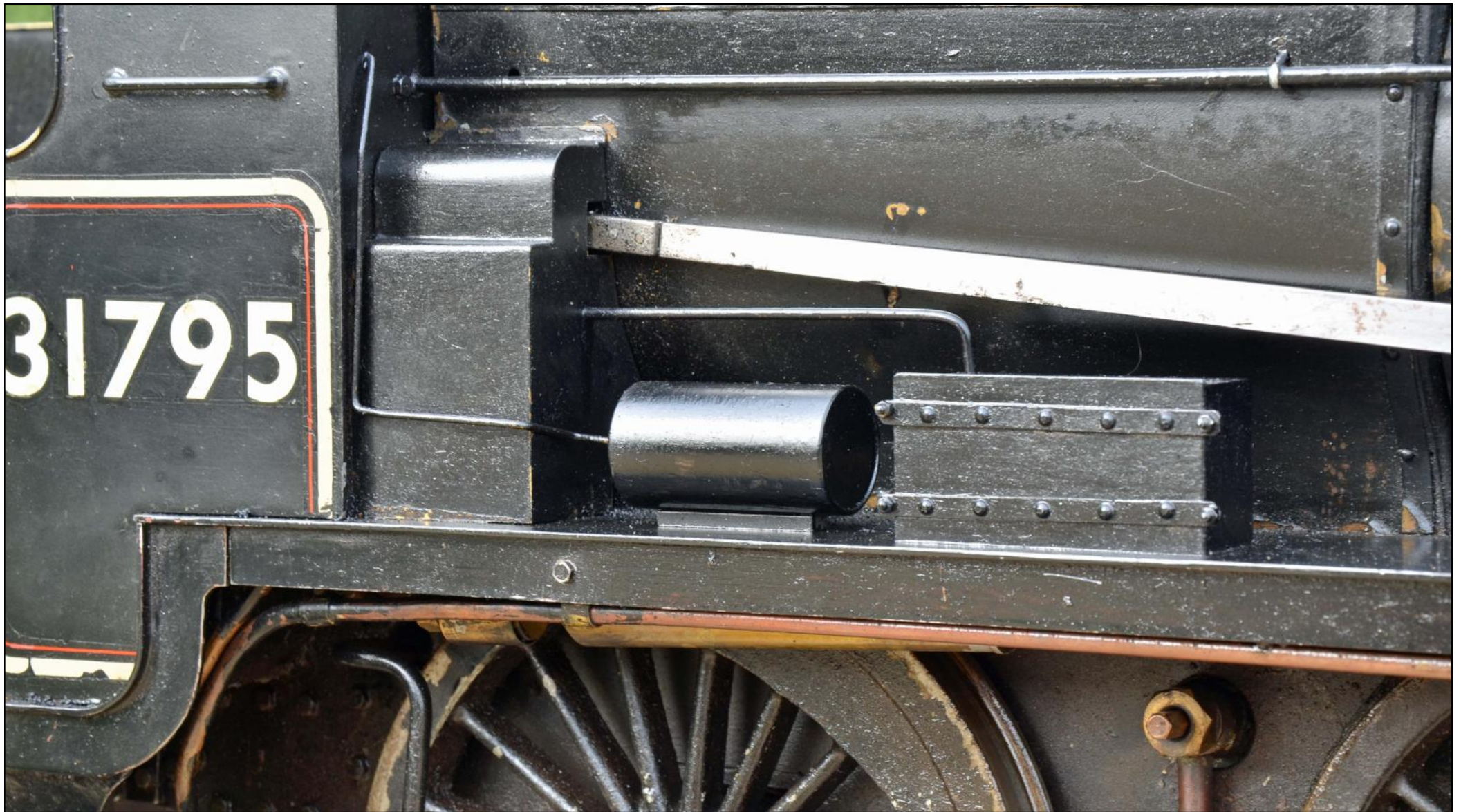
Classic three-quarter front view of the locomotive. The livery is British Railways mid 50s / early 60s mixed traffic (dirty) black.
Note the electrification flashes and the later BR emblem on the tender.



Right hand side three-quarter view. With six London termini and a plethora of possible paths, the Southern used route indicator discs for its trains. Two additional lamp brackets were fitted to the smokebox, giving a total of six rather than the usual four on other regions. There were also six on the tender, for tender first running.



Business end. Note the single slide bar. Due to the limited clearance behind the crosshead, the coupling rod nut is recessed to avoid fouling the connecting rod pin. Also visible are the brake blocks and rigging. The steam operated brakes are a very convenient and quick method of parking the loco.



Close up of the vacuum cylinder and battery box for the AWS carried by some Southern Region locomotives for a short while around that period.
Also visible below the running board are the whistle and the boiler blowdown valve.
There is also one on the left hand side in the equivalent position just above the foundation ring.



Head on. Note that the smoke box door is locked by six dogs, as per the full-size. It never leaks. The shed plate, fittingly, is for Guildford where several of the class finished their working lives.



Rear view of tender. Note the six lamp brackets and no, it does not have a step missing! Only two were fitted, the lower one being platform side. What happened when running tender first is one of life's mysteries.



The backhead has a simple and uncluttered arrangement. Note the hinged fall plate between locomotive and tender, a feature too frequently omitted in models, completely spoiling their appearance. The cab and handrails are arranged to come off easily as a complete unit by undoing six screws, leaving the spectacle plate in place – ideal for boiler tests!



Tender front showing drawbar, injector water valves and hand brake standard. The inward sloping raves at the top of the tender were to allow for limited clearances on some Southern lines and are a most attractive feature.

When first built, this class of locomotive was equipped with a 3,500 gallon tender, but this was later replaced by the Maunsell 4,000 gallon variety, as here.

Because of the difference in footplate and drag box heights between Ashford and Brighton, the design had to be slightly modified to incorporate a step in the tank and frames at the front end, visible in the photograph just below the vertical lining.

Booklet photography, printing and production by Mike Crisp
mike.chrisp@sfnms.co.uk
01442 215 245
©January 2017

