

Expansion Link

Newsletter of the B&DMES

Editor John Taviner - Volume Number Two - Issue Number One

Date: March 2008

Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of "Expansion Link" of 2008. It hardly seems possible that a whole year has passed since I took on the job of editing and compiling the society newsletter. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members that have submitted articles for inclusion and repeat that I am always looking for material from members. As I have said in the past that the contents of the newsletter are usually railway biased but unless I get more input from members that are involved with a different aspect of our hobby then this is inevitable. So come on you traction engine, hot air engine and stationary engine enthusiasts and builders lets have something giving us your point of view. In this issue we have the conclusion of Mick Lowe's account of his days as a Footplate man. Judging by some of the comments I have received this has been very popular, with a couple of members asking if he intends to tell us more of his escapades possibly with tales of specific occurrences. Perhaps he will oblige if we continue to buy tickets from him for the raffles that nobody wants to win!!! Steve Newell our webmaster has re-vamped the society's web page. For those of you with internet access who have not yet logged on I suggest you do so ASAP. Well worth a look and well done to Steve. Our new season of public running starts in April with the first run on April 6th. A month later than last year but hopefully the weather will be more kind to us. Last year's run, at the beginning of March, was a complete washout. Only two passengers turned up. One at the start and the second

when we had packed up and were about to leave sometime after 4 o'clock. It was therefore decided to start later in the year.

John Taviner Editor

Forthcoming Events

April

6th Public Running

8th Meeting night

20th Members running day (Sun)

22nd Bits and pieces evening

26/27th Milestones Model Engineering Show

May

4th Public running

6th Bring and buy sale

11th Big day out-McAlpine Railway (Sun)

18th Visitors open day

20th Stationary engines

June

1st Public running

3rd Meeting night

14th Efficiency competition (Sat)

17th Meeting night

Financial Year End

As our financial year end of February 29th 2008 approaches, could anyone who is owed money for milk etc. and B&DMES expenses please provide me with details and receipts so that I can reimburse them and close out this years accounts. Many thanks

Graham Blissett Treasurer

Progress on the Gresley

Work is getting in the way of the hobby, but trying to keep going, with work on boiler fittings and regulator...

Made bad decision on safety valve, which wanted 5/8X26 threads, (I only have up to 1/2) - so decide to go for 3/8BSP, almost the same size - I only have the tap, but figure I will screw cut the male... so thread the hole, then realise that 3/8BSP is 19TPI... I mean 19 for god's sake... of course the lathe won't cut this without new gears.... (I think again about buying that gear-hobber kit from Collage engineering, but make the "wise" decision) and head off to Alton tools (I want to get the job done before US trip tomorrow), haggle when I find the damn die is FIFTY-EIGHT POUNDS and get him down to £40 odd, and decide sod-it this is the only way to get the job done today...

Get home with the die (trying to forget what I have just paid for it) and pull out the tailstock die holder (and you guessed it) the F&^%&('in die is too big for the holder....AAARRRGGG!!!

So spend the day making a new tailstock die holder - and will have to do the threading when I get back (and I bet I could have had a die for a fiver from Tracy tools if I had known it was going to be two weeks before I needed it!!!!)

Good Tip: when you take a piece of bar out of the "silver steel" box and carefully make the D-bit you need to make the seats on the safety valve THEN discover it won't harden (cause it's a bloody piece of miss-filed mild steel), you can save the day by case hardening it... yep it really worked...

Amazing...

Also decided to dump Martin Evans pull-out regulator design for the Nigel Gresley and spent a happy two days modifying the design for the Keith Wilson PTFE-based one

for Slogger...(this involved re-learning AutoCAD - god that was hard, but got me away from the rellys over Xmas)... So with PTFE bushes on the connecting rods, and PTFE regulator and O-ring piston rings I reckon this is going to be one slippery loco... Not so sure about the PTFE tyres though.....

Malcolm Duckett

Subscriptions

Just to remind you all that annual subscriptions of £30 are due by the 29th of March 2008, rather than the 22nd of March as in previous years. This date change is because I am not intending to accept any subscriptions before March 1st. Existing members rejoining on or after the 30th March and within 12 months of any previous membership have to pay the full annual fee plus the £2 joining fee. From March 1st I will gladly accept subscriptions from you on a meeting night. Otherwise please leave payment (cheques only) in a sealed envelope in the clubhouse addressed to me or please send it to the following address :-

33 Gannet Close,
Kempshott,
Basingstoke,
Hampshire.
RG22 5QN.
Tel 01256 842521

Payments by cheque should be made payable to:- "B&DMES".

As always if since paying your last subscription, you have moved address, changed telephone number or have a new/different Email address can you please let me know. If you would rather collect your receipt and membership card from the clubhouse, can you please let me know when sending your payment.

Many thanks

Graham Blissett Treasurer

Milestones Model Engineering Show

Over the weekend of 26th/27th April there will be a Model Engineering Show at the Milestones Museum on the Basingstoke leisure park. B&DMES have been invited to exhibit at the show and we have already requested twelve tables for an exhibition of Model Engineering items and for a garden railway exhibition. We have again been asked whether we can provide miniature train rides for the public, for which we can make a small charge.

If you can start thinking about what you would like to exhibit at the show it would be appreciated. No offer of any exhibit will be refused, as long as we/you can get it into Milestones. This year I believe we could surpass last year's show and put on a bigger exhibition, again to a high standard. We are not just looking for finished models, but also work in progress and anything on the unusual side of model engineering. Prior to the exhibition I also need to know what the insurance value of the items you are intending to exhibit is, so that I can arrange specific insurance for the show.

Unfortunately, Milestones experienced a number of fraudulent exhibitor entries at last year's show. I believe this was down to individuals claiming to be manning exhibition stands when they were not. Consequently, any member of the B&DMES who is delivering items for the exhibition and/or helping out over the weekend must supply me with their names and car registrations by the 30th March. Please either add your name to the list in the Clubhouse or contact me directly, via post, telephone or Email. These details will be supplied to Milestones, so that passes can be issued. Unfortunately, Milestones has declared that if you turn up on the Friday, or more importantly, over the weekend and the

organisers don't have your details, you will not gain access to Milestones without paying the entrance fee. I believe passes will be issued on a daily basis, so Friday's pass will not get you into the weekends exhibition.

I do have a few 20% off discount vouchers, but I will, if possible, endeavour to get some more.

Graham Blissett
Treasurer

Although this is not strictly speaking a model engineering subject it could be relevant to us all.

It's a fact of life that the age of people participating in our hobby seem to be forever getting older. This article, which originally appeared in the *Stephenson Link*, the magazine of Chesterfield & District MES, is taken from the *Southern Federation News*, June 2006.

Recognising a Stroke

During a BBQ a friend stumbled and took a little fall - she assured everyone that she was fine. Although appearing a little shaken she went about enjoying the rest of the evening. Later her husband telephoned to say she had been taken to hospital and had passed away. She had suffered a stroke at the BBQ - had they known how to identify the signs of a stroke perhaps she would be with us today.

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within three hours he can totally reverse the effects of the stroke. The trick is getting a stroke recognised, diagnosed and getting to the patient within three hours.

Remember the following '3 steps'. Read and Learn! Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer brain damage when people nearby fail to recognise the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say a bystander can recognise a stroke by asking three simple questions.

1. Ask the individual to SMILE.
2. Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH HANDS.
3. Ask the person to SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE. (Coherently)
e.g. "It is sunny out today"

If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call an ambulance immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher. After discovering that a group of non-medical volunteers could identify facial weakness, arm weakness and speech problems, researchers urged the general public to learn the three questions. Widespread use of this test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of the stroke and prevent brain damage.

Be a friend and share this article with as many associates as possible. You could save their life.

With acknowledgement to the aforementioned publications.

Vandals Return To Viabes

Over the half term the vandals paid us another visit, the second time in as many weeks. This time they moved two 2ft x 3ft sheets of glass from outside the picture framer's and smashed them on to the remains of the garden railway supporting structure and over the grass. More seriously, they have now found a means of climbing on to the shed roof, where they took "great pleasure" ripping the felt off the roof apex.

The felt was then redistributed around the site. The police have been informed and provided John Hutson with a crime number. I'm intending to contact the council yet again to report the problems that we are experiencing, but short of putting a 6ft+ steel fence round the areas we wish to protect, I'm not sure what we can do legally or what the council will allow us to do. Suggestions on an Email or Postcard !!

Graham Blissett Treasurer

Basingstoke Model Railway Show

The 25th anniversary of this event took place over the weekend of 8/9th March. As in previous years B&DMES were invited to display a selection of our models. As usual we were able to show a good selection of locomotives although this year there seemed to be a larger than usual number of models in 3.5 inch gauge. These included John Croker's Schools, Terry Hobbs William, John Dixon's newly completed Invictor, Steve Newell's Juliet and James Taviner's Tich. These were displayed alongside the larger 5 inch gauge locomotives of Tom Burgess with his class 37 diesel and my own Butch. Also in this gauge was a part built tender for a Bullied Q1 under construction by our club Treasurer Graham Blissett. The garden railway were represented by Our newly appointed Secretary Brian Hogg and club stalwart Fred Pheby with locos. and rolling stock in two scales. Much interest was shown by the public and hopefully this will bring in a few more customers for our public running days the first of which is on April 6th. Help needed.

Overall a good weekend and I would like to thank all those members that helped to set up on the Friday, man the stand over the two days and to pack up on Sunday.

John Taviner

*The Footplate Career Of Mick Lowe
Continued.*

Back on the Railway in Basingstoke after 2 years, I found myself in number 3 link, but had to have a 6-week refresher course with another crew to get my hand in again, this was normal practice for persons coming back to the job after a long absence.

After 2 years in number 3 link I progressed upwards to number 2 link, all the time turns were getting better.

Then 2 years later went into the top number 1 link where there were some Hampshire Diesel Unit turns and Western Mechanical turns

This meant that due to the link structure to accommodate those diesel turns we only went with a regular driver for a few weeks before working with another, and then changing again

This was not the usual way of link structure always having a regular driver thus getting used to each other's ways.

This was the start of Steams decline.

Once in the top link one knew that the next step would be to go in for driving, when your seniority came up.

Most men were ready for this, as we had been going to Mutual Improvement classes in preparation for the big day

Knowledgeable senior drivers ran these classes on a weekly basis.

February 1963 the big day arrived for a workmate and myself.

On a very cold day at 10.00 am in the Basingstoke Breakdown coach (but with heaters on) we went before the London Area Footplate Inspector who gave us a short lecture about this big step up the ladder.

We were given the task to make a plug trimming and a plug and tail trimming with pliers, wire and worsted wool

The materials of which we provided

ourselves thus making quality pieces
The rest of the interview consisted of questions on the boiler, principles of combustion, operation of the live steam and exhaust injectors, valve gear, lubricators and brakes both vacuum and air (Westinghouse)
At 12.30 pm a break for lunch for an hour, the Inspector always made his a 'liquid lunch' in the Rising Sun Public House with the Shed Master.

The afternoon session was a very thorough grilling on Rules and Regulations and whistle codes.

Finished at 4.00 pm we were told that one of us had to go to Waterloo the next day and the other to go the day after

This was to travel passenger to Waterloo and drive the 10.54 x Waterloo back to Basingstoke under the critical eye of Inspector Pemberton

The loco was a rebuilt West Country with 8 coaches

On arrival at Basingstoke he made no comments on my performance just told me to meet him at 1.15pm to work the 1.33pm passenger service to Waterloo.

On meeting him he said " no problems, have an early day, don't bother to come up to Waterloo, I don't want to see you again (in other words stay out of trouble!)"

I was 'chuffed again'!!

Next step was to see the List Clerk and sign a route card; this meant you have to know all the siding connections, speeds over the routes, route availability for different classes of loads etc.

This done I was ready for the Iron Road as a DRIVER.

Prior to this I had to go to Wimbledon to see the Southern Region Motive Power Superintendent, being a bit apprehensive in case he asked questions on regarding Rules so many of them to remember! But no worry

after a little chat he said that Inspector Pemberton was pleased with me. He said 'think before you act, I don't want you here again' and wished me the best of luck. If you were ever unfortunate to be called before him at any time on a charge sheet (Form 1) you were in deep trouble.

Back to the Depot to await my first driving turn which came about two weeks later, it was to work the 00.30 Freight to Hinksey yard, unfitted (no vacuum brake on train) with a Hall class engine and return with the 03.30 Oxley

This loco was also a Hall but was partially fitted so at least we had some brake power. A while after this I was taken out of number 1 link and put in the shed gang (shed enginemans mate)

This was the usual procedure as we only had three turns of duty

6am – 2 pm, 2 pm – 10 pm, and 10 pm – 6 am, meaning that a Passed Fireman was always available for driving if a man went sick.

The turns were quite sociable, often getting away an hour or so early!

Being in the shed gang meant that you shunted the locos out in the order as the fitters required them to work on, tubes cleaning (Fireman's job), boiler washouts, gland packing, and general maintenance. During this period of 3 years I worked as a Driver for most of the time being booked on any turn that was requiring a Driver, be it Passenger, Freight, Ballast or conducting drivers who did not know a particular route (road)

Eventually in 1965 I was appointed Driver and put on my own turns as they came round, this was in the yard shunting gang which around that period was a very busy link as so much Freight was carried and trains reformed.

Some months later when I was put in the running link (no.4) we had a good class of work, the Diesel program started in earnest, we had already had a week at the Training School learning the 350HP Shunters prior to going in the yard gang.

Time now to learn the Main Line Locos, so off to Southampton Training School to learn 1550 HP Cromptons (Class 33)

One week in the classroom and one week practical on static and main line locos, followed by another week in the classroom with an exam on the last day, mainly dealing with faults and failures.

On passing this we were given a numbered key known as an EP key, which unlocked the controls of a loco (I still have my issued key 6211!!)

This key practice eventually came to an end when full dieselisation came in the early 1970's

Having passed this course we had to spend two weeks with an instructor working Freight trains, followed after a short break we were back to the classroom again for three weeks to learn Class 73 Diesels (known as EDL's)

These locos were lovely to work on with 1600 HP engine, on live rail or lift the conductor shoes and work with the 600HP Diesel engine in yards or when the live rail was isolated for track work

Another three week course to learn Electric Stock plus three days for the REP (Restaurant Electro Pneumatic) Stock and TC (Trailer Coaches) Stock

Another 3 weeks on Warship Hydraulics 2,200HP, followed by another week on Diesel Hydraulic Hymeks 1700 HP

Another three weeks learning the Hampshire Diesels and lastly a week on Class 47 locos

Phew! that I think completes the full

training, except there was another week for conversions on the 455 and 508 Suburban Stock

We had at Basingstoke acquired some work on the old Suburban Stock which was fitted with the Westinghouse brake,

This was a tricky brake at first to use, but once you got the hang of it was great, but you always had to be aware of its limits, you couldn't just play about with it (Sounds just like a woman!!)

Over the years for a small Depot, Basingstoke men were lucky in having good work of both Passenger and Freight and a very wide range of routes which was the envy of many other Depots

It was joked that if ever a Depot got a turn to the moon they would find those Basingstoke B - - - -ds already there!!

Times changed in 1993, the new companies took over work turns they could cover which resulted in a loss of work all around. The new Diesel units were put on Salisbury – Waterloo service and Basingstoke men would not be trained on them.

We lost a lot of Freight and Passenger work beyond Southampton.

The work on the Reading branch which we worked with Hampshire units was lost as Thames Trains were putting their new units in on this route and no Basingstoke men would be trained on them either.

One thing that came about was that eight turns were identified as Basingstoke losses and men could apply to transfer to Reading This backfired on them as eight senior men at Basingstoke were transferred! not very well received at first by the Reading men who were waiting in the various links to move up, only to be shunted back eight places.

I was one of the men to be transferred and after 6 months was put in my rightful link

number 1.

Motive Power Department link structure was always on seniority in the grade.

On arrival at Reading we had three weeks in the classroom on the 165 and 166 units, followed by route learning.

The best was Paddington – Birmingham route using Class 47's and the Reading Wokingham – Redhill Gatwick route

I enjoyed my career on both Steam and Diesel as we had so many types of traction to work on, a thing that does not happen these days as most Depots work mainly on one or two types.

This results in men getting fed up with the repetitive type of work

I retired in May 2002 after completing 49 years and 10 months on the Railway Network

I was awarded a 50-year service medal - I doubt there will not be many more of them awarded in the future!!

I still keep in contact with many of my old workmates; it was really like one big happy family

Comradeship was and is brilliant

I hope you will find this interesting, I could go on for ever regarding tales both comic and sad.

The rest you know

I joined BDMES, gained friends, and received a great deal of help and advice with my Winson 9F which hopefully will be up and running soon

I have learnt so much about model engineering

Thank you to everyone in the club

I owe you all a drink don't' rush all at once
Kind Regards

Mick Lowe

Garden Railway Report – March 2008

As reported in the previous edition of Expansion Link, the Garden Railway suffered a number of incidences of damage in the autumn of last year. The Garden Railway Group took the decision to lift the track in order to protect it.

Dave Dowson developed some alternative schemes for a much more robust and compact layout, following a well-established practice of laying the track on a low masonry wall (utilising some of the donated concrete blocks) and heavily ballasting it with a mortar mix. This has the effect of reducing the accessibility of the rails and sleepers to prying fingers or other implements.

During the first 2008 Maintenance Day in January, the Garden Group marked out, using loose blocks, the chosen track layout. This will give us two continuous running loops, one at 32mm gauge, the other at 45mm gauge, together with a siding on each loop for steaming up. There is sufficient space to add to the number of sidings in the future as required, for a station or further storage for example. The reduced size of each loop will make the trains more visible to the viewing public, whilst still giving the operators a 'lap' of approximately 25 metres. The existing boards and supports will be removed in due course but it is felt that in their current condition they are probably more difficult to damage/steal than if they were dismantled and stacked.

We hope to start excavating a shallow foundation for the blockwork walls in the near future once we have the position accurately set out. The means of providing the necessary concrete has exercised a few minds, since it is estimated that we will require about one cubic metre for a 100mm deep foundation, weighing in at some one

and three quarter tons. The location of the Garden Railway makes it difficult to place concrete if it is supplied commercially, whereas the sheer quantity mitigates against local mixing by ourselves unless this can be done over a number of weekends. Simple enough, you may think, but this then leads on to issues with the cost and logistics of concrete mixer hire and the necessity of barrowing all the constituents to the Garden Railway area. Additionally, in this day and age, we must not leave construction in progress (such as exposed trenches) unprotected to trap (or trip) the unwary – even if he has no business being there in the first place! Members' thoughts and suggestions would be gratefully received. Whatever the solution to the foundation problem, it is the firm intention of the Garden Railway Group to have something running again before the end of this year, both for our own enjoyment and also for that of the public while they wait their turn on the 'big railway'.

Brian Hogg

Directions to Sir William McAlpine's Steam Railway and Museum (For May 11th trip)

Take your favourite route to Henley-on-Thames. Follow the A4155 out of Henley towards Marlow. After approximately one mile, turn left up a single track road opposite the Toad Hall Garden Centre. At the top of the hill turn right, go through the S-bend and turn right into an entrance marked Brackenhill Stud. Keep going until you see signs or stewards for car parking.

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Email Addresses

If you have received a copy of the newsletter by post, it is because we don't have your Email address. Each newsletter costs us 50p to print and post, where as Email is effectively free. Currently, we do not have an Email address for nearly half the membership. If you do have an Email address, which we can use, could you please Email me with your details.

Graham Blissett
Treasurer

Who's Who.

Chairman	Terry Hobbs
Vice Chairman	John Croker
Secretary	Brian Hogg
Treasurer	Graham Blissett

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Tom Burgess	Member
Bob Lovett	Member

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