

EXPANSION LINK

BASINGSTOKE and DISTRICT MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY



Volume 10 - Issue 2 – June 2016

Editor Austin Lewis

In Memory of John Croker

2nd September 1937 – 19th April 2016

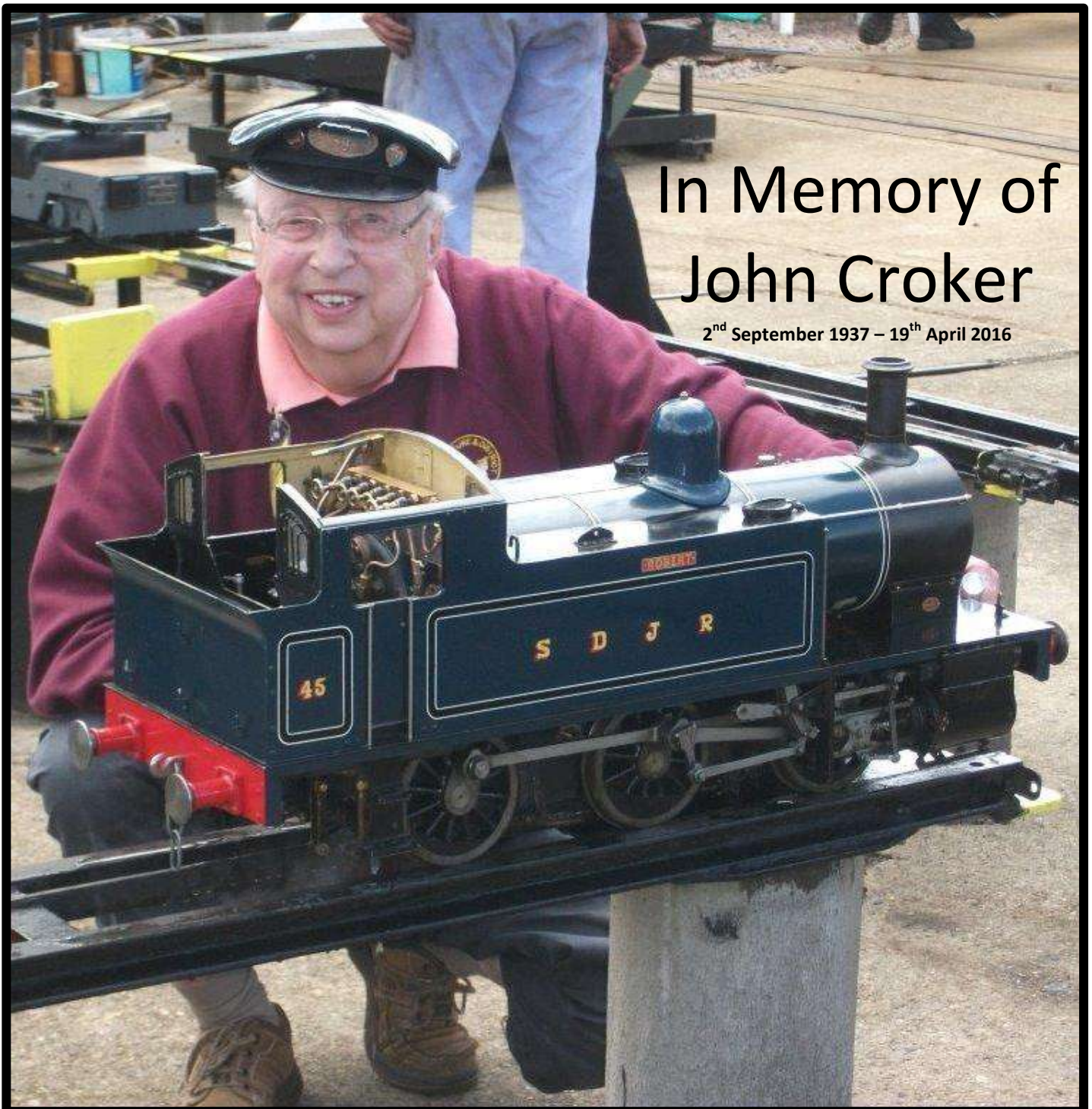


Photo by Pat Lowe

John Croker our chairman - a confuser with electricrickery

Memories from Steve Newell

John was a founder member of the Basingstoke & District Model Engineering Society when the club first met back in 1976 in Chineham House. He and a few others with a keen interest in steam engines decided Basingstoke needed a club track to use as its base and so the group set about building the site we use at Viables today. About this time John took up night-classes at Basingstoke College where he learnt the basics of model engineering, which he combined with his background in engineering from his apprenticeship.

I first met John in 2002 when I joined the society – he was always a jovial member where nothing was too much trouble and everything was done in good humour. He was very friendly and welcoming to any new members of the club, especially to me as a junior member giving plenty of encouragement and enthusiasm when required.

John was a skilled, proficient engineer and not long after I joined the society he first steamed his 3.5" gauge Schools Class Loco 'Sherborne' which he had started many years before. Last summer John took the loco to run at Guildford's Southern rally and it went like a rocket – I'm sure that if it had been possible to have lapped the bigger locos on the track he would have done! John also acquired a half-completed 5" gauge Simplex which fellow founder member, and close friend of John's, Bob Skinner had started but never finished. In Bob's memory, John completed Simplex and it remains another fitting accolade to John's model engineering ability.

In recent years John took over the role of Chairman of the Society, a position which he took seriously, spending much time writing and recording Society's procedures, encouraging standardisation and attempting to take the Society into the modern world. This is perhaps a little ironic as John will forever be remembered for his frequent use of the words 'electricrickery' and his reluctance to embrace the use of computers, or as he used to call it, the 'confuser'!

John was never the sort of person who would get into an argument with anyone and he would never hold grudges – there were often heated discussions at committee meetings but we would all leave as friends with smiles and jokes thanks to his ability to defuse tense situations with humour! John was a man of great wit - even up until recently he could still be heard mocking Dave Andrews about the 'wonderful' Great Western Railway and Dave's great big Brunnellian top-hat that stood so high on his head he would have to duck to get through the club house door (John was obviously a Southern man due to his South Coast roots)! Those of us who knew John well will remember his distinct laugh accompanied with that great big smile that he always seemed to wear on his face. A true veteran of the Basingstoke and District Model Engineering Society, he will be sorely missed.

Sentiments echoed, I am sure, by all members of the Club - Editor

Basingstoke Gazette Friday 22nd April

MEMBERS of the Basingstoke and District Model Engineering Society brought out their pride and joys to show to visitors at their annual miniature steam gala.

Held at the Viables Craft Centre, in The Harrow Way, Basingstoke over the weekend of April 9 and 10, guests could see fully operational traction engines at work as well as take a ride on the miniature railway around the site.

Now in its sixth year, the steam gala welcomes

people of all ages to experience the smells and sounds of real working steam engines.

Member of the model engineering society, Mick Lowe said the gala has grown year-on-year and it is a great fun filled weekend.

He said: "It started as an opportunity for members to show off their work, but now it has become a really popular annual event."

"For our members they look forward to this event each year, because for

many of them it is the first time bringing their engines out after the winter, so it's like coming out of hibernation."

Across the weekend there were more than 20 miniature traction engines on display and trips on the miniature railway running all the way up until 4pm on the Sunday.

The event was a donation entry event, with all the money going back into the model engineering society to help organise future events.



From left, Steve Parris and Andrew Cole



Above, father and son Paul and Ewan Davis with a 4 1/2 inch copy of a Burrell traction engine



Above, Michael Dodd with three-year-old Corben



Full steam ahead at the annual Basingstoke & District Model Engineering Society Steam Gala



A big wave as a steam engine goes by



Passengers enjoying a ride at the steam gala

Spring Steam Gala 2016

Saturday started fine but by the afternoon the weather had turned quite wintery and visitors soon drifted away after lunch. The display field was soft to start with and during Saturday it became quite muddy. Over night the field dried out and this continued through Sunday resulting in only one vehicle having to be towed out! Sunday was a wonderful day with bright sun and by the end of the weekend visitor numbers had surpassed previous records. Rides on the raised track also broke records for the number of tickets sold in a weekend.

There were many wonderful road and track locomotives at the Gala although the following photographs illustrate only a few with apologies to the owners of those whose engines which are not pictured here. May I say many, many thanks to all for making the weekend such a very enjoyable and successful event.



Photo 1 – 4 ½” Burrell Agricultural TE built and owned by Jon Poulter. This engine was scaled up from plans provided by Live Steam.



Photo 2 - The Lady of the Lake – 4” Burrell Scenic Showman’s Road Loco. Colin Alexander built this engine in 3.5 years from parts supplied by Steam Traction World and the model was finished in 2013.



Photo 3 – 4” Foster Agricultural Traction Engine built and owned by Terry and Andrew Wildish and finished in 2004.



Photo 4 – 6” Burrell Gold Medal Tractor by A B Attwell. This engine took 5 years to build and was finished in 2015. Mr. Attwell is in the process of building the convertible front fork and front and rear rolls.



Photo 5 – 6” Burrell Gold Medal Tractor by A B Attwell.



Photo 6 – 6" Burrell Gold Medal Tractor



Photo 7 – 4" Modelworks Burrell owned by Chris Blight and built by Modelworks 2005 as a 'control' model. A hand cranked Stuber Organ with whistle type pipes paper roll inside, can be seen in the background.



Photo 8 – 4” Foster traction engine owned by Derek Edwards, built 1991 and reboilered in 2014.



Photo 9 – 4” Burrell DCC Road Loco owned and built by Andrew Cole. It was started in 2011 and completed in 2013 using parts supplied by Steam Traction World.



Photo 10 – 4” Burrell DCC Road Loco and the very popular ice cream van in the background.



Photo 11 – 4” Burrell DCC Road Loco built and owned by Kevyn and Naomi Chambers with parts supplied by Steam Traction World. It was the first engine of this design to be in steam and was completed in 2012 after a three year build.



Photo 12 - Two 4" Burrells in steam - Kevyn Chambers in the foreground and Andrew Cole in the background.



Photo 13 – 4 ½" Foden Steam Wagon owned and built by Steve Parris and finished 2012.



Photo 14 – 4 ½” Foden Compound Steam Wagon built and owned by Rod Southern and finished in 2000.



Photo 15– Basingstoke’s Axminster Tools not only supported the event but as shown in this picture, provided a very skilful demonstration of turning a wooden bowl.



Photo 16 - Splendid models built and owned by club member, Barry Spender. A 5”gauge Gemma Great Eastern 0-4-0ST, designed by David Malcolm, on building stand with a 5” part built Don Young design Marie E in front and the Jack Buckler designed Sweet Pea just to be seen at left hand side.



Photo 17 – Barry Spender’s 5”gauge Gemma being admired in the steaming bay at the Basingstoke track.



Photo 18 – 4 ½” Burrell Traction Engine owned and built by Ewen Davis (in the smoke) in the late 1980s to the Plastow design and driven by his son Alan.



Photo 19 – Vice Chairman Colin Stubbs doing a stint of programme selling.



Photo Richard Holt

Photo 20 – Eddie Turner and Michael Topping running double headed with Eddie’s 5” gauge Winston 15XX and Michael’s 5” gauge scratch built Jinty - both locos performed extremely well.



Photo Richard Holt

Photo 21 – Locomotives were also running on the circular garden railway which consists of two circuits of track, one 32mm or O Gauge and the other 45mm or Gauge 1. This photo is of a 45mm gauged 2 cylinder Shay loco made by Accucraft and owned by Jon Evans.

Speakers at the Club

Traction Engine History

In the first talk of this year, **Dave Andrews** gave an excellent survey of the development of road and agricultural locomotives. His ninety minute (or there about) talk was fully illustrated with great slides, mostly from the 70's. Dave spoke continually without reference to any notes or mentioning the Great Western and it was a spell binding and very informative evening. Many thanks again Dave.

British Railways

On the 24th May Mick Lowe arranged for Geoff Burch to give a talk on his early life working for British Railways. This was most interesting with excellent slide illustrations of the locos Geoff cleaned and fired from 1961 to 1967 – the end of steam. He has written several books on his experiences, the one that many of us purchased was 'The Ramblings of a Railwayman' Fully Revised 2nd edition.

A note from Geoff's book says " Starting work at the tender age of 15 as an engine cleaner at the Guildford Motive Power Depot on the 4th April 1961, he graduated to become a fireman on the 9th April 1962. During his career as a Fireman from 1962 – 1967, he was fortunate enough to have been given the opportunity to fire to a number of drivers and Southern steam locomotives ranging from Drummond M7 tank engines to Bulleid's Merchant Navy Class pacifics. He was also a fireman on one of the last locomotives to leave Guildford Motive Power Depot when it closed on Sunday 9th July 1967."

His talk was full of interesting anecdotes and photos of great Southern locos with a few from the GWR.



Mick Lowe introducing Geoff Burch

It is hoped that over this year we will have several more evening with guest speakers. If any member knows of a speaker, is willing to give a talk or is particularly interested in and would like a talk on a specific subject - please contact a Board member.

A Breath of H & S Fresh Air – From the Southern Federation April News Letter

Dame Judith Hackett in her opening speech to the ‘Helping Great Britain to work well in 2016 – “A New Health and Safety Strategy”

A quote from her new strategy:

“Too much complexity and bureaucracy has built up around health and safety. We heard many people say that we already have the knowledge to make the themes of the strategy a reality. The message that this is about being smarter – not simply doing more – resonated with our audiences”

Case 383 - Odd job person in a managed block of flats was not allowed to change light bulbs for health and safety reasons

Issue

Management Company advised that odd job person is unable to change light bulbs as they would only be protected from negligence if a competent electrician carried out the job.

Panel Opinion

Health and safety at work legislation does not require the use of a competent electrician to change light bulbs in a residential property. Confusing a perceived (but in all probability low) risk of being sued for negligence with the requirements of health and safety legislation is unhelpful, and can distort the aim of the legislation, which is to ensure a proportionate approach to managing risks.

Southern Fed comments: The above could read, “Society member not allowed to change light bulb for H & S reasons.” So now perhaps we can combat those who say -can’t do that “elf & safety”.

for John C – editor

Basingstoke & District Model Engineering Society Ltd 2016 Calendar (Issue 2)

January

1 Members Day (Friday)
5 Meeting Night
16/17 Maintenance Weekend
19 Bits & Pieces Evening

February

2 Meeting Night
13/14 Maintenance Weekend
16 Meeting Night
28 Driver/Public Running Training (Sun)

March

1 Meeting Night
12/13 Maintenance Weekend
15 Bits & Pieces Evening
29 Meeting Night

April

3 Driver/Public Running Training (Sun)
9/10 Miniature Steam Gala
12 Meeting Night
23 Public Running (Sat): Queen's 90th
26 Bring & Buy Evening

May

10 Stationary Engines
15 Visitors' Open Day (Sun)
24 Meeting Night

June

5 Public Running
7 Bits and Pieces Evening
18 Members Running & Barbecue(Sat)
21 Meeting Night

July

3 Public Running
5 Meeting Night
10 Members Running Day (Sun)
19 Meeting Night

August

2 Bring & Buy Evening
7 Public Running
16 Meeting Night
30 Meeting Night

September

4 Public Running
11 Visitors' Open Day (Sun)
13 Meeting Night
24 Members Running Day (Sat),
incl. Fish & Chip Supper
27 Meeting Night

October

2 Public Running
9 Members Running Day (Sun)
11 Bits & Pieces Evening
25 Meeting Night
29 Halloween Public Running (Sat Evening)

November

8 Bring & Buy Evening
13 Members Running Day (Sun)
16 AGM (Date to be confirmed)
22 Meeting Night

December

4 Public Running
6 Meeting Night
20 Meeting Night

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