

EXPANSION LINK

NEWSLETTER OF THE B&DMES

EDITOR JOHN TAVINER-VOLUME THREE-ISSUE TWO

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Editorial

Welcome to the June issue of "Expansion Link". First let me apologise for the delay in all members receiving the March issue. As many of you will know by now my wife died on 7th March and as I am sure you will appreciate I had more pressing things on my mind than the newsletter. It was well under way for completion by the middle of the month but in the event not ready until much later. It then had to be printed and distributed in the normal way. Hopefully this one will be on time.

In this issue we have The Chairman's page, the completion of Graham's article on the development of the station, the continuation of Mick Lowe's career on the railway, a report on the recent visitors day, a suggestion for a change to the format of an event already on the calendar for August, an article by Steve Newell explaining the operation of the hydrostatic lubricator and a letter from a member in reply to one of the articles in the afore mentioned March issue. As I have said on many occasions I do need material to publish. After all, it is your club and you are all entitled to tell us anything that you think may be of interest to other members.

John Taviner Editor.

Forthcoming Events

July

- 5 Public running
- 11 Members Running Day
- 14 Meeting Night
- 18 Shunting Competition + BBQ (Sat)
- 19 Public Running (Class 66)
- 28 Meeting Night

August

- 2 Public Running
- 11 Bring and Buy Evening
- 15 Members running Day (Sat)
(Festival of Engines)
- 16 Public Running (Class 66)
- 25 Meeting Night

Sept.

- 6 Public Running (Diesel Electric)
- 8 Meeting Night
- 20 Members Running Day (Sun)
- 22 Meeting Night

Chairman's Chat.

Dear members. Once again it's time to do my bit for the club magazine. First of all I would like to ask the membership to see if they can support the club by helping out on Public Running days as sometimes there is rather a shortage of helpers. This year we have several extra running days due to reasons discussed at the AGM. The first of which was for increased charges from Basingstoke Council and the second for the rebuilding of the station. We have also installed a new signalling system which hopefully will be up and running by the time you read this.

I would like to thank all those who helped on these major projects and all those who did the other maintenance jobs that needed doing including rebuilding the passenger and guards trolleys, repairing the steaming bay air lines and water columns, making the new soak away and painting the turn table. There is still a lot of work to be completed and no doubt I will be asking for your input and help to carry on with the wide variety of jobs still to be done and hopefully this help will be forthcoming.

It has been discovered that the jobs are now using the tunnel and I would ask all members to be vigilant and on the look out and report any trouble you may encounter to the Police.

I have had comments made to me by a few members that, in their opinion, our site is not being kept up to an acceptable standard. My reply was not very diplomatic and those folk know who they are and I stand by what I said to them. They will get no apologies from me, and as I told them at the time if they don't like my attitude then take it up with the committee.

Dave Blaza works his socks off for this club and has done so for more years than he

cares to remember also Mike Lowe puts in a lot of his time on the site and Eric Widdowson and others have done their bit to help. So I will not stand back and accept unfair criticism from any member because in their opinion the site looked a bit untidy at the last public running and on the recent visitors days. NUFF SED.

Recently several of us went on a trip to Didcot Power Station organised on our behalf by Mike Lowe and a very enjoyable time was had by everyone that went. Many thanks Mike and hopefully someone will do an article for the magazine.

TERRY HOBBS CHAIRMAN.

Calling all Bean Counters

Are you semi-computer literate, like handling money, dealing with the public and sorting out financial issues with fellow B&DMES member's ? If this is the sort of thing that interests you then B&DMES have the ideal vacancy for you. No previous accountancy or finance experience or qualifications are required, but a good helping of common sense would be an advantage.

Due to personal and family reasons I will be stepping down from the Treasurer's post at this years AGM in November, or before if any volunteer would care to step forward. On a more serious note, which has in part contributed to my decision to step down, regular attendance at club nights and public running events is required.

The reason why I mention being semi-computer literate, is that the accounts are currently completed on a spreadsheet using Microsoft Excel. However, if you would be willing to take on the role, but would prefer to use good old fashioned "pen and paper", then that is your prerogative. So long as the accounts add up and the Auditor is happy

with them at the yearend, then that's ok. That said the accounts are currently well automated. It is just a case of adding to the spreadsheet, on a regular basis, all income and expenditure entries, along with any bank transactions, and keeping track of the petty cash and club assets. If you would like any further information please contact me or speak to me on a club night.

Graham Blissett
B&DMES Treasurer

Other Maintenance Weekend Activities

As some of you may know we have had a water leak on the water tower at the far end of the platform for some time, as well as, the issue of compressed air pressure "disappearing" between the compressor and the steaming bay. During the maintenance weekends and on a few Sundays, both the water and compressed air leaks have been dealt with. On initial inspection the pipe work and the joints buried in the ground around the steaming bay had seen better days, so the above ground option was selected, which would also provide improved access for any future maintenance requirements. Consequently, there is now a substantial above ground compressed air pipe network installed throughout the steaming bay.

The water tower and the far end of the platform has undergone a major refurbishment, with pipe work, flexible joints and the tower, which is now somewhat more substantial than its predecessor, being replaced. The water tower nearest the shed has also undergone some maintenance along with a grating and soak away being installed below it to prevent the surrounding grassed area becoming rather soggy under foot.

The picture shows the current stage of the redevelopment of the station platform. Safety railings have yet to be erected. The materials for this have been purchased and



should be completed over the next few weeks. The final stage of this work will be to replace and extend the station roof and will be carried out as and when funds permit. At the time of writing most of the passenger and guards trolleys have also undergone substantial maintenance, with bearings, springs and brakes being replaced where needed, as well as a great deal of TLC being applied in general.

Graham Blissett

A Maintenance Weekend Thank You

I would just like to say a big thank you to all of the B&DMES members who turned out for all the planned and unplanned maintenance weekends and days. So far its been a hard slog, but the light is at the end of the tunnel. I believe you will agree with me that we have dealt with a fair number of the out standing issues, which have been on the "Things to do list" for a long time. This has resulted in much improved station facilities, as well as more reliable rolling stock for the miniature railway.

Graham Blissett. Treasurer

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir.

An excellent report by Steve on his visit to the Severn Valley Railway in the last E.L. was spoiled by his reference to the Gresley "bathtub"!! Does this young man forget that another of this class of "bathtub" holds the world speed record for steam? Something his exulted G.W.R. will never do! Keep in mind too, that another of the L.N.E.R.'s locos has been thought good enough to NEW build, something that is not happening to G.W.R. locos, they are only being cobbled together from odd bits & pieces!!! Mind you, it does beg the question, why didn't the G.W.R have a bash at the record? Was it because their "billiard table" wasn't long enough to get up to the required speed?

Yours etc G. Reece-Lee. (Gresley).

AKA. Eric Widdowson

The Footplate Career of Mick Lowe.

Part 4

Well its 2.30 in the morning, my alarm clock has just gone off, it is winter time and the wind is howling round the house and its raining hard, oh how I wish I could stay here in this warm cosy bed!!

My wife needs to use the car today so I have to use my motorcycle to get to Reading Depot.

Waterproofs on and off I go, a rotten journey, large pools of water everywhere, one consolation is that the roads are quiet at this time in the morning.

On arrival at Reading, dripping waterproofs off, book on and then a walk from the station to the Diesel Depot which took about 20 minutes to get my unit, another wetting (might have been better to have kept my motor-cycle waterproofs on!!!!) Today having to prepare a six car unit for

my service to Paddington and Bedwyn which took about 25 minutes to prepare - so now who thinks the job is all glamour? It's not always that miserable the better parts of the job make up for the bad ones. (Shed staff now does Preparation of units)

When I was employed at Basingstoke Depot we worked a Freight Train service daily to the Army camp at Ludgershall with class 33 locos, the traffic was mainly vehicles for repair + servicing (snow cats, scout cars, Range Rovers and lorries.

The line was a single track and operated by a 'token', so once in you could only go up and down as required.

Well about mid-way between The Old Redpot Junction and Ludgershall there was (is) a bungalow at the foot of the embankment with immaculate lawns and gardens complete with a few buildings sunk into the ground in a sort of Indian Style – it was very nicely kept and owned by a gentleman who always came out to wave to the trains as they went by.

My Guard and I decided that on the way back we would stop and have a chat with him about his garden. So this is what we did, we scrambled down from the loco, had a lovely tour round his property and interesting chat about the style etc and telling us it was all his own work.

So we had to return the compliment somehow so I asked him if he had ever been on a footplate to which the answer was no! Would you fancy a ride tomorrow? we asked to which the reply was a resounding YES

It turned out he was a keen photographer and could he bring his camera we said that was all right on the understanding that we were not identified in the photos.

Next morning we touched the horn and out he came and scrambled up on the loco, he

was absolutely CHUFFED and took a whole reel of photos, after about 45 minutes on the footplate having observed our shunting work at the old Ludgershall station, (now a Military one). We dropped him off and he went home one happy old gentleman.

He often came out to wave as we went by on future occasions

On a more sober note on the 8th September 1995

I was working the 18.20 Paddington – Reading which was a semi-fast calling at Slough, Maidenhead and Reading

My train was a three car Thames Turbo and was on the down relief line, line speed 70mph - approaching Burnham an HST travelling at line speed of 125mph overtook me – within a quarter of a mile a large white cloud seemed to erupt from the rear Power Car. My initial thoughts were that the engine on the Power Car had blown up; the HST appeared to slow down so I hung back by braking and about a quarter of a mile from

Maidenhead station the HST stopped with flames from the front Power Car and thick black smoke blowing across in front of me. I stopped 2 coaches from the Power Car, and my Rules kicked in – I pressed the emergency button on my cab radio (by pressing emergency this cuts out any other transmissions in the area)

Slough Panel box responded – immediately I identified my train number 1F74, that I was a quarter to half a mile from Maidenhead and to stop all trains in the area.

Slough responded straight away all signals went to RED so trains stopped

At that moment an up Swansea service to Paddington HST burst through the thick black smoke, unfortunately a passenger in the leading coach behind the burning Power Car was killed when he panicked and

jumped out of the train on the wrong side and fell into the path of the Swansea HST I made an announcement to my passengers to sit tight and stay calm as there was no danger to us as all other trains had been stopped and would any other rail staff, doctors or nurses who could help make their way to my cab.

I got down from my cab onto the line and put track circuiting clips on the rails of the up line and contacted the signalman to explain the incident telling him that the Emergency Services (Fire, Ambulance and Police were required immediately and the fire in the Power Car died down. In the meantime several staff came to the cab following my request, which consisted of Rail Track Staff and two Rail Track Managers.

I was unable to proceed to Maidenhead to release my passengers as the body of the unfortunate passenger was lying on the track in front of me.

I requested that I be allowed to set back to Burnham, released the passengers and arranged for them to have taxis or coaches to carry them on to their destinations Once this was all done my job was to await events so I sat on my unit waiting for radio information as to my next move.

Suddenly BANG BANG on the cab window The Police had arrived - “Driver stop your engine we want to examine your unit” they said

“What for?” I said

“We have seen blood on a coach frame” they said

“Well I haven’t hit anyone” I said

But they insisted and it turned out to be a pigeon that I had hit and bits and feathers were splattered everywhere!!

The next theory from the Police was that a large battered cash box had been found on

the track and that this was the possible cause of the incident.

However later that evening it was discovered that the bolts on the underside of the Power Car that secured the fuel tank to the chassis had failed and the fuel tank had fallen beneath the Power Car causing the fire and subsequent damage

The sight of the white cloud at the start was in fact the fuel being dispersed when the tank hit the track

Eventually the track was released and I was able to take my empty unit to the Depot However I did gain some satisfaction from the trauma of the incident as I was commended for my actions and for carrying out all the safety rules to the full

Also I was given a small monetary reward Its not very often I earned brownie points like that I can tell you.

On a lighter note, you may remember in the last newsletter I recalled mushroom picking. Terry Hobbs who has a vast knowledge of farming in the area has told me that used mushroom compost was often spread on the fields thereabouts when mushroom growers disposed of it

Another naughty thing to confess to, back in the 1970's – 1980's my wife and I were really into homemade wine making

We had some decent equipment so went for it in a big way. We made some wine from shop bought kits but mostly used fresh fruit that we could acquire one way or another, consisting of strawberries, damsons, peaches, elderberries – the damson and elderberries being the best but we never managed to get cherries until now!

Well we had a freight turn from Salisbury, which we worked, to Andover, then on to Ludgershall. Earlier that week I had spotted a cherry tree laden with fruit on the edge of the track boundary fence. At 7.30 in the

morning with not many people about I had a word with the Guard and made a quick stop to pick some cherries for our wine, the branches were quite high and we had a job to reach the good ones (the best are always the hardest to get!) Suddenly 'crack crash' my Guard had broken off a very large bough heavy with fruit, which we pulled into the cab. We then proceeded to strip the cherries off as we rolled along to Andover!!

The wine turned out well and my Guard received a couple of bottles in due course for his help.

Recently we finished our last bottle of Damson wine made in 1999 and all the better for keeping it was like a fine Port (wish we had laid a few more down at the time)

We don't make wine anymore as shop ones can be bought very reasonably and mostly there is no fear it is undrinkable. A beetroot wine we made was awful but not to waste it we warmed it with sugar and mulling spices and it was quite acceptable! Now our cellar is empty – pity.

In case you wonder where the Damsons came from as its not a fruit easily found. Every year a friend of mine who was a Driver at Basingstoke - Cyril Wilson from Sherborne St. John, let me go to his smallholding to pick what I wanted from his tree. Some of you may be acquainted with him he has always reared Shire Horses and won many prizes all over the country He took early retirement from the job due to his health having suffered fatalities on three occasions in front of his trains

Dear me is that the time - I must book off Until the next shift

Mick Lowe

*Festival of Engines - Saturday 15th
August*

This is a new event in the Clubs calendar. It is the opportunity for club members to bring along engines that are normally or not normally seen be they stationary engines, traction engines or locos (steam with current boiler certificate or electric). For stationary engines a table will be set up on the station platform. For traction engines the concrete pathway and the site in general will be available for running.

For locos they will have a dedicated run time on the track, say half an hour, the individual run time will be dependant upon the number of locos coming. Individuals will have sole use of the club track for their allotted time so if you want to run solo or haul a few passengers it is up to you. If you want to share your run time with another member then once again it is up to you. In order to plan track-running sessions I have volunteered (for my sins) to take on that task. Will all those planning to bring a loco, please call me, Dave Mattingley tel. 01428 605490, with your preferred running session i.e. early morning, mid morning, late morning, early afternoon, mid afternoon, late afternoon. Allocated running times per sessions will be on a first come first serve basis. For a quick guide there are a possible 16 half hour slots in the day with the days running starting at 10.00 and finishing at 6.00.

The site will be open from around 9.00 and tea will be available all day. A BBQ will be available on a 'cook-your-own' basis at the end of the afternoon and the site will be closed about 7.00.

Weather permitting it will be a great day so please come along and support it. Friends and families will be more than welcome.

Dave Mattingley.

Visitors Open Day 17/5/09

Quite a good turn out for our open day, considering the weather wasn't as good. The guest list as below. The 5" Dolphur if anybody is wondering, is a model of a narrow gauge Indian loco. In 5" it comes up fairly large!! The owner was quite happy to let John Hutson & Dave Andrews have a spell on the regulator and their grins said it all!!! We also had a visit from three Andover members, with an open invitation to visit their new track, when complete. 5" & 7 1/4" ground level I believe. Philip & Sue Edney also attended with their Fowler traction engine & gave the roadway an airing between the showers.

A list of locos. attending and the clubs they represent appears below.

5" Dolphur 2-8-4 Fareham MES

5" L1 Bracknell RS

31/2" Virginia Southampton MES

5" B1 Bournemouth MES

5" SECR 4-4-0 Maxitrak OC

5" Swallow Maxitrak OC

5" Diesel Maxitrak OC

Eric Widdowson

The owner of the last three engines on the above list has now joined the B&DMES.

Welcome to the club Graham.

Editor

*Getting In An Oily Mess With
Hydrostatic Lubricators*

The hydrostatic lubricator is a popular choice on the majority of 5" gauge locos due to its simplicity of operation with no risk of mechanical failure, unlike the second most popular mechanical lubricator. The

hydrostatic type is surprisingly simple but unless you have come into contact with one then it is quite likely you don't know how it works. It was John Hutson's suggestion for someone to write an article on it and this is the result; hopefully an accurate description! The hydrostatic, or sight feed lubricator as it is also known has been used on engines for over one hundred years with the operation changing little since. The term hydrostatic refers to the need for 'static' water to enter an oil tank so that there is a clear separation between the two fluids. It is common knowledge that oil floats on water, this is due to the density difference of oil being lighter than water. Density is a physical property often confused with weight, which specifically refers to the mass of the fluid in relation to the volume it occupies. The density of water can be considered as 1000 kg per meter cubed, compared to oil which has around 800 kg per meter cubed. Apologies for the blasphemous units! So, back to basics. Most people know that the hydrostatic lubricator is powered using steam, which is taken from the engine's boiler and it follows that we need to condense the steam so as to put water into the tank, usually through a coil of pipe. We need to do this so that the steam turns back into water that will act as a 'hydraulic ram' which forces on the tank to displace the oil. If steam reaches the tank then it will emulsify with the oil and turn into a useless mixture which will be seen as a yellow bubbly mess going up your sight glass. With the steam valve on full to the tank we effectively have full boiler pressure on it. It

should be noted here that the tanks therefore ideally need to be constructed with the same care and attention as an engine boiler using good silver soldered joints, ideally with a copper construction and preferably made from tubing for the structural strength. Incidentally, the old boiler regulations used to treat the tanks as a pressure vessel that required twice boiler pressure testing, but under the new regulations the capacity is under the bar-litres requirement and is no longer compulsory; but it would be wise to! With water under full boiler pressure entering the tank it will obviously displace the oil with the same pressure and discharge, since both fluids in the tank are assumed incompressible. At this point the oil could be piped straight into the cylinders since the cylinder pressure, even at full regulator, is less than full boiler pressure. But there needs to be some control of the oil flow which is where the sight glass comes in (or just an in line needle valve with no sight control, often done with 3.5" locos). The fine control is usually in the form of a sight feed usually with an isolator and needle valve attached.

The sight feed can be considered as a window in the pipeline to the cylinders that shows the rate of flow of the oil with the fine needle valve attached for precise flow control. The sight glass is filled with a 50:50 saline (that is water with a much salt, often Epsom salts, as can be physically dissolved in it) and glycerol solution. The reason for adding these is to further increase the density of the 'water' compared to the oil so that the oil droplets rise quicker and cleanly.

The size of the droplets produced at the nozzle will also be dependant on this mixture too.

It is important to remember at this point that the sight glass is under pressure and the oil droplets are in fact forced up the glass, rather than floating up it of their own free will. There has to be a pressure, or driving force, in the sight glass to make the oil flow through the pipe work and into the cylinders.

Next, let's think about what happens when the regulator is open and we have a steam chest pressure to force the oil against. There will automatically be a back pressure experienced in the sight glass from the steam, so to get oil droplets to appear at the nozzle the oil pressure must be greater than the back pressure. Gradually opening the needle valve is letting more of the boiler pressure (via the oil tank) into the sight glass where the effect is to reduce net difference in pressures until there is equilibrium and the back pressure equals the applied pressure – go slightly beyond this point and you have oil flow. Therefore, it becomes clear why the rate of oil droplets will change with the position of the regulator and the system should not just be setup when on shed when the required pressure for flow is almost zero!

With all this acquired knowledge there are some simple points to remember to ensure a happy driver! Firstly, if you install the system from new or take any part of it off, ensure that you prime the pipe system. If you leave any air in the pipeline on the 'boiler side' of the sight glass the sudden

rush of the air, which will have been compressed, will almost certainly take some of the saline solution out of the sight glass. If this happens isolate the glass, take the top cap off and top up the glass with more solution – not always an easy job when on shed down the club! Also, if you get a visible oil level appear in the top of the glass when running, when you get the loco home inject some of the saline solution through the top cap and this will displace the oil and will remove any oil marks left on the glass after a few hours.

Secondly, when making and filling the oil tank make sure no air can become trapped in this. Ensure the filler cap is put at the highest point for example. Don't forget that air will sit on top of the oil and water and the outlet feed is at the top of the tank, hence any trapped air will be the first thing pushed through the system. Not only will this give the aforementioned problems, but the compression and rapid expulsion of the air from the tank will cause the steam to reach the tank too quickly without condensing and may emulsify the oil. If this gets into the glass it becomes impossible to see the flow of oil into the cylinders and also the glass has to be taken apart and cleaned!

Steve Newell

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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 60p 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	Tom Burgess
Secretary	Brian Hogg
Treasurer	Graham Blissett

Committee Members.

Bob Lovett	Member
Jon Evans	Member
Barry Spender	Member

Project Leaders.

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Electrical Work	Simon Hutson
Library	Ken Jones
Painting/Decorating	Vacant
Publicity	John Dixon/ Assistant required
Signalling	Graham Blissett
Station Building/Contents	Vacant
Track/Site/Ground Maint.	Dave Blaza/ Mick Lowe
Traction Engine Track	Vacant
Webmaster	Stephen Newell
Newsletter	John Taviner