

EXPANSION LINK

NEWSLETTER OF THE B&DMES

EDITOR JOHN TAVINER-VOLUME THREE-ISSUE Three

DATE September 2009



Editorial

Another three months gone by already. Three months that have had several of the club's planned events effected by the weather or clashes with other events taking place in either the local area or at other clubs to which our members were invited. The public running days all took place with mainly dry weather although on a couple of occasions somewhat overcast. The months of June, July and August had additional public runs in an attempt to claw back some of the income lost by three public runs abandoned due to the inclement conditions last year. (2008).

The meeting night of 14th July was very interesting. Bob Dyer, a former member, gave a very good explanation and demonstration of the art of metal casting. This turned out to be another of those events marred by the weather. The evening started in good dry conditions but was interrupted by a very heavy downfall of rain. In spite of this Bob kept going to complete the item he set out to make. An excellent presentation which just goes to show what can be achieved with simple home made equipment. Well done Bob and thank you for taking the time and trouble to pass on some of your knowledge to the members that attended.

John Taviner Editor

Forthcoming Events

October

- 4 Public Running
- 6 Meeting Night
- 18 Members Running Day (Sun)
- 20 Bits & Pieces Evening
- 31 Halloween Public Running (Sat Evening) 2PM 6PM

Nov

- 3 Meeting Night
- 17 Bring & Buy Evening
- 22 Members Running Day (Sun)
- 23-27 AGM (Date to be confirmed)

Dec

- 1 Meeting Night
- 6 Public Running
- 15 Meeting Night
- 29 Members Christmas Run (Tues)

It is possible that we will public run at other events planned by other organisations. Watch the notice board.



Chairman's Chat

Well folks it's time once again for me to do my bit for the magazine. The past 3 months seems to have flown by and we have all been busy in various ways. Quite a few members have been out on steam train trips this summer and hopefully someone will do a write up or two for the magazine.

Bob Dyer gave us a very good demo of metal casting and a very enjoyable evening was had by all those who attended although the weather did it's very best (or should that be worst) to spoil things for us. The product of Bobs efforts now adorns John Hutson's portable steam engine in the form of a nicely machined bearing.

Several club members, myself included, attended this years IMLEC competition at Bristol S M E E. and what a day we all had, weather was good, all visitors were made welcome, with nowhere being out of bounds, there were trade stands, a marquee full of their members models and the Bristol Ladies food and drink was second to none. The competitors locos were a good cross section of what has been made over the years with some very good workmanship on display and included a very nice Unrebuilt Merchant Navy class Loco complete with oil bath chain driven valve gear, it was driven very well by its owner burning lots of coal, and using copious amounts of water and pulling one of the days heaviest loads, it was for me the highlight of the day. Incidentally the owner builder came from up North and not from Southern Railway country.

We have had a reasonable success so far this year with the public running, the electric days are even pegging with the steam hauled days for the number of paying passengers carried, although the days when we carried 300 to 400 passengers seem to be in the past and I think this is for a number

reasons, not the least of which is the fact that few if any of the other units at Viables open on a Sunday anymore. Our saving grace this year seems to be the number of birthday parties held in the main hall. There seems to have been one on every public running day this year.

A good number of members turned up for our Festival of Engines day on Saturday 15th August along with a few visitors, This event was the brainchild of Dave Mattingley and along with help from Tom Burgess, who did a sterling job at the Barbeque, a great day was had by all with all sorts and types of engines on display and running.



Picture from Festival of Engines day

During the coming weeks we will be asking for helpers to finish off the station project and we need some help to re-do the water supply to steaming bays and station due to a broken stop cock. Hopefully help from those with suitable skills will be forthcoming.

As this will be the LAST magazine before our AGM in November I will ask all of you to reflect on the following.

1. There has been some criticism of myself as chairman this year by one or two members mainly that I have too negative an attitude towards the club and I sanction the spending of too much money on projects like the station and the new signalling, (for myself I was under the impression that all of this was given the go ahead at the last AGM) therefore I ask you all to reflect

among yourselves whether the time has come to select a more go ahead Chairman . And if so I am only too willing to step down.

2. As you all know Graham Blissett is resigning as club treasurer and we need to find a member willing to do the job, as you all know one volunteer is better than ten pressed men, it is important that we find someone for the post so instead of running and hiding will you please give it your consideration.

3. This point is directed at those members who adopt a THEM and US attitude towards the committee in general, the ones that tell how it should be done and where we get it all wrong. The AGM is your chance to tell us in front of everyone how you could do a much better job. Then the present committee can all stand down and we will vote you in and stand back and watch as you show us how it should be done. Come on take up the challenge. Well that's it folks, maybe more in December and then again in light of the above maybe not.

Terry Hobbs Chairman.

MJ Engineering

I recently paid my first visit to MJ Engineering. Although they did not stock the item that I wanted the proprietor, Alan, went out of his way to help even to the extent of checking his oddments box at home. It's good to know that good old fashioned service is not completely dead. MJ Engineering is owned and run by husband and wife team Alan and Helen Barsby and are located in Yateley Hampshire. Their main business is the supply of drawings and castings for the construction of model traction engines plus drawings and castings for 5" rebuilt

Merchant Navy class and 7 ¼" Bagnall saddle tank locomotives. In addition to these they stock a large selection of materials such as sheet metal in steel, brass and copper as well as square, round, hexagon and angle sections in the same materials.

A machining service is also offered including gear cutting. On top of all this is a comprehensive selection of fixings, fittings and tools.

If all this was not enough they offer a constantly changing stock of second hand engines and machine tools.

MJ can be contacted at 01252 890777

Web. www.mjeng.co.uk

Or e-mail sales@mjeng.co.uk

Give them a try. I'm sure they will give you the service that they did me.

John Taviner. Editor.

The Footplate Career of Mick Lowe

No.5

Well here I am again with another Epistle! A question frequently asked did you always have to prepare your engine, well sometimes it would be prepared for you if you had a full days work on the track working trains, and at other times you had to get your own loco ready. You were informed which loco to get ready by the Running Foreman (he was called the Train Crew Supervisor after privatisation) These men are almost non-existent now, crews book on in many areas by phone to a control system many miles away with controllers who often have no real knowledge of working that area Whereas with a local supervisor he knows the system and can rectify problems with the crews locally under his control.

Back to loco preparation - First climb on to the loco, check water in gauge, see what steam pressure is showing, how much fire there is under the fire hole door. Now jacket off along with your bag (sandwiches/ tea bags/coffee/milk and if posh an apple. Next get out oil bottles and fill oil feeder for the driver, wipe it clean and place on dish to warm up. Now off to the stores for oil (always the fireman's job), lubricator oil, engine oil and paraffin. Also get a duty board with loco duty number painted on it.

Return to loco and if weather is cold warm lubricator oil in firebox so that it pours easily, drain and fill lubricator, push fire over box put a few shovels of coal around, round to smoke box with brush and spanner in hand, tighten lugs on smoke box door, sweep off char and check sandboxes (hoping and praying they have plenty in) it is hard work lugging buckets of sand from the sand furnace!

Back onto footplate, clean and fill the headlamps and light if required, remembering to pinch the crust off the wicks which forms when they burn as they will flicker and soon go out.

Steam pressure is building up now, with a touch of blower and build up fire, up on the tender to trim coal and check that water level is alright, as important to leave shed full of water. Put on the head codes and tail lamp,

Hang couplings on hooks, test sands and both injectors and the steam heating if required for passenger workings. Now clean up footplate and with an oily rag wipe boiler front, clean gauge glass and protectors (frame) and wash down the footplate thoroughly after sweeping up, not forgetting to clean the windows (spectacles) All this completed we are ready to go off

shed from the Fireman's position.

Meanwhile the driver will have oiled round, checking everything as he did so and asking you to create the brake and apply it so that he can see if it needs adjusting – this would be indicated by the brake cylinder piston rod fulcrum arm being horizontal to the ground – and that completes the job!

Like most workers Monday morning always sported clean overalls for the week, all well if you were out on the track – but if you were 10am spare – disaster! – around midday the boiler washers would have finished with a loco and the Foreman would come into the mess room and just say “ tubes on “ giving the loco number. That was a very dirty job for a couple of hours ridding the tubes using a steel rod with some wire on the end. One of the rods had a corkscrew on the end to unblock any tubes that the other rod wouldn't go through. At times you could be unlucky and get a second set of tubes to do, particularly if the loco had been booked as steaming poorly. So much for clean Monday overalls you couldn't always be on a winner!!

Quite a few of our members will remember Park Prewett when it was a Mental Hospital.

What's that got to do with Basingstoke Loco 70D you ask?

The Coal Stage was situated in this area, just over the turntable and the standby loco was usually stabled up there so that if it was needed in a hurry it could be turned quickly to the direction required in about 10 to 15 minutes as it was always prepared oiled up and ready to go. It only needed the fire to be pushed over and built up as you left the shed.

Well as with all steam sheds we had a round

the clock team of raisers/firelighters who looked after the locos on shed that were in steam. One particular chap seemed very apprehensive about going up to the Coal Stage area at night on his own, so it was quite a thing to tease him if he was in the shed area by saying "Was it you I saw up in the Coal stage area a minute ago"? To which he would reply "No it wasn't me. "

Then we would answer usually by saying "well someone was definitely lurking about up there" this resulted in him saying that he thought a mental patient must have escaped and he would refuse to go up to the Coal Stage without someone going with him!



Other than that life on the Shed was quite sedate.

One incident to recall was that the sand furnace was situated on the West End of the Shed. This was attended by one of the shed labourers who had to keep the furnace going to keep the sand dry in the large hopper for the sand boxes.

Just outside was a short road with a crane that was used for lifting small locos for minor repairs. Access to this road was by a pair of spring points that required a second person to hold them open until the loco entering was fully over them.

Well one day a Guildford/Woking Driver was stabling a Class 33 in there and misjudged the length which resulted in it crashing into the outer wall of the sand furnace thus damaging the front of the loco

and the sand furnace was no more!!

I can't quite remember exactly the date – it was in the late 1960's early 1970's a firm called Colt who fits ventilators to buildings to help control fire damage to industrial premises used the Shed for an experiment. The Shed was fitted with automatic ventilators in the roof – the theory was that they would open if a fire started and they would draw the flames up and out keeping the fire contained.

The Shed doors were closed and reasonably sealed, the interior was piled about 25 feet high and the length of the Shed with empty packing cases and cardboard boxes.

On the chosen day they were set alight, went like a treat – a hell of a heat! (Oops poetry) – the ventilators opened and the flames went out through them as calculated. However not all to plan as the roofing sheets and other areas were coated in bitumen and the fire went out of control. The Fire Brigade were called to assist and the Shed building was destroyed!

No doubt further information can be found in the Library or Basingstoke Gazette Archives.

Speaking of things going 'Tits Up' here is another little incident to finish this chapter. We at Basingstoke in Diesel days had a nice little turn that involved working a van/parcel train from Salisbury to Basingstoke down yard. This was the last part of the duty so we were always in a hurry to leave on time from Salisbury. This was the 09.25/35 train with a Class 33 Crompton and usually 8 – 12 large vans.

So with full speed ahead at about 85 mph, all was going well until between Overton and Oakley where the track curves around

to the left as I came around this curve about 50 yards ahead I saw a fairly large tree (about 20-25ft) slowly topple onto the track in front of me.

Hanging on the horns (blowing them violently) and dropping the handle (emergency brake application)

I could see a gang of track workers scattering in all directions.

The train ploughed through the tree with debris everywhere. Coming to a halt about 50 yards away the leading ganger ran up to ask if I was alright - apparently he had forgotten that a train was due and assumed it was all clear to fell the tree!

He asked me what I was going to do and whether I would report the incident - in those days these sort

of things were kept quiet. He and his men helped to remove branches and boughs from under the engine and off the front entangled in the buckeye, buffers and control pipes.

There was nothing damaged, no failure with broken brake pipes or cracked windows.

Off I went leaving a grateful ganger with no reports to fill in.

Most important - an incident and no one hurt!

This is the first time I have ever mentioned it to anyone

So you know something that Management never knew!!

Bye for now - until next time -

Mick Lowe

Bournemouth MES Open Day 21st June

A contingent from the club visited Bournemouth on the 21st comprising Neil & Darren with their 5" Black 5 & Steve with his 31/2" Hall. A support crew? of John, Dave & self also went along for the ride! The raised track is an excellent one of 71/4" 5" & 31/2"

gauges.



From the station, on the top curve, it descends on a straight falling gradient to a banjo curve, straightening out again to a rising gradient & curve back to the station. A large 16mm outdoor layout was also in operation. A warm welcome was extended by Bournemouth members and an excellent buffet lunch laid on by their lady members.

Eric Widdowson Picture by Gordon de la Mare

A Record Breaking Run to the Seaside

The morning of the 9th July was an early one for nine members of B&DMES. The Cathedrals Express crew were out and about again, armed with specs, video cameras and nine all important tickets for the Sunny South Special to Weymouth, a recreation of the last steam journey run on the Southern network 42 years to the day.

The early morning sunshine was the first indication what was going to turn out to be a perfect day, not just because nine over-the-hill railway enthusiasts (well seven at least!!) were going to get their annual adrenaline rush, but because the locomotive on the front of the train was Battle of Britain Class 'Tangmere'. I don't care what prejudices

people may have about this class or Bullied's ideas in general, this engine is a top notch, fine tuned machine, or as Mike Lowe would say – "she's a good'un."

We all congregated in the foyer of Basingstoke station ready to catch the 0652 fast to Clapham junction, where Tangmere was to begin her journey to Dorset, as no platform could be obtained for a Waterloo departure. The route out of London was a slow and uneventful one with speeds in the mid 50's through Staines and up to Addelstone Junction where we joined the old Southern Mainline just before Woking, our first pick up point. There was a brief spell of fast running with speeds in the high 60's as we got underway to the first waterstop of the day at Winchfield. In this short section of racing, the old 'Tangmere clag' worked its magic on us boys with our heads out the window doing the Michael Jackson-in-reverse treatment, going from white to black in just under 20 minutes. At Winchfield, Great Western Dave had his first brush up and face wash of the day and we also saw member John Taviner on the platform



The next leg was through Basingstoke

station in the mid 60's I would guess, quite a thrill to be on the train instead of watching it there for a change. Then things really got rolling on the downgrade through Mitcheldever where the loco was being driven really well, we waved to Terry Hobbs beside the track although it was hard work to spot him despite knowing his location! We maintained the good spell of high speed running with Winchester passing as a blur but slowed as we neared Shawford for our second pick up point.

Another memory from the day was passing through Eastleigh where Tangmere saluted the Works and fellow unrebuilt Battle of Britain class mate 'Manston' in the yard with a prolonged crow on the whistle. And not forgetting Great Western Dave had another face wash at our 15 minute stop at Wareham too!

For the rest of the trip we were almost spot on time with some high running speeds maintained throughout. Our highest speed was reached on the downgrade through Upwey at 84mph (so I was faithfully informed on the quiet from the footplate!). We finally arrived on time at Weymouth where the gents congregated whilst a friend on the loco support crew got me onto the footplate! After we stood and watched Tangmere and the coaching stock hauled backwards out of the station by a diesel we all hurried after dear old John who was off in search of food.

In Weymouth it was a fish and chip lunch and a pint in the pub. We split into two

groups soon afterwards and it was at this point we lost Eric for the afternoon. Our group, of James Taviner, Bob Lovett,

Western



Dave (sorry "Great" Western Dave) and myself, visited the quay and all had a nose around the SS Shieldhall which was berthed there. The other group, comprised of Simon, Russel, John and Bob Hutson had a play on the beach.

We stocked up supplies for the journey home and made our way to the station at 1700 expecting the 1735 departure, but on arrival rumours were in the air that the diesel towing Tangmere to Yeovil had failed and the train would leave 45 minutes late. How wrong they were. Already an hour late, Tangmere runs in tender-first with support coach into the station with no coaches in sight - it took the best part of another hour to get the train assembled and ready for the off. The original plan was for the diesel to bank us up the hill and get detached at Wool, past Dorchester. This was when the fun really began and when the day changed from a good one to a brilliant one!

So, two and a quarter hours down, eleven on and no diesel – every window was full and

quite a crowd had gathered to see us off. With a bit of wheel spin we were off and Tangmere got stuck in and what a treat she sounded. We marched up the gentler start to the bank in the mid 40's I would guess, but towards the summit, in Bincombe tunnel, the loco slowed to the point where it was just about holding, then on came the steam sanders which initially didn't help as the condensate on the rails caused excessive wheelslip. Once the sand started to bite we were quickly over the summit, acknowledged by the prolonged tooting of the driver as we accelerated away down the slope. We had broken a record for the most load pulled unassisted up the bank by steam, as in steam days they only allowed 9 coaches up on a dry day and we had eleven. Now the climb was over and it was time to catch those lost minutes!

A superb run through Bournemouth and the New Forest with green lights almost all the way was keeping us well up in the 70's into the only water point on the up trip at Southampton Central, having made up 30 minutes. I should point out here that my friend on Tangmere's support crew was told that we were still going to do the timed stop at Basingstoke, even though we were late. He informed us all so everyone, except GW Dave and myself, planned to get off as we were running so late...So there we all are saying our goodbyes as Battledown flyover races by, when we realise that were aren't slowing down. We could see Basingstoke coming into view – and fast. With the road clear and an HST following us the boys in

the boxes kept us going. James's dad and Simon's wife waiting on the platform said we were going well as we sped past at 75mph!

The chaps got off at Woking and were back at Basingstoke within an hour, so all was well. Dave and myself had the honour of steaming into Waterloo in much the same way the last Bullied Pacific, and steam service had done 42 years to the day. I thought to myself, as the stop buffers came into view how lucky we were to still be able to do this and how very differently things could have turned out.

Steve Newell. Pictures by John Taviner

Festival of Engines

I think all will agree that this was a very successful day. It truly was a festival of engines with all shapes and sizes either in steam or on display. They varied from almost full size traction engines (1/3rd scale) down to delicate lightweight hot air engines. The club welcomed Gordon Howell and friends from the Andover club. Gordon



bringing and displaying his collection of stationary engines as well as his steam lorry. Dave Blaza bought along 3 engines that

hadn't been seen at the club for many a long year. One, a beautiful 2" Fowler compound ploughing engine and two 3 1/2" locos, a Britannia and an LMS 4-6-2. There is no excuse now Dave, we must see at least one



of them in steam next year.

A table was set up on the station and John Dixon had on display his 3 1/2" Invicta that made Tich seem enormous as well as his 3 1/2" 0-4-0, 1/12 scale, tank engine 'Mathilde' complete with tender. Ken Jones had a fine hot air engine there as well to provide added interest.

Trundling round the car park and the club site was Jon Poulter driving his 4 1/2" Burrell and Chris Street his 4" Foster. To keep them company Raymond drove Gordon's steam lorry to complete the collection.

Tom, after preparing a splendid bar-be-que, (as ever) fired his steam plant in the steaming bay. A coal fired boiler providing the magic ingredient for a horizontal engine. The track was kept busy from before 10 through to late afternoon. The first on was Adam with his 3 1/2" Hall; this was followed by Steve driving John D's Hall.

Not to be out done by the 3 1/2"s Mick fired his 9F and gave chase. After a slightly hesitant start due to a kinked injector water feed pipe it was off and quickly settled down to a steady pace. The run put a good

few miles under it's belt to bed in the many moving parts.

Neil and Darren bought along their 5" Manor and the Black 5, both looking good after new paint jobs and going well. It was difficult to prise Dave Andrews off the Manors regulator in the late afternoon. I'm sure he was doing a trip to Weymouth in his mind. John H had along his fine 02 which is now complete with a goods wagon. My 3 1/2" Bantam Cock did a good few very enjoyable laps in the afternoon before John Croker came on with his 3 1/2" Schools, looking and running as good as ever. It was good to see so many 3 1/2 locos on the track all performing faultlessly.

A big thanks must go to those that provided endless cups of tea and to Pat, Mick's wife, for preparing the cheese and onion 'sarnies' and the delicious bread pudding which I believe was provided by Fred's wife. The weather was kind and it was good to see so many people chatting in a very relaxed atmosphere. We should repeat it next year!!

Dave Mattingley. Pictures by John Taviner

SECRETARY'S NOTES: SEPT 09

Well, the nights are well and truly drawing in now and there's a nip in the air some mornings, so it looks as though summer-such as it was- is pretty well over. That's not to say that our revenue earning activities have ceased yet, or that the wider social scene involving other societies has ended.

As well as our regular Public Running day in September we are running on the 13th in support of the local Cats Protection League event at Viables. We also plan to run on the

first Sunday in both October and December. There is also Public Running for Halloween on Saturday, October 31st, in the evening. The December date takes the place of the Santa Runs held in recent years. It's a pity no-one felt able to step into Graham's shoes to keep this well supported event going.

Any advice received of forthcoming events, club open days or exhibitions etc, is posted on the clubhouse notice board at the first opportunity. We have had a number of such invitations from other societies this year and several members have made successful and enjoyable visits. There are still one or two outstanding events, so check the board and go along. Please give notice of your attendance, either directly to the other club's contact, or via me if preferred. It does help them with their planning.

Another date for your diary is the Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition which takes place from 16th to 20th October at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, near Leamington Spa.

Don't forget, if you are free on one of the running days, helpers are always required. You don't have to be a driver or a guard; there are plenty of other roles to fulfil. However, if you do have a loco, do bring it along as it always seems to be the same tiny minority who run their locos for the benefit of the club as a whole.

Brian Hogg

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Email Addresses

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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