

# EXPANSION LINK

## NEWSLETTER OF THE B&DMES

EDITOR JOHN TAVINER-VOLUME THREE-ISSUE two

DATE June 2010



### *Editorial*

Hello to all members.

Here we are in June already. It hardly seems possible that another three months of 2010 have flown by since the last issue in March. As those of you that attend club events and meetings on a regular basis will have observed, great progress has been made on the re-vamping of the station area. The platform and railings are complete and the roofing of the station canopy and workshop are nearing completion. Well done and THANK YOU to all those members that have given their time and efforts in this project.

You will notice that this issue is thinner than most of those in the past. This is due to lack of material to publish. As usual I make a plea to all members to submit an article. I am sure that many of you must have something of interest that you could share with all of us.

Regular contributor Mick Lowe is taking a well earned break from the recollections of some of his experiences as a Fireman and Driver on the main line. I am sure that he will continue in the future. Thanks Mick for sharing these thoughts with us. Steve Newell tells of some more of his travels in Poland and Eric Widdowson has a report on the recent visitors day.

*John Taviner. Editor*

### *Forthcoming Events.*

#### July

- 4 Public Running
- 10 Members Running Day (Sat)
- 13 Meeting Night
- 17/18 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Public Running
- 17 Members BBQ Saturday Night
- 27 Meeting Night

#### Aug

- 1 Public Running
- 10 Bring And Buy Evening
- 15 Public Running
- 24 Meeting Night

#### Sept

- 5 Public Running
- 7 Meeting Night
- 12 Cats Protection Craft Fair
- 19 Members Running Day (Sun)
- 21 Meeting Night

Please note. Extra public running on each of these months. Help needed.

### *Chairman's Chat*

I don't know if the rest of you will agree with me but I find time seems to go a lot faster these days It does not seem that 3 months has passed since the Editor was chasing me for my piece.

For those that do visit the club often then a lot of what I put in my article is old news, however we have quite a number that, for whatever reason, we don't see very often and hopefully I keep them up to date.

You will notice that a lot painting by Dave Andrews and helpers has been undertaken lately and the site is looking better for it.

Also the roof is now on the station canopy and the roof on the running shed has been painted a light grey. May I say a personal "Thank you" to all of you involved in this ongoing project.

Mid May saw our 30th anniversary visitors week end and this was well supported by visitors and club members alike, I would like to say a big thank you to Malcolm for his efforts with the barbeque and keeping us in food on the Saturday and Mike and Pat for the wonderful spread on Sunday also Eric and his mates who kept us supplied with tea and coffee on both days.

B+ D borough council has again hit us with a large demand for money due to themselves not getting their sums right a few years ago. This is for electricity and water since they took over running the site from Viables Trust. Our treasurer is now sorting this out with the appropriate departments, also the club has had an increase in our insurance premium.

The 3 days public running we have had so far this year have been a bit hit and miss with the last day taking the grand total of £2.. Although some members think this is due to lack of advertising, I can assure them that Malcolm and John D. are doing their

best and I would add that Malcolm would welcome any assistance that they would like to give, The 2 main reasons we struggle, apart from the weather, is other events on at the same time elsewhere and the fact that all bar one of the other units at Viables do not open anymore on Sundays leaving us and Petra a bit isolated.

Please note JULY 17th and 18th is our anniversary gala and public running weekend. It is YOUR CLUB and it is your responsibility to see that it happens, not the committees, so suggestions and help will be required in copious amounts, so please turn up on Tuesday meeting nights and show your support!!!!

And on this note I will wish you happy hours of steaming and miniature engineering .

*Terry Hobbs chairman.*

### *GARDEN RAILWAY – STOP PRESS*

Just prior to publication two major items of news relating to the Garden Railway have arisen, one very good, the other very bad! On the good news front Graham has received a brief email informing him that we have been awarded a grant towards the rebuilding of the Garden Railway amounting to approximately 80% of the amount applied for. At the time of writing no further details are available and we shall have to scour the fine print regarding the terms and conditions of the grant when we receive them. This is great news for the club. Not such great news is the fact that it has recently been discovered that a large proportion of the 32mm Garden Railway track stored in the clubhouse has been removed by person or persons unknown.

The miscreant must be a key holder and therefore a current or past member of the club, since there was no forced entry and nothing else in the clubhouse has been removed or disturbed, including, thankfully, the 45mm track. Someone clearly wanted to set up their own railway on the cheap at home since track, points, rail joiners and screws are all missing. The new replacement cost of the lost track is in excess of £300, and in the club's present financial position this loss of club assets has the potential to jeopardise the rebuilding project. It is all the more difficult to bear as the guilty party is clearly one of our own, present or past.

*Brian Hogg Secretary*

#### *Sales and Wants*

FOR SALE. 3.5 gauge 2-6-2 TANK ENGINE based on Martin Evans William design with detail alterations to make it resemble a LMS Fowler 3P passenger tank details as follows. Silver Soldered Copper Boiler 4inches in diameter made by ALEC FARMER with stainless steel radiant super heaters, driving wheels 3.75 inches in diameter, cylinder bore 1.125inches it has cylinder drain cocks, axle pump, hand pump and an injector fitted to get its water from a supply on the owners driving trolley. The loco. also has steam lubrication and wind on hand brake, it is painted LMS passenger red and transferred as when first built. This loco. is 31.5 inches long and weight is approx 56lbs and is new. It has been run in and tuned up by Steven Newell and will have full Hydraulic and Steam Test Certificates. Please note there was one of this model on Steam Days Website 24 MAY 2010 priced at £3800 pounds. PRICE OF THIS ONE is

£2000 pounds. If you are interested contact Steve Newell or Terry Hobbs 01256 397 607

#### *Treasurers Notes.*

So far, five members have decided not to renew. Mainly due to ill health and all have wished the club good luck in the future. We still have six outstanding memberships and I will be chasing them again. We could really do with a few new members, so if you know of anyone please let me know. Hopefully a few good public running days, weather permitting, will fill the shortfall. Finally, if you have any outstanding receipts for materials for the station or track refurbishment, then please get them to me. Please note. To all those members that have not renewed their subscriptions this will be the last newsletter that you will receive.

*Jon Evans. Treasurer*

#### *Visitors Weekend 15/16th May 2010*

We had 3 visitors from the Reading Club on Saturday,  
A 3 1/2" Britannia, a 5" Hymek and a Simplex " hybrid" with a Western style boiler.  
Club members Darren Davis & Bob Lovett brought their locos, a Black 5 and Railmotor respectively.  
Malcolm provided an excellent barbecue.  
The all important weather was reasonable and the Reading guys told us that they had enjoyed the day.  
Sunday although not a good day weather wise, proved to be the more popular day.  
Our visitors were as follows:-  
From Fareham a 5" Austrian 1245 electric loco. (See picture).  
From Andover a 5" Ajax a 5" Lord Nelson and a 5" Silver Pea.

From Southampton a 5" G. N. Gresley Darren brought his Black 5 along for another airing, as did Bob and his Railmotor. But dare I say it, the highlight of the day was the first public appearance of the "beastie" Micks "9F" which, after a small



hiccup, Mick expressed himself satisfied with.

We have Mick's wife Pat, to thank very much indeed for the spread of sandwiches and quiche, for our sustenance on Sunday. In between the showers all the visitors seemed to enjoy the day, at least it proved the worth of the new station canopy!!!!

*E. Widdowson. Picture by James Taviner.*

### *Polish Adventures - Part II*

Last December I went back for my third visit to Wolsztyn, Poland, for a week's holiday before Christmas. It was an action packed week from start to finish and I hope my story captures the sense of madness and excitement experienced from start to finish! Looking back, the most memorable part of the holiday was the snow. It seems hard to imagine that only six months ago we were in the depths of one of the coldest winters for at least 20 years. Leaving England I thought I was prepared for the cold temperatures you typically imagine for a Polish winter – how wrong I was... I flew out on a Saturday, a long, but

uneventful day. I was staying with my girlfriend again, and we met up with some friends of hers I had met back in September, all traction engine men, also volunteers on Bluebell Railway. They were on the Wolsztyn Experience driving the steam hauled service trains that week on a rota for the morning and afternoon shifts. Whoever wasn't booked on that day had it free so activities were planned. There were nine of us in total. I was told that on the Sunday they were off on "Derailer Car" on the narrow gauge railway and I could come along too. At early-o'clock we set off in a mini bus to Smeigal, a little village in the middle of no-where where there is a narrow gauge line (750mm gauge) with steam locos and diesel railcars. Now perhaps at this point I should explain why they nicknamed it "Derailer Car". The track to the North of Smeigal has been out of use for many years and is in a poor state of repair – it was along this section the lads planned to run a train... In Poland, if the powers-that-be have been given enough money they are happy to turn a blind eye. We were all allowed to drive this railcar so it wasn't a question of 'if' we



could derail the railcar, but 'who' would derail it!

The track really was bad. Our aim was to get to the terminus some 15km away, but progression was hindered by many farm level crossings where we had to dig out

flange ways. We were armed with a variety of digging tools but it was still hard work, made worse by the compacted mud frozen at minus 10 deg. C. There was one level crossing up someone's driveway which I remember had beautifully laid brickwork



between the rails – it wasn't so beautiful after we had smashed out the bricks for the flange ways though! Still, it ain't called the permanent way for nothing!

Despite the train riding over some pretty hairy level crossings OK, it was grass that finally defeated us and sent us "off the rails"! The line was buried under a good 3" of turf - as the track underneath curved off to the right the front bogie went straight on! The front bogie was also the driving bogie and was helpless to shift us in the grass. We tried to dig the wheels free but it was to no avail. In an attempt to free us, a local farmer came out with his tractor and tried to pull us back out, but he only buried himself in the mud trying! With a 16 tonne railcar to get

back to the depot by 6 pm for following morning's school train the our poor old driver gave in and phoned his boss who came with another diesel loco and re-railing ramps from the depot we had set off from. They eventually pulled us out, with some impressive fireworks from under the slipping wheels! The derailment had set us

back two hours but that didn't deter us, we still managed to progressed on another half a mile before admitting defeat when the sun set. The trip back in the dark was fortunately uneventful because it had started snowing and the temperature was getting down into -15 degrees. Thinking that the activities of that day couldn't get any stranger – the plan for Monday would make it seem like a normal day out...

Monday was "Fiat Carsky Day" and the closest I've ever got to hypothermia! What the devil does that mean I hear you ask? Well, if you have seen Back to the Future 3 with the car on railway line and a steam train chasing it – you wouldn't be far off! Some Polish railway enthusiasts decided to take a Fiat 126 and substitute the rubber tyres for some steel ones so it can run on the railway track! But the 'best bit', which I had been ill informed of was that passengers don't sit in the car – they sit on a flat wagon towed behind the car on two facing garden benches welded to the wagon, lovely in the summer time I'm sure, but not when the temperature was -15 and snowing! Again, the boys had paid PKP (Polish state railways) money for access to 30km of disused railway from Grodzisk to run the 'car train'. The disused line runs parallel for nearly one mile out of Grodzisk station with the main Wolsztyn – Poznan line before they diverge. The plan was to run the car parallel with the mainline when the steamer came back in with the morning train and when it went out again with the evening train to take some videos

Racing the steam loco out of the station was a disappointment as the snowfall on the rails hindered grip so the steam was well off into the distance before we really got going. We decided to substitute the bumper for a wooden plank, onto which two 'rail brushes' were nailed to sweep the snow off the

railhead before going under the cars wheels! It was a great fun, if not a very cold day. We traversed about one third of the disused branch. We passed through several stations, over old bridges and embankments – at one point the car was doing 90kmph (about 50mph) on the downgrade apparently – there was one particular farm crossing I'm sure that the wagons wheels didn't touch the rails... At that speed I can honestly say I was frightened! I dread to think what would have happened if we had derailed... But then that's Poland! A country unspoiled by modern 'Elf and Safety rules – and they are better off for it.

We didn't continue all the way to the end of the line – the line was badly overgrown 10km out of from Grodzisk. We went to a roadside shop for some lunch and some warm up Polish 'wodka' before turning and heading 'home' to catch the outward evening steam service. The next question I hear you ask is how did we turn the car on a single track railway? Well, that's the ingenious bit! You simply



find a level crossing to jack up the front of the car and lift it, turn the wheels full-lock and let down the jack to effectively derail it on the crossing and just drive off the rails. Do a three point turn on the crossing and slot yourself back onto the track – easy! We went back but stopped outside of Grodzisk, where the two rail lines meet and

run parallel into the station and waited for the steamer. We had about 1 km to gain speed and film the engine before the station. Eventually a steam cloud could be seen on the horizon so we fired up the Fiat and got a roll on. We let the loco gain on us before flooring the car. Our top speed was about 20mph and the steamer was galloping up on us, with the driver, one of the lads, playing on the whistle. It was quite daunting when the loco caught up with us as you realise just how massive they are, especially when they are actually steaming along side you! I videoed the whole episode whilst standing upright on the wagon – a bit wobbly but fun nevertheless! The video can be found on YouTube for those interested; search for the 'Best Train Race' and you will find it! It was a brilliant day, if not very cold – but how many of you can say you have driven over a level crossing the wrong way in a car whilst going perpendicular to the main road?! The people in their cars waiting at the gates were probably rubbing their eyes in disbelief as we went by...

On the Friday, I went with the girlfriend on the footplate, just as passengers, with two of the lads who drove and fired. It was quite a squeeze on the footplate every time the shovel was picked up with six of us on the footplate. Every time we went passed a depot or signal box we had to duck down so as not to be seen as the drivers would get in trouble if we were caught. For that reason we couldn't go with six of us on the footplate when the loco went on shed at Poznan for water and turning, so we went to town to buy some sausages to put up on the boiler manifold. It was getting very cold by now, the temperature was -15 degrees when we left at Wolsztyn at 13.31, but it had dropped off to -24 degrees when we reached Poznan (that's what the digital station clock

registered anyway!). On the way home I sat on the edge of the coal shovelling tray on the tender, quite a bouncy seat! I helped the fireman by pulling down coal in the tender which had frozen together into a solid mass which required braking up with the poker, whilst maintaining a clean footplate the

Great Western would be proud of! Incidentally, if you thought the footplate would be warm – you were wrong! One of the drivers had a bottle of water which he wedged behind the tender handbrake, by the time we were back on shed at Wolsztyn the water was solid ice! It was so cold the leaking steam past the piston glands froze on the connecting rods and smoke deflectors turning them white with a build up of solid ice. Still, all that made those sausages slip down a treat!

*Steve Newell*

## ***Contact Numbers/Addresses.***

Treasurer John Evans  
1 Grosvenor Close  
Hatch Warren  
Basingstoke  
Hampshire  
RG22 4RQ  
01256 471233  
[Jon.h.evans@btinternet.com](mailto:Jon.h.evans@btinternet.com)

Secretary. Brian Hogg  
14 Fontwell Drive  
Alton  
Hampshire  
GU34 2TN  
01420 543581

Newsletter Editor  
John Taviner  
67 Mullins Close  
Basingstoke  
Hampshire  
RG21 5QY  
01256 464642  
[wejt@btopenworld.com](mailto:wejt@btopenworld.com)

## ***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.

*Jon Evans*  
*Treasurer*

## ***Who's Who.***

Chairman	Terry Hobbs
Vice Chairman	Tom Burgess
Secretary	Brian Hogg
Treasurer	Jon Evans

## ***Committee Members.***

Bob Lovett	Member
Graham Blissett	Member
Barry Spender	Member

## ***Project Leaders.***

Catering manager	Fred Pheby
Electrical Work	Simon Hutson
Library	Ken Jones
Painting/Decorating	Vacant
Publicity	Malcolm Duckett
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