

EXPANSION LINK

NEWSLETTER OF THE B&DMES

EDITOR JOHN TAVINER-VOLUME Five-ISSUE three

DATE SEPTEMBER 2011



Editorial

Hello to all members and welcome to the third edition of "Expansion Link" of 2011. In this issue we have the usual notes from The Chairman and The Treasurer. Mick Lowe continues with his experiences on the mainline, Philip Edney relates the first part of the building of a Fowler Traction engine in 2 inch scale. Philip and his wife Sue live in Hayling Island but still frequently make the journey to Basingstoke for meeting nights and other events. Finally Jon Poulter tells of the preliminary plans for next year's two day steam rally. The next big event on the calendar is the Halloween Public Run. Let us all hope that the weather stays kind to us for this event to make it the success it has been over the last two years. A lot of help is wanted on the day and if you can come dressed in the appropriate costume so much the better. That's about it for now except to make my usual plea for material for inclusion in future issues. Remember this newsletter is dependent on input from all members. It can be on any subject relative to our hobby and should be of your own experiences. You can also use these pages to advertise any sales or wants but bear in mind that there will probably be a delay between submission and publication. Sorry no pictures in this issue. I have had a major computer problem and I am using an old unit which only has a small library of pictures with no suitable subjects.

John Taviner Editor

Forthcoming Events

October

- 2 Public Running
- 4 Meeting Night
- 16 Members Running Day (Sun)
- 18 Bits and Pieces
- 29 Halloween Public Running (Sat Evening)

November

- 1 Meeting Night
- 15 Bring and Buy Evening
- 20 Members Running Day (Sun)
- 23 AGM
- 29 Meeting Night

December

- 4 Public Running
- 13 Meeting Night
- 27 Members Christmas Run (Tuesday)

Chairman's Chat

Well folks it is that time again and the Editor is chasing me to get this to him.

Those of you that get to the club will see that the building we have acquired to replace the old tunnel is nearly complete and by the time you read this it should be almost ready for use, my thanks to all those that have helped in any way with its construction.

Some members have spoken to me recently saying they are worried about the club's future, all were at pains to stress there concerns were nothing to with actions of other members or the committee, Their concerns cover quite few aspects from "We don't seem to do much to try and get new members of a younger age group, to worries over the lack of income from the public running" and several other things as well.

Some suggested we should go back to running on the first Sunday of each month, regardless of what happens elsewhere, others have suggested we try a few Saturdays as there is always a lot more going on at Viabes on that day. So I will say to you all, think about it and think on.

We have the A G M coming up in November and we can discuss your concerns and ideas then.

As most of you will remember I was heavily criticised for letting a couple of our younger members act as guard on the trains during our steam rally and also the fact they were allowed to drive traction engines on the rally field, well member Phil Edney has found out the actual insurance details concerning young drivers taking part on any club event concerning steam locomotives, traction engines and other related vehicles, THERE IS NO LOWER OR UPPER AGE LIMIT and hopefully the Editor will print it in this magazine for you all to read. My thanks to

Phil for doing this.

You will have noticed that the council's tree surgeons have been busy around the site. There are 38 trees getting various amounts of treatment including 5 to be completely taken down. This brings me to one of the concerns that was voiced to me by Dave Blaza, about the number of self setting weed trees that are growing on our bit of the site. In his opinion, and I agree with him, we should dig them out as it is part of the lease agreement that we are responsible for the condition of our part of the sight including all shrubs, trees etc and that the site has to be kept in good order. More about this at a later date.

When we approached the council for permission to use the paddock and redundant car track for next years traction engine rally we were informed that they could well be developing the site and no use of those two areas would be sanctioned until after they have had their meeting. Please draw your conclusions on this matter.

That's it for this time folks.

Terry Hobbs. Chairman.

Treasurers Notes

Welcome to all our new members who have joined this year.

The Membership has now reached 61 this month which is an increase of 10 on last year with only 2 people dropping out. Public running has so far been somewhat disappointing in terms of revenue, so can we all

ensure that the Halloween run is as successful as last year.

Finally, I have provisionally booked Richard Aldworth for this years AGM on Wednesday 23rd November.

Another date which you might like to pencil in is the 2012 Steam Rally which

is planned for April 14th - 15th 2012

Jon. Treasurer

The Footplate Career of Mick Lowe

No. 11

Well here I am again after a break in the last issue

A question I have often been asked is " what is the procedure of putting the Loco away after a days work?"

Well a Steam Loco was pretty basic. The Driver would walk round, do a visual examination of the Loco and feel the bearings, big ends and all the coupling bearings to see whether they were running hot. Also the same on the tender axle boxes and this would show if there were any defects that needed booking. This would include defective injectors (not picking up properly), brakes that might need adjusting and any other jobs needing attention. The Fireman's job was a little more physical. The first job was to clean the fire, shovel it up on one side of the firebox and break up the now dead clinker on one side using the clinker shovel that was up to 10ft long, haul it out of the firebox with the shovel getting hotter and hotter!

When this side was cleaned the other side of the fire was pulled over and cleaned with now a very hot clinker shovel that was beginning to buckle. Then the clean fire was pulled back under the fire hole door, then built up with clean coal from the tender making sure that the engine has some steam left so that it can be moved, fill the boiler up with water so that the footplate can swept up and be washed down.

Now to the smoke box – open and shovel out char (ashes not tea!), then sweep the front off after shutting the smoke box door. Take the lamps or disc boards back to the footplate and put away in the toolbox

Last but not least go into the pit and rake out the ash pan, and very often when under the loco performing this task if the wind was blowing you would be showered with ash! Happy Days!

Whilst cleaning the fire and smoke box you would note if there were any leaks or stays blowing and inform the Driver.

This task was much easier on BR Standard Locos and some Non-Standard Locos by the fact that some of the smoke boxes were self-cleaning and with drop graters fitted to the fireboxes.

Also hopper ash pans allowed you to operate them from the exterior of the Loco without going underneath (no more showers of ash here!)

When I transferred to Reading in 1993 along with seven other drivers most of us were ex-steam men.

Fortune smiled upon me and three steam driving turns came my way!

One of them in 1994 was to travel pass to Didcot Loco with my Fireman Chris Jennings (who was one of the ex-Basingstoke men). It was an evening turn and dark as it was wintertime.

We arrived at the Loco and found the Engine No.70000 Britannia under the coal stage with the support coach already coupled up and the engine ready and prepared for us by the support crew.

We had an hour and a half before we were due to leave for Stewarts Lane, so having satisfied ourselves by having a quick check around the Loco, tender filled, lamps lit that all was well we went over to the Shunters hut to make a can of tea and informed them that we were ready to leave at the booked time. " OK " they said "will get you the road when its time".

We returned to the Engine had our tea and sandwiches

Then a Footplate Inspector turns up to ride with us
In the meanwhile I had walked from the Engine up to the Signal that would let us out onto the main line to check all was well there - only to find a de-railer clamped to the track halfway to the signal.
Whilst chatting amongst ourselves on the Footplate the time rolled on and passed the start time.
No sign of the Shunters to release us!
The Footplate Inspector says we should give them a reminder to which the Shunter replied that he had forgotten all about us, he raced up to the signal telephone and the signal came off.
He then called us up with his hand lamp. I didn't move – the Inspector says “ its ok to go up as the Shunter is giving you the tip that he has got us the road”
I answered that we were not moving as a de-clamper was clamped on the track half way to the signal
By now the Shunter was shouting “Come on you have the road”.
No time now to get excited, so I strolled up to the Shunter who asked what was the matter.
I asked him if he wanted to derail us with a clamper on the track!
He was full of apologies saying that he had forgotten about that (probably mind not on his job, woman trouble!)
He rang the Signalman who put the signal back and went for the key for the derailer
Oh deary, deary me they could not find the key!!
So after about forty minutes they managed to smash the derailer with a sledgehammer!
After getting the road we were on our way
A good result, I got a letter thanking me for my professional observance from the Inspector.

This was the second one of my career- I must be getting good!
(What was the first one you may ask? I wrote about the Maidenhead incident in a previous episode)
Please no comments – just cross my hand with some coinage of the realm or buy me a pint.
On the Southern in the 1950's and early 1960's we were very fortunate to become Drivers at quite a young age (I was passed for driving in 1963 and got my Drivers job in 1966 which gave me three and a half years driving Steam Locos)
This was due to promotion at that time being confined to your own region unless a vacancy was classed as exhausted, meaning that no-one had applied for the job/depot due to perhaps the quality of the work there. Mainly small depots with crap work!
It boiled down to the fact that in the period that men who joined the railway in the 1920's and 1930's were now coming up to Retirement age.
Such large numbers had moved around when electrification was installed on the South Eastern and Central side, causing men to move rather than in those days being made redundant.
This worked out very well for us 'young nippers' and we were often classed as 'boy Drivers'
One time this came to the fore was when I piloted an old Driver to Banbury with a freight train - he did the driving under my guidance – this is the most efficient way to learn a route.
After putting our train away we reformed the return service with our train Loco – (a Class 33), on being given the load by the Shunter – the Driver told me what the load was to which I replied, “we can manage that lot”

The Shunter looked at me and said, "You wouldn't say that if this was a Steam Loco"
Again I replied, "Yes a piece of cake!"
The Driver said, "I am the Driver here, He is my Pilot man"

This stunned the Shunter who now wanted to know how long I had been on the job before becoming a Driver
He was quite taken aback when I told him it was 9 years

It transpired that he had been on the footplate at Banbury for 27 years and a passed Fireman for about 12 years and had only ever had one driving turn!!

He had been so despondent that he had packed the job in when redundancy reared its ugly head at Banbury and he transferred to the yard as a Shunter

Due to Electrification there was a very big difference between the regions.

Time to book off and go home

Mick Lowe

How I Came To Build A 2" Fowler Traction Engine

It all began at the beginning of the 1964 when my father and I acquired the plans for a Wallace & Stevens Traction Engine which we intended to build. Unfortunately my father died in 1965 and so this project never came to fruition.

Some years ago my aunt Sarah died and left me a small legacy. I had mentioned the desire to build a Traction Engine to my wife Sue who suggested that I use this money to buy the necessary equipment to build an engine. (She said what you never had you never missed). I duly purchased an old lorry body to use as a workshop as I had no workshop.

We then visited many shows and I agonized over which engine to build. I plumped for a Fowler 2" Agricultural Engine as my father

had been an agricultural worker and also the lathe I had wasn't large enough for anything bigger. I think the year was 1998.

The boiler was ordered from Western Steam and while I waited for this I got on with the wheels so that when the boiler arrived I would have something to stand it on. This worked very well but I had to wait longer than usual for the boiler as Helen was poorly at the time and took longer to make it. Any necessary castings I needed I bought from MJ Engineering when it was run by John and Malcolm and bought all the castings at the same time, to give me encouragement and to buy before they went up.

I never had any engineering experience and therefore had to teach myself how to use a lathe and read plans, which wasn't easy as I couldn't visualize the finished piece. I sometimes therefore made two or three parts before it was correct. I also had to make the jigs necessary to complete these parts. However, I persevered and although at times I had to sit for days or even weeks and think about how I was going to do the part I was then working on I would eventually make it. The boiler arrived and I was as they say in business.

I would adjourn to my shed in between work and other duties and sometimes got despondent when the part I was working on went wrong and would leave it for a while to ponder on what I was going to do or how I would get round the problem. Sometimes this took hours, days or weeks but eventually I would make it. The only problem was that when thinking about one thing, I couldn't carry on with the next part because the problem was always on my mind! #

I read books on how to do things and when it came to the gears I read the book by

Percival Marshall titled Gear Wheels and Gear Cutting. I decided after reading this that I wouldn't be able to make the gears, not least of all because I didn't have a Mill which I thought was too expensive to buy. There was another person I knew who was building a 2" Fowler at the other end of Hayling and although he had a lovely workshop with all the tools he needed, including 2 Mills, he had joined evening classes. Sue suggested I did the same and make the gears on their Mills. I joined and the teacher set up my gear blank on the machine to make the gears. At the end of these attempts which took more than one evening, the gears all came out crooked which disappointed me! I thought then that perhaps I knew more than he did as I had read the book and set about buying a Mill (second hand of course). I purchased a dividing head at a second-hand tool shop which was unfortunately 42/1 ratio and I cut all my gears for the engine on this, however I subsequently made my own dividing head at 60/1 ratio as I found it very hard to remember where I was with the other one. At this time a good friend, who is no longer with us, was building a wooden clock and only had a small lathe which as he described it "nearly shook all my teeth out" when he tried making his gears on it. I talked him into using my lathe for this purpose and apart from one mistake when he lost count and went wrong, he completed this task. He was very pleased with this and got his clock finished and was fortunate enough to try it just before he died.

Philip Edney

To be continued.

2012 Steam Rally Update

Just an update for you. We are currently

producing flyers and handing them out at some of the shows the team and myself attend, will be looking for more people to assist with this nearer the time.

An answer from the council is due in October for the use of the field, so we are held up at this time in pushing the event to the next level.

Dealt with so far?

1: Train rides will increase to £1.50 just for the rally weekend, this we do not believe unreasonable considering every thing else is free.

2: We are dropping the Scouts from organising the car parking, as they collected over £200 for their own use. This we will take care of ourselves and signs have been made.

3: Both halls are booked again at the same cost as this year, £250. We do have the option to cancel, as no deposit has to be paid yet.

We are also looking towards a theme, ' Hampshire Steam'. So any model, Wallis & Steevens, Tasker or Thorneycroft. Then on the railway side we would like someone or group to arrange a display, photo's etc of Basingstoke shed. To add further to the show, we are trying to get a boating pool, as some boating people have expressed an interest in attending. We will also be inviting a couple of other clubs, to display their wares.

On the trade side, we have started to approach those that asked to be informed of the forth-coming event. So fingers crossed this time.

Both MJ and JB cutting have agreed to come,

with MJ having a display on the Wallis traction engine they currently market. Further updates to follow. I have attached the revised poster, if you would be so kind and added it to the news letter please. Thanks. Also if anyone has any ideas to further enhance the show, please get in touch.

Jon Poulter

**Basingstoke & District
Model Engineering
Society**

**Miniature Steam Rally
& Exhibition**

Craft Units
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Train Rides
Garden Railway



14th & 15th April 2012

Viabes Craft Centre
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Admission By Donation
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Or phone: John Poulter on 01256 463884

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**Model Road Steam Insurance
Young Drivers and NTET Authorised Events**

Young Drivers

The Walker Midgley Model Road Steam Policy provides Road Traffic Act insurance cover for all persons driving on the policyholder's order or with the policyholder's permission. There is no upper or lower age limit for drivers – full Road Traffic Act insurance cover applies to all, including drivers under the age of 17.

When the model/minature road vehicle is used on the road the driver must be age 17 or over and the holder of a category B driving licence – the licence required to drive a car.

Drivers under the age of 17 and drivers who do not hold a category B driving licence are permitted to drive anywhere other than on a road and full Road Traffic Act insurance cover applies.

NTET Authorised Events

Whilst the Model Road Steam Policy provides cover for young drivers individual rallies may have their own 'rules' concerning the approval of young drivers. It is wise to check with the rally organiser before you arrive in order to avoid any disappointment.

For NTET authorised events there are seven conditions laid down by The National Traction Engine Trust - these are set out below:-

1. There must be proper insurance in place (note: the Model Road Steam Policy provides this)
2. The young driver must be a member of the NTET Steam Apprentice Club
3. The young driver is not barred from holding a licence – apart from by reason of his/her age. Also a minimum age of 13 and a minimum height of 1.4 metres (4ft 7ins) applies
4. The young driver must be accompanied by a full licence holder for the vehicle (ie the full licence holder must be able to reach the controls)
5. The young driver must be of known good conduct
6. The young driver's driving has been sanctioned by the safety officer
7. The rally organiser has notified exhibitors and visitors that youngsters may be driving

Further details of the Steam Apprentice Club may be obtained from Kevin Munn, Chairman NTET Steam Apprentice Club, telephone 0208 573 9180 or by visiting www.ntet.co.uk and clicking on 'steam Apprentice Club'

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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.

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

Eric Widdowson

Electrical Work

Vacant

Library

Ken Jones

Painting/Decorating

David Andrews

Publicity

Eric Widdowson

Assistant needed

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