

# HALESWORTH & DISTRICT MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY LTD



**NEWSLETTER**



**WINTER 2009/10**

## Management Committee

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Vice Chairman	Dick Barker
Secretary	Chris Walliman
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	Vic Churchill
	Philip Hall
	Brian Sinfield
	Michael Ovenden
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Newsletter Editor	Michael Ovenden
Web master	David Seaborne
Events Coordinator	Terry Fleet

Boiler Testers	Don Black
	Vic Churchill

Driver Authoriser (locomotives)	Vic Churchill
Guard Authoriser (locomotives)	Philip Hall

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## COVER STORY

Do you remember what the weather was like in early November? Well if you have forgotten then the article starting on page 5 may refresh your memory!

## FROM THE EDITOR'S BENCH

Many of you may have noticed that we only had three newsletters last year instead of four. The reason for this is quite simple, I cannot edit a newsletter for you without any articles. After a desperate plea I have managed a fairly comprehensive edition this time, but the Spring edition is looking a bit sparse. I have no problem with editing your newsletter but I cannot also write the articles and take photographs. I work full time and have other interests so I need your articles to make it a success.

If you want to continue to have a newsletter then I must have articles from the membership.

Those of you with access to the internet will no doubt have noticed that David Seaborne has been very busy updating everything. I would like to thank David on behalf of the club for the huge amount of work he has put in over the last few months. David also needs material for the web site so if you have something of interest call him on 01502 733896.

*Michael Ovenden*

## ANNUAL DINNER

Its that time of year again and it is time to get your booking form in for the annual dinner. As in previous years we will be holding this event at The Priory, St. Olaves on Friday 19th March 2010, Seating at 7.30pm for 8.00pm. The cost this year is £15.95 per head for three courses and tea/coffee. A menu selection and booking form is enclosed with this newsletter.

Over the past couple of years we have been asked if we can have a change of venue. The answer to this is quiet simple, "yes". If any member would like to find a venue which fits the following criteria then Linda is more than happy to make the arrangements.

- 1 A reasonable fixed menu selection
- 2 Acceptable price
- 3 Centrally located
- 4 Able to cater for our numbers

Please do not say "What about....." it is your club and your annual dinner, if you want a change then it is up to you to find it!

# SECRETARY'S NOTES

Sadly I must report the death of three of our members over the past months. Our thoughts and sympathy go to their families and friends.

Dick Grave passed away on 16 September 2009. Although a member for only a few years Dick will always be remembered for his old school charm and the lively talks he gave.

Keith Butcher passed away on 4 November 2009. Keith was among the founder members of our club and maintained his ties when he recently offered to help out as a boiler inspector. Keith and his son Shaun were frequently seen out and about with their steam launch.

Allan Wright passed away on 27 December 2009. Allan was a good supporter of club events providing help or advice freely. He had a particular interest in promoting model engineering to the younger generation and developed an interesting range of display models for use at exhibitions.

At a recent committee meeting we looked at the way the club is run and considered how the administration could be broken down in such a way that would spread the workload more evenly. It was agreed that a breakdown which enabled "Horses for courses" should result in better management. There is still detail to be sorted out and there will be a number of changes on the committee. Informal discussion will take place with interested members on meeting nights and the recommended way forward will be explained on the AGM calling notice with a decision to be taken by members at the AGM.

Looking ahead we will soon be setting out the programme for the year commencing 1 April 2010. Now is the time to start thinking about what we want to do in the way of meeting nights, visits and outings etc.

We are fortunate in owning a super site which has evolved in a way to suit members needs. Ongoing care and maintenance is probably the greatest challenge facing us and with diminishing numbers on the Thursday working party it cannot be left to that group alone. We are all co-owners of the site so how about taking a hand in care and maintenance of our joint asset

*Chris Walliman*

# LONDON TO BRIGHTON NOVEMBER 2009

One day I will remember to engage brain before mouth but on this occasion I was glad I didn't!

While visiting the 2008 Engineering Show at Harrogate I met up with my cousin and his wife and conversation eventually got on to the topic of old cars and Malcolm's adventure on the previous 2007 L2B run. Without engaging brain I immediately said 'Oh – I'd love to do that' to which his wife's reply was 'Good because then I can have a year off'.

What had I done?.....I had no idea what it involved, what the car was like, how long it took and what if anything I would have to do on the route. Malcolm soon informed me that I might want to reconsider my comment as the car was 1901 vintage, had no roof or doors and I might have to walk part of the route up the hills or even worse – help push the car up the hill.....and to enable me to take part help from Michael would also be required as he would be driving the support vehicle and trailer from London to Brighton so we could get home again! As I remember I didn't really give Michael much opportunity to say no – so tentative plans were made that I would take part in the 2009 run once Malcolm had completed one more run with his wife Sue in 2008

At the beginning of October 2009 we started making plans. A friend of his who had helped as support driver in previous years was also going to have a 'turn' and as Tony opted to go first, I was to start my leg of the journey at Pease Pottage Services. This must have been a difficult decision for Tony to make as by going first he was almost guaranteed a run but if the car kept going as far as Pease Pottage services and he went second he would have the prestige (hopefully) of crossing the famous finish line in Brighton.

Many phone calls later it was eventually agreed that Michael and I would stay at Malcolm's house (well near enough – the motor home was parked in a neighbour's garden) on the Saturday night so we could leave Chelmsford at 4.15am to get to London in time for his start time of 7.08

The journey to London was an event in itself – missed turnings, road closures and unexpected diversions – but we eventually found a

parking space in a still very dark Hyde Park and began to unload the car. Only when it was unloaded from the trailer did I see 'Reggie Renault' for the first time. A cute little car (female term) with the saving grace of rubber tyres – unlike some other vehicles going to Brighton that day!

However Reggie had other plans and despite Malcolm's thorough pre-flight checks Reggie would not start. Good job an engineer was on hand and between them Michael and Malcolm got it started (the problem was something to do with points) and off went Tony and Malcolm.

Michael and I plus Sue and Lynn (Tony's wife) wandered down to the assembly area and I was amazed there were so many types, ages, shapes and colours of vehicles – very nostalgic when set against the river with dawn breaking.

However the time came for us to set off to the change over point and Michael proceeded to drive the car and trailer out of London towards Pease Pottage services – by this time the rain was getting heavier and heavier by the minute. As we got nearer to the change over point the weather had become what can only be described as atrocious - heavy rain with gusts of wind to knock you over - and I was glad I was going second and not currently sitting in a 108-year-old car with no roof or doors on the motorway!

Unfortunately having got to Pease Pottage earlier than we anticipated, when Malcolm eventually arrived, the 2 hours free parking allowance had nearly expired so I quickly got ready to go – and while Malcolm was using the facilities everybody else literally drove away leaving me standing beside 'Reggie' in the rain ever hopeful that it would start again for our leg of the journey

Only now was I glad I had not opted for a fashion show of appropriate 1901 attire – but had chosen to wear my motorcycle gear which is totally waterproof and warm with the crash helmet being replaced by a warm (but not so waterproof) leather flying helmet. In fact I was the only one that day that stayed dry!

Reggie behaved this time and started first time so we set off in horizontal rain which was painful when it hit your face – but the challenge was to take part and get to Brighton – I could dry out later.

Malcolm had warned me there were steep hills on the route and I may have to get out and walk or push but amazingly – considering that by now Malcolm had no 3<sup>rd</sup> gear to use – Reggie managed to get up all the hills without me walking or being pushed – something not achieved previously with Sue as a passenger!

Even though the weather was appalling, the route was lined with people of all ages waving and clapping in support of us all. We had priority at traffic lights and the hills had been closed to oncoming vehicles so if you had more than the 4.5hp we had, other cars could overtake if necessary. I just wonder how many photos were taken on the route and how many people have pictures of us that we will never see?

Then came the interesting bit – joining the motorway in the rain with a average speed of 10mph – although we did once reach 19mph going down a hill. Malcolm asked me to look for a suitable gap – but how big a gap did a 108 year old car need? I spotted a gap and told him ‘NOW’ but with his flying helmet being soaked right through with rain, he did not hear me in time and the gap was lost. I looked again and told him ‘GO’ but just as he started to pull out of the inside lane to go across to the outside lane a car came into view but fortunately saw us and all lanes of traffic slowed down to let us across. Phew!!!!

To see the ‘Welcome to Brighton’ sign made me happy and sad - happy we were nearly there but sad as it meant my adventure was nearly over but little did I realise more fun was ahead. On the approach to Brighton we had to obey traffic light controls again and whether tired or showing off, Reggie decided to stall at a set of lights. Conveniently a pedestrian crossing with an island was right beside us so we pushed it onto there out of the way of the lights and a policewoman came across to us and said ‘Don’t worry, we will get you to the finish line – I will get some petrol here for you’. Malcolm was not sure what the problem was as it could be I had been over enthusiastic in adding oil to the engine (oops) but with a bit of TLC he got it started again and once it was reversed back into the traffic flow (reverse being me pushing it) we set off again.

The L2B’s official finish line is in Preston Park and we got the entrants pass stamped and knew we had officially finished but the famous finish line is on Madeira Walk so we still had a bit further to go hoping Reggie would keep going. What an experience to cross the finish line

with photographers, sponsors, relatives and friends waiting for you. We drove under the famous L2B barrier with such a big smile on our faces but about 12ft later Reggie had had enough and stopped again but this time it didn't matter – we had done it – and what an experience.

I would not have missed this opportunity for anything – the rain just made it more memorable!!! .....but the biggest thankyou has to go to Malcolm and Michael as without them I would not have had such a wonderful day



*Linda Ovenden*

## **RAILWAY CANOPY**

You know how it is sitting on a station waiting for a train. Bored, you start to look around. The work that goes into a railway canopy, brackets, woodwork, lights, painting not to mention the rest of the railway items you find on the station. One of these canopies would look good on the side of our garage, said Kevin. After years of looking for some suitable large brackets we thought we had finally found some, ornamental but not railway, only to be told by the seller, "I don't want to sell them, I'm going to use them to put a lean to on the side of my house"!

Then with a kind donation to our club of two Midland & Great Northern Railway (affectionately known as the muddle and get nowhere railway) brackets this set the ball rolling. With the committees permission we borrowed a bracket to use as a pattern. Asking around the membership one other member also wanted a bracket cast for a future project. The bracket was cleaned up to remove the concrete etc that it had accumulated over the years. As it was so heavy Kevin decided to have the brackets cast in aluminium to reduce the weight, rather than pull over the garage wall. We travelled round numerous foundries trying to find one that could cast this volume of aluminium and with the required quality. We placed the order with a delivery time of about 4 weeks, 10 days later we got a phone call to say the brackets were

ready for collection. So on the Friday we hooked up the trailer to collect the original bracket and three shiny new aluminium ones.

The brackets required fettling, filling and cleaning as expected, I got the job of painting the etch primer followed by two coats of the correct colour paints (Golden brown with the detail picked out in county cream).

Once Kevin worked out a design which I approved, the wood was delivered and we made a start. He cut and joined, and I painted and painted and painted. The weather was brilliant sunshine, so things moved fast. Slate tiles were acquired from just the other side of Ipswich and installed on top



of the tongue & groove, membrane and battens (Kevin broke the corner off one slate whilst he was working on the roof, which is still in place as it “adds character to the roof”). The guttering is boxed in so it cannot be seen. Lead flashing was added with Kevin’s artistic flare using homemade tools to produce a nice profile for the corners. And then the pretty bits, all 114 of them hand cut and sanded and painted with three coats of the county cream.

It looks brilliant and is finished, or so I thought, but no it doesn’t finish there. We then painted the side door (with three coats of the right coloured paint) and found a station masters sign for it, also painted in the right colour. Kevin then installed loads of hidden uplighters within the canopy. A G.W.R bench stands under the canopy and on a fine warm evening we can sit with a glass of wine. Peace at last. And still no bloody train.



Shortly after completing the canopy a friend managed to acquire an original station lamp. “That gives me an idea, a pair would look great”, said Kevin. Another project begins!!!

*Marion Rackham*

Brian read is currently having some more brackets cast. If any member wants to add to the order please contact Brain ASAP on 01379 676316. This will be the last opportunity before they are fixed in place.

## **A PERENNIAL FAVOURITE - SWEET PEA**

There are quite a few Sweet Pea locos in the club, well built, reliable and durable. I had never really liked the shape, so when examples have come up for sale in the club it has never been of interest to me. Then last year I had a phone call from an old member to say that he had a Sweet Pea for sale called Daisy. A price was stated and I was surprised to hear myself say "I'll have that, subject to satisfactory steam and running test". The loco had originally belonged to Bernard North and then was acquired by Michael Whitwam.

Arranging a steam test down at the club, the first thing apparent was that the loco had had a lot of use over its 30 year life. The fact that each wheel had 2 deep flanges was a clue. Steam was raised with difficulty, the safety valves worked correctly, the hand pump sort of worked and I didn't bother to try the injector. A trip round the raised track was next, the wheels were so badly worn that they may have been damaged going over the points. A quick circuit revealed that the axle pump almost kept up with demand, the valve gear was correctly set and that I was not adept at keeping the pressure up. That was OK then.

Back at the workshop the first thing to do was whip the wheel sets off and true up the wheels. A loose crankpin was sorted out and opportunity taken to modify the rear suspension to give a more stable ride height. I managed to overcome my natural tendency to sort out every minor defect. It was probably seeing my steam lorry in several hundred pieces that did the trick. The hand pump problem was worn valve seats and excessive ball lift, quickly sorted out. With decent wheels a trip round the ground level track was called for. This confirmed that the axle pump was defective as was my ability to keep pressure up or a decent fire going.

Round 2 involved removing the pump where the valve seats and ball lift limiter were excessively worn and the balls were corroded. Quickly remedied. Using the ground level track I had been unable to see the pressure gauge because of the cab roof. A solution would have been to relocate the gauge but I had found an illustration of one of the very few quarry Bagnalls with the roofless cab and the appeal was immediate. Just in time for the New year steam up the old cab was removed, brake and drain-cock gear relocated and new side sheets made up. When painted satin black I was quite pleased with the result.

I decided to give the flue tubes a brush, as you do, and it was only

then that what should have been obvious from day one became apparent. Two of the flues are for superheaters which are not fitted. This may have some bearing on my poor steam raising. Superheaters have now been made up and fitted and another trial run is required.

The fun thing about a Sweet Pea is that there was never a full sized version. Therefore you can modify the looks in any way you desire and not have a purist tell you it's wrong.

*Chris Walliman*

## **PEPPERED COFFEE**

(Sinsheim visit continued)

After about 10 hours sleep we were all up ready for breakfast. The Brits eating a continental breakfast and the Germans eating egg and bacon, strange. At a table behind us were three fellow enthusiasts from the UK who had started their journey from Blackpool and had bought three traction engines with them. If this was not a strange enough coincidence then the fact that one of them had a Dodman engine the same as Kevin's was even more of a coincidence. After breakfast our taxi was waiting and we stepped outside to temperatures of around -15°C, we were finally on our way to Sinsheim.

The journey was uneventful and having asked our taxi driver if he could return to pick us up at around 5.00pm we were finally inside. The sight that first meets you is unbelievable, it looks like a giant child's railway layout, with Christmas trees scattered around. The first hall is just track, locos, carriages and wagons of every description. The centre piece is a long track ramp which puts the locos to test with some quite spectacular results.

On the way in we saw the three traction engine owners from our hotel. They were getting up steam INSIDE the hall. The coal supplied must have been good quality as there was very little smoke. There were about a dozen or so other traction engines several of which had come from the UK.

In addition to the two large halls with the track layouts there were two more with trade stands and exhibitions. It was quite strange to be standing looking at a stand to find a 6" traction engine steaming past you pulling a riding trolley with passengers! This is because in addition

to being able to wander in and out of the track, the traction engines weave in and out of the trade stands. All of this happens in an enclosed building with live steam. Health and safety by allowing people to use their common sense.

We spent a great deal of the day wandering around the track. There was so much to see with locos constantly coming and going. They were hauling trains of every type and description and every type of loco you could think of even a tiny gas fired version of "Rocket".



Words cannot really describe the scene so I have included a few scenes from inside the halls. The next installment will be about our visit to the Sinsheim Museum. *Michael Ovenden*



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