

The Journal

of the North West Leicester Society of Model Engineers
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From The Editor

I came across this picture taken from the 'Plumbing, Heating and Air Movement News' (one for the 'Have I Got News For You' guest publication if ever I heard one). It is about a project I have heard of before but maybe I should take a bit more interest in it now. If you want to learn more, checkout www.steamcar.co.uk.



As an appetite whetter for little trips out, here are a couple from recent, very local, visits.



Left, a horse tram being restored at Stonehurst Farm, Mountsorrel. Right, my favourite place on the Great Central Railway at Rothley.

I must say it is very gratifying to get some feedback about the Journal. Some positive views have been expressed and I and Chairman Jamie really appreciate it. Thank you.

Dennis Hill

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT – JAMIE WILDE

I'm hoping it's not just my rose tinted glasses, but there seems to be a good 'vibe' around the place at the moment. Work is being done round the site at the usual busy pace, public running has been well attended, we've had some good birthday parties and the recent social events have been well supported. The atmosphere on running days always seems buoyant and friendly with the usual high standard of abuse by the bucket full. Visitors often remark on the friendly and relaxed atmosphere at our events. The fact that members and the public alike can come down to the track and have an enjoyable time must be a good indicator of the health of our Society. Am I right? If so, long may it continue!

I am pleased to tell you that we have formally started activities that should hopefully lead to us having a new clubhouse. We have requested permission from our landlord, the District Council, to put up a new building on the site. That was the easy part; we now need to create a Business Plan in order to sell our idea to all the people who we will need to help us along the way, particularly in the finance department. The intent is that this will be a colour printed booklet to promote the Society, our aims and our intentions for the new clubhouse.

A project of this size would be a major test of our determination as a Society at the best of times, so given the current economic climate we will have to work even harder if we wish to succeed. In order to achieve this, it will require us all to pull together and each one of us to do as much as we can to contribute. It will be a stern test of the positive spirit I mentioned earlier. The challenge has been set and the outcome is in our hands, so please do your bit. As the project develops, we will put information on the notice boards to show what is happening and what help is needed.

I know that some of our members have been busy visiting other clubs and have come back with some good ideas. How about writing a few notes on your visits for the rest of us chaps? It is always interesting to hear how other clubs are run or how they tackle certain problems.

And finally, a pat on the back for Bryan Rozier, who has taken up the mantle of advertising the Society and our events – you will hopefully have noticed his leaflets and / or posters around the place. We reckon that the increased success of our recent events and public running days is due in no small part to the work that Brian has done. Our June public running raised £41, which was well above the norm. Thanks Bryan, keep up the good work.

At the Track Site

Stebbing the Sleeper and his friends are still busy at work on the track, currently progressing along the back straight having completed both curves. The pace of work is impressive to say the least and there is a noticeable difference in the ride, well done to all involved.

Still with the track, we have been having some lively discussions about what we need to do to improve the track itself. The ride is certainly not as good as it used to be a few years ago. The ends of a lot of the rails are starting to distort leading to an uncomfortable ride in places. These need cutting out, the rails moving along and new rails sections adding in as required. Also connected with the rail ends, there are sizeable gaps at some of the joints which are causing problems for the smaller models in particular. It has been decided to close up all the joints on each curve and monitor the situation over the summer and next winter to see how the track moves.

A major part of the debate has centred on how the track moves as it expands and contracts with the varying temperature. A lot of work has been put into the carefully designed expansion joints that are gradually being installed. However, recent visits to a number of other Societies have revealed that they pay little attention to this issue and apparently suffer no ill effects. We

need to do more work to understand this as we may be creating a lot more work for ourselves than is really needed. No doubt there will be plenty more discussions before we agree on a final solution.

The new outside store is complete and has been pressed into good use, giving us a valuable increase in storage space. It has already survived two attacks from the local vandals, resulting in more robust locks being fitted. Thanks to all those involved.

The hut itself has also been receiving some external attention. The cladding at the kitchen end has been replaced and is now being re-painted. The rest of the cladding is being rubbed down and prepared for a fresh coat of paint. This will make a fantastic difference to the appearance for both us and our visitors.

Passenger Trucks

The trucks are now in regular operation and have been serving us well. The braking systems could still do with some more work to smooth them out before the vacuum system is finally installed.

The driving trucks are basically complete, although it has been reported that they are quite wobbly. This may just be down to adjusting the suspension settings. The couplings then need revising in-line with the main trucks.

As a final note, everyone who uses or handles the trucks must do so with care and a good dose of common sense please. Three of the four coupling pins from the blue set have completely disappeared. Where have they gone? What are people doing with them? There is no reason for them to be separated from the trucks and they have little use for anything else, so where are they? The replacement pins will be attached with lanyards to prevent further problems. Also, somebody has recently applied a massive load to one of the lifting clips such that it has bent it completely straight. It also burnt out the switch on the hoist in the process. As well as being careless and irresponsible, this could have caused a serious personal injury or damage to the trucks. PLEASE USE CLUB EQUIPMENT WITH CARE.

Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition

Our Secretary John and his helpers are already making arrangements for this year's exhibition and there is a list on the notice board for models to exhibit. The team have some good ideas and our goal is to win the trophy for the 'Best Club Stand' for the third successive year. If you can help out by providing a model or helping to overhaul the stand, please contact John. We have the prime site for our stand at the end of the hall again so gives us an advantage straight away and given what I've been hearing already, if we put in the effort over the next couple of months, there is no reason why we should not win the trophy again.

Society Clothing

Dave Waldram has decided that his wardrobe needs updating, so he has been organising some clothing and ordered a few extra on our behalf. We will be making further orders when batch sizes are large enough, rather than outlaying a large sum of money to buy stock that may not all be sold. There are lists on the notice board if you want to order a T shirt, sweatshirt or embroidered badge and the prices are very reasonable. We may expand to cover other items if the demand is sufficient.

New Members

There are no new members to report this time however, it was good to see recently joined members David and Nora White being made welcome at the Ploughman's Supper. I seem to remember David at the regulator of a large, black LMS loco at one point.

Forthcoming Events.

13 th August	Fish and chip supper
16 th August	Public Running
5 th / 6 th Sept	Working Weekend – please come along and lend a hand, even if it's only for a couple of hours.
10 th Sept	Sir Nigel Gresley and the LNER – James Kendrick
20 th Sept	Enthusiasts Rally

From The Archives



I am guessing this picture was taken in the 1920's. The location is Jackson Street, Coalville. The original shop on Belvoir Road is now Lloyds TSB Bank. If you are passing, look up. Only the ground floor has changed.