

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd

Issue No. 414
April 2015

BEECH HURST NEWS



Cover picture: -

Express Passenger: Over a decade since it first visited our track at Beech Hurst, 5" Merchant Navy Locomotive 'Cunard White Star' is now back on a permanent basis. Sadly, Bob Frost who was a distant member and first brought the locomotive to our Club passed away recently.

Editor

Andrew Brock
189 The Welkin
Lindfield
RH16 2PW

andy.brock15@btinternet.com

SMLS Ltd, The Clubhouse, Bolnore Road, Haywards Heath,
West Sussex, RH16 4BX.

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Editor's Notes

After one of the driest April's on record, the south east of England having received only 20% of the average monthly rainfall, it is once again cloudy and cool as I sit and write this introduction. The previous couple of weeks, sort of mid-April if you like, have been very nice with warm spring sunshine and virtually dry, however as we approach the May Day Bank Holiday the weather is looking less settled and rain is definitely on the horizon! April has been kind to us though and we have had some bumper, even record breaking, running days so far – a good start to the 2015 season. The AGM now seems a long way past, however details on the 'Officer's' and 'Other' positions for 2015 will appear in this edition. On that score, and from a personal perspective, I will be retiring from Treasurer this year due to increased work commitments, which mean my free time is much reduced! Therefore over the coming weeks and months I will be handing over things bit by bit to Graham Miller who has kindly agreed to take on this time consuming role and I will of course help to guide him through the first year. Over and above the time element, which for me has become unsustainable, change also allows for fresh ideas and thoughts to flourish, which in a Club like ours are essential to its long term future and helps keep it from going stale.

From the last edition, out on AGM afternoon, I would like to thank Ray for his truck seat article (drivers please remember to select your most comfortable cushion during the course of the season!) and in this edition thanks to John Dalton for his obituary for late member Bob Frost, who passed away in mid-March after a short illness. Also in this newsletter, there are the usual writings, an updated 'Officer's' and 'Other' positions list for 2015, as well as a conclusion to Winter Work and a fully updated Diary of Events through to September, so please read on and enjoy...

Andrew

Chairman's Notes

The 2015 running season has begun. Easter started cold and damp but Easter Monday was nice and we were busy.

Since the last notes, we have had our AGM with a good attendance. John Gange retired from the Committee after many years of service. Thanks go to him for all his hard work. John Baldwin and Dan Evans were re-elected along with Graham Miller, who we welcome to the Committee. Following the AGM we had our Committee meeting to fill the posts and positions for the year ahead. Andrew Brock will be retiring as Treasurer this year after many years in the post and Steve Turner will stand down as Vice-Chair. Thanks go to them both for their hard work. Graham Miller will take on the Treasurer's post and Dan Evans will take the Vice-Chair, and I wish them well in their new roles.

On a sad note, we learned of the recent passing of Bob Frost, not a regular member, because he lived far away, but well known to many of us for many years. He frequently came along with the Chelmsford Club visits and then joined Beech Hurst as a result. He donated a very nice 'low loader' passenger car / truck to the Club, not so long back. Our thoughts go out to his family.

The last big job of the winter, namely the complete refurbishment of the point, has at last been pretty well finished. Just a couple of tweaks now, but it is operational under its own power, compressed air power anyway! Thanks must go to Roy Preston for his help initially in finding a company that refurbished the cylinders and also the chap who has helped us so much with the pneumatics and given his time to the Club for free! Many thanks indeed to Roland Kusay of Activ-Air Automation. Further thanks go to John Baldwin who took on the project management of the task, Steve's Steer and Turner who did the bearings and much 'heavy work'. Marc Fenner dismantled the framework and Graham Mundy, Mike Wakeling & I cleaned and painted some too. It took a while to get all the boxes and pneumatics together, the cylinders and pistons were back from the repairers earlier in the year. We operated the point manually over Easter and the following week, John B, Roy P, Steve T & I, along with Roland, set it up and got the whole system working again. A tremendous amount of work and time, but hopefully it is good for many years now.

Let's hope it gets warmer soon..., please come and fill in the running book when you can spare some time.

Mike

Club History

There will be a break in this series of articles for this edition as a new Excel only format is being compiled and is due to start in the June newsletter.

Steve T

Updated Club / Track Rules

From the last edition of the newsletter handed out at or just after the AGM, please find attached an amended copy of the Club / Track Rules with a recent addition to Track Rule No.11 included...

Committee

For Sale: Ajax

From our April Committee meeting, a decision was made to look at selling our second Club steam locomotive 'Ajax'. The locomotive has been little used recently and with no one coming forward to offer to be Custodian, the best course of action was deemed to be its sale. The locomotive is to the published 'Ajax' design with the addition of a 'Railmotor' no.1 tender for enhanced coal / water capacity. It has a commercially built boiler, which is due both hydraulic and steam tests, both of which need to be satisfactorily completed prior to a sale. Overall it is in very good condition and we would be looking for offers in the region of £3,000 for it. Expressions of interest should in the first instance be made through Secretary John Baldwin who can then arrange for a viewing etc... to be made. A final decision can then be agreed at our next Committee meeting at the end of May. 2 pictures of the locomotive / tender can be seen at the top of the next page, the right hand one giving an example of a normal load of 2 trucks, which can comfortably accommodate up to 8 passengers.

Committee



Election of 'Officers' and 'Other' Positions for 2015

At our first Committee meeting following the AGM we always elect members to fill the 'Officer's' & other 'Working' positions within the Club, this list is for 2015:

Chairman: Mike Porter

Vice-Chairman: Dan Evans

Secretary: John Baldwin

Minutes Secretary: Nick Edwards

Treasurer: Graham Miller

Other Committee Members in Addition to the Above Officer's:

Andrew Brock, Nick Edwards, Graham Mundy, Steve Steer & Steve Turner

Operations Managers: Nick Edwards, Daniel Evans, Mike Porter & Andrew Strongitharm

Signals Engineer: Graham Mundy

Assistant Signals: Steve Turner

Workshop Manager: Mike Wakeling

Assistant Workshop: Steve Steer

House Manager: John West

Catering Manager: Val West

Stores Managers: Nick Edwards & Steve Steer

Librarian: Stephen Hutton

Assistant Librarians: Ray Parsons & Geoff West

Newsletter Editor: Andrew Brock

Boiler Consultant: John Richardson

Boiler Coordinator: Steve Turner

Boiler Inspectors: Mike Porter & Paul Tomlinson

Custodians of Wharfedale: Nick Edwards & Daniel Evans

Assistant Custodian: Laurie Anderson

Custodian of Club Electric Locomotives: Graham Mundy

Carriage Valeters: Graham Mundy, Ian Thompson & Sharon Thompson

Webmaster: Stephen Hutton

Clubhouse Cleaners: Nick Edwards, Daniel Evans & Mike Porter

Track Maintenance: Roy Preston

Carriage & Wagon Maintenance: Andrew Brock & Andrew Strongitharm

Any changes to the above will be communicated through the newsletter.

Obituary: Bob Frost 1944-2015



Bob was born in Hornsey, North London, and had an interest in music from an early age. Around 1960 the 'Raiders' pop group was formed and the lead singer was a young 16 year old Rod Stewart. A little later, record producer Joe Meek offered the group a contract but stipulated that he did not want the lead Singer! By 1962 Bob had joined the band as the bass player with his friend David Dore and the group's name changed to the 'Moontrekkers'. They released two singles 'Something at the bottom of the well' and 'Moondust', which was a top ten hit in Sweden. Soon after, Bob and his friend fell out with the leader of the band and they left the group. The music industry at this time was dominated by a well known Liverpoolian band!

Looking through a newspaper a few months later he noticed an advert 'Firemen wanted'. He got the job and worked out of Hornsey Depot firing steam locomotives. At the end of steam in 1968 he left the railway, bought a coach and ran Grosvenor Coaches operating from West Cliff, Southend. In the late 1970's his film production company started making railway driver training / public awareness / safety films and latterly a Eurostar film. On a film making visit to Calais Bob first saw a 'de Glehn' loco and later found out two friends were forming the 'Nord Locomotive Preservation Society' with the intention of buying Nord 3.628 and it was brought to England in 1970. Of course, Bob wanted some of the action and joined the team! It was restored at Ashford Depot before being moved to the Nene Valley Railway in 1975, where it ran passenger services. It was later bought by the Science Museum before returning to Longueville in France where it has been cosmetically restored.

In the mid 1990's he acquired a partly finished 5" gauge 'Merchant Navy' locomotive that was started by Kevan Ayling, who later sold it to Nigel Buck, then Bob bought it and finished it off. The name came about because at the time Bob and his friend had been working on a 'Titanic' documentary and whilst talking it over his friend said it had to be 'Cunard White Star'. Bob was an accomplished Model Engineer although i'm not sure where he got the time to build a 3 ½" gauge 'Black 5', which has run at the Chelmsford Club a number of times.

Around 2005 he started driving coaches again, working for Kirby Coaches in Rayleigh, a job he really enjoyed.

His funeral at Southend Crematorium was attended by over 300 people, a reflection on how much his friendship was appreciated by so many people.

John Dalton

Ed No. Thanks to John for passing on that piece about Bob and reading through it, as I compile this edition, makes me think just how little I knew about someone who I had talked to so many times in the past. You could not help but like Bob, he was that kind of a person and Adam, Andrew S, Howard & I last met him at the London Model Engineering Exhibition back in January. We had a good chat then but most importantly he got to see his beloved 'Merchant Navy' locomotive again, which is now at Beech Hurst (**see cover photo**) in Howard Strongitharm's ownership. He was definitely pleased to see it & knew it would be in safe hands!

I for one have many happy memories of Bob, too many to share them all now, but one particularly sticks in my mind. We were on a visit to the Chelmsford Club back in 2010 and after lunch Bob turned up clutching a very nice Hank Marvin Signature Fender Stratocaster guitar and one amplifier! For the next hour or so he set to and played quite a number of tracks from 'The Shadows' back catalogue in their clubhouse and I was impressed to say the least! Not something you expect to get on a visit to a model engineering club and because of that, something I will never forget either! An accomplished guitarist, an accomplished model engineer and a very accomplished gentleman too, need I say more...?

Winter Work

As I write this final report of the winter season, the pneumatic point, as of today, has been receiving some last tweaks and is now fully functioning. Since the AGM, the cylinders have been mounted, the pneumatics installed and both have been checked over – it was working just fine for me last Saturday! Although the physical action of the mechanism is identical to before, the pneumatic side is completely changed and hopefully good for many years to come. Regular Traffic Controllers have been shown its operation, however if you are unsure and need help then do ask the duty TC who will be happy to assist! Thanks to John B & Roy P for all the liaising and design work which has gone into this project, much of which has been done away from Beech Hurst and in their own time.

Aside this project, our railway is now running again and apart from a couple of ongoing jobs, we are now back to day to day maintenance during the summer.

One notable exception has been the hive of activity in the workshop during the past few weekends as Geoff, assisted by Chris S and Graham Miller, has been working his way through best part of 4000 sleepers, punching and drilling each one. Given the fact that all need to be punched once and then drilled with 9 holes, it is a mammoth task and one that has to be done in bite size chunks! At the time of writing, this job is nearly complete, so much so that our vintage Fobco pillar drill has had to be dismantled for total bearing replacement due to overuse!

It has become increasingly noisy over the last few weeks, despite copious amounts of grease having been applied, and as of last Saturday was being stripped down by Chris S, Geoff and Mike W to release the worn out parts! Hopefully it will be back in action very soon!

Throughout the summer there will be ad-hoc work taking place and of course the usual gardening activities, which have already started. John G spends much of his Saturday afternoons keeping the grassed areas and borders looking very neat, however there are always plenty of other opportunities to assist with grass cutting etc..., so if you have a spare hour or two on a weekend morning (Saturday's especially) then all help will be gratefully received...!

Winter work will now go away for its summer recess and promptly return at the beginning of the autumn when we will once again be back to work...! As a final fling, please see next page but one for a brief pictorial interlude depicting a couple of images of the finished pneumatic point and one showing George & Nick preparing coal back in March for our upcoming season...

Andrew

For Sale: Lawn Mower

Further to our recent Committee meeting, we have decided to sell 1 of our 2 lawn mowers, which has become surplus to our requirements and should free up space in the gardening store. The lawn mower is a Hayter with a 5hp 4-stroke Briggs & Stratton petrol engine and comes complete with grass collector, which hangs under the handle at the rear (**see picture right**). It is fully functioning and as per our Ajax steam locomotive, expressions of interest should be made to Secretary John Baldwin in the first instance with a final decision at our next Committee meeting at the end of May.



Committee

Forthcoming Events

From the last edition, there are several updates for the summer as listed below. Two special event days for 2015 have already been confirmed and these are a £4 'Ride All Afternoon' on Saturday May 23rd and a 'Little Engine Day' on Saturday August 29th. Both of these Saturdays fall on Bank Holiday weekends. In addition to the above dates we have invited Chelmsford Club to visit Beech Hurst on Saturday 6th June and Maidstone Club on Saturday 12th September, both of these days will start from approximately 10:00.

We have also been invited to visit Chelmsford Club on Saturday 13th June. At our last Committee meeting we also agreed the dates for the two summer BBQ evenings, which will fall on Saturday 20th June and Saturday 29th August. The plan is for these to be of our usual format with onions and puddings supplied, however over and above those items you need to bring the rest! Meat or otherwise, pretty much anything goes, as long as it can be flame cooked on an open grill! Weather permitting these two evenings will start from 18:00...

Club Nights

Further to the February edition, a discussion took place at the AGM to decide the future of these Club Nights. For now, a decision was taken to hold these meets during the summer months only, basically during our running season from April through to and including September and I have updated the Diary accordingly.

Diary of Events

7th May 2015 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900

23rd May 2015 – £4 ‘Ride All Afternoon’ Special – Normal 1400 to 1700 service

4th June 2015 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900

6th June 2015 – Chelmsford Club to visit Beech Hurst – From approx. 1000

13th June 2015 – SMLS invited to visit Chelmsford Club – Details TBC

20th June 2015 – ‘Bring Your Own’ BBQ Evening – Will start at approx. 1800

2nd July 2015 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900

6th August 2015 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900

29th August 2015 – ‘Little Engine Day’ Special – Normal 1400 to 1700 service

29th August 2015 – ‘Bring Your Own’ BBQ Evening – Will start at approx. 1800

3rd September 2015 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900

12th September 2015 – Maidstone Club to visit Beech Hurst – From approx. 1000

NB. Certain events may be organised at short notice and will not therefore appear in the newsletter. Please check black / notice boards in the clubhouse for details of such events.

Andrew



Picture Top: Season preparation sees George & Nick breaking the hard Russian coal
Picture Middle: The recently completed pneumatic point as of last week
Picture Bottom: A close up of the new control panel – a bit different to the old one

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd



Rear Cover picture: -

In Bloom: As of last Sunday, our own carpet of bluebells are now in flower on the approach to the long tunnel, however make the most of them while they last – probably only for a couple of weeks or so...

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society

Track Rules

1. All locomotives steamed at Beech Hurst shall have a valid boiler test certificate, sight of which may be required by the traffic controller.
2. Drivers must be aged 18 and above to work fare paying passenger trains.
Driver aged 16 and 17 can drive an assisting (pilot or banking) locomotive working fare paying passenger trains.
Drivers aged 16 and 17 can drive a train locomotive, working fare paying passenger trains, providing they are accompanied by a competent adult driver.
At the discretion of the committee drivers aged 16 and 17 can drive electric powered passenger trains comprising of up to two cars.
Again at the discretion of the committee, drivers aged 17 can be approved to drive steam trains comprising of up to two cars.
Drivers under 16 years of age may only use the track if they are:
a) A member of the club, b) A member of another bona-fide club or c) Close family of club members. They shall only use the track when supervised by an adult member, who will assume full responsibility for all their actions and any such use shall be outside public running time.
3. All drivers must familiarise themselves with the track and signals notices that may be displayed in the clubhouse.
4. Drivers must obey all signals, warning boards, whistle signs etc... and shall halt at a signal presenting no aspect. They may then proceed with extreme caution and immediately notify the traffic controller. When flashing red signals are observed, drivers must bring their train to a stand immediately, check their train for any obvious fault and only proceed when normal signalling resumes. (If a driver cannot see a signal, the driver must wait for authorisation to proceed).
5. With the operation of the flashing red signals (see rule 4), the individual who puts the flashing reds on is to inform the traffic controller immediately. It is then the traffic controller's responsibility to ensure that the signals and service are restored back to normal.
6. Excessive speed is forbidden at all times and drivers shall carry out speed reductions if so instructed by the traffic controller.
7. Any member present has the authority to monitor track discipline and shall report any misdemeanour to the traffic controller.
8. During the periods set aside for passenger hauling, members using inappropriate locomotives and / or stock may be directed to remove them from the track at the discretion of the traffic controller.
9. Anyone wishing to run a locomotive outside normal club hours must notify a) The Operations Managers, b) The Track Manager and c) The Secretary.
10. Any drivers running outside of public running times shall be aware that it is their responsibility to put the signals away, lock the tunnel gates and clear the steaming bay etc.

Track Rules (continued)

11. In the interests of safety only S.M.L.S. trucks shall be used unless the alternative complies with existing club standards. All drivers must sit astride trucks when hauling passengers.
12. The manual operation of any unit of stock on the track by irresponsible persons is forbidden.
13. All locomotives steam or electric on the main line must not be left unattended.
14. Drivers must ensure that locomotives do not deposit oil on the track.
15. All visiting clubs shall have their attention drawn to the track rules, and shall be asked to appoint a steward who shall be required to notify the traffic controller of his identity.
16. All aspects of the track operation during public running and any visits shall be at the discretion of the traffic controller.
17. All signals must be displayed on all signal posts and be in operation during public running times. (except in exceptional circumstances e.g. a power cut)
18. If running one train on the track outside of public running times, either* signal number 6 or 7 must be displayed and in operation. (* Signal 6 if running anti-clockwise direction / Signal 1 (on signal post 7) if running clockwise direction)
19. During public running times, the traffic controller may only be relieved if there is a suitable person available and if their replacement wears a high visibility jacket for the duration of the change. This is to ensure all drivers are aware of the change.
20. Before public running, a Permanent Way Inspection (PWI) shall be carried out to inspect the track for any possible damage. After which the track will be signed off as safe in the signing in book.
21. When person(s) are working on or near the track during public running times, they will be required to a) Wear a high visibility jacket b) Provide a lookout and c) Notify the traffic controller of the nature of the work which they are carrying out and the location.
22. On any given day, there is to be only one named traffic controller in the signing in book. The name of any person who is assisting and or training is to be written in brackets or clearly stated otherwise next to the main traffic controller's name. The main traffic controller is responsible for the actions of anyone assisting him / her and remains responsible at all times.

By order of the committee April 2015

The Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society

Rules

(Revised April 2015)

**THE SUSSEX MINIATURE LOCOMOTIVE
SOCIETY RULES
(Revised March 1999)**

1) TITLE AND OBJECTS

- a) The Society shall be called The Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd.
- b) Objects. The object of the Society shall be:-
 - i) The maintenance and development of their track, premises and equipment at Beech Hurst.
 - ii) To encourage the building, running, testing and improvement in design and construction of small locomotives.
 - iii) The provision of a public passenger service.
 - iv) The organisation of social and instructional functions.
- c) Status and winding up. The Society shall be non-profit making and accordingly:-
 - i) The assets of the Society shall only be used for the furtherance of the objects of the Society (Except as in rule 4.d and 1.c.ii)
 - ii) If the Society shall be wound up or put into liquidation, then after payment of all debts or other liabilities, any funds or other assets remaining shall be applied to such charitable object of an engineering nature as the Society may resolve at a general meeting.

2) MANAGEMENT

- a) Election of Officers and Committee and their duties.
 - i) The management of the Society shall be vested in the Committee to be elected by ballot at each Annual General Meeting. The election arrangements shall be the responsibility of the Chairman and Secretary.
 - ii) The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be appointed by the Committee out of their number and shall hold office until the first committee meeting following the Annual General Meeting.
 - iii) The Committee shall be composed of:-
 - a) Ex officio members (President and Vice Presidents – nonvoting).
 - b) Members elected at the Annual General Meeting up to a maximum of nine.
 - c) Members co-opted by the elected Committee at

their discretion.

The numbers of such members to be determined by the Committee in such a way that b) and c) do not exceed a total of eleven. Elected and co-opted members shall have equal standing. Co-opted members shall however hold office from the date of co-option to the first AGM following that date.

A quorum shall consist of five members; the Chairman shall have the casting vote.

iv) The Committee shall be empowered to nominate as President and Vice President(s) any members whose services to the society, in their opinion, warrant such honour. Such nominations shall be put before the Annual General Meeting for ratification.

b) Sub Committees. The Committee may appoint small Executive Committees for any particular purpose. The Chairman of such subcommittee to be a member of the main Committee.

c) Track Rules. The Committee shall frame rules for the operation of the track, and it is the responsibility of all members to familiarise themselves with these rules and to see that they are complied with.

3) MEMBERSHIP

- a) Eligibility.
 - i) Full membership is available to persons age 18 years and over at the discretion of the committee.
 - ii) Junior membership is available to young person's up to 18 years at the discretion of the committee.
 - iii) Honorary membership may be conferred on persons whose services, in the opinion of the committee, have warranted recognition. Honorary members enjoy all the privileges of full members.
- b) Election. Application for membership shall be subject to the approval of the Committee and shall name a proposer and a seconder, one of whom shall be a member of the committee.
- c) Termination. If a member's conduct is considered by the committee to be prejudicial to the interests of the society it shall have powers to determine that persons membership.

4) FINANCES

- a) Subscriptions. The Society's financial year shall end on 31st December, subscriptions becoming due on the 1st January. The amount of subscription shall be determined by the committee and shall be subject to ratification at a General meeting.
- b) New members shall pay an annual subscription. If joining after 30th June they shall pay half subscription.
- c) Authorisation for expenditure. No expenditure may be incurred

on behalf of the Society without the approval of the Committee

- d) Donations to Charities. These may be at the discretion of the Committee

5) MEETINGS

- a) Annual General Meeting. The Annual General Meeting shall be held within a 20 mile radius of Beech Hurst in March. 21 days notice to be given. Nominations and the assent of the nominee shall be submitted in writing to the secretary not less than 48 hours before the date of the Annual General Meeting. At this meeting a report of the previous year's activities and statement of accounts shall be presented, and the officers and Committee elected. A quorum shall constitute thirteen members.
- b) Extra Ordinary Meetings. At the request of not less than ten fully paid up members tendered to the secretary in writing and stating the matter which they wish to discuss, the Secretary shall, within 21 days, call a Special General Meeting notifying members of the matter at issue. At such special General Meeting no business other than that specified in the notice convening the meeting shall be discussed, nor shall any other business be transacted

6) GENERAL

- a) Affiliation. The Committee may recommend affiliation to kindred organisations subject to ratification at a General Meeting.
- b) Responsibility of the Society. The Society does not accept any responsibility for:-
 - i) The actions of any of its members.
 - ii) The property of Members or Visitors.
- c) Matters not covered by the rules. The Officers and Committee shall have the power to act in all matters affecting the interests of the Society which may from time to time arise and which are not specifically covered in these rules.
- d) Alterations and Additions to Rules. Any alterations or additions to the foregoing rules must be presented by the Committee for ratification at a General Meeting.
- e) The Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society is limited by guarantee (registration no 1214042) and is therefore bound by a Memorandum and Articles of Association document which is held by the Secretary.