

BEECH HURST NEWS



Cover picture: -

A New Dawn: Budding photographer and junior member at Beech Hurst Andrew Strongitharm was up bright and early to capture this wintry scene on 19th December, not that this winter has been very cold, this is definitely the exception rather than the rule!

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Editor's Notes

Welcome to 2007! It really doesn't seem like two months since the December edition was 'on the table' and many were just sitting down to enjoy their Christmas nosh. However here we are, two months older and the new season is but a month away, scary!

Through the news we would like to express our thanks to all those who have contributed to help keep the railway and clubhouse in ship shape during 2006, also to the volunteers we need during the summer to run the intensive service schedule. The season was very good once again and with many jobs now completed or nearing completion we have had a very busy winter too, more later...

Thanks must go to those who contributed to the December edition of the newsletter, namely, Stephen Hutton, Enid Marten, Ray Parsons, Norman Payne, Jack Pitt and Chris Saunders + all the regular features!

In this edition we have all the regular features + articles on recent social events, winter work, subscriptions & AGM, jokes – courtesy of Bob Youldon and Ray Parsons and an updated Diary of Events. Also we would like to thank junior member Andrew Strongitharm for our cover picture this time, with our 'wonky weather' this winter it seemed wintry scenes like this were a rare occurrence nowadays, however in the last couple of weeks we have seen two separate snowfalls of a couple of inches or more each, with everybody slipping and sliding around and services generally grinding to a halt! It is amazing how such a small inconvenience means that half of the country has seemingly 'gone to the dogs!' Anyway, business as usual here, so please read on and enjoy...

Andrew & Mark

2007 Subscriptions

I'm afraid it is that time of year again! Sub's for 2007 are now overdue and this is the 'last call' for sub's for 2007. I have so far received a little over 50% of the total sub's due, so if you have not paid then this is the last reminder to do so. Feel free to either send your subscription to one of the addresses below or if you are at the club at a weekend then leave it on the treasurer's clip and your name will be duly crossed off my list. Membership cards have now been printed and will be distributed shortly.

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Andrew

AGM

Just a very brief reminder that the 2007 AGM will be held at Beech Hurst on Saturday 3rd March at 1900 hours. All the minutes from the 2006 meeting have now been sent, committee nominations and proxy voting slips must be returned to John Baldwin by Wednesday 28th February at the latest.

Andrew & Mark

Alan Gettings

We are saddened to report the death of Alan Gettings on Boxing Day. Although he was no longer a member at Beech Hurst, he will be remembered particularly as a former editor of this newsletter and also the author of the first twenty-five years book, celebrating the Silver anniversary of the Society.

Andrew & Mark

Chairman's Notes

Another winter is nearly over, but this year the two recent snowfalls brought us back to reality after some very mild, but often wet spells. Nevertheless the usual winter maintenance jobs have all been achieved, to the track and trucks, along with a lot of outside painting, and winter gardening. Besides this, a big tidy up all round has taken place and a new siding is being built off the turntable to make life easier for the T.C. to shunt and prepare the carriage sets each running day. An excellent achievement all round by many very hard working members and I thank them all very much.

Our winter social evenings, the bonfire night in November, and the Xmas nosh night were also very well attended and much enjoyed by all.

As the days get longer it will soon be time to take the engines out from their moth balls as the running season will be upon us. Don't forget the steamers require a yearly steam test on their boilers under the new rules.

Next up is the A.G.M. in a couple of weeks and I look forward to seeing you then.

Mike

EdNo. With regards to the above reference to boiler steam tests, all those boilers who are now on 'new' style certificates issued after 1st January 2006 will require to undertake a cold boiler inspection and steam test at the beginning of every season. Bearing in mind that the boiler testers will be very busy during this time, it would be appreciated if you arrange to have your boiler inspected in good time for the start of the season to allow sufficient time for all the inspections to take place.

Winter Work

Of the major winter projects taken on this year, most have now been finished or are the home straight.

The additional siding off the turntable is now well on the way with the steel work nearly finished and then a few minor adjustments to make before the sleepers and rail can be laid.

The old signal posts were cut down before Christmas and the new wiring as far as possible has been installed from the signal heads to the under-track boxes.

The truck bearings have also been replaced where necessary, with just a couple of 'Sunday' end Pullman cars left to do before the beginning of the season. One car will also be fitted with rotational type bearings to aid alignment of the axles, as some of the axles, particularly on the Pullman cars are not always dead square with the bogie frames.

Two skips later, the workshop sort out is also well underway, with the addition of two new pieces of equipment recently purchased, namely a washing tank and a shot blasting cabinet, the latter already proving to be extremely useful. The remaining sliding draw cabinets are being put in at the moment and with a bit of luck will be all tidy in the next few weeks.

Painting of the steaming bays and rear siding are also well on the way to completion, the last of grey paint added to the loco shed road a couple of weeks back and about half of the siding has now been 'blackened', with the remaining section to the pneumatic point hopefully being completed in the next few weeks, weather permitting!

In addition the usual tidying jobs around the clubhouse (including an increased level of pest control this year!), gardening (where possible due to the inclement weather and waterlogged ground) and general maintenance have also carried on at a gentle pace. Without naming too many people individually we would like to thank all those people who have contributed to any of the above projects and anything else that we have not mentioned in these pages, a lot of work has certainly been achieved again this winter, albeit with often dry and slightly warmer than average weather, so thanks again to all those who have got stuck in and helped out.

Andrew & Mark

Winter Social

Since the last edition of the news there have been a couple of notable annual social events at Beech Hurst.

Firstly on Saturday 16th December there was the annual Nosh Night evening that was extremely well attended again, with nearly 30 members and family guests enjoying the fine food and great company. As with previous years Val and John West had put together the excellent spread and once again it proved to be very appetising indeed. After the dinner, there was a short DVD made by John Midderigh with recent footage of the railway, including an afternoon with Brian on Big Boy and following that a short quiz, also prepared by John and his wife Linda.

Many thanks must go to all those who helped in different ways to prepare the night and especially to Val and John who work extremely hard in preparing the food for that number of people. Many thanks!



Following on from that, there was the annual New Year's Day steam up that was also well attended again this year, with a good variety of steam (Andrew's 'Railmotor', Geoff's L1 and Daniel's 'Conway'), electric (Norman's Class 47, Peter Marten's Class 08, and our own Class 08 and 'Growler') and petrol machines (Andrew's IC125) on the track. It was in fact a really cracking day, not that cold and brilliantly sunny, well until about 1600 that is when we were rained upon by a band of thunderstorms that had moved in. It was by then pretty much dark, so it is fair to say that we had the best of the day for sure and despite getting a little wet at the end, a good day was had by all. Which is more than can be said for a couple of residents in Worthing, who had their house roofs lifted by the storms, that were unusually violent, bearing in mind we are supposed to be in the middle of winter!

Pictured Top: Andrew's 'Railmotor' is seen taking a break at the steaming bay whilst on shunting duties.

Pictured Bottom: Geoff's newly out-shopped L1 is seen waiting to take coal before setting off for another lap.

Andrew & Mark

Jokes

During a public steam up a couple of years ago at a local park, a non-steamer asked me why I was adding water to the tender.

I patiently explained water, coal in the firebox and ignition = boiling water, water level, steam, pressure gauges etc.

After some time poking and prodding while I was trying to fire up, he was still far from convinced that an engine so small was actually using "real water, real coal, real fire" etc.

Eventually he asked, "what is the glass tube for?"

I replied "that is the fuse".

He nodded "OK now I understand, thank you" and walked away!

Bob Youldon

Aircraft reports

After every flight, Qantas pilots fill out a form, called a "gripe sheet," which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft. The mechanics correct the problems, document their repairs on the form, then the pilots review the gripe sheets right before the next flight. Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humour. Here are some of the actual maintenance complaints submitted by the Qantas' pilots (as marked with a P) and the solutions recorded (as marked with an S) by the maintenance engineers.

By the way, it is relevant to note that Qantas is the only major airline in the world that has never, ever, had an accident!

P: Left inside main tyre almost needs replacement.

S: Almost replaced left inside main tyre.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in the cockpit.

S: Something tightened in the cockpit.

P: Dead bugs on windshield.

S: Live bugs on backorder.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent.

S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of a leak on the right main landing gear.

S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.

S: DME volume reset to a more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

S: That's what friction locks are for.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right.

P: The number 3 engine is missing.

S: Engine found on right wing after a brief search.

P: Aircraft handles funny. (I love this one!)

S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right and be serious.

P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.

And the best one saved for last...

P: Noise coming from under the instrument panel. Sounds like a midget
pounding on something with a hammer.

S: Took hammer away from the midget.

Bob Youldon

Imperial Quiz

The following quiz is part an article given to us by Ray Parsons that was in the newsletter of the Auckland SME in New Zealand. It is more aimed at you older folk who remember this kind of thing, not to say that some of us younger folk could have a decent bash at it!

Duodecimal reminds me of primary school arithmetic in England, where we, as seven-year olds, were expected to calculate in a non-decimal monetary system that used bases of twelve (pence) and twenty (shillings) – good old LSD.

We also had guineas, crowns, half crowns, florins, and farthings! My neighbour's cat would only come in at night if he rustled a crisp ten-bob note at the back door.

Typical Problem:

The coalman delivered seven sacks of coal at thirteen shillings and ten pence ha'penny a hundredweight. Your Mum gave him a five-pound note, then bought a pair of shoes for one guinea and gave you half a crown pocket money with the change. How much change did she have left?

Hint: Coal sacks weighed 56lbs (Avoirdupois – another non-decimal system)

Ray

Christmas Quiz Answers

Listed below are the answers to last years Christmas quiz, some of them were quite tricky, even if you've lived round this way for a while. They were a bit of fun anyway and a slight diversion from the railway themes of previous years!

Sussex Quiz

1. Lewes
2. Marbles
3. Sheffield Park
4. Mid-Sussex
5. Rudyard Kipling
6. Bramber Castle
7. Heresy
8. Lawn Mowers
9. The Brighton Pavilion
10. Bird of Prey

Kent Quiz

1. Hastings
2. Maidstone
3. 1
4. Bluewater
5. Maidstone
6. The Medway
7. True
8. Tonbridge and Malling
9. Maidstone
- 10.4

Hampshire Quiz

1. The Solent
2. The Needles
3. Victoria
4. False
5. Cutty Sark
6. Third-Century Romans
7. Aldershot
8. Jane Austen
9. The Round Table
10. The New Forest

Andrew & Mark

Forthcoming Events

Listed below is an updated diary of events as far as we know for 2007. The AGM will be held in a fortnight's time, followed by the commencement of the 2007 running season that is all but a month away. We are then due to welcome the Chelmsford club to Beech Hurst on 13th May. John Dalton, Melvyn Bright and Bob Frost are already SMLS members and usually visit once or twice a year on a Sunday during the summer, so this year John asked if we could turn it into more of a club outing rather than just a couple or three engines visiting. This will be a nice change for us on a Sunday and it is always interesting to see different engines and new people at the same time. A possible SMLS visit that is in the pipeline could be to the Railway Centre at Didcot. We have a contact at the Centre through John Baldwin and there is a distinct possibility that we could arrange a mid-week group visit there in the summer. No date has been fixed for this yet and further details will follow in the April newsletter if we are able to arrange a group visit there. Club nights will then continue in their normal Thursday slot each month during the summer and in the April edition we should hopefully have some dates for special running days and also the summer BBQ's.

Diary Of Events

1st March 2007 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

3rd March 2007 – SMLS AGM, held at Beech Hurst, from 1900.

6th April 2007 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

7th April 2007 – Timetabled commencement of the 2007 running season.

3rd May 2007 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

13th May 2007 – Chelmsford club to visit SMLS – Will start at approx. 1000.

7th June 2007 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

Summer 2007 – Visit to Didcot Railway Centre, provisional and details TBC.

N.B. Other events are not always shown in the diary of events because they have been arranged at short notice; check black/notice board at the clubhouse for more details.

Andrew & Mark