

BEECH HURST NEWS



Cover picture: -

Happy Anniversary: With everything pretty much in place, our 2011 Bonfire effort is ready for the off. The 'cake' was adorned with 6 flares (one for each decade) which were lit prior to the fire and this year's sweepstake was when the '60' fell down. A report follows inside...

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.

Opinions expressed in the News are not necessarily those of the Society for which it cannot be held responsible

Copyright is that of the author or the S.M.L.S

Editor's Notes

It is with the deepest sadness that I start this newsletter by reporting the passing of Bill Thompson on 22nd November. Father of regular attendee, Ian Thompson, Bill had been a member for a number of years and until a couple of years ago regularly took turns at the station or driving an electric locomotive. For me, I remember Bill as being Mr Haywards Heath. His knowledge of the town and much of its history was fascinating to listen to, particularly for me as I have lived here for 30 years and there was so much I didn't know, until I got talking to Bill that is! He will be sadly missed and our thoughts are with his family at this time.

It will have been about 6 weeks since the last newsletter, released on Bonfire Night, and as such there didn't seem a huge amount to report. However, things have come together and this edition is as big as ever. Firstly, thanks to Andrew S and Norman for their respective pieces in the October edition and also to Andrew S and Chris for their pieces in this edition. As well as the usual writings, there are articles about Bonfire Night, the Sandown Show, Winter Work and an updated Diary, so Happy Christmas / New Year and please read on and enjoy...

Andrew

Chairman's Notes

So, 2011 draws to a close. As ever, it seems to have passed by so quickly! On reflection, it's been a momentous and extremely busy year for the club and the committee, not least because of all the events relating to our 60th birthday, with the highlight being our big celebration dinner on the 'Golden Arrow' train at the 'Bluebell' in early June. Also connected with this, our anniversary year, has been the production of Peter M's book on the last 35 years and reproduction of the first 25 year booklet, along with a weekend special event and now, finally, the finished DVD gift to all our members containing excerpts ('clips and stills') from the beginning of the club to the present day. It depicts some of the characters, locos, highlights, events and general development of the site throughout those years, and thanks go to Steve T, Graham, John B and Nick for the final hard work and effort put in to the finished article. It has taken many months of checking, editing, design and production..., and is later than anticipated! But I hope you enjoy it as a Christmas / end of 60th 'stocking filler'! For some, it will be an education into the amazing amount of work that has gone into the present clubhouse and surroundings, for others, it will be a trip down 'memory lane'! Just a few members have the distinction of witnessing or being part of most of the events shown. I hope some of our younger members will be around in another 50 years to recall the present day!

Since I last wrote, we have enjoyed an excellent bonfire night and a very successful show at Sandown. Once again, I thank everyone who has worked so hard to make these a success. Many members gave their time and energy, but thanks especially to Andrew B for planning and setting off our pyrotechnics on Guy Fawkes night, Val and John for the tasty food, Mike W for the big '60' sign for the bonfire and Steve S and his power tools! With regard to the show, thanks too to Steve S and John H for transporting the models, and to everyone, who exhibited, manned the stand and represented the club. An excellent job!

On a sad note, last month, we learned that Bill Thompson had died suddenly and unexpectedly at home. Our thoughts go out to Anne, his wife of over 60 years, to Ian, his brother and sister who have lost their dad. Bill was a real character who had lived an interesting life and always had a story to tell! He had worked with Roland Emmett on his 'contraptions', had a hand in building the 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang' car and had shared a pint with Dick Van Dyke! He had travelled extensively and was a very capable engineer, turning his hand to many things, including building a track cleaning car for our club. A few years back he frequently manned the station for us and often drove the club electric's or Ian's '37' in passenger duties. We will miss him.

As we come to the year's end, I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone from the 'extra gardeners' to the 'Ops Managers', for such a successful season. I can honestly say I have never seen the club areas looking so smart and lawns 'manicured' as this year!

So, with optimism, a deep breath and a clean slate awaiting us in 2012, I say 'A Merry Christmas' and a 'Happy New Year' to all, and may the goodwill of the season carry throughout the coming year!

With that in mind, what better way to start the New Year than with a party! So, I hope to see you at our New Year's Day Buffet. Come and run an engine (weather permitting!) or just enjoy good company and a light lunch to kick off 2012!

Mike

Celebrating 60: The DVD

The production of the DVD is now complete and with a bit of luck will have dropped out of your envelope by the time you read this! I have already seen an advance copy and I have to say it is a very interesting account of the first 60 years of the club. With each disc is a separate PDF sheet, detailing the sequences as they go. Because of time constraints it was not possible to include all of our archive footage but thanks to Graham this is now catalogued on master discs in our library, copies of which can be made if desired. Hopefully you will enjoy your extra Christmas present!

Andrew

Recent Social Events

Bonfire Night was a week before the actual day itself to avoid clashes with other local displays and we chose correctly as the weather was kind and dry for our set up and evening display. Had we picked the 5th we'd have got wet! Andrew S & I had been busily collecting pallets for a weekend or two prior to the day itself and together with a multitude of tree cuttings, an old bridge and some picket fencing we set about attempting some sort of anniversary cake! Steve S kindly helped for most of the day and with much head scratching the 3 of us started making an octagon of sorts with the pallets, including trying to be clever and making angle plates to get the pallets organised correctly – suffice to say it was easier without! Several hours of bodging later and using most of Steve's available battery powered toys we had ourselves a suitably shaped cake, filled with a mixture of trees, topped with a kind of sweet looking white picket fencing and a large number 60, courtesy of Mike W, was added across the top. Finally, 6 'candle' holders were nailed around the outside.

The candles themselves being out of date red and white distress flares! Shortly before 18:00 the flares were set off and the fire itself was ready to light. The sweepstake was how long it would take for the '60' to fall down into the fire or be burnt out, which ever came sooner! With a subtle westerly blowing the fire was very soon burning well and after 17m 32s the '60' was down. Coincidentally, the manufacturer also won the sweepstake so well done to Mike W for this!

As we let the fire burn down, the 30 or so members and guests who had come up to the evening then enjoyed the baked potatoes, beans, cheese and fruit tarts which were on offer. I have to say I always look forward to this bit and having been working since 09:00 it is very much enjoyed too!

The fireworks then followed, a mixture of rockets and ground 'cakes', the finale being 3 minutes continuously and there we are, done for a another year!

Thanks particularly to Andrew S and Steve S for helping before the day and also for much of it in preparation of the fire, to Val & John for their hard work in preparing the food for 30+ hungry people and also to everyone who helped move and prepare the wood during the day, without which the whole job would have been a great deal harder! Here's to 2012 (an Olympic theme maybe...?).

Andrew

Sandown Park Show



This was our third year at the Model Engineer exhibition and overall it was another good one. Moved from our berth of last year, we were stationed at the opposite end of the club room, adjacent to the stairs and lift. This meant a narrower stand and also a slightly shorter one too. Arriving on the Thursday at our earliest ever time of

14:00, the van was quickly unloaded and everything transported upstairs adjacent to our tables. We had received a good mix of models this year and nothing that was greatly heavy either, which made the set up that little bit easier! In no particular order our display was as follows: 5" LNER B1 + Driving Truck, 5" GWR 15xx chassis, 5" GWR 'King' Tender, 3 ½" SR West Country, 7 ¼" LSWR B4, 5" GNR 'Single', Single Cylinder Beam Engine, 5" HST Bogie, 5" BR 9F Chassis, Boiler and Tender, 3 ½" Roy Roy x2 and 3 ½" 0-4-0 Freelance Electric Locomotive. **(See pictures above and next page of our 2011 stand)**

We had also brought 'Dougal' with us but this was being exhibited in the judging hall under the junior category. With the 'B4' too heavy to be placed on the tables, it was sited on the end of the two rows and the remaining models neatly filled the 48 feet of available space, along with some pictures from around club and cards giving details about us.



Not being present on the Friday I have been reliably informed that it was a very steady day with plenty of visitors until about 15:00 when it went decidedly flat. Saturday was not that busy, although I suspect this had something to do with the special entry on the Sunday and anybody not wishing to grab a bargain on the second hand stalls was more

likely to come on Sunday and save some money on the entrance instead! Indeed Sunday did prove to be quite steady, much more so than 2010 when it was quiet. I think everybody who went this year; either to help out or just browse round, will agree it was another successful show. There was plenty to see and do, and many other models to view too. Through these pages I would like to thank all those who put their names down and helped out on the stand during the 3 days, and more importantly, to all those who allowed us to bring their models without which any such event would become impossible. Here's to 2012...

Andrew

Passenger Numbers

Another year has gone and a close to our 58th running season. The weather was hardly much help this year with a very cold winter, a bone dry spring and a naff summer, we had it all. However, in spite of all of that, we did quite well after all.

The annual average has been 23,224 or thereabouts for some time, this year we finished at 23,224.6 up ½ a passenger. Now I wonder how that happened?

The total for this year stands at an admirable 24,658, very good in a recession I think. The **BIG** total is now at 1,348,460. If you think it looks like a telephone number try looking up Croesgoch, Haverfordwest, in West Wales! Last year's number was Ripe, near Lewes!

The poor old track lap counter has been re-set, not before counting 6,234 laps.

No doubt the truck bearings and the rail are showing signs of all this punishment, especially as we are seeing a trend to carrying larger passengers than in the early days of passenger service.

So, in the club's 60th year we still have a lot to celebrate, especially as the ORR (the office of the rail regulator) has yet to see fit to impose excessive safety regulation on our 5" operations (touch wood!). Well done all on a good year.

Chris

Winter Work

It is that time of year again when Winter Work returns from its summer recess and is back in the frame for the next 3 editions. There are no major construction projects being undertaken this winter, at least outside anyway, so much of our work is routine maintenance to existing hardware, with one notable exception!

We agreed sometime ago to upgrade one of our club electric locomotives 'Michael Faraday' after a succession of problems and failures. Finding a reliable commercial replacement is tough, so we decided to buy a kit locomotive and construct it ourselves! For those of you who don't already know, this new locomotive will be a Maxitrak Class 73, in Pullman livery. Yes one really did exist in this guise (73 101 to be precise) and should go well with our fleet of Pullman trucks. Graham and Peter C are working on this and parts of Michael's chassis and electronics are being used. A further progress report will follow in February. Outside on the track, Mike has turned several lengths of rail by the short tunnel and a section of track has been replaced in the siding from the carriage shed bridge to the turntable. This also included painting of the steel work and turntable, which has many nooks and crannies! Inside on the trucks, Andrew S & I have had no bearing replacements to make this winter and with brake pads done as required during the season we have got started by giving the short green trucks an 'intermediate' overhaul, including securing the side sheets, painting the chassis' and running boards. Also inside, Mike W and Roy P have been refurbishing 2 of our benches, as well as making up a third one from pieces stored in the loft. These are currently work in progress and should be finished early in the New Year. Finally outside and the usual gardening jobs have been underway since the beginning of October, thanks mainly to Brian J, John G, John M and Roy P, and most leaves are now down. Also, Steve T has been replacing 'Pyro' cable from section 3 to the engine shed, which required a trench and new conduit to be laid. There have been a number of other jobs completed too and thanks to everyone who has come up at the weekend to help the club with these.

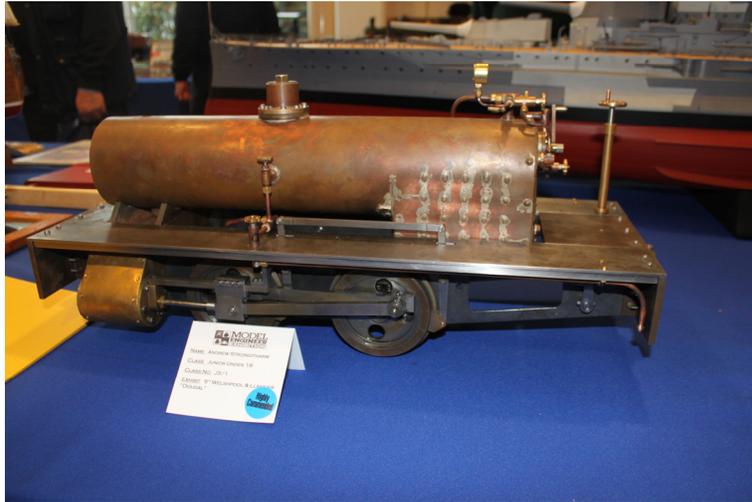
Andrew

Building a 5" W&L Dougal

Although two months have past since the last news, there has not been too much visible progress on Dougal. Much of the time has been spent either trying to find something in the now cluttered shed or finishing off those bits that we never got round to when building them in the first place. As well as the above, all the pipe work for the injector and axle pump is complete and brackets made to secure the pipes which run to the back of the loco to take a hose from a truck mounted tank. With the loco entered into the junior section of the model engineering competition at Sandown Park, it was time to replace all those cap head bolts which had been used to secure items such as the running plates and dome. It was therefore with apprehension that I embarked on producing 24 stainless 4mm bolts of differing lengths. After some friendly negotiating, I was allowed to purchase a similar number of 3mm bolts for the regulator flanges on the back head and smoke box. The safety valve has been the latest project, which was unfortunately not finished in time to go on display with the rest of the loco last weekend. The valve which has now been successfully completed is a 'pop' type valve and a fun afternoon was spent playing around with different length springs, re-cutting the seating and changing the length of the counter bore. I am pleased to say this was time well spent and after two hours or so of no popping action, all of a sudden, it popped! Best of all it decided to pop back down again, with a fall of about 15psi.

We decided that was good enough but might re-visit it again once it's steamed. **(Picture below: Dougal on the judging stand at the Sandown Park Show, together with its 'Highly Commended' award)**

With the exhibition out of the way, attention can now focus on getting the loco in steam for New Years Day. Some parts of the stand for the Lubricator have been manufactured and I can now list all the jobs needed to put a fire in the loco. The only problem is neither of us know if any of the fittings and valves will work, however I am



fairly confident that the loco will be mechanically finished. I know it sounds cheesy, but tune in next time to see if we achieve it....

Andrew S

Forthcoming Events

With the Sandown Park show recently passed, the next event is our New Year's Day run on the 1st January 2012. The advertised 'lunch' is now being planned and at present we have 45 names on the blackboard so it looks like it'll be busy! Thereafter, the Alexandra Palace show is next up during the third weekend of January and if this is anything like last year, it too will be a great success. Names and models are on the board and we will be confirming our display very soon. Although a little way off yet, this is likely to be the last newsletter prior to the AGM (the February edition should be released that night) and the provisional date for this is Saturday 3rd March. Minutes for the meeting will be distributed around the end of January and the date will be confirmed in these but this should be the 3rd. Further Diary dates for 2012 will follow in the February edition...

Andrew

Diary of Events

1st January 2012 – New Year's Day run from 1000 & lunch meal from 1200'ish'

5th January 2012 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900

20th, 21st & 22nd January 2012 – SMLS to display at Alexandra Palace Exhibition

2nd February 2012 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900

1st March 2012 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900

3rd March 2012 – SMLS AGM – Provisional Date – TBC in late January

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

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd



Rear Cover picture: -

Arty! After the bonfire and fireworks, Andrew, Nick, Jamie & I had some fun with sparklers trying to spell our names whilst in front of Steve S' camera. It isn't as easy as it looks, particularly in lower case text and the above picture is Andrew S whose 2nd or 3rd attempt proved to be the best of the lot. It is incredible what can be achieved with modern photographic equipment and of course one of the main advantages of digital is the instant picture, which can be kept or deleted depending on the result! In our case a replay was easy if the first attempt was no good!