

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd

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BEECH HURST NEWS



Cover picture: -

Golden Achievement: After 50 years continuous service at Beech Hurst, Ray Parsons is congratulated by current Chairman, Mike Porter on reaching this milestone and received a special Pullman dining gift as a thanks from everybody at the club.

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Editor's Notes

By the time you are reading these pages we will have passed the longest day and nearly to the mid-point of the season! What with the mainly settled weather we have had a very steady season so far with no rained off days and many weekends where both Saturday and Sunday have been very busy. We have also been running for many party groups again this year and if all those who are provisionally booked definitely run, then we will do about 12 extras! These, together with a hectic social schedule since the last edition and all our regular members have definitely been 'earning their corn'!

Thanks go to Mike and John West who contributed to the last edition, I for one was very interested in John's boiler article, partly because I helped with the silver soldering but also because I hoped it would give those members who are not familiar with the internals of a boiler the opportunity to see a real live construction! If I may digress for a minute, but related to that subject, I stumbled upon an interesting letter in the July Engineering in Miniature in which the builder of 'Wessie' explains why he doesn't drill his boiler bushes until after the soldering process and initial hydraulic test is complete. I for one still cannot fathom this method out. I can understand drilling and partly tapping them, then finishing the threads after soldering, but to drill freehand and tap them afterwards to me seems a little bizarre and a tad risqué! Have a read and make your own mind up! Anyway, back on track, the June edition is quite a bulky newsletter with plenty of recent news and a couple of articles that were omitted from the April edition. Apart from the regular articles, Diary of Events and recent Social Events, there will be the Christmas Quiz answers, Officers & Positions Held list + Forthcoming Events. You may have also noticed that I have strayed away from having an engine on the front cover for this edition, so I hope the cover picture and caption are perfectly self explanatory! Normal service will be resumed next edition and I am hoping to keep this up for the remainder of 2009, workshop time permitting for those concerned! Anyway, here goes with another edition, so please read on and enjoy...

Andrew

Chairman's Notes

As mid-season and mid-summer approach I'm pleased to report that this year has been kind to us so far with the weather! Pleasant running days and long light evenings make this time of year very enjoyable and the passenger numbers are up a little on last year. This is our second year of the increased fare and not only has it helped us financially, but it has brought about more manageable numbers of passengers to carry each afternoon. In the last couple of months we have had visits from Chelmsford and the 'Lavender' line members, where we are due a return visit on 2nd July. A small group visited Chelmsford's track only last weekend to sample their raised and ground level tracks. On the social scene we have had the first of our two annual BBQ's, - with some of our younger members taking the opportunity to 'dine in style' (eating a burger whilst being pulled around the track sitting at a dining table mounted on one of the Pullman cars!)

Inside the clubhouse, a couple of weeks ago, I had the pleasure of presenting Ray with a card and gift to mark his achievement of being a continuous active member with the club for 50 years! Well done Ray! To mark this 'Golden' anniversary, on behalf of the club, I handed Ray a 'voucher-for-two' to dine on the 'Golden Arrow' train at the Bluebell Railway to be arranged at a time suitable for him and Sheila. We all hope they will have a lovely experience and have time to reflect over those 50 years!

Meanwhile, these last two weeks have seen some of the finishing work being done to the clubhouse, in the form of PVC fascia boards, gable ends, guttering and new kitchen door and windows. When complete, there will be no maintenance or painting needed to the building and it all looks very smart.

Geoff has been busy with his paint brushes again and completed the internal decoration around the dining area and John G has likewise painted the interior of the engine shed doors. I've given the clubhouse floors a facelift and sealer to finish it off. Outside, the paintwork of the track steelwork has had a birthday – all ½ mile of it! Thanks for this go to Nick and Andrew S (who came with Norman and myself during their half-term holidays) and we did the public half of the railway, and then Daniel, John G, Norman and yours truly took on the 'wild meadow' half of the track after that! Andrew B and Dave Mattingley have been busy with the grass cutting these last two months and I must say the place is looking much loved all round!

The big TV screen is now on the wall and working well, with Nick and Andrew S providing some interesting video and still shots from around the track. Behind the scenes Steve T and Graham have progressed the signal rewiring a little further, just amongst many other unseen jobs that make the place run smoothly. Thanks to everyone for your efforts and enthusiasm.

Mike

Upgrading

Having invested our time and monies into installing double glazing at our clubhouse last year, we felt that this year it would be beneficial to finish the job and replace our aging gable ends, soffits, barge boards and gutters, as well as replacing the kitchen door and windows to match with the rest of the building. As this newsletter goes to press the work has been 75% completed, with the remaining items due for replacement this coming week. The brown, wood effect, PVC looks very nice and has been widely applauded by those who regularly use the park and who have also seen the work in progress. These replacements not only rid us of the fragile asbestos that once bordered the clubhouse but the low maintenance plastic means no more long ladders to reach the apex's when they need a lick of paint. Hopefully this together with the redecoration of the clubhouse interior (see also Chairman's Notes above) will enable many maintenance free years to come, with time spent on more useful projects, particularly during the winter months when exterior painting is hard work and also often held up by the weather.

Thanks of course to all those involved again with this project, which is now nearing its end. There are one or two more upgrades that we plan to make this year, funds permitting, and these will of course be reported, together with the above, in the August and October editions as they are completed.

Andrew

Election of Officers

The following list represents the Officers and other Positions held within the club for the season 2009/10. Any changes to this during the course of 2009/10 will be published in the next available newsletter. Thanks of course to all those listed below who have volunteered to take responsible positions to help the club run during the course of the year.

Position	Holder(s)	Proposed / Seconded By
Chairman	Mr M Porter	JW / JB
Vice-Chairman	Mr G West	ST / JB
Secretary	Mr J Baldwin	MJP / GAW
Treasurer	Mr A Brock	MJP / ST
Minutes Secretary	Mr A Brock	GAW / JB
Operations Managers	Mr M Porter Mr G West Mr A Brock	JW / ST
Assistant Operation Manager	Mr D Evans	JW / ST
Signals Engineer	Mr S Turner	NP / GAW
Assistant Signals Engineer	Mr G Mundy	NP / GAW
Workshop Manager	Mr S Turner	JW / JB
Assistant Workshop Manager	Mr N Payne	ST / APB
House Manager	Mr J West	MJP / APB
Materials Manager	Mr A Brock	ST / MJP
Assistant Materials Manager	Mr P Marten	ST / MJP
Social Secretary	Mrs V West	MJP / ST
News Editor	Mr A Brock	JW / MJP
Librarian	Mr R Parsons	APB / MJP
Assistant Librarians	Mr A Brock Mr D Evans Mr G West	JW / MJP
Boiler Inspector	Mr G West	APB / JB
Assistant Boiler Inspectors	Mr S Turner Mr J West	APB / JB
Custodian of Wharfedale	Mr A Brock	JW / MJP
Assistant Custodian of W'dale	Mr D Evans	JW / MJP
Carriage Valet	Mr I Thompson	JW / GAW
Webmaster	Mr S Hutton	APB / MJP
Custodians of Growlers	Mr N Edwards Mr A Strongitharm	GAW / MJP

Recent Social Events...

French Boulez Opening



It isn't everyday that you get a new French Boulez rink open in the park and 4 of us were privileged to be part of the opening of the Haywards Heath's club new rinks on 2nd May. Apart from the dignitaries, the speech's etc... there was the serious stuff of playing Boulez and winning! The Boulez club had asked if we could provide 2 teams of 2 people (Andrew B &

Steve T + Andrew S & John M) to play against representatives from the Bowls club, MSDC and some of their own members. After a practice match and a crash course on the rules of Boulez we had two games to prove our worth. Similar, in principal, to lawn Bowls the idea is to get as many of your team's 6 balls (3 per person) closest to the jack as possible, whilst making sure the oppositions are blasted out of contention! Beginners luck or not, Steve & I whitewashed the MSDC team, before making light work of the Bowls club team to come out with a net total of 15 points and top the leader board! Andrew S and John M I think had lesser luck with their games, ended on minus 'something' and gained the 'wooden spoon' for their efforts! It was however a very enjoyable afternoon, particularly with 'our' result and it is nice to see the Boulez club in the lower part of the park amongst the Bowls and our railway.

(Picture Above: Andrew S, Andrew B and Steve T with their prizes)

Andrew

Chelmsford Take-Two

Chelmsford club arrived at Beech Hurst on 17th May to be greeted by torrential rain and left in a similar fashion! At least the middle part of their day was dry and sunny! Along with a dozen or so members they also brought with them a variety of 5" gauge locomotives including a 'Britannia', a 'B1', a 'Loch' and a 'Sweet Pea'. There was also a very nice 3 ½" 'Black 5' and later a 5" 'Class 23' electric.





Their visit to Beech Hurst is pretty much an annual event now and in the last few years the weather has been none too kind.

When running did commence about 11:00 it looked good for the day and they enjoyed their morning fun run in the pleasant sunshine. It didn't, however, last and there were plentiful showers during the afternoon,

several of which discharged over the park! As a result passenger numbers were pretty lean and there were as many 'blank' laps as there were fare paying ones! The showers did abate sufficiently for us to get mostly packed away in the dry, but rain was never far away! **(Picture Previous Page: The 5" 'Sweet Pea')**

Thanks to all the guys from Chelmsford for running their locomotives during our passenger service and I hope they enjoyed the delights of our track at the same time! Also thanks to everybody at our end who helped out with all jobs, both large and small, and made the visit possible! **(Picture Above: The 3 ½" 'Black 5')**



With the above in mind we were duly invited back to the Chelmsford club, which was new to all of us, for a run on their track. The visit took place last Saturday and we had hoped to take 6 members and a couple of locomotives, however, circumstances didn't permit and in the end 4 of us made the trip to Essex, together with Howard's B1 and driving car + the Pump

Trolley! Their site is very centrally located in Chelmsford and as such is sandwiched between industrial and residential developments, with neighbouring cycling club, dance club and Air Cadets, who have a full size 'Meteor' jet parked in their yard! A landmark to any intending visitor if nothing else!

The site has both raised and ground level 7 ¼" and 5" tracks, together with 3 ½" on the raised level only. At about 800 feet long the raised level is 'bone' shaped and nearly extends to both extremities of the site, the Southern end of which is just a stones throw from the ex. GER mainline from London to Norwich.



Had it not been for the trees in leaf then the trains would have been clearly visible on the embankment beyond. The ground level which traverses the perimeter of the site is about 1000 feet in total and boasts a fully operational signalling system, controlled from the signal box by the entrance to the site.

Nick and Andrew S came with me, together with the locomotive and Pump Trolley, with Stephen Hutton coming up from Hampshire by train. We arrived even before 9:00 and were surprised to see people already there busily preparing for the day. After a tour round we unloaded and whilst the 'boys' took the Pump Trolley out, I slowly coaxed the B1 into life with an agonisingly slow electric blower! We were certainly the first ones on and had a good half hour or more with a completely clear raised track, joined later by a 5" 2-6-0T compound, 5" LNER '01', 5" GWR 'Saint' and a 3 ½" BR Standard 4, both of the latter seemingly attempting to break the lap record! (**Pictures Above:** Andrew B & also Andrew S on the raised track)



After a very tasty lunch and with the raised level filling up we moved down to the ground level (a new experience for one or two people!) for the rest of the afternoon and were privileged to get our own freight train too. We took it in turns to take the train round much to the surprise of the locals who are not used to seeing 5" gauge on the ground and with a good load too!

I am sure the others will agree that it was a very pleasant day, marred only by a light shower as we packed away! Thanks to the guys and girls at Chelmsford who were very hospitable and provided a lovely and unexpected lunch too! I for one, and I'm sure I speak for the 'boys' too, would like to visit there again next year, hopefully with a different selection of motive power, maybe even one of my own! (**Picture Above:** The B1 lightly simmering away, complete with freight train)

BBQ Evening



Having had a succession of party groups, plus the visit from Chelmsford, it was nice to have a pleasant social evening in the form of our early summer BBQ evening. Usually this would be held in mid-June, but prior commitments and the advantage of a long weekend meant that we gave the Saturday of the Whitsun Bank Holiday a try this year. The weather was

really pleasant, with warm sunshine throughout the evening, leading to a dry clear night. It was also good to see an array of different locomotives on the track for the evening running too. 'Wharfedale', John West's 'City of Truro' and Geoff's 'L1' made up the steam contingent, with 'Growler' 'Michael Faraday' also running for those who desired electric traction! **(Pictures Above & Below)**



The evening generally went off without too much event, apart from the BBQ itself which was very sluggish to burn and required frequent boosting from propane and forced air to generate any heat. Also the re-emergence of the 'dining' train, which came out of semi-retirement, with Andy and Howard eating on the move complete with 'professional' driver!

I would like to thank everybody who turned up for the BBQ and made it such a pleasant evening, also to all those who helped to prepare beforehand and clear away afterwards, which is always more work than meets the eye. We will of course hold our second BBQ on the August Bank Holiday for those of you who are around and interested!

Lavender Line

Our June club night took on something of a different look, with about 12 visitors from the Lavender line coming the short distance west to have a go at driving somewhat smaller locomotives than they are generally used to!

We turned out two steam locomotives in the form of 'Wharfedale' and Howard's 'Minx', also two electrics in the form of Norman's 'CEP' coach and our own 'Michael Faraday' for the visitors to enjoy. They brought with them a mix of skills, from drivers and firemen to workshop personnel and catering ladies, and all had a fun evening at the controls of our trains. Even the weather behaved itself, which is more than can be said for the signalling system, which initially 'blipped' when a fuse was blown and it meant running a reduced service at the start with no signals! Once rectified everything else went well with plenty of mingling between our guests and members, and it may be that we also gained a new junior member called Hamish, who was lucky enough to have several drives during the course of the evening and was very keen to come back the following weekend and find out more about the railway.

Once again thanks to everybody who turned up to help out, for those who ran or looked after locomotives, made tea and welcomed our guests to Beech Hurst. Also, to Carol Hiscock for the lovely cakes she made, which were devoured during the evening! Sure enough nothing was left at the end!

Andrew

Christmas Quiz Answers

Albeit two editions later than I had intended, please find below the answers to the Christmas Quiz for which you will need to unearth your December edition! I have to admit, with hindsight, that some of the questions could inadvertently lead you to more than one correct answer. I have gone with the answer which was shown in the book, however, I think that in certain cases (with reference to some of the locomotive names) there could feasibly be more than one right answer.

1. 'Achilles' was an **LMS** name,
 2. 'Merlin' was an **LNER** name,
 3. 'Owain Glyndwr' was a **GWR** name,
 4. 'Fairey Battle' was a **GWR** name,
 5. 'Lord of the Isles' was an **LNER** name,
 6. 'St Helena' was an **LMS** name,
 7. 'Earl of Marischal' was an **LNER** name,
 8. 'Lady of the Lake' was a **GWR** name and
 9. 'Repton' was of course an **SR** name.
-
1. There are **7** 'traditional' counties bordering Northants,
 2. Douglas on the Isle of Man is closest to **Scotland**,
 3. They say that **Norwich** is the mostly northerly city listed (debateable),
 4. Edinburgh to Glasgow is **43** miles
 5. There is **no** 'official' English second city,
 6. **Lough Neagh** is the largest in the UK,
 7. **St David's** is the smallest city in the UK (**Wells** if it is England only),
 8. **Offa's Dyke** links the Rivers Dee and Severn and
 9. The Rampant Horse is the symbol of **Kent**.

Forthcoming Events

With early summer now in full swing our Diary of Events is still pretty swell and I have included everything up until October for this edition.

The next Club Night, which will be this coming Thursday when you receive these pages, is a visit to the Lavender line at Isfield. It is envisaged that there will be no one at Beech Hurst on the Thursday night, as we will be over at Isfield for this visit. A report on our return visit to the Lavender line will appear in the August edition in a couple of month's time.

Moving further into July, we will soon be welcoming Maidstone club to Beech Hurst for their annual visit on Saturday 18th and again a report and pictures will appear in the August edition.

Towards the end of July we have also been invited to take part in our annual bowls match with the club next door. This would normally be scheduled for our August Club Night, however commitments mean that this year it will be on either Thursday 23rd or 30th July. Anybody interested should put their name on the whiteboard in the clubhouse in the next couple of weeks, so we can firm up numbers in time for one of those days. It is usually a very fun, and mildly competitive evening, and of course the bar will be open with light snacks provided after the games have been completed!

Into August and we have the return visit to Maidstone on the 8th to look forward to. Again names will be required on the whiteboard, by the end of July at the latest, so arrangements can be made at their end. The visit is all the more special as Maidstone are celebrating their 80th year this year and must be one of the longest existing ME clubs in the country, 20+ years more than us for starters!

The stand at the Bristol ME show is still uncertain at the time of press and it is getting to stage where it will be too late to organise should we be offered a place to exhibit. Details will be posted in the clubhouse if we should get the nod in time. Nonetheless I'm sure a number of us will visit the show even if we are not there to exhibit. We have also been given an early invitation to exhibit at the Sandown Park show in mid-December, which is not only less than half the distance but is also in our closed season that makes staffing the event that much easier. Details will follow later if we decide to seriously look at this, which is just about our nearest feasible exhibition, Alexandra Palace excepted.

We then have our aforementioned end of summer BBQ on the 29th August, which is as late as the Bank Holiday Saturday can be.

Finally, in October, we have been invited back to the Malden DSME track at Thames Ditton again this year. This visit is becoming quite a popular event and coincides well with our end of season, meaning that everybody who would like to go is able to. Although a two day affair we would almost certainly go on Saturday 10th as with previous years. Further details will appear in the August edition, with names required shortly thereafter.

Andrew

Diary of Events

2nd July 2009 – Club Night (see extra details above).

18th July 2009 – Maidstone MES to visit Beech Hurst – Will start at approx. 1000.

23rd or 30th July 2009 – Bowls Night at Beech Hurst – Will start at approx. 1800.

6th August 2009 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

8th August 2009 – SMLS to visit Maidstone MES (see extra details above).

21st/22nd/23rd August 2009 – Provisional display at Bristol ME Show – TBC.

29th August 2009 – End of summer BBQ – Will start at approx. 1800.

3rd September 2009 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

1st October 2009 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

10th or 11th October 2009 – SMLS to visit Malden DSME – Details in August.

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

Andrew

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd



Rear Cover picture: -

One For The History Books: With the front cover picture in mind, I dug this photograph from the archives of a much younger looking Ray driving 'Nobby' Clark's S15. The photograph is undated, and I'm sure someone can correct me if I'm wrong, but I would hazard a guess to say that it is late 1970's, bearing in mind the track, trucks and some of the dress code!