

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd

Issue No. 390

April 2011

BEECH HURST NEWS



Cover picture: -

Special Occasion: It is just under 60 years to the day since our club was formed and the new headboard which will adorn the front of our special dining train on June 3rd is a fitting reminder of this special year – our Diamond Jubilee Year...

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Editor's Notes

After one of the coldest and driest winters for many years, we have been blessed with one of the best starts to a season for nearly as long! 2008 was a good April and to be honest I think 2011 trumps that. Hardly a drop of rain has fallen and with soaring temperatures we have really cashed in when it matters! It is strange to come out of March and for everything to change very quickly but that's how it seems and even Easter was one of the best on record. Unfortunately, all good things come to an end and this coming weekend (including the Royal Wedding day) looks set to be going out with a bang as thunderstorms move in to spoil the party! I doubt we will be so lucky throughout the summer but it is nice to get off to a good start all the same.

Thanks to Alan Temple, Andrew S & Ray for providing much of the content for the February edition, as well as all the usual writings of course.

Although not quite there, this is the nearest edition to our 60th anniversary, hence the front and rear cover pictures. Our special celebration will take place on Friday 3rd June with an extended report and pictures to appear in the June edition of the newsletter and as a result I intend to keep this edition fairly 'short and sweet'. Along with the usual items of literature, there are reports on the closure of the winter work season, the recent boiler seminar held at Beech Hurst, an updated 'Officer's and 'Workers' list and an article by Andrew S on the continued progress of his 5" 'Dougal' project. I have also updated the Diary pages right through to October, which covers most, if not all, of the likely social events during our summer period, so please read on, enjoy and most of all reflect back over the years that you, as a member, have seen at Beech Hurst. This may be longer or may be shorter but above all else I think for those who are or have been regular attendees will understand when I say that the club leaves its mark on all of us and also for the many happy memories it leaves with us too...

Andrew

Chairman's Notes

Our 60th season has started and so far the weather has been exceptionally warm and kind to us! Easter is later this year and the fine spell has held for us through this 4 day weekend. I'm pleased to say we completed virtually all our winter work programme, only the new truck has to have a final coat of paint before it goes into service in 'blood and custard' colours.

Our committee remains the same for the coming year and most of the main posts have not changed either. Two changes of note are that Daniel has taken my place as one of the Operations Managers and Graham has swapped with Steve T as our Signals Engineer.

We also decided at the AGM to defer a vote on the future of the 3 ½" gauge rail until next year, when we can review again how much it is used. Since the AGM we have hosted the Northern Association of Model Engineers annual boiler seminar, which was attended by over 50 people – a few more than we were expecting. Thanks to Val for once again taking care of the catering for this gathering!

Judging from the start of the season our railway will be as busy as ever again this year. Listening to some of the comments on my train as I was driving around last weekend, there still seems to be a lot of people who have never been around the track before, as well as a good number of 'regulars'. The running book is now 'made out' for the rest of the season, so when you have time, please put your name in the book and come and help the Operations Managers in keeping us suitably staffed! I hope you have a good season on the track.

This will be the last newsletter before our 60th anniversary train at the Bluebell. A 'flyer' giving final details will be included for all those taking part in this celebration trip. Let's hope the weather will be equally good for June 3rd!

The publication of this newsletter coincides almost exactly with the club's 60th birthday (the first meeting to form the society was held on May 4th 1951).

Back in 1976 one of the club members at the time, Alan Gettings, wrote a short booklet documenting the history of the first 25 years of the club. This was published by the club and some of the older members probably still have a copy tucked away somewhere. We only had a couple of copies left at the club in recent years. Meanwhile, Peter Marten embarked on a follow up book to document the next 25 years, which was due for publication around our 50th birthday. For many reasons, although the book was virtually ready to print, it never materialised at this time. As they do, the years passed quickly, and as we were coming up to our 60th, we persuaded Peter to revisit his project and complete a further 10 years of events and bring our history right up to date. This he did and a very fine job he has made of it. The two books are both well written and informative and together give a detailed account of all aspects of club developments and key events over our 60 years.

I am very proud, on behalf of the club, (as part of our 'birthday' presents to members this year), to include with this newsletter, a gift copy of both booklets. I hope you will enjoy reading them. Also included is an anniversary lapel badge depicting the club engine 'Wharfedale'. After our anniversary train ride and dinner at the Bluebell Railway, we will also be presenting a DVD to each member with a selection of cine/video clips and 'stills', taken over the years. I would like to thank everyone who has given so much of their spare time in preparing all this material, especially Peter for writing such an excellent follow up to the first booklet, Steve T for all his help in collating photos and preparing the booklets for publication, Graham for transferring all our old movies onto DVD, Chris for organising badge production, and the committee for the time and effort bringing it all together. I would also like to thank both Andrew's and Chris for coordinating the arrangements with the Bluebell.

Mike

60th Anniversary

Final details are almost in place for our 60th anniversary dining train at the Bluebell Railway on Friday 3rd June and if you have previously booked a place(s) on the train then you will receive a separate sheet with this newsletter detailing where you need to be and when etc...

Bearing in mind this will be the last newsletter prior to that evening, if you have any last queries then please see either myself or Andrew S at the club and we will endeavour to answer your question. Otherwise we look forward to seeing you on 3rd June for an evening meandering through the Sussex countryside.

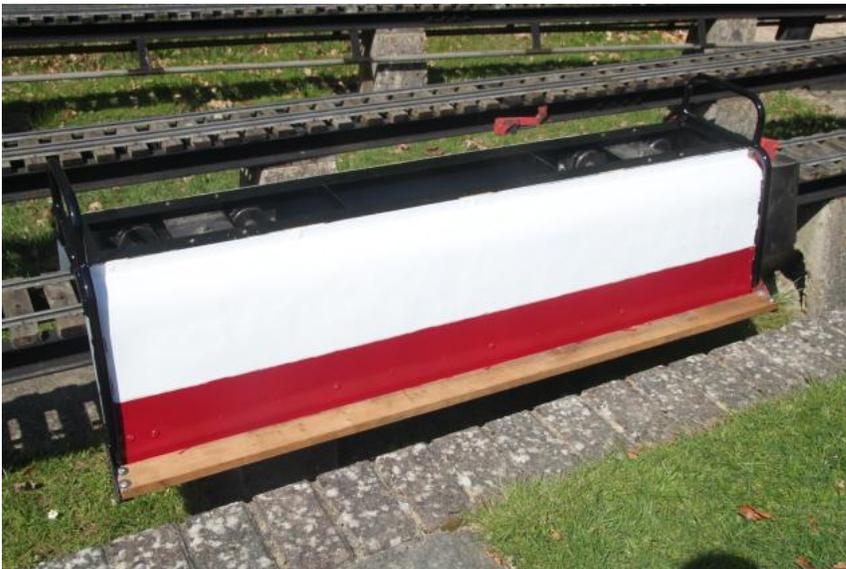
Andrew

Recent Social Events

Since the last newsletter, just under 2 months ago, there have been no notable 'social events' other than the visit of 50 or so boiler inspectors to Beech Hurst on Saturday 19th March. This organised seminar was the chance for local boiler inspectors in the 'southern' area to meet with the Northern Association of Model Engineers boiler team to discuss the testing of boilers and updated rules and regulations. Although not there personally, I understand that the seminar went very well and was extremely useful, if a little more populated than had been planned for! Many thanks go to Val & John for organising the catering, which proved to be just enough and to John Baldwin for liaising with NAME to get this seminar up and running in the first place.

Andrew

Winter Work



Since we are now well into the running season, I would like to say a final thank you to everybody who came up and helped out during this last winter period and for all those who came up and gave their time freely for the benefit of the club each weekend. Given the list that

started out at the beginning of the closed season, there wasn't much left that hadn't been completed come the last weekend in March as we prepared for running once again. A handful of small jobs have been completed since then and the new truck which Andrew & I have been progressing has, of this weekend, received its final top coat of paint (**picture above: recently in undercoat**) and is now just devoid of lining and top banding before it is ready to go into service around the Whitsun Bank Holiday – with a bit of luck! There are always small jobs that continue during the summer months; however Winter Work is now in hibernation, ready again for October when the process starts once more!

Andrew

Election of 'Officers' and 'Workers' for 2011

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 2011:

Chairman: Mike Porter

Vice-Chairman: Geoff West

Secretary: John Baldwin

Minutes Secretary: Andrew Brock

Treasurer: Andrew Brock

Other Committee Members In Addition To The Above Officer's:

John Gange, Graham Mundy, Paul Tomlinson, Steve Turner & John West

Operations Managers: Andrew Brock, Daniel Evans & Geoff West

Signals Engineer: Graham Mundy

Assistant Signals: Steve Turner

Workshop Manager: Steve Turner

Assistant Workshop: Geoff West

House Manager: John West

Materials Manager: Andrew Brock

Assistant Materials: Peter Marten

Social Secretary: Val West

Librarian: Ray Parsons

Assistant Librarians: Andrew Brock & Geoff West

Newsletter Editor: Andrew Brock

Boiler Coordinator: Steve Turner

Boiler Inspectors: Paul Tomlinson, Geoff West & John West

Custodian of Wharfedale: Andrew Brock

Assistant Custodian: Daniel Evans

Carriage Valeters: Nick Edwards & Ian Thompson

Growler Custodians: Graham Mundy & George Reynolds

Webmaster: Stephen Hutton

Clubhouse Cleaners: Andrew Brock & Mike Porter

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

Andrew

Celebrating 60: Who Do We Share Our Anniversary Day With?

With our actual anniversary (4th May) very much upon us and following on from Andrew S' article in the February edition I thought I would produce a little snippet to see which famous people's Birthdays we share our day with. I think most people will recognise the names below but I will add their notoriety in case not:

Eric Sykes (1923) – British Film, Radio & Television actor, producer & writer

Terry Scott (1927) – British Film & Television actor & comedian

Audrey Hepburn (1929) – British Actress

Jackie Jackson (1951) – American Singer & Musician, member of the Jackson 5

Michael Barrymore (1952) – British Television actor & comedian

Andrew

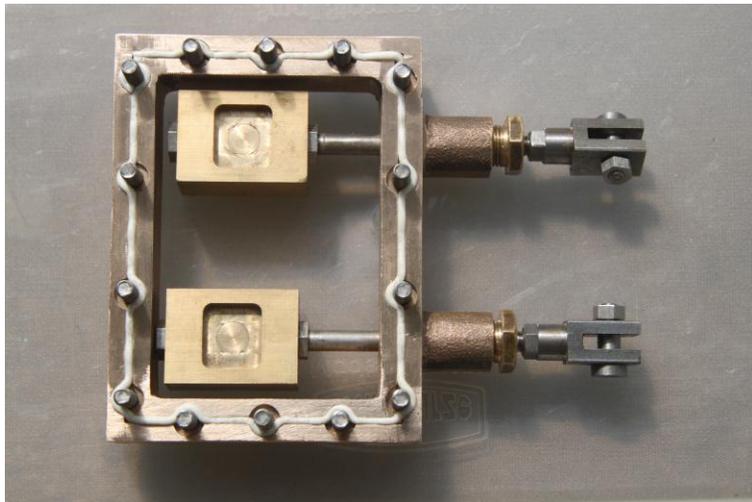
Building a 5" W&L Dougal

The last three weeks have mainly been spent finishing off those few parts that were never finished properly in the first place. These include the eccentric straps and shaping the connecting rods. Also, the last three major components before the chassis can be declared finished have been manufactured; these are the motion



brackets, slide bars and crossheads. As well as these parts, we have found time to pin all four wheels to the axles by threading bored holes to take a 4mm grub screw. **(Photo above: The entire chassis mounted in the milling machine ready to drill 50:50 into each wheel and axle in order to pin them)**

Back in February, I finished by saying that I hoped to have reached a stage with Dougal that would involve using an air compressor. And, after burning some mid-night oil and several very long days to complete the remaining machining, on Tuesday 26th April Dougal turned over on air for the first time. This first attempt did not all go according to plan, as after a short time of running, a knocking noise began to develop. Several hours later, we discovered that this was being caused by a wheel that had come loose from the axle. Just as well we had pinned all the wheels to the axles first! On a lighter note, building my running chassis has taken almost exactly 400 hours.



Prior to this, Andrew and I had spent a couple of afternoons making sure the steam chest and cylinders were air (or steam) tight and whether the decision to do away with traditional flange sealant and replace with 'O' ring cord on the chest was a good one. Although it involved a lot more work at the time, this idea proved to be very successful, especially as this is one part you need regular access to when setting the valves. **(Photo above: The steam chest and valves ready to be bolted to the port/saddle block complete with 'O' ring cord in position)**

Andrew S

Recent / Forthcoming Events

With the onset of spring and now that we are back running again, there are the usual social events to sort out for the coming year. Rather than wait for the June edition, I have compiled a list of all our upcoming events right through until October. Some of these you will see are away from Beech Hurst, whilst others are at 'home'. This list, I hope, will be fairly definitive and the only other social evening might be a bowls match, which usually occurs around the end of July or beginning of August and with a bit of luck I will get this in the June edition if it has been firmed up by then. Reading through the list there are the usual suspects that occur each year and a few different ones for 2011. The Bluebell train being the first of these and the details for this have been included with each newsletter if appropriate. Two other 'new' visits for 2011 are those to / from Colchester club. A chance meeting with a Colchester member at the Alexandra Palace show spawned these two dates and it will be nice to visit somewhere new this year and welcome new faces to Beech Hurst also. If I have extra dates, I will include these in the June edition; otherwise this should be it for 2011 until the autumn.

Andrew

Diary of Events

- 5th May 2011 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900
- 22nd May 2011 – Chelmsford club visit to Beech Hurst from 1000
- 2nd June 2011 – Club Night – Lavender Line visit to Beech Hurst from 1800
- 3rd June 2011 – 60th Anniversary dinner at Bluebell Railway from 1800
- 17th June 2011 – SMLS visit to Lavender Line – see blackboard at Beech Hurst
- 2nd July 2011 – SMLS mid-summer 'Bring Your Own' BBQ from 1800
- 7th July 2011 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900
- 23rd July 2011 – SMLS visit to Colchester club – see blackboard at Beech Hurst
- 4th August 2011 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900
- 27th August 2011 – SMLS end of summer 'Bring Your Own' BBQ from 1800
- 1st September 2011 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900
- 17th September 2011 – Colchester club visit to Beech Hurst from 1000
- 1st October 2011 – Maidstone club visit to Beech Hurst from 1000
- 6th October 2011 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900
- 15th October 2011 – Pentanque Match at Beech Hurst – details & times TBC

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

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Rear Cover picture: -

Recognisable? – The other most notable symbol of our club is the 'Beech Hurst' badge, now used on our embroidered garments and website pages (except this year when our 60th anniversary headboard will be used), a design based on the SR 'Schools' class names plates.