Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd

Issue No. 344
August 2003

BEECH HURST NEWS

Cover picture: -

Eyes Down for a Full House: Pictured are a group of hardy souls who braved arctic conditions to try out John Ely's new 16mm garden railway. Using Don & James' remote controlled live steam locomotives, a fun afternoon, the first of many (hopefully), was had by all.

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Editors Notes

Welcome to our third edition of this newsletter. All seemed to be fine on the weather front, until the other day when the ‘summer holidays’ were meant to begin and then the weather has since been on a slippery slide downwards, with quite a bit of rain mixed in with a little summer sunshine. Bearing in mind we have had a very long dry and warm spell we can’t really complain too much, except we wish it would just rain at night and be warm and sunny during daylight!! By the time this news is delivered, by whatever means you have chosen, there will be little more than a month of running left and the close season will be upon us once again. We can hardly thank anyone for contributions to the June edition as apart from the Chairman, we did all the articles ourselves. This was mainly due to time on our part, which when you have exams and your preparing to move house in Mark’s case (hence no address on the front cover!) and in Andrew’s case, working 35hours a week and East Grinstead Fete’s etc… there is little time to arrange the newsletter, as well as the fact that certain times of the year allow better printing opportunities which are often taken, so articles get finished as and when required. Apologies for the B/W photographs and cover picture, by the way, as copying facilities are limited and colour is non-existent!! Nevertheless I hope it was an enjoyable edition, with plenty to keep you amused.
This time is very similar to the last with the both of us contributing a good few articles together with Mike Porter and John Ely who have generously donated their time to write a page or two for the newsletter and an extra piece courtesy of John De Bank on lubrication!! There are several articles on social events and visits that have taken place in the last 8 weeks, together with an updated Diary of Events and a really good article on the construction of John Ely’s garden railway, so please read on and enjoy…

Andrew & Mark

For The Future & Website Update

From the June edition, we have had 15 responses to say whether people want e-mailed copies of the news or whether they prefer the traditional paper copy. Minus ‘us’, that’s 13 of which 5 are taking the road to electronic newsletters each month. Now we presume therefore that the remaining 60 or so members are happy to continue having theirs delivered by snail mail?? Also the news’ that are left for collection in the clubhouse by those ‘regularly’ attending members will no longer have envelopes, there will instead be a tick list by the box and enough news’ to cover the anticipated demand on that day, all we ask is that you take your news and tick to say it has been taken and the ones not gone by the Sunday evening will be duly sealed into envelopes and sent as normal. This will not only reduce the envelope wastage, but also the need for so many address labels to be printed. We will start doing this as from the October edition, so this edition will be delivered as usual.
The Website has been a little troublesome since the last newsletter, having been hacked into several times and problems with the main servers have meant updates have been a little few and far between. Also Mark has recently moved house and access to the computer is still very limited, so for the next little while the website may not be updated so regularly,

this includes the main public section as well as the member's section. Updates will take place when time permits.

Andrew & Mark

Chairman's Notes

It is with great sadness that I have to report that Gwen, Jim Green's partner, passed away in June. Our condolences and thoughts go to Jim and Gwen's family.
Early July saw a visit from the Chichester DMES with Maidstone MES later in the same month.
After a slow start our "Little and Large day" turned into a success with larger locos banking the smaller ones. Wharfedale assisted Mike's 'Hardwicke,' Vince's 'Maid' banked Jim Green's 'Polly' and the 'Scot' pushed the Pump Trolley (train engine!!) round all afternoon.
A large contingent (20+) of members paid a visit to Bill McAlpine's railway at Fawley Hill. I would imagine a report appears in this issue. (Does it Editor?)
Contrary to what I said in the last issue of the "News" the battery charging house was not complete but hopefully it is now!! Oops. Members with batteries to charge will use the clubhouse key to initially open the box and then take a key from inside to enable them to change batteries etc. without needing to enter the clubhouse.
The carriage workshop roof was showing signs of old age and has now been recovered with felt and stones.
The issue of signing in has culminated in the continuing point blank refusal by one of our senior members to sign in. As members will be aware, this matter was discussed at some length at the AGM. A majority vote was passed and it became a requirement for members to sign in. This member continued to "cock a snook" at our rules and this situation cannot continue. This member was given many chances to abide by the democratically voted rules. He has given no assurance that he will abide by the rules and therefore it is with regret that he has been asked to leave the Society. This decision has not been taken lightly and has been discussed at numerous committee meetings. The committee acknowledges the great deal of work done by the member over the many years of his membership and is disappointed that he would not agree to sign in but we cannot have one rule for some and one for senior members.
Contrary to this member's opinion I personally think that the Society is a friendlier place than when I first joined.
Whilst on the subject of safety, the carriage shed lifting bridge has had the swinging end painted red and warning signs attached. It was thought that the end could pose a risk to member's fingers and as a responsible society we try and minimize the risks involved. Will all members take care when using the lifting bridge.
Sheila Parsons, Allan Killick and Peter Marten are either recovering from or about to have operations and we wish them all a speedy recovery.

Don

The Social Scene – Visits by IoW, Ascot, Chichester & Maidstone MES'

Along with the regular public running days we have also welcomed several visiting clubs to Beech Hurst during the last 2 months.

The return visit of the IoW and Ascot societies was on Saturday 14th June, several engines and a good few members enjoyed fine and warm weather for another excellent day at the SMLS, even John De Bank had an 'extended run', before being forced off with a blocked Hydrostatic Lubricator. His excuse follows, with some plausible reasons for failure and tips on how to solve the problem. Along with John's 5" 'Hunslet', there was also a brace of 5" Simplex's, a 3 ½" 'Maisie and a 3 ½" 'K2'. In addition were a sextet of electrics running at various times during the day. All hopefully had a good day and we hope to be able to keep up the tradition with a similar gathering next year.

Andrew & Mark

Hydrostatic Lubrication – A Problem Solved!

'ELIDIR', that's the Hunslet with one gunmetal cylinder and one cast iron cylinder had an extended run of 1 ½ hours until the squeak became audible! On the previous run I had cleaned out the sight feed glass and refilled it with a mixture of glycerine and water. I have tried various solutions such as brine, brine and teepol, water and teepol, but have settled on glycerine and water. However no drops of oil were seen rising in the glass!! I came up to the steaming bays in a gap in passengers and checked the tank and drained it of condensate and refilled with the usual Shell 'Nassa' steam oil. Still no oil in the sight glass so at 1515 'ELIDIR' was taken off to cool down prior to putting in the car. Now you may think 'extended run?' when our engines at Beech Hurst do a full afternoon running and then some! Well an hour on Broadfields is quite sufficient. At only 640 feet you start counting the sleepers as you go over them! I was sitting in my 'think tank' when I realised I didn't have to strip the loco down or to steam the loco up just to test the sight feed, therefore I devised the following sequence:

Blank off steam pipe from boiler cock to the oil tank,
Drain condensate from the tank,
Fill to the brim with oil,
Screw in a long threaded cap to provide pressure in the tank,
Open sight feed control tap,
Count the number of drops rising in the glass,
Repeat until the oil pipe to the cylinders is filled,
Reconnect the boiler steam cock.

Think! I'll write it down and send it to Beech Hurst, they probably do it all the time or only use mechanical lubricators or don't use oil at all (considering how full their drums of oil on the shelf are!!) or they collect the oil wiped from the wheels to keep their cans filled!!

John De Bank

EdNo. Thanks for that John, will keep those thoughts in mind, most of our engines do have mechanical lubricators however and we do use plenty of oil, not sure why the oil drums are always full when you visit, probably because they are replenished regularly as we have plenty of the stuff. As for the wheels, 'we', that is Andrew and Mark try to get all those oily rags for our weekly 'burn ups', it certainly wouldn't be recycled, we make sure of that!!

On July 5th we invited the Chichester & District MES to a run at Beech Hurst, the first time Chichester have visited in their own right for quite a while, other than on the Sussex Clubs days. They were blessed with fine weather throughout and brought with them a good variety of motive power. Amongst the engines running was a 5" GWR 'Metro', a 5" 0-6-0 'Kirtley', two 5" Simplex's, a 5" 'Boxhill' and a 5" GWR 'Pansy'. Although neither of us were there on that day, I am reliably informed that they all enjoyed themselves having had several hours uninterrupted running, including some 1400-1700 passenger hauling. We look forward to a return visit to the Chichester track on 6th September for the 'Sussex Clubs' day.

Our latest visitors to the club were Maidstone on 19th July. Their visit together with the return outing to Mote Park in Maidstone has become a regular annual trip for both societies in recent years. This year they brought six engines, including a 5" 'Duchess', a 5" 'Speedy', a 5" GER 4-6-0, a 3 ½" 'Britannia', a 3 ½" 'Juliet' and the return of Mike P's 5" 4-2-2 'Caledonian' single, which having been to the Midlands and back ran round the club track once more, albeit under different ownership. As with all the other visits the weather played it's part with fine weather throughout and most of the visitors enjoyed a good few hours free running and then basically running our passenger service for us in the afternoon. Thanks go to the Maidstone 'lot' for running our service for us and hope they enjoyed their day out and hope that a good few of us will join in the return visit to Maidstone at the end of September. (**Pictured Above:** Tom Parham at the controls of his 5" 'Speedy' during Saturday's visit by Maidstone MES).

Andrew & Mark

Special Events – Little & Large Day, 20th July

Similar to the event we held last year, the 'Little and Large' day this year was another success, with quite a few eager passengers ready to experience the power of little engines. The three trains were headed by small engines, which were, Mike Porter's 2-4-0 'Hardwicke', Jim Green's 0-4-0 'Polly' and on the third was the Pump Trolley (engines provided by Andrew & Mark!). (**Pictured Above:** Mike Porter at the controls of 'Hardwicke,' banked by 'Wharfedale at the rear). They were banked by 'Wharfedale', Vince's L1 & 'The Royal Scot' respectively. The afternoon went very well overall; occasionally the lead engine would take a train out of the station leaving the banker behind, quite a struggle, but fun all the same. Everyone, including the public seemed to like the concept, an idea we could try again next year. Thanks to all those involved in the organising & participating of this successful day.

Visits to Swindon & Fawley Hill

Apart from the several visiting clubs that have been to Beech Hurst in the last two months, we have also been visiting other places too. The first visit was a return to the Swindon MES track in Swindon, back in early June. The track is sited in the Coate Water Country Park on the outskirts of Swindon and comprises of ground level 3 ½", 5" and 7 ¼" track, which forms a big figure of eight with several loops in between. It has to be one of the nicest tracks that we have visited, nice location, mixed graded (anything up to inclines of 1 in 57) and well maintained. It has a signal box, which controls the station area signals and points, the remainder of the track is not signalled and is a case of drive on sight.

The last visit we had was in 1999, which was the first visit to the Swindon track and we thought that after several years absence another visit this year would be good. There were 13 of us in the end who attended, taking with us several locomotives, including: Geoff's L1, Vince's 'Barry', 'Wharfedale' and the Pump Trolley. John Ely also brought along 'Planet X' later on for a run in the rain!! As we arrived even before any of their members had, we ended up 'shinning' over a fence to have a look around the site, before we were officially let in a little time later. All the engines were lit up simultaneously and we were running not long after 1100, with Andrew and Mark already trying the track on the Pump Trolley on it's maiden visit to Swindon. We shared the driving during the day with everyone having a drive of something; we were also treated to a BBQ at lunchtime, with bangers and burgers plentiful!! **Pictured Above: Ray driving Geoff's L1.**

The afternoon started brightly enough, with some passengers being carried, the clouds were looking ominous, however, and it wasn't long before a particularly slow moving shower seemed to hang around for an age, driving all the passengers away and leaving just James and Vince on the track, getting wet. The rest of us had either retired to the clubhouse or were crammed into the signal box looking for shelter!! There were eight of us in there at one point, very squashed, but dry at least!! The rain eventually eased and allowed another good couple hours of uninterrupted running, which was quite pleasant in the afternoon sunshine. We cleaned down at about 1700 and were treated to another round of tea and cakes before we set off for home, having had another very enjoyable day trip to Swindon, albeit a bit wet!! Thanks go to the Swindon club for their hospitality throughout and hopefully we can welcome them to Beech Hurst in the near future. **Pictured Above: John Ely and most of the family emerging from a smoke screen, whilst enjoying a ride behind 'Planet X'.**

The visit to Fawley Hill on the 6th July was quite unique for Beech Hurst. The last big group visit certainly hasn't been in the last ten years or so, although there is a small army of us who visit other tracks, there was nearly half the membership present going to Fawley Hill, the first group visit on that scale for some while. The estate at Fawley Hill, near Henley-On-Thames is owned by Bill McAlpine and includes wild animals, there is a large full size railway that weaves it's way up and down the estate and the largest collection of railwayana we have ever seen.

The idea of a visit to Fawley Hill was born from John Ely who suggested a club outing would be an enjoyable day out, having visited a similar open day last year. 28 tickets were duly obtained and on a first come first served basis they were snapped up by members and their families. It became clear that the estate is only opened several times a year and that applicants to visit are almost sort of 'vetted' as most of those present on our visit were society members of some description or another. It was considered to drive individually there, but then the idea of a group coach outing was born and with Ray's son-in-law, Bob, owning a Southdown coach of 1961 vintage, so there was a proposal to go as a group and have a proper club day out.

And so it was that we set off from the club on 6th July for Fawley Hill, about two hours drive away. The journey, mainly by motorway, was very uneventful except the last part that involves steep 'A' & 'B' roads, followed by a single carriageway road to the entrance of the estate. There were several near misses in the lane leading to Fawley Hill, with the cars forced to back down when faced with a 10-ton coach bearing down on them!!

We were supposed to be there at 1215 and since it was barely 1100 we decided to take an early lunch prior to entrance and then we could have four hours or so uninterrupted viewing time. Proceeding down the lane to the actual site made us wonder how you could landscape this estate to take a full size railway, an answer that was sort of, well, sort of answered, as an 0-6-0 J** tank came storming up the 1 in 13 gradient into the station at the top of the hill. **Pictured Above: The locomotive No. 31 "Sir William McAlpine" charges past the Waterloo arches en-route to Somersham station, the grade here is about 1 in 14!!** It was quite a sight to see, with the engine absolutely flat out, pulling an open seven plank wagon and guards van. The site on which the full size rolling stock is based, along with the railwayana collection is only an acre or so in size, with the railway extending about 1 mile down into the bottom of the estate, which is resident to Llama's, Kangaroo's and other non-native animals. Rides on the train were adhoc and subject to space as and when you could get on to it, Dave and Jim Green also experienced footplate rides which came as part of the group booking, they were lucky ones when names were pulled from a hat during the coach trip to Fawley, otherwise there was plenty to see as the train came and went with several rooms and garages filled with railwayana, more than we have ever seen in one collection before, with everything you can imagine, including marine engines, 12 ½" , 7 ¼", 5" and 3 ½" models and road vehicles,

more articles in and around the station and a few old coaches and locomotives in the sidings waiting for repair or restoration. People spent most of their day split up in small groups looking around the attractions and taking the occasional trip on the train. Now come to mention the train, the trip starts at the station at the top of the hill and descends initially at 1 in 13 and then 1 in 14 past the sidings, ex-Waterloo station arches and landscaped gardens, including water fountains made from old electricity insulators!! The line then turns a sharp left hand curve to 'Bourne Again' station at the bottom of the hill, where the train reverses and continues down away from the main site and into the estate, passing a covered storage area housing more wagons, brake vans etc… It finally terminates a short distance later at, 'Invernie', the bottom station, where sightings of Llama's, Kangaroo's, Emu's & Deer are common. The return journey is then in reverse, climbing virtually the whole way at 1 in 85 to 'Bourne Again' and then at 1 in 14 to Somersham station (**Pictured Left**) at the summit. Travelling in the open wagon behind the engine gives the best perspective of the locomotive climbing the gradient and guarantee's being covered in small particles of soot by the end of the journey, it is an experience that would be difficult to repeat anywhere else and short of a rack railway we do not know of anywhere that 4' 8 ½" exists and has gradients as steep as 1 in 13. Also, with the local topography being of a steep nature the sound of the train climbing the severe gradient reverberates around the neighbourhood, not that there is much of one!! Somersham station itself is only an engine and a coach in length, but is very well kept, with a tunnel for storage at the far end and a café and seated area at the back. In the museums there are several interesting relics, including the old 'Solari' departure boards from Brighton station. As well as the aforementioned railwayana collection, there are also scores of original enamel signs and a collection of Rolls Royce's and other Automobilia in the garages downstairs. **Pictured Left: Brian seems to be showing a keen interest in some classic 'Jag's' which were part of another visiting group that day, I'm sure it wasn't the MK1 Courtina you were looking at Brian??** For the five or so hours we all spent on site, there was plenty to see and do, with the train rides an added attraction and all in all it was an excellent day out, even the weather played its part, being warm and sunny, without being too hot. We left around 1630, having a fairly hassle free trip back, except for a two mile queue on the approach to the M25, from the M40, caused by two scantily clad lasses having a puncture in the hard shoulder and although no one seemed bothered about stopping to offer assistance there were plenty of drivers who seemed intent on slowing down to 'Rubber Neck' and have a good look!!

We think everyone who went would agree it was an impressive, but tiring (for some) group day out, that would be good to repeat again sometime to a different place. We would like to thank John Ely for organising the whole day by himself, for Ray and Bob for organising the transport and to all the other 25 people who made one of the best days out the club has seen for a long while.

Andrew & Mark

Club Clean Up

Those of you who come up to the club regularly will notice we've had a big clean up in the workshop, (now the final bits and pieces from the winter work projects are finished!).
If you use the workshop facilities, please leave them as clean (or cleaner!) than you find them, and put all the tools back where they came from as a courtesy to your fellow clubmates and the workshop managers!
On a similar note our cleaning lady has decided to "call it a day", and for the time being we have decided to clean for ourselves. This is easier now, anyway, since we've turned the seating round in the clubhouse. Probably, the "Sunday gang" will have a clean up prior to departing, as they have always done the kitchen area anyway, (since our cleaner only did the floor). We have a second hand "hoover" on its way for the little bit of carpet and it only takes 10 mins to sweep and mop the rest. I am happy to do this most times, but a little help occasionally would be appreciated.
Thanks to John and Val we always have clean tea clothes. I have given the kitchen a spring clean, but again a little help with the washing up would be appreciated occasionally. In fairness, if you are not prepared to "do a turn" at the sink occasionally, then the least you can do is wash up and put away your own cup/plates etc.
Anyway, in a nutshell, please don't consider it's another member's job to keep your clubhouse clean and tidy. We are very lucky to enjoy such excellent facilities at Beech Hurst, thanks to the effort of its membership over the years, and surely, the least we can do is to collectively take a pride in them. Nuff sed!

Mike

For Sale

We don't generally get too many requests to list items for sale in the newsletter, but John West asked if he could place this ad in and see if anyone out there is interested:

For Sale: Clarke CFC 500F ½ Tonne Folding Engine Crane, unused and as new, complete with instructions and test certificate. **£80.00**. You can either contact John direct on (01444) 235026 for more details, or Andrew or Mark at their addresses on the cover and we will pass your details on, thanks.

The Summerhill Light Railway – Reflections on the first year

The story of my 45mm gauge garden railway started I suppose, when my twin sons were four, half a decade ago. No less than two LGB starter train sets were the Christmas present of the year and we had a great holiday laying several permutations of track on the living room floor. The minimum age recommended for these sets is eight, but “start ‘em young”, that’s my motto, particularly when it comes to encouraging railways as a hobby!

I have always had a master plan to set up 45mm in the garden and shortly after purchasing the LGB I set about building a complete Welshpool and Llanfair train. Two rather basic coach kits and three wagons were bought and over the intervening period I completed them. They took so long in fact that I am nervous getting them out into the garden when there are small feet (and footballs) around!

Around Easter last year I purchased a 20m oval and deviation in LGB set track and I laid it loosely around the bottom, rather arid, part of the garden. Expecting to do some packing here and there I thought I would have an immediate layout. No way, the topography was a lot worse than expected and I had to make some light trestles from timber to get an even formation. We ran the LGB on this for a while and it was so nice to see something moving in the garden at last.

Thoughts moved to a more solid track capable of supporting real steam locomotives. I didn’t fancy concrete because of the mess and heavy labouring involved. Another often-used system is 100mm blocks laid into the ground. This sounded too heavy as well and knowing how keen our clay is to heave in all directions I decided to use a “piled” system. (Brunel would have been proud of me!). 2”x1” treated softwood pegs were driven into the ground to a “set”. I used a lot of them at about two foot centres and at times quite long. I was on first name terms at Mid Sussex Timber by the time I had finished!

For the deck I chose one inch marine plywood screwed to the “piles”. I reckon if its good enough for Building Roofs and for boats it must suit garden conditions…. time will tell! Eight by four sheets were purchased at breath taking prices and many (many, many) happy hours were spent jig sawing the curved shapes.

To complete the formation, I loosely laid roofing felt under the track (on reflection I could have heat bonded it) and laid 6mm limestone over. The limestone comprised two tonnes delivered from the jolly friendly chaps at the Ardingly railhead and I just don’t know where it has all gone!

Although the LGB track has a very chunky, unrealistic rail section, it does permit the laying of 6mm ballast loosely over it without any interference with the trains. I have tried to create as near a perfect formation as possible because I believe the interest would wane pretty rapidly if the trains derailed as a regular occurrence.

After completing the basic circuit a remarkable thing occurred. The domestic authorities permitted me to extend from the bottom of the garden to the patio! Delighted with this I set about incorporating a point in my level circuit and proceeded immediately up the garden at 1 in 30! With a gradient of 1 in 8 I thought my garden was insurmountable but having got the calculator out and

roughly worked out the length of a meandering track I realised I could just do it. A block was fixed to the end of my spirit level and off I went!

I had intended to create a spiral but space did not permit. Instead, a rather attractive curved embankment was formed and a small bridge incorporated to cross the circuit beneath. This was a major hurdle overcome and on wet weekends in October, November and December progress was made up the 30m of line to the patio and a run round loop. I was very pleased to use flexible track for this extension. It cut down on plywood wastage because I just cut out a slightly larger radius each time I cut off a piece. Also I was able to put in transition curves and super-elevation to create a new level of sophistication. Suffice to say the original circuit seems a bit basic now.

In the December holiday I was delighted to invite visitors and the first steam locomotives to traverse the line (**see cover picture**). These were Don and James Clarke's early "Roundhouse" locomotives burning a heady mix of methylated spirit. My heart was in my mouth when they tackled the 1 in 30 but to my delight and surprise they did not prime and it was great fun to see them struggle up the incline in realistic fashion.

During winter evenings I toiled away at two station buildings and on special occasions (when footballs are prohibited) they come out and grace the line. They are both standard gauge light railway structures but look perfectly at home with narrow gauge. They are "Northiam" from the K&ESR and "Sidlesham" from the Selsey Tramway. Platforms and detail will follow in due course. (**Pictured Above:** The Countess passing the station on the original bottom loop).

The next milestone came in the spring when I was able to sell the five inch "Warship". Although I was very sad to see this go, it did open the door to 45mm live steam. "Countess" was immediately secured to complete my W&L train and an ambition held over many years was achieved.

I was then able to secure "Goliath" a rather attractive 0-6-0t freelance engine made by Cheddar models (**see picture left**). "Exe" a fully lined Southern Railway Lynton and Barnstaple machine followed.

My father came to visit us on a nice late spring afternoon and it was rather fun to see him fully absorbed by the passing of the many trains we fielded for him. Not being of the railway persuasion, it was quite entertaining to see him captivated. A couple of weeks passed and I received a phone call from him offering to buy a fourth loco for the line! Not wishing to hesitate and stare a gift horse in the face for too long, I rushed out and bought "Caradoc", a rather attractive 0-4-0t, British outline (but built in China!)

So now we have a stud of four locomotives. Three of them are radio control and the fourth manual. I have built a rake of IP engineering wooden panelled coaches and I am progressing with a scheme to “Anglicise” the LGB stock previously bought. I am busy lining out Caradoc so that it can be named “Harry” after its sponsor at a family “do” soon.
The railway runs well and videos taken on the train show plausible realism. The set track on the circuit leaves a bit to be desired but the excitement of seeing a locomotive conquer the 1 in 30 is fresh everytime we see it happen.
All eyes are focused on the other side of the garden now and provided I can get “planning permission” we may see me hacking at plywood for a second winter. This extension would see a complete circuit being formed around the garden with another horrendous climb. The full circuit would be around 70m long and a spiral with tunnel should be possible.
Watch out for a Friday evening get together soon. I may also try the odd afternoon or two in the Autumn/ Winter for hardy souls.

John Ely

Summer Work - Battery Charging Shed

For those of you who have either been at the club in the last three weeks or own a battery powered locomotive should by now be aware that our modified battery charging shed has been completed. It is an extension of the compressor house, with several more courses of brick work added to raise the roof sufficiently to house the new charging area. In last times edition, the exterior had been finished and now the interior floor, door backing and electrics have been finished. Thanks must go to Vince & Dave who have done the majority of the hard work, but also to all the ‘others’ who put in cameo appearances along the way to help, where help was needed. Charging batteries has now been made a lot easier and should stop a lot of the ‘ferrying’ of batteries to and from member’s homes. Should anyone require to use the charging shed but are unfamiliar with the procedure, please see Dave Keast, Vince Williams or Mike Porter, who will fill you in and loan out a key as required.
(**Pictured Above:** The new charging shed in action the other week, complete with an extractor fan and room for several batteries to be charged simultaneously).

Andrew & Mark

The Social Scene – BBQ Night

The annual mid-summer BBQ was held on 21st June. It was blessed with fine weather, unusual for a June BBQ and was well attended with a couple of dozen members + family members enjoying the balmy summer evening.

Along with the delicious cuisine there were several engines in steam and running round, there were also several fires alight in the tunnel during the course of the evening too, as Andrew & Mark used a mixture of paraffin charcoal and grass to 'fog' out the long tunnel as passing trains went through the smoky haze, just to add a bit of fun to the proceedings!! The evening was a big success, very sociable and entertaining too, it was at least 00:30 by the time we finally left having enjoyed another very good BBQ night. There is another BBQ evening in August, see the Diary of Events, below please.

Andrew & Mark

Diary of Events

16th August 2003 – Croydon MES visit SMLS, timings and numbers **TBC**.

17th August 2003 – Visit to 'Vale of Aylesbury' MES at Quainton Road, nr Aylesbury. Exact details of this visit, **TBC**.

23rd August 2003 – Mid-summer 'Bring Your Own' BBQ, from 1830.

4th September 2003 – Club Night – Will start approx 19:00.

6th September 2003 – Sussex Clubs Day at Chichester DSME, details **TBC**.

27th September 2003 – Visit to Maidstone MES, Mote Park, Maidstone.

2nd October 2003 – Club Night – Will start approx 19:00.

4th/5th October 2003 – Last running weekend, then maintenance begins.

1st November 2003 – Proposed Bonfire Night, Beans & Mash etc… **TBC**.

6th November 2003 – Club Night – Will start approx 19:00.

Club nights will continue throughout the season on the first Thursday of each month.

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 for more details of any such events.

Andrew & Mark