

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd

BEECH HURST NEWS



Cover picture: -

Wet, Wet, Wet, was the order of the day on the traditional New Years Day run at Beech Hurst. The puddles are a legacy of some serious rainfall, though even that wasn't enough to dampen our spirits and we ran on regardless! Brian is seen here driving Andrew's IC125. Jim is precariously perched at the rear.

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Editors Notes

Well here we are already, no sooner have the Christmas and New Year festivities passed us by and the new season is just a stones throw away and we are in the grip of more snow. What a topsy-turvy winter it has been, mild to start with, then flooding, snow, mild again and as we write these notes so more snow and ice cover the land once again, nothing seems to be certain in weather forecasting nowadays.

Thanks to all those who contributed to the December edition, making it quite a plump edition yet again. The cover picture certainly making it a refreshing change from locomotives, thanks to Peter Chapman for that and his article on the Pullman car, also to Bob Youldon, Chris and Andrew for the other articles. In this edition we have a continuation of Brian's construction of the Big Boy, now it's time for the tender, Andrew has done another couple of articles on the Winter Work program, Nosh Night back in December & New Years Day run in January. There is also an article by Mark Allen on the new website which was launched last weekend for members to view and give feedback on ready for running in April. In addition to the regular articles there is also an updated Diary of Events, well, updated as far as we can at the moment, keep an eye on forthcoming summer events and visits in the April edition.

As printing becomes more difficult, pictures may become black and white in future I'm afraid, however we will try to keep the usual high standard (hummm!!) of content. Read on and enjoy...

Andrew & James

Chairman's notes

Eagle eyed members could not have failed to notice the change in seating arrangements in the clubhouse. By moving the comfy chairs to the smaller part of the clubhouse and the table to the opposite side a clear passage is available from the engine shed and workshop. This will save the carpet getting too dirty and make it easier for our cleaner to keep the floor clean. During talks, film shows etc. the new arrangements should make it easier for all to see the screen.

The access gate and concrete driveway by the carriage shed has now been completed. This will enable cars, vans, and trailers easier access to drop of materials etc. We are still awaiting the council to tarmac the extra part of the car park backing onto the carriage shed. We have done our bit by removing all of the spoil and rubbish from the site.

To save a rerun of the "Battle of the Somme" alongside the carriage road and head shunt, paving slabs have been laid, currently terminating half way along the head shunt. These slabs will be extended right to the end of the head shunt to enable easy wheelbarrow access.

The storage building attached to the flam store is progressing well. The base and walls are gradually rising and the steel doorjamb and the framework for the door itself have been finished. The lock, hinges and door skin remain to be fitted.

The carriage workshop window has now been bricked up. This has saved us the expense of renewing the rotten frame and also increases the security of the clubhouse. Any loss of natural light does not seem to be a problem.

The track gang have been kept busy turning rails on the section from the station to the steaming bay. Time does not allow a complete renewal of this section but hopefully the rail turning will help alleviate some of the slipping upon leaving the station (Saturday direction obviously)

Various signage has been renewed around the railway.

Thanks must once again be extended to Val (and John) West for preparing the food for our Christmas dinner. The number attending this meal was the largest for many years and I think I speak for all those that attended in saying a heart felt thanks to Val for feeding us all so well.

A few brave souls (idiots!) turned up and ran on New Years Day. The HST, 08s and pump trolley were in evidence on the track on a wet and bitter cold day.

By the time this News is published our web site should be up and running. No doubt a note to this effect and web address details appear later in this issue!

Don

20 Years in the Making, Constructing a 5" gauge Big Boy (Continued)

In the last instalment the partially completed loco had run for the first time on Good Friday 1990. It then went on to run on the three consecutive days. There were two hitches during this period, one being a seizing up of the front engine due to a lack of lubrication in the bearings of the front axle and failure of one of the four mechanical lubricators. However they were eventually cured. The one thing that did go well to confound the club pundits was the steaming which was perhaps a little too good. To counter this, coal consumption on the 169 square inch grate was high and the powers that be in those days would not allow the loco to have an eight car train which was well within it's capabilities with a very little increase in coal consumption.

The loco alone was too long to fit in a locker and was therefore put in the tunnel during the four nights of the 1990 Easter Holiday. In order to protect it from rust on the first night I sprayed it liberally with Duck Oil even though the fire had not been cleaned out. The subsequent conflagration was quite impressive as the vaporised oil burnt in suspension, the flames reaching to the roof of the tunnel. Luckily only the rear truck had been painted.

The loco was now put to one side, if that means parking it, in the middle of the garage and a start was made on the tender. Here again the idea was to present a scale appearance on the outside whilst internally this would not be so. In the prototype, the fourteen wheel tender had a cast frame which was, if anything, more complicated than the engine frames. Incorporated in the frame casting was a belly tank for a proportion of the 25,000 gallons of water carried. The superstructure of the tender was steel plate riveted together which included all the baffles (a considerable number being required as 25,000 gallons of water swilling around becomes quite dangerous), the trough for the mechanical stoker engine and the angled section for the coal area. It is surprising that at about the time that Kaiser was producing all welded Liberty Ships, American locomotive manufacturers were sticking to the completely riveted tenders which continued until the end of steam.

The flat floor of the model tender was supported by two lengths of steel angle 1" x 1/8" for the longitudinals in the middle of the tender plus 1/8" BMS sheet for the double frame on each side, held together at the top of the frame by 1 1/8" x 1/2" BMS rod. The complicated cut outs on the side frames were dealt with by bolting the four frames together and drilling and fly cutting the various shapes required and finishing off with an end mill. When the frame sides had been completed they were attached to the securing rods at the top by countersunk screws. The horns were now machined and vertical slots cut in them so that they fitted into the double frames. To ensure they were held in the correct position 1/4" holes were drilled through the face of each horn and then they were clamped in position on the frames by threading 1/4" studding through the holes of two back to back horns and knutted up tight you then had the two double frames securely held together in order that the horns could be silver soldered in position. I must admit that quite a bit of heat was required to ensure that all the joints were satisfactory but with Easy Flo High Tenacity No. 5 flux all went well.

The two double frames and the two supporting angle pieces were attached to the floor of the tender which is 1/16" inch brass sheet, in fact the whole of the sheet work on the tender is 1/16" sheet brass. The solid BMS crossbeams at each end of the tender were attached at this stage which were also attached to the double frames. The whole of the floor of the tender was reinforced with 1" x 1/8" brass angle on the top side at about 6" intervals to which were attached a number of baffles. Holes were drilled through the bottom of the angle pieces at right angles to allow the water to flow to all parts of the tender.

The coal section of the tender which is a rectangular box shape but without the top is substantially supported by vertical 1" x 1/8" brass angle and horizontal longitudinal pieces to take the weight of the driver who sits on a padded box. In the prototype the sides and the back of the coal section of the tender are angled in to allow the coal to slide towards the two cylinder steam stoker engines housed in a trough which feeds coal to the back area of the firebox by an Archimedean screw. Once in the firebox the coal is blown out to all parts of the firebox as required by steam jets controlled by the fireman. In the model this is all taken care of by the driver with the aid of a long shovel. Behind the coal area the top of the tender is covered by sheet metal with three man holes in line to take the water cranes at fuelling stops. I understand that three man holes are required as stopping, say, a 1 1/2 mile train at the precise spot is not always achieved. Perhaps I should mention that the coal is not mechanically stoked in the model as the coal for such a stoker would be so fine, much of it would be blown out of the smoke stacks only partially burnt to the annoyance of the paying passengers.

The sides of the tender were bent to shape (not rolled) by Alan Stone of Polegate MES who owns a sheet metal firm. The curves in the top and bottom of the tender sides were obtained by bending the 1/16" brass sheet in 8mm increments until the appropriate shape was reached. However, the lines of the bends required filing and finishing with emery cloth to reach the smooth contours necessary, a somewhat tedious job. The sides of the tender were reinforced by 1/2" x 1/8" internal brass strips riveted vertically with 3/8" x 1/16" brass angle at the ends to receive the front and back sheets. The rear ladders to the deck of the tender were let into the sides so that they lay flat to the tender which allowed the whole of the tender to be made wider and still remain within the loading gauge. Although interesting and time consuming to model, I must admit that at times I wondered why they were not just attached to the back of the tender out of harms way.

There was a hosepipe mounted on the deck at the rear of the tender which enabled fires to be put out on the first fifteen cars of the train plus bush and prairie fires. Because the hose used boiler water the front cars were drenched in a white wash colour from the chemicals in the water after use which was not at all popular with the owners of the cars, many of whom were private companies. After a while the use of the hoses was discontinued but they were never removed and some were used as late as 1958.

Brian

Winter Social: Nosh Night & New Years Day



Given our current membership and a few family members apart, the 32 people who turned up for our Xmas Nosh evening back in December made it one of the best socials for a long while. The clubhouse was just about at bursting point and too many more people and there would have been a serious lack of seating space. Nevertheless the general chitter chatter and excellent cuisine made it another good Christmas Nosh Night, with many thanks to Val for all the hard work that goes in to preparing food for that number of people. The after dinner games were then organised by Don who gave us a selection of general knowledge and word teasing games, with the added fun of a few rounds of 'Pictionary' to finish the evening off. I have to say that to actually depict something, particularly when you cannot draw, can be quite challenging and very

frustrating when it is blatantly obvious to you what the picture is, but not to those members of your team trying guess what it is you are trying to show them. Very good fun all the same and thanks also to Don for the time that was taken to prepare the games and keep us all amused and here's to another good 'do' the same time this year...

Faces in a Crowd: I think I captured most people in the two shots above, I apologise if I missed anyone. I have kept the most embarrassing photo's confined to 'My Pictures,' even one of Dave doing the washing up - (Wonders never cease!!)

Given the appalling weather that we had been experiencing over the few weeks preceding Christmas it was no surprise when the annual New Years Day run was wet as well. I had been working that night (unfortunately) and despite a bright start it wasn't long before the rain started to fall. However when you don't have to light up an engine, just crank a starting handle, fill the engine shed full of blue petrol fumes for a few minutes and then don the appropriate wet weather gear then you can still have a good time. I for one was very keen to have a run and the weather certainly wasn't going to stop me. I think Mike must have thought we were crazy as we set off in the driving rain (it was too, not vertical but horizontal) to unlock the tunnel. Driving round in the rain is something different to be honest with you and if you are suitably attired then it is quite fun in an insane kind of way!! In the end I gave the engine to others to drive when it was dry and only drove it when it was raining hard!! Mind you it wasn't just the water coming out of the sky either that was a problem, but the several inches that was lying most of the way round the track and the springs that were running out of the drain holes in the tunnel walls.



By lunch time a few other people had arrived and the weather had improved sufficiently to encourage Norman to drag his Class 47 out and for the red club '08' to be brought out for some fun.



Mark and I also went round on the pump trolley in the afternoon as well, chasing other, and being chased by other, trains. There was also the small matter of a large 'Water Bubble' that appeared at the top of the golf course by the steaming bays. It had been created by a large amount of run off from the steaming bays and point becoming trapped by the clay soil and was quite fun to stand on as you bobbed up and down, fun at least until it burst!!



As the afternoon wore on so everybody had a drive of those engines on, getting drowned in the occasional downpour, but enjoying themselves all the same. Mike was out in force with a broom facing a running battle with the build up of water and mud in the tunnel, it is a good job nobody de-raild during the day or it would have been a very dodgy job trying to re-rail a train whilst ankle deep in mud and water!! We eventually cleared up about 18:00, in the dark, having had a very enjoyable and tiring (well some of us anyway) day. Thanks to all those who organised and of course

participated in a very good social day and to those 'fair weather' drivers who didn't dare challenge the weather, you definitely missed out on some fun!!

Picture Top Left: Brian is seen advancing slowly up the hill towards Court Tunnel with James precariously perched in a works bin at the rear of the train!!

Picture Middle Left: Mike (at the controls) and Norman are seen speeding along the bowling green straight with Norman's Class 47 (note the large puddles!).

Picture Bottom Left: Peter Chapman captured in Wick tunnel at the controls of my IC125. The tunnel was very badly flooded that day with a good couple of inches of water and mud all the way through and the lying water in the cuttings at either end. The water fountains from the walls had stopped appearing from by the time this picture was taken in the afternoon too.

Andrew

Beech Hurst on the Web

For those members who haven't been to the Club recently, you will not have heard that on Saturday 1st February the Beech Hurst website was published on the Internet. The web address is www.beechhurst-railway.org.uk and for those of you who have access to the web it is important that you log on and test it before we tell 'the public' about it.

Right back in the summer I talked about doing this and after some encouragement from other members, I decided it was worth taking a break from homework to construct something. A quick working model was built and my Dad looked into the costs and options of running it. This was discussed following a Committee Meeting and I received agreement to continue.

We got all the words on the website reviewed and received lots of feedback on the layout and general content of the prototype. This was when the problems began!

When things were first built they were 'thrown together' using Front Page Express which comes free with Windows but following my Dad's advice this all had to be changed. The problem with the version of Front Page Express, which we have, is that it is really pretty basic and if a change is needed to all pages - say a change to the background colour - then each and every page would have to be changed to reflect this. It is a better design practice to have everything controlled by Cascading Style Sheets (CSS). However, changing the pages that had been quickly built as basic HTML to using CSS seemed to take forever. If only I had done that at the start!

Once this had been completed, the various images were added to the site. This was when another problem came about. The digital photographs that were used were very large files and would take a long time to download for people with low speed connections to the Internet. So before an image is included onto the website it has to be processed to reduce the size of the files, all quite fiddly.

However, at this stage the website looked rather static and needed something to add a little extra to give it a bit of 'life'. The first place that was changed was the home page. As you will see when you log in it has a little flashy welcome message. This was achieved by using a Java Applet which are freely available on the Internet that have been written by enthusiasts for use by other people. However, Java Applets have really been overtaken by another Internet technology called 'Flash'. It might be necessary to change from Java to Flash but in order to decide on this we will need some feedback from you.

So what is the point of all this? Well that was one of the questions first asked and it was agreed that the main use for the website is to act as an advertisement to the public. However, it could be used for other things too. As you will see when you try it there is a member's calendar. This could be extended to be a special area which is password protected to allow only members to see what is there. This could be used as a general noticeboard, online news' or many other things.

Finally, now that there is a web address of www.beechhurst-railway.org.uk it would be very easy to have a personalised e-mail address that you could have. We control the website and could easily create an e-mail address of, for example, mark.allen@beechhurst-railway.org.uk.



So the next steps are to get feedback from you on what does not work on the website, what you don't like on the website and what you think needs adding to the website. Please send comments to feedback@beechhurst-railway.org.uk. Another version of the website will be launched in March and then the final version ready for the start of the running season at Easter. Please log in and give it a try.

Picture Above: For those of you who haven't met me, I am one of the junior trio at the club, I will be maintaining and running the website for the foreseeable future, any pictures articles can be either sent direct to me at the address' above or via the news editors if you prefer.

Mark Allen

Diary of Events

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

29th/30th March 2003 – Start of the 2003 running season (See running book).

3rd April 2003 – Club Night – Will start approx 19:00.

18th & 21st April 2003 – Extra Bank Holiday running days 1400-1700.

27th April 2003 – Provisional date for visit to loW track at Cowes, loW. **TBC**

1st May 2003 – Club Night – Will start approx 19:00.

10th May 2003 – SMEE visit Beech Hurst, timings and numbers TBC.

6th July 2003 – Confirmed visit to Fawley Hill Railway and gardens. 28 places have been booked, those 28 names present on the blackboard earlier in 2002. Transport to be confirmed, a group or separate?

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

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.

Winter Work Program

Ever since last winter I have tried, through these pages, to keep all our membership up to date with the work that goes on when we are not operating the railway during the winter. It may not all be glamorous but there is a level of essential maintenance required every year just to keep the place in top order. There are also some projects that we continue with to make life easier and with a view to making new items as maintenance free as possible, like this winter we have replaced the wood shed with a new block equivalent which should see most of us out.

Since Christmas, Mike and Co have continued to replace and renew the track from the station towards the steaming bays, turning some and replacing other bits. It is only when you actually look closely at the steel work, piers and paintwork that you begin to realise why only small sections are completed every winter and why it is a never ending task keeping the track the way we like it. I have to admit in the 10 years that I have been involved at Beech Hurst I have never visited a better laid and maintained track anywhere and that is a credit to all those who strive to keep ours in top order.



Elsewhere, the side entrance has been completed (**see picture left**), together with all the associated drainage, the gates re-hung (after some tweaking) and a path laid from the carriage shed to approximately half way down the head shunt, this will be completed when more paving is ordered and we have the time to lay it!!

Work has recently started on the new shed at the rear of the flam store. The foundation was cast a few weeks ago and the block walls and metal door are starting to take shape. This will be quite a slow exercise as the blocks can only be laid a couple of courses at a time to avoid movement of the bottom courses, so we are hoping to have it completed sometime around Easter, depending on weather etc..



Brian (**see picture left**) has been busy finishing off the first of the three benches that normally reside out the back of the clubhouse. The first one has been re-painted and teak oiled and looks very smart, just two more to go Brian, don't put that electric sander away yet!!

All the old painted signage has been renovated by Larry who has stripped and re-painted most of the station signs and replaced the old lettering with new sticky labels which should last better. I am reliably informed that the paint will come unstuck before the stickers do!!



Finally the clubroom has received a small change around. It was decided back last summer that the soft chairs would be moved up to the field end and the table and chairs to the steaming bay end, with a view to removing the carpet in line with where people walk through to keep the place tidier and give a clearer thoroughfare. Also it meant you could sit in comfort without being blasted by the heater, because you were sitting right in

the firing line. The new layout certainly seems to work and give a lot more room where it is needed; also it makes cleaning and hoovering a lot easier.

(Picture above) – This is about the only shot I managed to get where most of those present were not trying to dodge the picture and blurring the resulting image, it shows the swift transformation that occurred one evening of the

removal of soft chairs to the other end of the club room.



One other image I just had to include was that of the generator. Seeboard have replaced a substation on Tylers Green a few Sunday's back and it was necessary during the works to cut the power, so we thought it would be fun to make sure the generator still operated correctly, in case we required power.

However despite some of us trying to be

serious here, the picture quite clearly shows that sometimes minds just wander from the point a bit. Which is why there are three or four unnamed persons loitering with serious intent around the 'Genny' with a 2KW heater plugged into it in the open air **(see picture above)**, fun indeed!! (Note also, the amount of smoke present!!)

It is not, all, hard work, really. Sometimes you just have some fun.

Andrew

EdNo.

Finally through these pages I would like to say thank you to Norman Payne's wife Hazel for repairing the Myford Super 7 cover. It had, partly through mis-treatment and partly through some of the chemicals that had got onto it lost all it's stitching on one side. It has been duly repaired with new stitching, which I have been reliably informed is very hard work, although I have never tried sewing or a sewing machine in my entire life so I wouldn't know, but thanks go to Hazel for repairing the cover which now adorns the Myford once again.

Andrew