

# Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd

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## BEECH HURST NEWS



### Cover picture: -

*A Rare Beast:* Following on from the August cover, this time we have another rare model from the North East region in the shape of John Dalton's 'Shire' class locomotive 'Yorkshire', which is seen about a month ago when John & Melvyn Bright visited us from Chelmsford...

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## **Editor's Notes**

Well I'm afraid 'that's all folks' as another season draws to a close! It hardly seems like we are literally 2 months from Christmas and Bonfire Night is only but a week away.

Since the last edition in August we have undoubtedly had the most settled weather of the year and that is reflected in the fact that we have been running up to and including last weekend, and we have had good numbers of passengers too. Overall 2008 has been quite poor with various factors meaning that our passenger total is considerably down on recent years.

Through these pages I have kept everyone informed of our progress during the summer and I intend to do the same throughout our 'closed season' when the Winter Work write-ups will keep everyone abreast of the goings on at the club.

As with the August issue, I have kept this one back till the tail end of the month in order to put in the latest news from Beech Hurst, which I hope you will find interesting and maybe amusing – maybe! Apart from our usual writings there are the results of the efficiency competition that has been running throughout the summer, an update on the workshop, an updated Diary of Events and a small for sale advert from Alan Garner, which you will find inside. So please as ever, read on and enjoy...

**Andrew**

## **Chairman's Notes**

I think we can reflect on this year's running season with a degree of satisfaction. Despite the Easter washout, followed by one of the wettest years for a long time, despite the 'putting' green being closed more often than not, and even with no outlet for drinks or ice-creams in the park through the summer, we realised revenues above even the best achieved in recent years. Without a doubt, had we not raised our fares, we would be looking at some poor results. I made a point of taking the 'satchel' at the station plenty of times this year so that I could gauge at first hand the feelings of our passengers to the increase. Just a few complained, but, equally, many commented that they thought it was still good value in comparison to other 'rides'. I would say that by giving notice well in advance, the increase has been well handled and introduced successfully. Chris Saunders as usual has been keeping abreast of the passenger numbers and will do some 'crunching' in due course!

Eleven efficiency competition runs were made through the year, and there might have been a few more, if not for the rain! Peter Marten's 'K' class showed us how to use coal frugally and he is a worthy winner – although both Mark Allen and Stephen Hutton had a go with 'Wharfedale' and produced some very good results – but not quite good enough to topple Peter! Congratulations to all who took part, none failed to complete the course and some of our younger members showed considerable skill with the shovel! I hope everyone who entered enjoyed the challenge and thanks to all who helped prepare the test trains, especially 'big' Andrew for moving and weighing all those concrete blocks!

We also hosted about a dozen party groups, some club visits and two evening BBQ's during the season.

I have just been reading the Chairman's Notes in the Autumn 'Bluebell News' and some interesting points are raised. Not only does he worry about future income (with the impending economic slowdown) but he also questions whether they are trying to do too much too quickly, stretching the volunteers to the point where it's not 'fun' any more. I quote "what we are not doing currently is enjoying ourselves and the fruits of our labours!"

Even though we are a relatively small operation, it's always a fine balancing act with events and projects which help to keep the interest going, whilst also carrying sufficient passengers to pay for everything – without overdoing it! After all it is a hobby and should be fun. This year, I think we have managed it at Beech Hurst – primarily because so many have helped with the chores of setting up, putting away, gardening, cleaning up etc... and have not left it to just a few. Behind the scenes there is a lot of work done by all the 'regulars' to keep our railway safe and in good order so we can enjoy running our locomotives and trains.

So, at the end of another running season, I say 'thank you' to everyone who took part and helped to make it successful and above all, I hope you had fun!

Now we are listing out a few jobs that need doing to keep the good 'volunteers' amused throughout the winter, whilst we wait for spring to come around again.

**Mike**

### **Efficiency Competition – The Story Ends...**

With the season pretty much over we can now reveal the overall winner in the efficiency competition (you should already know if you were paying attention above!). Peter Marten's 'K' class, which is arguably the best all round locomotive we have at Beech Hurst, won by a 'couple of lengths' from 'Wharfedale' which came 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>! It is interesting to see the chart below to compare different locomotives of comparable size and see how they did. Having completed 11 separate runs the secret seems to be to take as bigger load as you dare because at the end of the day it is helping you for ½ the circuit on the down hill and once moving gives you momentum on the start of the up hill. Smaller engines are not necessarily at a disadvantage, however, it has to be said that those which are 'spot on' beat are far more efficient and will pull far greater loads than those that are slightly '3-legged' or have a tendency to 'kick' every revolution. As with many IMLEC competitions the bigger 4-6-0, 4-6-2 and 4-6-4 locomotives tend have the best chance of succeeding, however, a lot has to do with the drivers competency too, which is probably why the 'K' won, excellent locomotive and excellent driver – well done Peter!

Hopefully we can continue with something similar next year, particularly as it would be nice to experiment knowing how we each did this year and see if there are ways of trying to improve next time out!

**Andrew**

# ‘Beech LEC’ Competition Results 2008

Final Place	Date Of Trial	Engine	Gauge	Owner/Driver	Total Weight of Load (kg's)	Weight of Coal Used (gm's)	Coal Used per 100kg of Load	10 Laps Completed? Yes (y) Failed (x)	Comments
1	23/07/08	‘K’	5”	Peter Marten	1012.7	1232	<b>121.65</b>	Y	Dry track, no stops
2	25/08/08	‘Wharfedale’	5”	Mark Allen	1051.3	1404	<b>133.54</b>	Y	Dry track, no stops
3	24/08/08	‘Wharfedale’	5”	Stephen Hutton	1054.2	1495	<b>141.81</b>	Y	Dry track, no stops
4	04/05/08	‘B1’	5”	Mike Porter	871.8	1239	<b>142.12</b>	Y	Dry track, no stops
5	31/05/08	‘Jumbo’	5”	Mike Porter	385.9	713	<b>184.76</b>	Y	Dry track, no stops
6	08/06/08	‘Polly 3’	5”	Daniel Evans	653.9	1314	<b>200.95</b>	Y	Dry track, no stops
7	11/05/08	‘Railmotor’	5”	Andrew Brock	443.9	998	<b>224.82</b>	Y	Dry track, no stops
8	26/07/08	‘Simplex’	5”	Nick Edwards	540.5	1279	<b>236.63</b>	Y	Dry track, no stops
9	20/07/08	‘Minx’	5”	Andrew Strongitharm	518.7	1316	<b>253.71</b>	Y	Dry track, 3 stops
10	30/08/08	‘Bantam Cock’	3 ½”	David Mattingley	187.7	637	<b>339.37</b>	Y	Dry track, no stops
11	27/07/08	‘Single’	5”	Adam Cro	194.2	1026	<b>528.32</b>	Y	Dry track, 2 stops

**Andrew**

## Upgrading The Workshop

By the standards of many clubs that we have visited over the years, the facilities at Beech Hurst are pretty top notch and the workshop is no exception. So when the opportunity came to upgrade and increase our 'stable' of machines we thought that now was as good a time as any to consolidate for the future generations of the club (**picture below:** Dugards delivering last Saturday).



We have as recently as last weekend purchased and moved three items from Ron Harris' who in turn is looking to the future and is downgrading his facilities. We now have a superb new Bridgeport milling machine, complete with Digital Read Outs that replaces our current Bridgeport, which has made the short trip north to East Grinstead and Paul

Tomlinson's workshop. As well as the Bridgeport we have also purchased a Smart & Brown collet lathe, which is an incredibly sturdy piece of kit that will complement the Colchester Student, which is used as a chuck lathe. As part of the package we have also acquired a small Herbert Surface Grinder that is one of those pieces of equipment that don't get used very frequently but are damned handy when you want them!

We hope that by buying this kind of equipment at a time when we as a club are doing very well and given that longer term the future is far from certain, then the workshop will, with the right care and attention, be good for many generations to come when the professional skills learnt and used in the workplace by many of our current members will be just a thing of the past. With this in mind I think it is very credible that some of our younger members are now starting to use the workshop, produce work of their own and hopefully glean a greater understanding into the workings of the machines that many of us use week in week out to continue producing scratch built models – long may this continue!

**Andrew**

## A Day Out In The Suburbs

The annual visit to the Malden society track is becoming a bit of a habit nowadays with this year being our 4<sup>th</sup> on the trot when we have headed to Thames Ditton for a run on their circuit.

Each and every year so far has been dry, warm and sunny and 2008 was no exception, with very mild October weather making it feel pleasant indeed. Circumstances dictated somewhat depleted numbers this year, with illness and



broken down cars the root cause, which meant that just 5 SMLS members were in attendance. We took with us, Mike Chiano's freelance 4 cylinder 4-6-2, Nick's 'Simplex' and the club 'Growler' for a variety of motive power. It was also reassuring to see a greater attendance from other clubs this year, with 2007 being somewhat embarrassing given the efforts of the

Malden members to lay on a good spread for what they hoped would be a bigger audience. I would say that there were a good 50 people there on Saturday and at least 20 different locomotives in 3 1/2", 5" and 7 1/4".

We wasted no time in steaming up and getting on before the 'masses'! There were already a couple of electrics going round the raised track and these were soon joined by 'Simplex', a very nice L & Y 'A' class 0-6-0 and soon after Mike's 4-6-2 was also running round and running very well too. 'Simplex' had unfortunately suffered a couple of issues including losing one of it's crosshead bolts and also part of the drain cock linkage, but still carried on regardless and put in a good 2 hour run before lunchtime came round.



As with previous years the grub was absolutely superb, hardly surprising that an orderly queue had started to form a good 1/2 hour before it was due to be served, much to the disgust of the ladies in the kitchen who were valiantly fighting their way through the waiting masses with food for the table!

With 'Simplex' having been withdrawn before lunch and Mike keen to come off soon after, it was left to the 'Growler' to see us through into the afternoon, joined by a nice GWR 'Prairie' and a 'nice looking' 3 1/2" 'Q1' which seemingly had only 2 beats and lasted just a couple of laps before retiring back to the steaming bays! As well as the raised circuit there was also the chance to ride the 7 1/4" ground level which had several interesting models running this year, including a very nice Class '2' tank and an equally nice 'B1', complete with 4 LNER teak coaches. A few of us chose to ride the 'B1', which with 9 people aboard should have coped admirably, but nearly stalled on the incline over the tunnel on the first lap, ran a red light on the second lap and as we waited for the way forward to be cleared were nearly rammed from behind by a 'Baltimore' locomotive that had also just gone passed a signal at danger! Somewhat disconcerting when you have best part of 50 stone of man and machine approaching at break neck speed and stopped only by much shouting and arm waving from the adjacent signal box! Still visits wouldn't be same without the odd blooper and this one was no exception – makes for a more entertaining day!

Having enjoyed a very nice afternoon tea, we began to prepare for home and started saying our goodbyes. It had been a very enjoyable day, as all trips to Malden have always been, and I for one would hope that we are invited to go again next year. Through these pages I would like to thank the Malden DMSE club for their excellent hospitality and for laying on superb weather again this year! Also, to Ian, Mike C, Nick and Stephen H who were also in attendance and made for excellent company throughout the day!

**Andrew**

### **Winter Work**

Although we have yet to really get started on any winter work at the club, I will through this regular feature keep you posted on the projects and general maintenance that is undertaken during the closed season. The next few weeks will be normal end of season work, together with having a damn good clear up in readiness for a couple of projects we have lined and also the routine work that is required in and around the clubhouse and also to the rolling stock in the next few months.

**Andrew**

### **'Tich' For Sale & Model Engineer Magazines**

Would anyone like to help make some space in my bookshelves? I have back numbers of "Model Engineer" from December 1973 - October 1995 that I am willing to give to anyone who would like them. They include a few bound volumes and all are in good condition. Just give me a ring and we can arrange collection.

I also have all the bits for a 5" gauge "Tich" including a rolling chassis, the copper for the boiler, castings and drawings. Any reasonable offer considered.

**Alan Garner - 01444 482827**

## **Forthcoming Events**

With the running season all but over it is now time to turn our attention to usual Autumn social events that are fast closing in.

Starting this coming Saturday (1<sup>st</sup> November) we have the annual Bonfire and Firework night. The fire, will, as with previous years be a theme of some sort (yet TBC) and will be accompanied by the usual pyrotechnics of fireworks and also some sumptuous cuisine in the form of jacket potatoes, beans, cheese and sweet deserts!

Following this on November 29<sup>th</sup> we have a talk by Robert Harris on 'The History of Fairgrounds'. A firm time has not yet been decided, however, a list of names will be started on the blackboard for those interested, with the start time advertised as soon as we know. It promises to be a very interesting talk.

In addition to this another list will soon be on the blackboard for Nosh Night. This is being held on 13<sup>th</sup> December and we need to know firm names, numbers and preferences by this time in November so Val and John can prepare the food in time for the evening.

As if that wasn't enough, and I know it is a little way away yet, there is New Years Day run on 'New Years Day' (strange that!). I will advertise this again in the December edition, which I plan to have ready for Nosh Night on the 13<sup>th</sup> December.

**Andrew**

## **Diary of Events**

1<sup>st</sup> November 2008 – Bonfire Night – details to be firmed in October edition.

6<sup>th</sup> November 2008 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

29<sup>th</sup> November 2008 – Talk by the Harris Bros. on 'The History of Fairgrounds'.

4<sup>th</sup> December 2008 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

13<sup>th</sup> December 2008 – Nosh Night – See blackboard in clubhouse.

1<sup>st</sup> January 2009 – New Years Day Run & Club Night – Will start from 1000.

**N.B.** Other events are not always shown in the diary of events because they have been arranged at short notice; check black/notice boards at the clubhouse for more details.

**Andrew**



## Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd



### **Rear Cover picture: -**

*On The Road:* ...and following on from the front cover, pictured above, is Melvyn Bright from Chelmsford with his 9F locomotive. John and Melvyn very kindly kept our service running one Sunday back in September with very nice models, which made a pleasant change from our usual offerings. I for one was particularly pleased to see the 'Shire' class at Beech Hurst, as they are very pretty locomotives, extremely capable haulers and something a bit different from B1's and 'Enterprises' which seem to be relatively common in comparison!