

# The Oily Rag!

Spring 2012 Issue No. 109



## **Christmas at Creech!**

**Popular Santa Specials were run at Creech and at Vivary Park on the two Sundays before Christmas resulting in donations received of £245 for local charities.**

**Photograph—Don Hancock**

**The Taunton Model Engineers'**

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# From the Editor

We have our usual mixture of articles in this latest “Oily Rag” and I hope that there is something here to interest everybody!

With the days beginning to draw out again, we are starting to think of the season ahead - the Sunday Gang at Creech have continued to be busy throughout the Winter but the Creech Thursday Gang placed their activities with track maintenance on hold until there was some warmer and drier weather—but they are due to start again on the 1st March. Easter is not too far away and with the arrival of that, our running season will have started.

The Vivary Gang seem to be well on top of their annual maintenance procedures prior to running again and they look forward to another bumper season.

The AGM is also looming and the formal notice of that is enclosed with this “Oily Rag”. Do try to attend—it is usually one of our best attended meetings and we do need the benefits of all opinions about our way ahead. Do remember that the committee is not a closed shop and do come forward and say if you would like to become involved with the running of our Club.

The new Editor takes over with the next magazine and as Editors do, he will also be looking for material for the his first “Oily Rag”. Please help him by putting pen to paper now and give him some material to work with. The first ones for him will be the most difficult until he gets into the swing of things.

I did have an E-mail from Walt—the “Old Yeovilian” just before Christmas—he is now 90 and as so many members have enjoyed his past contributions, I have published it in the “Letters to the Editor” section. All of us would want to wish him well.

Tony

# Chairman's Notes

So far this year the weather has been exceptionally mild when compared with last winter and this has enabled the working parties at both sites to complete essential building and maintenance works.

I am hoping that we will again be blessed with good weather for our Exhibition which will soon be upon us. I would like as many members as possible to volunteer for the essential stewarding duties that need to be carried out. If you have not already done so please contact me as soon as possible so that I may include you on the stewarding rota.

A number of members have not yet returned their updated model data base forms and I urge them to do so NOW. Please send them to me as only the new data base forms are being used in choosing exhibition models.

April will be a very busy time for us. April 1<sup>st</sup> heralds the start of public running at Vivary and the following week-end is Easter . This is then followed by the Exhibition week-end. Then on the 24<sup>th</sup> we have again been invited to run during the Emergency Services Day where at last year's event we managed to raise £400.00 for the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance. I hope we can do as well again this year and look forward to your support.

I am very pleased to announce that during the two recent Santa Special running events we raised the magnificent sum of £245 through donations which will be given equally to BIBIC & Barnados.

We now have a dedicated kitchen area within the carriage shed at Creech complete with a sink unit. You will now be able to make tea and coffee at your leisure—and wash up afterwards!

Finally I would like to pay tribute to our “Oily Rag” editor, Tony Gosling who is “retiring” from this position after many years of sterling work. Thank you Tony for all your efforts - your successor is going to have a tough act to follow!

And a reminder that 2012 subscriptions were due on 1<sup>st</sup> January. Those members who have not yet paid, please send their payment with a S.A.E to the Membership Secretary whose contact details are shown inside the front cover.

Gerry

# News from Creech

**By Mike Johns**

In spite of the weather forecasts we have made good progress with the new unloading ramp out to the car park. Since Xmas it has been possible for the Sunday gang to work outside every week and by mid-February all the legs had been planted and set in concrete, the steel work needed for the ramp welded in place and track in position down to the traverser with some final adjustments to be made over the last 15 feet.

Most of the track has been removed from the old ramp and stored pending re-location to go from the opposite side of the traverser behind our shed to connect with the yard tracks. This will give owners of non-steam locomotives the option of unloading and running straight across the traverser onto a running line. Steam locomotives will normally be moved on to the traverser and then to a steaming bay before going into service.

Thanks to Andy Cooke and Gerry Willis a new worktop and sink have been installed in the workshop as the basis for a tea bar. Mark Hartnell is plumbing the sink into the existing facilities. If anyone has any redundant kitchen wall or base cabinets they wish to get shot of please let us know as we need to create some reasonably dust free storage.

With all the construction work that has gone on the workshop is now in a bit of a muddle and needs a good spring clean in the next month before we start running trains again. Outside the grass is coming back to life and will soon need cutting so anyone who can spare a few hours to assist will be welcome on site on Sundays or Thursdays.

*Photographs on page 26*

# **Report from Vivary Park**

## **By David Spicer**

The Santa Special running day was very successful where we had both steam and electric locomotives in action. As reported elsewhere, about £200 of our Christmas Charity donation was earned here.

The Thursday morning working parties have paved the area where the booking table goes and this should now prevent the “sinking” phenomenon previously experienced there. Some sleepers have been replaced and a new solid wheel has been fitted to the moving bridge. The pivots on the bridge have been greased, but further work has still to be done—in particular, on the raised sections of the bend.

As always, many thanks to all who have helped to ready the track for the coming season.

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## **The Tickers—(Horological Sub Group)**

### **By David Spicer**

The Harrison Clock Project is progressing on schedule accompanied by a steep learning curve. Due to British Horological commitments, I will not be at our Exhibition. Graham Barford has kindly offered to man the Clock Stand so please give him your support.

If you have any questions relating to horology, then please speak to me as I shall pleased to help.

# Health Notes

By  
Nurse Spin

Recently I read an interesting article written by Dr Spin regarding storage and efficient organisation of equipment in the workshop. This estimable article mentioned the use of coloured plastic boxes and heavy metal trolleys with wheels. The first for easy parts recognition and the second for the versatility of using heavy machinery in any area as required, by the use of propulsion. I feel the need to point out to TME that this way of working can bring on two, as yet, medically unrecognised syndromes.

## **Plastic Box Syndrome, Chronic Symptoms.**

On seeing a display of brightly coloured plastic boxes the subject becomes flushed and excitable and unable to pass the shop frontage without handling, tapping and testing out the strength of the boxes on sides and base. There is a rise in blood pressure particularly if there is a new colour in the range, and in the acute stage a compulsive need to bulk buy any suitable items disregarding the fact that there is already a large collection at home.

## **Treatment.**

I vacillate between treating the cause or the symptoms. I would however advise that wives and partners treat the affected ME with consideration and patience as the 'Tough Love' methods used in other addictions have been proved to cause distress. A map of the local area needs to be acquired and plastic box suppliers marked in red so the relative can steer the subject away from danger. However, should the plastic items be located by mischance, then a firm offer of 'cake and a nice cup of tea', should divert the ME and stave off another attack.

## **Cross Infection**

Carers need to be aware that the subject may pass on older boxes to unsuspecting family members, if this should happen, a firm ‘no thank you’ will suffice, but it is well to be always on your guard.

## **Metal Trolley Spontanitis**

This condition is more dangerous because of the sheer unpredictability and almost robotic like nature of the complaint.

## **Case Study**

In my research I have been able to study an ME in his natural environment over some years. For a time my clinic was based in the country side on a hill within the confines of an old quarry, there were steep cliffs, deep inclines and we were surrounded on two sides by dense woods.

One morning I was going about my sensible domestic duties when I heard a desperate shout, I quickly moved to the window where I witnessed a disturbing sight. A large heavy trolley was making its way down the drive at approximately 25mph and accelerating, towards the sheer drop at the bend in the lane. Following behind was the ME making strange arm gestures rather in the manner of Harry Potter casting a spell, and making alarming inarticulate sounds. I was rooted to the spot, and knowing I was too far away to avert a disaster, watched to see the outcome of this debacle. Thankfully, a poor unsuspecting sapling right on the edge of the drop, stopped the careering object from causing any further mayhem, and the ME turned towards the house with a face full of relief. Tea and biscuits were required.

## **Treatment**

Metal trolleys should have a working locking device at wheel level and it is advisable not to leave them on a steep slope. Although, if your life lacks excitement, you can always use the country method.

I much admire and advocate Dr Spin’s advice regarding the layout and organisation of the workshop, however in the above respects, I would need to add, ‘Physician heal thyself’!

# **‘MONA’ – A SIMPLE 0-6-2 TANK ENGINE**

## **By LBSC**

By Paul Orrells

Well, at least that what is says on the front of the cover of the instruction booklet. Perhaps it was this that convinced by Dad to start building his first steam locomotive. I can't remember when he started it exactly, all I remember is that we moved to Amersham in 1969 when my Dad was promoted and some time afterwards he set up a little workshop alongside the house in a small garden shed. He always had a fascination for trains, which was transferred to me (as his oldest son) almost as a rite of passage. I remember as a child standing for hours on Dolgellau Station watching the trains go by.

My Grandmother lived in Dolgellau, and my sister and brother and I used to spend the entire school holidays there, roaming free between breakfast and tea time. On one occasion I clearly remember being offered a footplate ride on a Pannier Tank while it went to turn on the turntable. I refused to go, because they wouldn't let my Mum go for the ride as well.

From school my Dad did his National Service in the Military Police, he then joined the Metropolitan Police before later joining the Bucks Constabulary (later to become the Thames Valley Police). He did not have any engineering training at all, and therefore a decision to start building a loco was very surprising.

His enthusiasm may have been spurred on a by a local chap who he came across as part of his job. John Knott was a retired metalwork teacher from the local secondary school that I went to. He lived just

a few miles up the road at Little Chalfont, and had a dual 3½ and 5” gauge ground level railway that he had built around his garden. It

was magnificent – it had a small viaduct over a pond and a big long tunnel. My Dad and John struck up a long lasting friendship, and for years I used to go there to ride on the trains. John had built a 3½” gauge Black 5, and had also built a 5” Atlantic to his own design as well as a little battery operated shunter that was easy to use without all the bother of having to the disposing of it afterwards. Over 30 years later my own two sons would also ride ‘The Whym Light Railway’ (TWLR) as it was called.

I don’t remember much about ‘Mona’ being built, other than my Dad spending hours and hours in his shed, and one episode about the building of the boiler. Although the workshop (wooden shed) was right next to the house, we had a brick garage that was in a block with other garages about 50 yards away from the house. All of the boiler work was done there, presumably because there was more space and it wasn’t so flammable. It was at some stage during the building of the boiler that it needed pickling. I’m not sure what happened exactly, but during the process acid splashed up into one of his eyes. A dash to hospital and a bandaged eye for a while was the result, with luckily no permanent damage.

Many years later, after I had left home, the loco was finished with it being steamed on several occasions. It was painted blue, the paint being applied directly to the copper boiler as no cladding was fitted. I think it was probably a case of ‘I’ve got it finished, I’ll paint it properly later’.

Things moved on, and ‘Mona’ never did get her proper paint job. A few small Stuart Stationary engines were built, as well as a start on a 3½” ‘Princess Marina’, but ‘Mona’ never received any more attention. My mother passed away in 2001 and this signalled the  
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end of any more time in the shed.

A few years ago my Dad had to move into a care home, so he had to sell his house and dispose of his workshop. Most bits were sold off, but the two locos he made were kept by me. I had always wanted to get Mona steaming again, to pass her on to my eldest son, but in her existing state she was a bit of an eyesore. I had intended to send her away to a so called reputable engineering company in Lincolnshire to be restored but I got my fingers burnt when I sent a nearly complete 3½” Britannia there for completion. Several thousand pounds were taken on my credit card without it even being taken out of the packing case I had made and sent it off in. After a lot of bother I got my money and my little Brit back, but I wasn’t going to risk sending anything away again.

While all of this was going on I had emerged from many years as a silent member of TME to be a member of the Thursday gang at Creech. A chance conversation with Nigel Gettings led to him agreeing to give her a complete overhaul (with some boiler cladding!) and a decent paint job.

After a lot of frustration the task has been completed, and ‘Mona’ looks resplendent in her new black livery. The number 168 on the bunker is my Dad’s old police number, and I have some nameplates to fit on the front splasher to name her ‘Rene Patricia’ after my late mother. The before and after pictures are amazing, and I would like to thank Nigel for doing a fantastic job for me. I can’t wait to see my Dads face when I take it to show him.

I have a 5” Winson Britannia kit that I want to get finished next, then I might see how Nigel is fixed to have a go at finishing that Princess Marina for me!

# Alan Keef Ltd

By Bill Edmondson

This engineering company, situated near Ross on Wye, family owned, traces its existence back to 1968. Now in the hands of son Patrick and daughter Alice (the latter is the trained engineer), the business is involved in railways from 10¼” to 3’6” gauge. They cater for both leisure and industrial.

Each year the company throws its doors open in aid of local charities. Jack and I went along to the latest one on 24 September 2011. Pretty much the whole premises are open to wander around, it all having had a good spring clean beforehand! There are always some locomotives in steam on their 2’ gauge test track which runs around three sides of the main building.

This year there was:



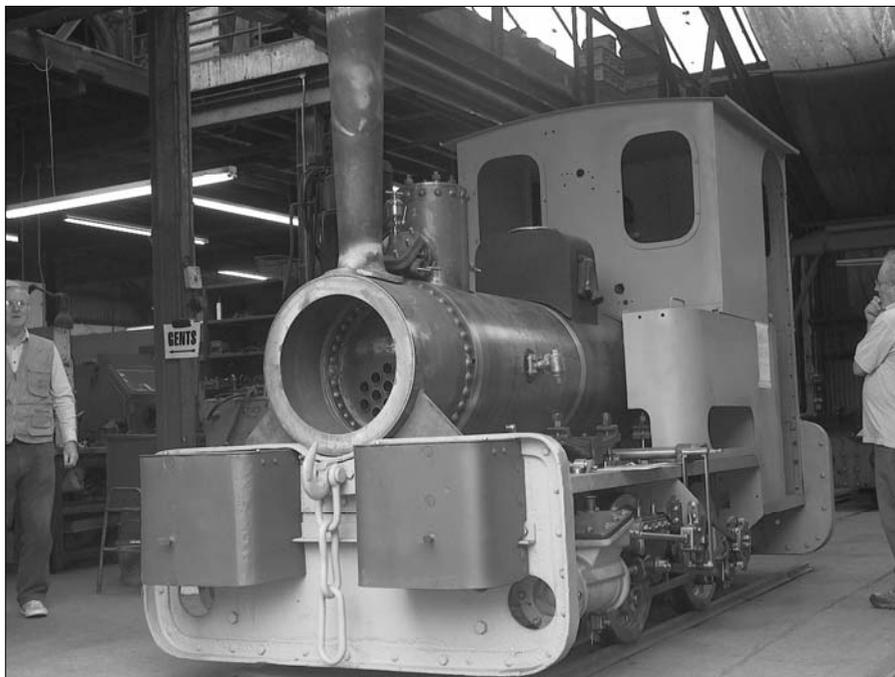
“Taffy” – a deWinton. This can be described as a rebuild. Much of the vital motionwork, boiler fittings and sundry bits were rescued many years ago from a derelict locomotive on a gallery high up in the mountains of North Wales where a company called Penmaenmawr Quarry chiseled away in an effort to win granite used for both road and rail construction. The rescued parts eventually ended up with the Keefs who manufactured the missing parts; frames, wheelsets, boiler etc resulting in a very pleasing engine.



“Jack” – an Andrew Barclay gasworks locomotive. Privately owned and often seen around the country with a portable track! It is similar to the 2’6” gauge version “Dougal” which resides on the Welshpool & Llanfair Railway. Apparently it lives in the owner’s garage.

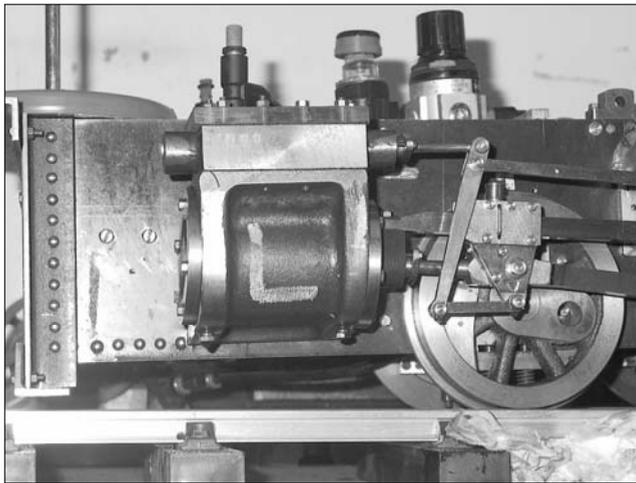
“Peter Pan” – Kerr Stuart Wren class – the locomotive on which Tony Goslings model is based. Again privately owned and much travelled.

Then on display in the works were several interesting ongoing jobs. The eyecatcher however was a very attractive metre gauge Krauss.



This engine is one of a pair which Keefs are restoring for a customer in the Netherlands. With outside Stephenson's valve gear, wouldn't that look good in one of our scales?

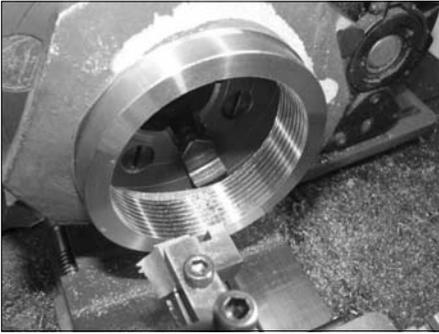
And to complete this short report of our visit, there was an Oxford model engineer, John Marriage, who had his 5" gauge O&K 0-6-0 "Elfin Maid" on show. He'd rigged it up with a Perspex valve chest cover to allow visitors to see the slide valve in action. John has worked the basic castings and dimension up from the Metre Maid design, but heavily modified to follow some of the design quirks of Elfin Maid. In particular the motion is laid out so that the valve gear is all square to the frames, whereas the cylinder bores are inclined. The close up photo shows this unusual arrangement. Apparently John is a footplate crew member on the Leighton Buzzard narrow



gauge line where Patrick Keef is too.

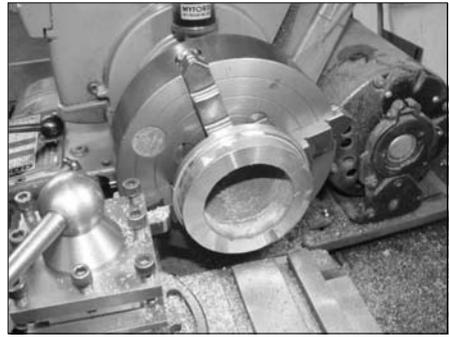
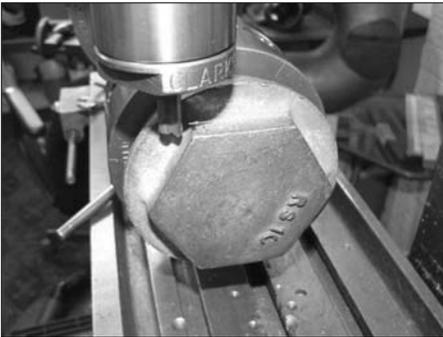
So far as is known the company intend to continue with these open days and I would heartily recommend a day trip; it's not too much of a hop across the water – if you choose to go over the old Severn Bridge.





one to be used to cut the internal thread. The previous picture shows the dome bush, mounted in the four jaw chuck, with the turning and screwcutting completed, all made that much easier by having 11 TPI readily available on my lathe's gearbox.

The faces on the hexagon top of the plug were machined, to provide true surfaces to be gripped, again in the four-jaw chuck. Turning to diameter followed by a bit of relatively easy external screwcutting completed the job.



It wasn't a particularly difficult task, but not something you get to do everyday.

# A Serious Memory Loss!

By Chris Orchard

The weekend of the 4th and 5th June saw our pilgrimage to my other club, Taunton Model Engineers, on the occasion of their annual (well nearly) exhibition. This year I was asked to take my *Rob Roy* and *Simplex* locomotive models and when they learned the *Simplex* was well used to passenger hauling duties, asked me to run it on their portable track at the exhibition on the Saturday.

Well that turned out to be very quiet, with only about a dozen rides given in the four hours I was there but there was the opportunity to talk to the visitors including one who told me he had started his *Simplex* in 1986 and asked if it would take long to finish! Is there an answer? I now think it was the result of *Simplex* standing still for long periods that produced a pronounced “squeak” whenever it was moved. I now believe the heat from the firebox dried out the oil in the rear axleboxes, but a moment of panic prompted me to turn the adjustable cylinder lubricator up to its maximum.

The Sunday afternoon proved to be much more interesting, running on their ground level multi-gauge track, about half a mile long with some interesting gradients. A 1 in 70 climb about two hundred feet long is well remembered; you have to be prepared for that sort of thing and the first time around I wasn't! But after three hours of play “51309” became most reluctant to do anything and finally stalled on that grade; time to stop, to thank everyone for their hospitality and make our way home. It was when cleaning the locomotive down, its reluctance to perform became apparent; a thoroughly clogged up spark arrester. What had I forgotten to do?



# Mary Estelle built by Bob Wilkinson

As related to Nora Batty by B. E.

At a visit to Bob's home in November 2011 to have my 5" gauge Dougal locomotive hydraulically tested, Bob showed Ian Grinter and myself progress on his Don Young 7¼" gauge Mary Estelle. This engine started life as a lot that had come up at a Taunton club auction in recent years. It consisted of a set of frames, flanged parts for the boiler and other sundries. Finding the cost of wheel castings prohibitive, Bob opted for steel blanks at a fraction of the price.



Fortunately the cylinder castings were part of the job lot. The previous builder had altered the chassis to represent a shunter style locomotive rather than the Don Young design with cowcatchers. To give a better proportion to the engine, Bob has added a diamond

By April 2010, the build had reached boiler installation and associated pipework and in November 2011 the engine was steamed, albeit on blocks in Bob's workshop. He needs a warm day to be tempted out to try it on a track.

The detail includes a false backhead onto which Bob has installed a hydrostatic lubricator based on a design by Fred Cottam seen in the *Model Engineer* some years ago.

Not liking the slide valve design of regulator, Bob has substituted a large needle or cone valve operated by a twin start thread. Not wishing to work with wood, the cab is in steel sheet instead.

Although the photographs don't show the locomotive fully, they do give some idea of the workshop in which Bob manages to produce his locomotives. Not a square inch of space wasted. This engine is his fifth in just over twenty years.



# Of Ships and Things

By

**Fireman M.N. (Retired)**

The fireman's training school was a bit behind the times and still thought that most ships were coal burners. The training was pretty crude to say the least. Two chairs with their backs removed, were placed side by side and propped up on these were two toilet seats. This represented the "boiler front." The coal, in turn, was represented by a heap of pebbles placed about six feet away. The idea was to take a shovel full of pebbles and pitch them through the seat without touching the sides, which would dislodge the seat in any case if you did not aim straight. When the pebbles landed they had to have the correct spread on the floor which was to teach you to aim the shovel correctly and cover the fire properly.

Please don't make up your own jokes about blokes aiming for toilet seats. Once the heap of pebbles was used up and the spread pattern was recorded they were swept into a heap and fired back the other way. This went on until the so-called instructors thought you might make a half decent stoker.

After being home for a week I was getting restless so I went up to the docks to see what jobs were going.

The "Adelaide Star" wanted an engine room cleaner. As there was nothing else going at the time and I fancied a trip to the colonies, I took that and started work the next day. We were scheduled to sail on the 21st October which would give me a week to settle in and to get used to things.

The “ Adelaide Star “ was a refrigerated motor ship of some 12,000 tons with a cruising speed of 18 knots and accommodation for 12 passengers.



The machinery consisted of two 6 cylinder “Doxford” opposed piston 2 stroke main engines, four 8 cylinder “Ruston” engines driving “English Electric “ generators and four electric refrigeration units. The main engine exhausts went up to the funnel where they passed through two silencers while on slow running and when up to speed the gasses were diverted through a pair of Donkey Boilers, which were “Clarkson” vertical thimble tube type. These provided all the auxiliary steam needed and quietened the sound to a steady purr. When in port the boilers were fired with conventional oil burners which was another reason for the large funnels on the Blue Star ships.

When running at top speed the engines were doing 100 RPM, which made oiling and greasing moving parts a fairly easy job.

We sailed on time and the first port of call was Lisbon where we

unloaded about 20 Bedford Lorries which had been lashed down on the decks. The next stop was Canary Isle for fuel oil, slightly thinner than boiler oil but still needing heating to about 250 degrees F. so that the injectors could handle it efficiently.

Just before we got to Las Palmas I was promoted to main greaser, as the chap on the 4-8 watch went down with severe Kidney Stones and was sent ashore to hospital.

Then it was back to sea again for the 5,000 mile jaunt to Cape Town.

Marine diesel engines have two cooling systems. Lubricating oil is pumped from a tank below the crankcase and passes through a hollow crankshaft and connecting rod into the hollow pistons and back to the sump tank via a heat exchanger. The main cooling is through water jackets around the cylinders with fresh water pumped round and through a sea-water heat exchanger. When sailing through the tropics speed has to be reduced because the sea temperature is high and therefore cannot cool things down sufficiently.

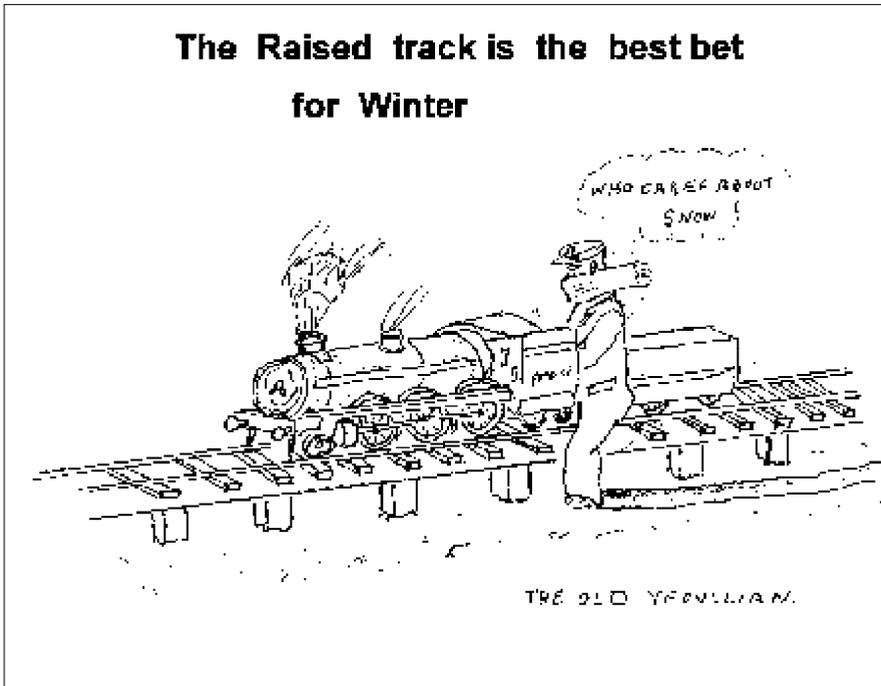
As we approached Cape Town - what a sight it was! Table Mountain stretched out with the sun behind it. Having said that I was in no mood for sightseeing as for two days I had toothache. The first one always seems to be the worst and I wasn't very happy about it.

The next morning I was taken ashore to a dentist' That was fun. The dentist was a woman, about 6ft-6" tall and about 25 stones. I think she was probably the first mate from one of the Russian Whale factory ships that were laid up in port. She came at me with a syringe like a tyre pump saying "Open wide". The next thing that I remembered was laying on the floor with this great thing picking me up and the shipping agent opening the door, telling me to hurry up as the taxi was still waiting. She replied, "He's all yours", with a twinkle in her eye.

Back on board and feeling sorry for myself but with no time for that as preparations were under way for sailing, another 5,000 miles to Australia.

About two days out we passed several schools of whales heading towards Cape Town. As it was the closed season they were probably off to thumb their noses at the tied up whalers. Ten days later we reached Adelaide.

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# Notes from the (frozen) North

By

**“Mr. M.D.F.”**

As I pen these notes, outside the snow is falling heavily. “Mrs.M.D.F” has just returned from taking "Sami" the black dog on his constitutional morning walk. The hound being well encrusted in snow looks more like a living advert for a well known brand of scotch whisky, whilst “Mrs. M.D.F” is naturally very rosy cheeked and as the sauce bottle label says, “is free from artificial flavours and colouring”!

I hope that you all had a peaceful and relaxing Christmas and that your batteries are re-charged for the coming season - remember there is always work to do. For our part we spent Christmas with our younger son and his family in Southampton where we were happy, but well jumped upon by excited grandchildren with extreme reserves of energy (I would not wish it any differently). Among the presents I received was a boxed set of D.V.D's - "Fred Dibnah's Steam, Steel and Stone". Very nice, but upon closer viewing I firmly believe a Health (and Safety) warning should be issued. Some of the antics by Fred could make ones hair stand on end. Standing rather too close to a shaper chonking merrily away and loose clothing flapping free, unguarded belts clack-clacking rythmically over pulleys all with a measured indifference to the potential hazards around. Not a good example to inexperienced budding engineers. One further example - Fred is seen surfacing a piece of timber about 2" square on a wood planing machine with tables about 18" wide, a common industrial size. The fence to the far side of the tables exposing the whole of the cutter block, not a guard in sight. A two bladed cutter block revolving at 3,000 r.p.m. equals 6,000 cuts per minute which can make an awful mess of flesh and bone. I know - I have witnessed it first hand and helped to clear the mess up afterwards (not a pretty sight). I might add that I have worked woodworking machinery for more than sixty five years with only one minor bite (one too many I might say). Care and caution should be foremost in our actions and best practice should be our watchword especially when younger inexperienced people are around.

Enough of the doom and gloom lecture, let's move on to something constructive.

When mounting fittings (water gauges, blower valves etc.) upon the boiler back head, they often do not settle at the right position. Tighten further and disaster, the threaded end snaps off. The fitting is ruined and removing the broken part from the boiler can be a daunting task. Years ago when Stuart-Turner was at Henley upon Thames, they used to list aluminium shim washers to help overcome this problem - whether the new owners still list this service I know not -- I cannot afford their prices!

So why not make your own? Shim Aluminium is available FREE almost anywhere - empty pop cans. Some are steel but some are aluminium and those are the ones that you want. With a sharp knife with a pointed end stab the can and remove the ends. The metal cuts easily but care is required - it's only the can that you want to cut! Throw the ends away and the flimsy tube that you have left will provide shim stock for many washers.

Cut the tube through with a pair of scissors and open out to a flat sheet. With a pencil or scribe, mark a straight edge on one long side and cut to the line. Decide what size washers you require - for example 1/4" bore x 7/16" O.D. Cut strips of aluminium about 9/16" wide. Now a simple punch and die is required to make the 1/4" hole as you cannot drill the shim! Take a short block of mild steel say 1" x 1/2" and at about 5/16" - 3/8" from the 1/2" edge make a cut with a slitting saw 1/32" - 1/16" thick, 9/16" into the end of the block. On the opposite 1/2" face 9/32" from the end and in the middle of the width mark out and drill a hole reaming size for a 1/4" reamer. Follow this with the 1/4" reamer and the die is made. For the punch a short length of 1/4" diam. silver steel is made into the same. Face of the business end dead flat, put a chamfer on the other end, harden and temper the flat end. Punch made, insert punch into wider side of the die and punch holes into aluminium strip about 5/8" apart. Cut the punched strip into squares, thread the squares onto a suitable mandrel in the lathe chuck, nut up tight and turn the pack of shims to 7/16" diam. Unthread and hey presto, shim washers. As the Meerkats would say ----Simple. For other sizes make punch and die to suit.

An improvement would be a collar on the punch and a suitable compression spring between collar and die to hold the punch just clear of slot thus forming a punch extractor. The top of the die acting as punch guide and stripper, striking the punch compresses spring which lifts the punch clear ready for the next move.

# Creech



**Alterations to the unloading facility**

# Letters to the Editor

**I wish you and all your members a great Christmas and Happy Trains in the New Year.**

**I am well, much better than I have been as I am on dialysis three days a week since last June.**

**I have four days feeling great. I will be on it though until my dying day—if I live that long.**

**I am now involved in the movie project about the Whirlwind. The director flew over last month to interview me as I am the only one left who knew and worked for the genius who designed it. It is hoped that the BBC can get with it as an ongoing documentary.**

**I hope you are well and give my regards to anyone who knows me.**

**Walter (The Old Yeovilian) (By Email from the USA)**

**Taunton Model Engineers Exhibition  
Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th April 2012  
Heathfield Community School,  
Monkton Heathfield,  
Taunton TA2 8PD  
Setting up on Friday 13th April**

# **Subscriptions**

**For 2012 were due on the 1st January**

**(The membership for those who joined after 30th September  
2011 runs until the end of 2012).**

**Ordinary Membership is £25 with a further £5 for spouse or  
partner.**

**Junior Membership—£5**

**Membership Secretary contact details—see inside front cover.**

**If renewing by post, please enclose S.A.E. for Membership  
Card**

**The views and articles featured in this magazine do not  
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and Members.**

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# **Vivary Park Running Days**

**Trains will run between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m.**

**2012**

**Sunday 1st April**

**Sunday 8th April (Easter Day)**

**Sunday 22nd April (Emergency Services Day) - 11a.m.—4p.m.**

**Sunday 6th May**

**Sunday 20th May**

**Sunday 3rd June (Queens Diamond Jubilee) - 11a.m. –4p.m.**

**Sunday 17th June**

**Sunday 1st July**

**Sunday 15th July**

**Flower Show - Fri 3rd & Sat 4th August—11a.m. to 6p.m**

**Sunday 5th August**

**Sunday 19th August**

**Sunday 26th August**

**Sunday 2nd September**

**Sunday 16th September**

**Sunday 7th October**

**Sunday 21st October**

**Sunday 16th December Santa Special**

**12 noon to 3.p.m.**



**“Mona” - before and after!**  
**See full story inside**