

The Oily Rag!



Thursdays are not all work! Here Brian Groves tries out his recently acquired "Speedy".

The Taunton Model Engineers'
magazine

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From the Editor

Sorry this issue is rather late, but for a long time I had nothing to edit. It is always good to get articles from friends outside the TME. but maybe you should try harder only half of the six articles in this issue are home grown. If you have something for the Spring issue please can I have it as soon as possible, since I would like to get the magazine out on time next time round !

As you may know we did quite well in the "Engineering in Miniature" club magazine competition. In his editorial, in EIM, Chris Deith made the point that it was content not presentation which decided the outcome. So congratulations to all those who have put pen to paper.

I think this issue is as diverse as any I have put together. I hope you enjoy it.

John

Chairman's Notes

By Mike Johns

The Winter Oily Rag is normally my opportunity to thank members and the committee for their support in the previous 12 months and so to wish them the compliments of the season in a timely fashion. Unfortunately this has not been possible this year owing to this edition being later than normal which has also meant that members have been unaware of our forward events programme unless they have checked the TME website. The delay at least in part, is a reflection on the number and sizes of contributions passed to the editor in order to make up an interesting and informative issue.

In some instances over recent months there have been articles where there has been more than a hint, that the editor himself has been the writer albeit under a pen name. That John Pickering has been able to maintain content and standards overall is reflected in the quality of each of our quarterly magazines throughout the year. This has been marked by 'Engineering in Miniature' magazine again judging the Oily Rag first in their annual Club Newsletter Competition for 2015. On behalf of TME I have received a letter and a £150.00 cheque from Chris Deith in recognition of this achievement for which I have passed on the club's thanks and congratulations to John.

This is the second time TME has received this award in 3 years, an almost unique event. We all now need to keep up the flow of interesting material to John to see if he can do it again!

But he does need help. There is no way he can maintain output or standards unless sufficient items of interest are fed to him on a regular basis. We have over 100 regular members who between them have many and varied ME interests and who are active in their workshop to some degree on many and various projects. Each represents a topic that other members would like to hear about, whether historical background; a story of 'how I did that' or even 'how do I do that?' for problems which others can help with; 'hints and tips' etc. etc. Browsing through past Oily Rags shows just how many different topics have formed the variety that can be included.

Please therefore make 2016 the year in which you put pen to paper and provide some copy for John to include in a future edition. If you do not I'm afraid the Oily Rag will gradually be reduced to a simple newsletter listing events past and to come, together with occasional sale items – a situation I'm sure none of us want to see.

The seventieth anniversary of TME's formation in 1946. Occurs this year. With this Oily Rag you will find a leaflet giving out lined details of a celebratory event to be held on Saturday 23 July next at Creech.

David Hartland is leading the organising committee and will be advising details of what has been planned in due course. Apart from this we have another varied programme of events for you to enjoy as well as sustaining the public running days at Vivary and Creech.

I look forward to your continued support in what will be an eventful year. And with that I'll end by wishing each of you a happy and successful 2016.

News from Creech

By Mike Johns

2015 has been a very successful year for public running at Creech, a total of 2540 passengers being carried over the 16 regular running days before the Santa special on 20 December. In spite of poor weather at the start this was also successful with some £116.00 in donations collected for charity. Generally we have been lucky with the weather – and even when it rained 30 hardy souls had a ride, whilst on the best day when the “Party in the Park” was held we carried no less than 464. This has only been possible through the continued support of members bringing and driving their own locomotives on the track and for which we are all very grateful to Robert Oldfield, Allen Wellesley - Miller, Tim Hims, John Williams, and Tony Newberry among others, plus those who sell tickets, look after our passengers, operate the turntable and make the tea! Our thanks are due to them all.

The healthy increase in passenger this year has stressed the need for more riding vehicles. Thank to John Selby we now have 3 new steel underframes on hand for which David Hartland and John Pickering are collaborating on provision of the bogies. Mark Hartnell has the timber for the bodies already cut which he will assemble as soon as we're ready. Steve Gosling has formed for

pressing the buffer heads and vacuum brake cylinder halves once blankshave been cut. The buffer heads are made from 1/8" sheet steel and the brake parts from 1/16" brass, if someone would like to come forward to cut them out that would be helpful. Most of the other buffer parts are simple turning exercises to produce the parts in steel ready for assembly. Again we'd like someone to come forward to take this on. If you are interested please contact me and I can pass on a copy of the drawing so you can see what is involved.

Work has continued on site to fit ballast retaining boards and a significant length through the trees at the back of the site has been fitted and the ballast levelled thanksto Tony Gosling and others. The unloading area and roadway into the station area has been dug out and re-surfaced with tamped scalplings, the displaced earth all having been removed by train and used to re-profile the sides of the embankment through the trees. This was possible once David Hartland and John Pickering had modified the ballast wagon so its hopper top would tip to either side and it could be hauled empty without derailing. David did deals with the local builders and stone contractors.

The new yard point has been completed and David H. has made two more points on the workshop bench ready for the re-arrangement of the yard and workshop access tracks before the start of the 2016 running season. With Tim Griffiths, Mike Pinkney and others she has also cleared the ground at the back of four buildings ready for this work, the displaced earth etc. again having been used for landscaping. Inside the building John Pickering has finalised the control systems for the two Hymek locomotives, the last bits being fitted ready to get the bodies away for painting prior to completion. Both have been tested and run in public service where their power and controllability has been well up to expectations.

Unfortunately there have been some problems with the milling machine failing but John P. was able to identify the cause and has

fitted the new contactor needed, and the machine has been used by Andy Cook to make some of the point parts needed.

With all the new work going on there regular Thursday working parties have become something of a social event in the Club calendar with up to 14 members on site on fine days. Thanks are due to all for their contributions which have allowed some catching up on outstanding jobs. There are more to be done, especially before our anniversary celebrations in July to present the track at its best for our visitors. Why not come along and join in?

Report from Vivary Park

By Diana Fathers

As surprisingly mild day brought the crowds out for the Santa Special and the queue reached right round the pavilion well before the starting time of midday.

Phil's train was helped along by reindeer – of course – and the two other trains, which were driven by Dave Wood and Bryan Groves, were kept busy with a constant stream of passengers, right up to closing time. Donations were generous and £200 was raised for the Children's Hospice South West.

Tickers update.

David Spicer

The clock is a usual progressing very slowly due to experimenting with the mechanism which gives power to the going train during winding. I will explain further when I give a presentation to TME. This clock has been in the making for circa 4 years and we hope to complete in approx 2 years. Best wishes to all for 2016.

Operation “Dog Kennel” part II

an Update by Doctor Spin.

Progress has been good on the improvements at Creech. The opening in the end wall has been fitted with a sliding shutter, itself worked by a medieval style counterbalance weight to ease the effort involved in opening.

Track is complete in the shed, and the pointwork to form the new Shed Throat area is being worked on. The approach road has been reinforced with scalping. What is left, however, is the Great Concreting Job. This is to provide the north end of the shed with a nice flat working area, with the three tracks crossing it, set level with the top of the concrete.

We are awaiting the return of more predictable weather, but if all goes well we should be ready for concreting in early March. Here is where you can help – in spite of all attempts it has not been possible to find a ready mix lorry which is narrow enough to pass down the approach road, so we will have to deliver the concrete to the car park and move down the approach road by the use of wagons drawn by a locomotive on the backroad, and with some wheelbarrows. Now you are all thinking – NEVER – but in reality if we have enough people each with a wheelbarrow, then we can form a continuous chain of barrows into which the lorry



The new pointwork.

deposits concrete, then wheel the barrow down to the shed and tip. The more people and barrows, plus the train shuttling back and forth – the less work there will be for each. Once in position, we have to do the usual tamping and levelling.

Three Thursday mornings are set aside for this work – 25th February, 3rd March and 10th March. The idea will be that the weather forecast will be studied a few days before and a GO – NOGO advertised by Email to those who have registered interest in helping. If the first day is NOGO then we proceed to the second, and so on. If you are already on Tony Gosling's Thursday gang circulation then you will be informed anyway; but if you are not and would like to assist then please Email Tony on a.f.gosling@btinternet.com It will not all be heavy work – there are lighter jobs involved as well. If you do not feel able to handle a wheelbarrow then please come along to encourage those who can!



Loading some of the spoil.



Unloading the scalplings.



Tony Gosling and Tim Hims working hard!

The Conveyor, A Penny Slot Machine Build

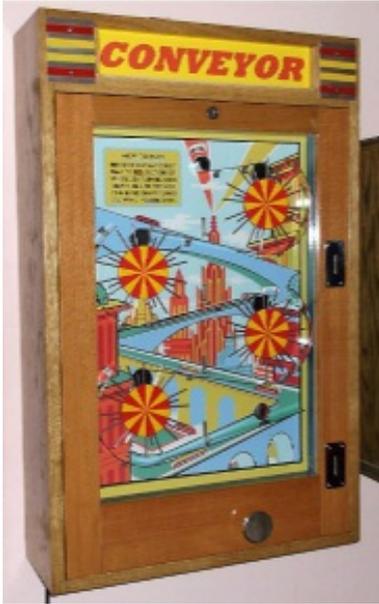
by John Barnard

I am sure many of you can remember as children the thrill of going to the seaside and running into the slot machine arcade on the pier with a few pennies scadged from your parents to play the machines. I remember we selected our machine and dropped our penny into its slot and eagerly awaited the appearance of a shiny steel ball from a little hole in the faded velvet back ground and rolling down its track only for us to depress and release as sprung chrome lever and send it spinning around the circular tracks in an attempt to get it into one of the winning cups to get our penny back or a packet of sweets plus a free ball for another go. Oh! Happy days.

The penny slot machine started life in the latter half of Queen Victoria's reign and they were used as trade stimulators in shops, bars and hotels. For a win these machines delivered a token which could be exchanged for goods at the counter, cigar, beer, etc. or whatever the owner was trying to promote at the time. After WW1 the interest in these machines as trade stimulators had waned and they were purchased by travelling showmen for their fairs. The showmen couldn't be bothered with exchanging tokens so they converted machines to just return the player's penny for a win. When the older showmen found travelling too hard for them they set up arcades in seaside towns. A massive world-wide industry then sprang up to supply machines to these arcades and is still trading today.

Without the aid of modern computers many machines were just pure luck but some were real games of skill and the Conveyor is one of these.

You play the Conveyor game by dropping your penny in the slot which starts the red and yellow pinwheel spinning at about 30rpm, then the ball drops onto the lower track and is held by a pin midway



The new Conveyor
Ready to frustrate.

along the track. Using your judgement you turn the big knob and lift the pin hoping that you have released the ball into a red segment on the pinwheel; if it lands in the yellow the ball disappears through a hole into the ball pan behind and is lost. If successful the ball is then carried around and lifted onto the next track up where it is stopped by another pin ready for you to release it again so working the ball up to the Win hole at the top to get your penny returned.

The Conveyor is believed to have been built by the amusement machine manufacturer Stevenson & Lovett in 1945. The machine is 35" high x 23" wide and 7" deep and cost just £30 at that date.

Not many Conveyors were made and there are very few left now as the advent of the brightly coloured machines in the 1960's saw most of the older machines thrown off the end of the pier to make way for these new -fangled light flashing monsters.

The scarcity of Conveyors makes collectors, who want to relive their miss-spent childhood, pay high prices for the very few machines that do come onto the market, so as I am now approaching my second childhood and as penniless as I was during my first one I decided it would be an interesting and slightly different to the

normal model engineering fare to build done. There are no drawings for the Conveyor so the back flash and photographs provide the only building information.

Basically a fairly simple project; the varnished case is made from Oak and the door from Beech using simple butt and rebate joints cut on the milling machine with a router cutter and glued together. The back flash is a laminated photograph, Photo-shopped from a photograph of an original Conveyor and affixed to the back plate (there remains of the metal casing from an old washing machine, as is the red painted ball pan behind). The only mildly difficult parts are the four pin wheels; made from $3/8$ " thick Tufnol and drilled $2.9\text{mm} \times 1/2$ " deep around the periphery, using the rotary table, to take the 3mm dia. push fit (in the vice) polished stainless steel rods. The red and yellow segments are generated from the pie chart facility in Microsoft Word, printed onto self-adhesive photo paper and stuck onto the Tufnol making sure that they are dead centre and correctly aligned to the pins. The pin wheels run in full length brass bearings flanged at one end and threaded $3/8$ " BSP for an nut at the other.

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An original conveyor showing the mechanism.



John's machine again showing the mechanism.

The belt pulleys are also Tufnol and the 6mm o/d belt is green polythene material (eBay) cut to length and the ends melted on a hotplate (make sure the wife is out before trying this) and quickly pushed together using a V block to help align the ends. The ball tracks are cut and curved from 1.5x22mm wide polished stainless steel and held to the back plate by small angle brackets cut, folded and drilled from the same material. The stainless steel ball is 7/8" dia.

The ball tracks are in three pieces. A straight section with a slot into allow the pin wheel to pass; the second section is a length of spring steel fixed from just beyond the ball release pin to the underside of the curve; then the curved section. This is because the pin wheel can trap the ball onto the track and stop the motor; the spring section allow the ball to be pushed down to clear the jam. It's surprising how many times this happens; I estimate one in ten plays see the ball trapped.

The coin track is folded from three pieces of thin steel sheet and held together at 30 deg angles; the lower angle is soldered and the



The coin mechanism

top one is split pinned for ease of disassembly. The near horizontal pivoted lever holds the ball until a penny is dropped into the slot and falls down the track carrying the lever with it and so releasing the ball into play. Releasing the ball allows the arm of a micro switch to rise which starts the 220 volt 14 watt 50 rpm internally geared motor (from Hong Kong via eBay)

The penny then drops into the lower angle piece and is held by a wire from the bottom of the long centre pivoted vertical bar, the top of which has a metal flag attached inside the ball pan. The ball falling through the win hole pushes the flag aside so pulling the wire clear and allowing the penny to roll out of the wining slot. If the penny is not won a weighted deflector is moved into the vertical track by the penny and any further pennies are directed through a slot in the back of the coin track into the cash box.

I found it an interesting project, something a bit different and using three disciplines, woodwork, metalwork and electricity. Hanging on the wall in my hallway it makes a good talking point and frustrates friends who play it; what better enjoyment could a model engineer want?

Don't overlook marine steam!

Mark Rudal of the Steamboat Association waxes lyrical

Years ago, as a kid, I couldn't wait to visit a shop I had read about. It was called "Cherry's of Richmond", an up-market steam emporium.

I eventually got to explore the place under the eye of a haughty shop assistant who knew perfectly well that the boy in the anorak was not about to write a cheque for that "Exhibition quality 5" gauge GWR 'Star' - he was drooling over, prior to having it carried out to a splendid Bentley parked round the corner.

By the age of 15 I had written articles about a stationary steam plant and a historic portable engine published by Martin Evans in 'Model Engineer' - some behaviour in Cherry's was, as I look back, incomprehensible. For in the middle of the shop stood a massive mahogany bench bearing a collection of marine engines.

They were singles, compounds and triples bristling with pumps and elegant lubricators, dazzling with burnished bronze and bright steel and painted luscious maroons and deep greens. Tom yshame I gave them hardly a look, preferring the loco and traction engines before, appalled at the prices, going home to Bedfordshire where I was being taught to drive a full sized traction engine.

The people I met in that 1960s world of full -sized steam were often model engineers, and many of them had built small Reeves or Stuart stationary engines before aspiring to LBSC, Martin Evans or LC Mason designs for something more demanding. Many had a 'Virginia' or a 'Maisie', a 'Firefly' or a 'Minnie' traction engine on the stocks so I think I was fortunate to be immersed in an ascenethat embraced steam engines of all sizes and types, full sized and models.

I think I started to get excited by marine steam when shown a near -wreck about 25' long called 'India' sitting uncovered and neglected on the Medway. I pumped out the oily bilge and examined her in detail. The rusty engine was an old tugboat general purpose pump engine (about 4' x 4") but I came to see that a small marine engine might be

relatively quick to build, and that its components were of generous proportions by comparison, say, with a 3.5" gauge loco. 'India' had an old Merryweather 'B' fire engine boiler from WW2, so her modest plan had boiler fittings that were all full -sized and I found that very appealing too.



A Taylor single powers the 15' "Little Lamb"

In my 20s, having become a clergyman with a young family, I received a letter one day saying that a wonderful old man whose Aveling 8 ton roller I had known, had died, and 'he had always wanted me to have first refusal' when the time came to sell it. I had to turn it down, but resolved to build a steam transport of some sort before I too shuffled off this mortal coil. And a steam launch it probably had to be.

As a regular contributor to the first ten years of 'Old Glory' magazine I was introduced to the Steamboat Association which had started in 1971 with steamboat owners who had come to know each other and met from time to time at Beaulieu and on Lake Windermere or the Thames.

Some were model engineers who had built largish stationary engines and wished to put them to work, finding for example that Stuart Turner's 5a - their biggest single cylinder engine - would push a boat of up to about 18' along if fed enough steam. Others had saved historic launches and were reusing them. George Pattinson, up in the Lakes, had saved so many significant boats he started a 'Steamboat Museum' up there at Bowness.



The Stuart 5A steam plant in "Melissa" also 15' long.

Many of these pioneers in the resurgence of steamboating had been influenced by a nearly 1960s American publication 'Steamboats and Modern Steam Launches' and by something equally 'fringe' but of biblical significance to those who knew it: 'Light Steam Power' magazine, published from the Isle of Man.

These publications and the few remaining historic boats provided inspiration for a new generation of steamboats. New builds began to emerge. New GRP hulls were produced and marketed based on historic designs. Stuarts were prevailed upon to re-release their handsome early 20th century No. 6 large compound engine (as the 6a) and their 'Cygnet' and 'Swan' engines became popular again. Other engines were made available in casting form by a number of designers while boiler design took off too. Simple watertube verticals, two and three drum horizontal types and rugged fire tube varieties: all kinds appeared including robust side-fired locomotive type boilers and the vertical 'Kingdon' type.

However, most importantly, fun for all the family was being had on the water because steam launch is a very social thing.

For me steam boating brings the great loves of my life together: my passion for steam power in any form; my desire to build and restore things in the workshop, my love of boats and water and most of all, my love for people and picnics! That's because steam boating is a social asset par excellence. SBA partners, family and friends are happy to embrace summer days on the water. Friends will drive for miles to enjoy some of the best pubs for leisurely lunches aboard boats of a kind that make people on the towpaths stop dead in amazement and whip out their phones and cameras for a shot.

The SBA itself currently has about 1000 members worldwide and publishes a colourful quarterly journal called 'Funnel' full of interest to those with an interest in maritime and inland waterway steam. There is also a trading arm - SBA services - which provides boiler inspection and boiler design approval services to SBA members. We reckon that throughout any given summer in the UK, about 100 trailable steamboats, steam narrowboats and other SBA craft are actively in steam, with another three hundred being built, modified or laid up for whatever reason.

The numbers are modest but a steamer of any size on a canal is guaranteed to make an impact.



A typical steamboat "Quetzal" launched 2015.

Finally, the Association ensures that various rallies and meets are provided for those who want to steam in company and explore different waterways or lakes. The SBA website is well worth Googling with its register of boats, and I think you'll see that the appeal of steamboating is immediately apparent!

ABERDEEN MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY

By Ernest Mitchell .

It's not easy to establish exactly when the Aberdeen Model Engineering Society (AMES) began, but it must have been in existence in the 1930's. Attendance figures are not available, for this period, but were believed to be in the high 40s.

A current member remembers that in the 1940s, meetings took place in a basement in “The Adelphi” a small collection of Lanes and Back Street premises which lead off the East end (or end nearest the North Sea) of Union Street, the street considered the Main Street of Aberdeen, which to this day still has Arched Basements stretching across under the street itself, most of which are now however are sealed off and unused. The basement was rented from the Aberdeen Town Council of the time.

The trend then, as still happens now, was to hold only meetings at

these premises, most members having their own workshops, or having access to machines, or use of, elsewhere. Some items such as Numbered & Lettered Drills, Dbits, and a Double Ended Bench Grinder, were purchased and kept available for members’ use. As always,



A member’s Simplex looks good in Caledonian livery.

membership numbers fluctuated, sometimes drastically as “age” or transferring to other places for employment exceeded recruitment of new members, thus the funds from fees were unable to cover the rent and the premises were given up!.

Thus AMES was all but relegated to history but for the effort of a new comertaking up employment in Aberdeen in the early 1970s. Being desperate to join a band of folk who purported to be “Live Steam Model Engineers”, he took a card table and some photocopied application forms to the local Steam Traction Engine

Rally, sat at the entrance to a tent which was titled Crafts & Models, and recruited a number of people interested in joining such a band. As well as reviving the small but valuable group of folk who had been "cowering" out of sight, alone in their own wee workshops, eventually leading to AMES once again having a membership of 40+.

Since AMES had no access to premises for their usual seat at this time, an approach was made, "cap in hand" to the now "Gramscian" Aberdeen City Council, for their help in finding suitable premises. An agreement was formed to use the Technical Rooms of a Local Academy every Monday Evening to include the attendance of the school Janitor. (Crafty Sod these Councilors! How many Local/School holidays are there annually! So many Mondays were lost.)

However the arrangement worked quite well, the first Monday of the month set aside for general meetings, the others dedicated as "working" evenings, permission having been obtained for machining operations to be done on the School's Technical Department equipment. The range of work comprised mainly of various Railway Locomotives but also included two Road Traction Locomotives, a 3" centre Metal S.C. Lathe, two small Hacksaw Machines, a Circular Saw Spindle for a wood working saw bench and a Hand Operated Winch for launching scale model Gliders.

Inevitably as membership numbers fluctuated due to employment, family and natural reasons, perhaps the most influential being day school Technical Subjects being "watered down" to become a subject known as "Craft and Design". This new method of teaching was different from the well known traditional way, now having metal working and wood working facilities mixed together along with the integration of computer studies in each teaching room. (Saw dust in metal working lathes, metal filings in wood cutting areas... well well!!!) But that's progress.

Equipment now mixed together resulted in a reduced number of lathes, milling, shaping and drilling machines being available and thus limited the range of true engineering activities able to be performed. This really was the major factor, along with rising rental costs which inevitably led to the cessation of the School as a meeting/working centre for AMES.

The next establishment to become our meeting place was a small hotel where a small conference room was made available for a small consideration, but this arrangement was short-lived. . . . you see the public and decreed that we were supposed to consume alcoholic beverage. . . . not soft drinks! WE WERE ALL DRIVERS! ('Nuff said').

Monthly meetings were then held in the local BBC's Social Club rooms, but that was abandoned after two visits because the Club activities and hilarity of the residents drowned out almost all attempts to speak/hear .

The BBC organisers were thanked and monthly meetings were thereafter held for a long duration at The Robert Gordon's Institute of Technology, School of Surveying since a member was a lecturer there, AMES was thus considered to be there by invitation. The lecturer/member retired and the R.G.I.T. facility was no longer available. Meetings were then held at member's houses on a pro-rata basis as needs arose. An arrangement which is still used today with our newsletter to keep us up to date.

AMES had a levelled 3½" and 5" gauge railways sited at the Village of Alford, some 25 miles from Aberdeen, on a spare piece of ground adjacent to the original Aberdeen to Alford railway station, (axed by Beeching) and adjacent to the Grampian Museum premises. This was used by the members to enjoy running for

testing, pleasure, demonstrations/driving skills and also to allow the Public to experience the unique power of steam.

Generation of donations to charities, mainly "Children in need" were collected by charging a 20p donation for two circuits of the track, all done by voluntary efforts of the AMES members.

As the track became worn through use and with a marked reluctance by the "authorities" to allow an extension to complement a complete renewal of the track, a decision delayed also by the Health and Safety lot, who eventually decreed that we would be judged as being the same as a Fairground! This site was lost only to become a development of flats, thus revealing why the extension/renewal application was ignored!

However during the rundown to the end of that railway's useful life, the local BBC produced a program titled "The Beechgrove Garden". (Its address is Beechgrove terrace, which explains the name). and what luck... its producer was a railway enthusiast! In addition to creating the "Garden" he also organised the construction of an elevated combined 3½" &



Our current hosts with their "Sweet Pea".

5" gauge railway circuit around the BBC's front grounds (the Beechgrove Garden was sited in the area at the back) with a Station, an elevated Footbridge with stairway accesses and a short tunnel, all with voluntary help/advice from AMES members and with the agreement that AMES members would run their locos.

To have a method of creating greater interest for members of the

public when visiting the gardens, especially on open days, A gauge "1" railway was built round and through raised flower plots at the side of the building where Methylated Spirit and Gas fired models ran to create further interest.

"Children in Need" programmes were retransmitted live from the BBC's Aberdeen site on numerous occasions, railway scenes being used as a backdrop for groups of collectors being filmed as they handed in buckets of money or cheques made out to "Children in Need". Long queues of children/adults formed waiting for their turn to be allowed two circuits of the track behind a steam drawn "train", each person paying 20p + a donation for the excursion.

Authentic printed, thick card travel tickets purchased from the "station" were "punched" with a genuine ticket punch as the holder took their place on the train, many to be kept as mementos. This track was used for quite a number of years by AMES, also an exhibition, where AMES were able to show and judge their work, were held in the studio from where The White Heather Club (Scottish Country Dancing) and other programmes were broadcast. Space being given to all local Clubs, such as Aero Modelling, Scale Model Boats and Dinky/Hornby collectorstomentionbutafew. Exhibitions organised by other Clubs, such as The Railway Modeller Club and Scottish Model Helicopters were also supported by AMES when invited. On other occasions AMES members visited venues at Elgin (Morayshire), Newliston (Mid Lothian) and Crieff (Perthshire) on their open days.

But nothing good it seems is permanent! doom was to befall the excellent arrangement with the BBC, The Beechgrove Garden programme was put out to contract. run thereafter from Glasgow and inevitably the use of the railway at the Aberdeen premises had to be stopped due to the removal of the BBC's insurance cover for it on their premises.

However a country based AMES member was able to persuade his neighbour, a farmer, to allow the railway to be sited in a corner of a field adjacent to his home. Local planning restrictions became a virtual impossibility to crack and to cut along a story short, the farmer saved the day. He allowed the railway to be built and used during Spring to Autumn, then thereafter the site was grazed by his sheep during winter, thus legally remaining truly farmland.



Ernest tries out a new driving truck behind his 3" Burrel.

Unfortunately time and tide does not respect perpetuity, again resulting in the loss of the member who passed on and thus access to the field. The railway was disposed to a local "Re-cycler" and finding another venue/track became immediately high priority.

Because of "what" and "who" being known... a 5" - 7 1/4" ground level track complete with a very accommodating and understanding person was found. AMES, due to this find, is able to continue enjoying live steam at this property which is by invitation, on a regular timetable basis throughout the Spring, Summer and early Autumn months.. Many thanks to him, his family and to his peers.

We believe we are the most northerly model engineering club in the UK. Membership at present is 16 covering a wide area, Skye, Dingwall, Elgin, Keith as well as those neighbouring Aberdeen.

Hope you all find this wee essay of some interest.....

The Exeter Garden Railway Show.

By Tim Griffiths

Back in October there was an interesting exhibition in Exeter, as the title says it was about garden railways, not necessarily model engineering, some may think. However, most of the exhibits, were of "O" gauge or larger, this may be considered the point at which model railways metamorphose into model engineering. Live steam becomes a viable proposition, if not passenger hauling, gauge "1" is also much nearer model engineering than model railways. All this to one side, there were enough model engineers attending to prove that this is a scale/gauge certainly of interest to model engineers, indeed there were also three model engineering societies exhibiting, The Westland and Yeovil MES., The Tiverton MES and the Perranporth MES.

The show itself was a diverse as any model engineering exhibition, from tinplate to scales scratch built models. There were many ready to run items from a good number of trade stands. These covered gauges from G32mm to G64mm (gauge 0 to gauge 3 if you are the same age as me!) for both standard gauge and narrow gauge railways, in a bewildering range of scales. As well as general trade stands there were those with a particular niche. For example there was a stand that displayed only semaphore signals of more than one railway company. A splendid exhibition to give food for thought, for all those that want to represent a railway in whatever size takes your fancy.

Layouts were varied in size as well as content, mainline locos in live steam, diesel and electric outline were seen, some radio controlled, others chased along to a just there regulator, this is a skilled and brilliant to watch.

I was particularly impressed by the “Salisbury and Stonehenge” gauge 1 layout exhibited by the South Devon Garden Railway Group, here you could see a finer range of Southern and GWR locos, both steam and diesel in action. The Wainwright class C. was a favourite. (Even though I always preferred the “black motors” myself!)



No.682 on the Salisbury and Stonehenge layout

Others were narrow gauge railways, again many in live steam, some were proprietary make or kits, others were hand built, all of extremely good quality.



The Westland and Yeovil layout, with a younger member in charge.

There were those based on full size practice, such as the Indian Hills 16mm scale layout modelled on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, others, such as the one exhibited by The Westland and Yeovil M.E.S. were freelance but still had all the character and charm of a narrow gauge line.

The St. Glennys 16mm scale layout showed just how much you can get into a small space, even in one of the larger model railway scales, the baseboard is only 3 meters square!

Then there were displays of period model railways, in both gauge 0 and gauge 1, with Bowman, Basset Lowke and Hornby all represented. Some were of tinplate, which is of course where many garden railways started, the controls were a bit coarse but effective. Viewing this always brings back memories, of my childhood and my introduction to model railways and finally model engineering. This show attracted several Taunton Model Engineers and was well worth a visit and lets face it our ground level track at Crech is just a garden railway on a larger scale!



Steam at St. Glenn's

OF SHIPS AND THINGS

BY FIREMAN M. N. RETIRED

Day work in port was fairly easy, a bit of stripping down and taking moveable stores ashore as they would not still be there when the repair yard had finished.

Looking for another job after a week I went on board the "Persic" which was two berths further along the dock, she was a 13,500 ton twin screw turbine driven ship run by the Shaw Savill line, being what was known as a "colonial boat", which was a term used for all

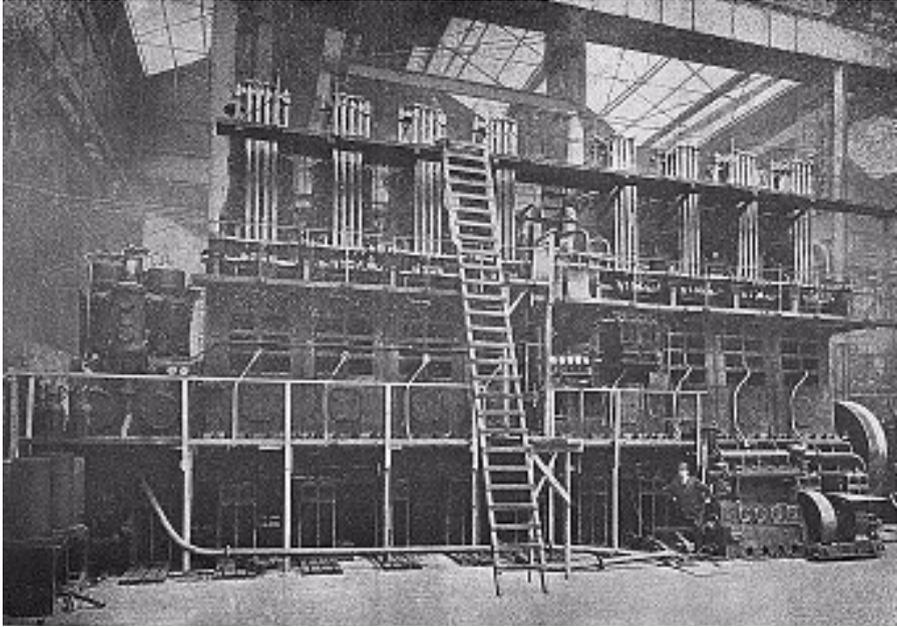
the general cargo and refrigerated ships sailing to Australia and New Zealand.

When it came to signing on it was only home trade but that was ok it would be a chance to check it out before going deep sea, which was just as well because Shaw Savill apparently had some, shall we say questionable working practices.

We went round to Avonmouth and Cardiff and then up to Liverpool, where we were told, job oversign off! When I paid off I had the magnificent sum of ten pounds nine shillings and eight pence and a trainticket to London. This was about ten o'clock at night, but good fortunes smiled on me for the other greaser I shared a cabin with, a chap my own age, who lived local, said you had better come home with me for the night. His Mum was a lovely lady and she fed us well. In the end I stayed five days and got to see a few of the sights of Liverpool and a lot of the Alehouses (pubs to you and me).

When I got back down to London I felt a bit like Paddington Bear, but without a label or any marmalade sandwiches. The "Highland Monarch" was about to start loadings so I went on board and got my old job back, to sail on the twelfth of March. So I stayed aboard again and then we were off.

The photograph shows the Starboard engine at the Harland and Wolff works. It is about thirty feet high by fifty feet long, single acting four stroke. The cylinders at the front end is a three stage compressor to provide air for starting at about three hundred P.S.I. The push rods are three inch diameter thick wall steel tubes so as not to flex owing to their length, the camshaft is driven by a chain in its centre worked from the crankshaft. There are four valves at the top of each cylinder unit, Inlet, starting air, fuel and exhaust. Being single acting the piston rod is connected to a crosshead which guides to cut down the length of the Conrod.



The engine at Harland and Wolff prior to installation.

The flywheel at the shaft end has slots cut into its rim, this is to engage with a geared electric motor to turn the engine over during maintenance work, this was known as a barring engine, for they used to be small steam units which had superseded a great iron bar and fulcrum pin.

At only one hundred R.P.M. it was quite an impressive sight to see all those pushrods dancing up and down.

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The Society is very grateful for their sponsorship.



Chris and Yvonne Orchard with the Simplex at EESME open day
Autumn 2015



We don't all buy them!
Ian Grinter working on his latest boiler.