

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd

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BEECH HURST NEWS



Cover picture: -

In Memoriam – It is with the greatest sadness that we enter 2009 with the news of the passing of Beech Hurst's longest serving active member, Allan Killick. An Obituary and a summary in the Chairman's Notes appear inside this issue...

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Editor's Notes

Well here we are then, 2 months into 2009 already and barely 3 weeks till the new season kicks off!

It hardly seems that long ago that I was typing the Christmas edition and since then we have entered another year, experienced some of the worst winter weather for nearly 2 decades and are once again fast approaching our AGM! I would like to thank all those who contributed to our Christmas edition of the newsletter, namely I, Chris Saunders, Jack Pitt, Mike Porter and Ray Parsons.

The first edition of 2009 is a little later than normal and has been coincided with the AGM, for those people who wish to collect on the night. Apart from the regular columns and a fully updated Diary of Events, there is an obituary by Ray Parsons for Allan Killick who passed away on Boxing Day, our 2008 website statistics courtesy of Stephen Hutton, a report on New Year's Day and our recent snow as well as an updated Winter Work report, which will conclude all our activities for the 2008/9 closed season. I hope as ever you enjoy this edition of the newsletter, so please read on and enjoy...

Andrew

Subscriptions

I have now received a good 90% of subscriptions for 2009, so if you haven't paid then the time is nigh and this will also be your last newsletter! I will normally be at the club both days of a weekend if you wish to pay your subscription to me in person, otherwise payments (£5 for under-18's and over 60's, then £10 the rest) can be sent to either the clubhouse address: Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd, The Clubhouse, Beech Hurst Gardens, Bolnore Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 4BX or to my home address on the cover of this edition. If you haven't already received your membership card, then it will be attached to this edition of the news – please check, but you should have already found it if you have read this, unless you are the kind of person who reads from back to front!

Andrew

Chairman's Notes

I start my notes for the first newsletter of the year with some sad news. Over the Christmas holiday Allan Killick, who had been poorly for a few months, passed away at his home. Allan was our longest serving active member and 4 years ago we made him a small award to celebrate his 50 years of service to the club. For most of those years, he built and maintained the signalling system for our railway and for much of this time too was on the committee, also serving as Chairman of the Society from 1984 – 1987. Although not in the best of health for a few years he was a regular at the Saturday lunchtime table right up until the autumn last year. We will miss seeing him and our thoughts go to his wife Grace and his family too at this time.

On other matters, I am pleased to say that the worst of the winter work programme has been completed and we are all tidy and ready for the 2009 season which is now only just around the corner, so a big 'thank you' to all who helped out in some way with the winter duties.

Andrew B has been busy preparing last year's accounts and the AGM notices have all been sent out in preparation for this year's meeting on March 7th. I hope you will be able to come and look forward to seeing you there.

Anyway, I wish everyone a happy 2009 season in the meantime!

Mike

Obituary for Allan Killick

I first met Allan when I went to Brighton B Power Station in 1954. Over the next few years we established that we shared a common interest in Railways and Modelling, until he finally introduced me to Beech Hurst in the summer of 1959; where among others I met the Killick clan, comprising of Allan, Jim his Father, Mike his Cousin and Uncle Charlie, Mike's Father and Allan's Uncle.

Allan served on Beech Hurst committee continuously from 1956 until 2000, becoming Chairman from 1984 to 1987. Throughout this time he served as Signals Engineer and Boiler Inspector.

During this time Allan built up the signalling system from an early simple system allowing 2 trains in one section with a control panel in the station through to its present comprehensive system with a control panel in the clubhouse.

Allan also put a big impact into the construction of the tunnel for which he and John Seymour acquired 'Morgans Organ' our large green cement mixer which gave the club yeoman service for many years.

When I joined, Allan was running and maintaining 'Hank', so I became his relief driver. In those days trains were mostly double headed and 'Hank' usually paired with Eric Rowland's 'Speedy', whose relief driver was Bill Cro. Each pair of drivers drove for $\frac{3}{4}$ hour on and $\frac{3}{4}$ hour off, so Allan and Eric would start and be relieved by Bill and myself; each pair sharing fully in the preparation and disposal of the engines.

From this time Allan was building his 'B1' with his usual skill and care, which arrived regularly as 'bits and pieces' and finally appeared on the track in 1975. This loco as most of you will know was a really good reliable runner and gave Allan much pleasure in building and driving it.

Sadly Allan passed away on 26th December 2008 at home with Grace as he wished, to whom I would like to express my sincere sympathy for her loss, with which sentiment I am sure all club members would like to join me.

Ray Parsons

Locomotives & Workshop Equipment

With the above in mind I have been asked, through these pages, to offer for sale to club members Allan's 2 remaining locomotives, namely his 5" gauge 2-10-0 'Austerity' locomotive 'North British', originally built by the late John Seymour and Allan's own 5" gauge B1 locomotive 'Gazelle', which is currently in a partially dismantled state but is complete with a new professionally built boiler. These will be offered together with possible items of workshop equipment through John Bateup. Any interested parties should contact John directly on 01273 833286 to discuss their interest further.

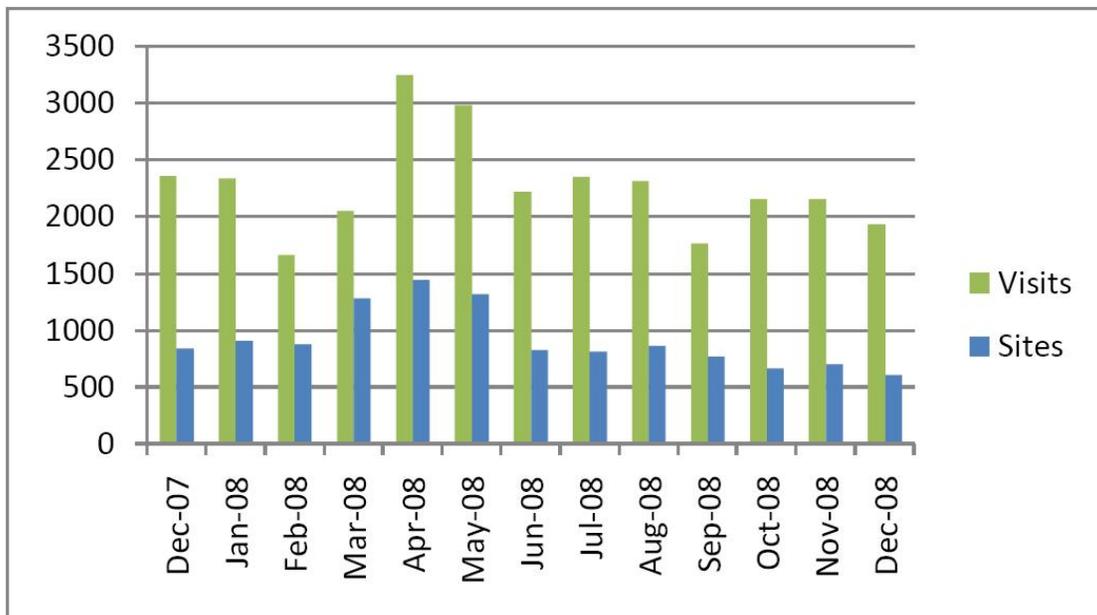
Andrew

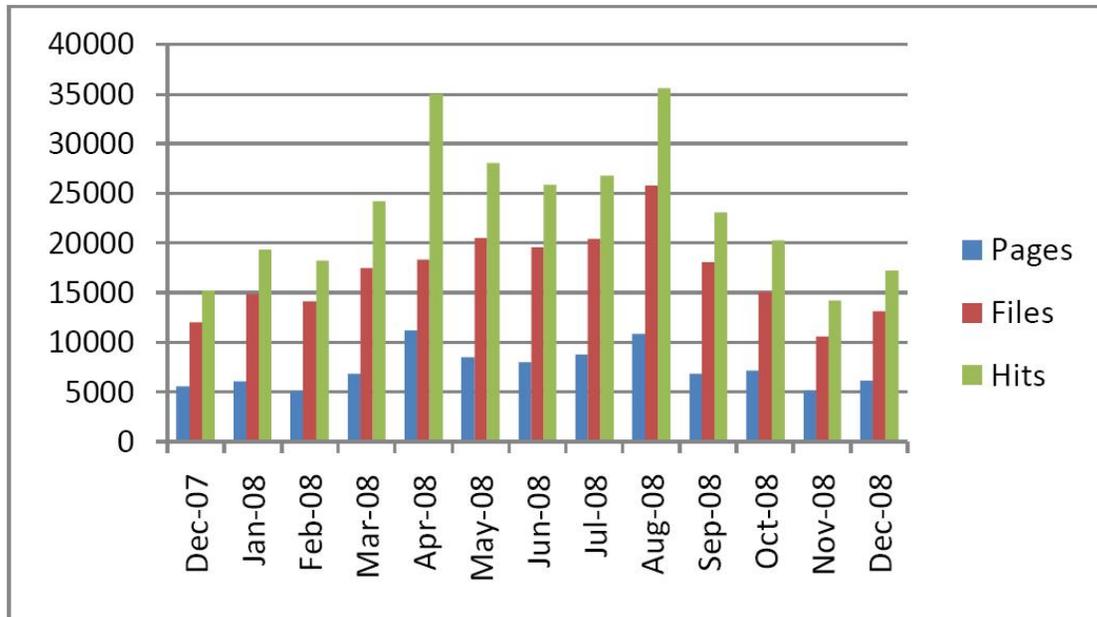
Website Statistics for 2008

With the 'www' becoming of ever increasing importance to all businesses and organisations throughout the world, it is nice to see that our own website is continuing to grow and now appears as the number one search result when 'Beech Hurst' is entered into 'Google' search engine. Bear in mind too that this is number one of 71,800 UK sites or number one of nearly 400,000 worldwide sites that are found as a result of this search and it is no wonder that 2008 was our best year yet for 'hits' to the website. Stephen Hutton has continued to maintain up to date coverage throughout the year and it is a credit to him for this continual maintenance that keeps our website useful – so many are out of date and not maintained properly!

Below is a table and two graphs that break down the usage throughout 2008.

Month	Daily Average				Monthly Totals					
	Hits	Files	Pages	Visits	Sites	KBytes	Visits	Pages	Files	Hits
Dec-07	491	387	180	75	835	290059	2352	5583	12013	15233
Jan-08	622	481	197	75	906	319496	2331	6107	14927	19310
Feb-08	628	487	176	57	874	326919	1660	5130	14131	18212
Mar-08	779	564	220	66	1279	383763	2050	6832	17490	24178
Apr-08	1165	610	373	108	1441	277236	3242	11198	18302	34960
May-08	905	662	275	96	1314	348671	2977	8554	20540	28072
Jun-08	860	653	266	73	820	396985	2213	7999	19607	25817
Jul-08	864	659	282	75	808	384442	2345	8745	20431	26808
Aug-08	1148	832	350	74	860	510994	2309	10873	25798	35594
Sep-08	769	601	229	58	760	384603	1762	6884	18053	23086
Oct-08	654	485	231	69	663	275094	2152	7189	15044	20292
Nov-08	475	355	206	71	700	150902	2150	5197	10663	14257
Dec-08	556	422	201	62	601	258886	1933	6232	13100	17248





The 'business end' of these figures are the 'visits' and the 'hits'. The 'visits' indicate how many occasions the 'homepage' was opened during each day / month, however it is not necessary to go to the homepage to access other pages within the website and the 'hits' indicate how many times any of our web pages was viewed each day / month. In short the website 'homepage' was viewed on about 25,000 separate occasions during 2008 and all of the website pages as whole were viewed on about 290,000 separate occasions during 2008! The figures for 2007 show that we received about 25,000 'visits' to the site, which compares like for like with 2008, but the 'hits' have risen from 200,000 in 2007 to 290,000 in 2008 – a 45% increase! This suggests that people are tending to view inner pages of the website more than the 'homepage' and I wouldn't mind betting that the most used of all the pages is the 'timetable' page.

Through these 'old fashioned' pages I would like to thank Stephen on behalf of everybody for his efforts with the website, another job that is a lot of work during the year, but one that gets done quietly in the background like a good many others!

Andrew & Stephen

New Year's Day

The social calendar has been quite sparse since Christmas, with our New Year's Day run the only notable exception. This year's run was well attended although more than a few of us were either recovering from the flu or had heavy colds, which somewhat kept activities on the track to a minimum. Nevertheless, Norman enjoyed an early run with the 4-CEP (**see picture below**), whilst Nick and Andy enjoyed lengthy runs with 'Simplex' and 'Butch' respectively (**see picture below**) – despite the near freezing temperatures! Later our two club 'Growlers' which were on test following repairs to Michael's brain joined them!

I think all things considered it was a very good day, with a good turnout of members and thanks to some youthful enthusiasm a turnout on the track too – pity it only happens once a year!



Andrew

Winter Work

With the new running season just a couple of weeks away we are pretty much tidying up the loose ends from the winter and are nearly prepared for 2009. Overall we have achieved a great deal this winter, with most of the jobs pencilled in at the beginning of the closed season now completed and many more that we hadn't planned for are also complete!

Since the December edition we have successfully erected the new compressor store doors, with much sweat and grunting! Peter Chapman and I hung these one Sunday a few weeks, in sub-zero temperatures and at times near blizzard conditions! They have since been tweaked and are now finished barring a final coat of 'Buckingham' once the weather perks up a bit!

We have also swapped around the 'Flam Store' and 'Tool Store'. The 'Flam Store' was bigger and had less stuff in it and the 'Tool Store' was overloaded and also inconveniently located for getting barrows, trolleys and tools from on a regular basis. It has taken several weekends work, including making repairs to the 'Flam Store' roof to make it water tight and they are now pretty much sorted. Hopefully this will make access easier all round and the 'Flam Store' is now more secure and behind a steel door, not a plastic one. **(See picture below)**



We have also repaired the drain alongside the transporter rails in the steaming bays. The existing section had broken up over the years and the cast iron covers were often uneven, having taken punishment from vehicles trying to reach the centre of the park.

We were lucky to get a warmish weekend around Christmas to do this work and then even luckier when the council decided to empty their 5,000 water tank a couple of days later, most of which flooded across the steaming bays! Fortunately for us the concrete had set by this stage and no lasting harm was done, as we had had to specially cast the drain using two galvanised water pipes as formers because there were no commercially available drainage sections of the right dimensions. It worked really well and together with some 'liberated' ballast the job was completed over one weekend!

More recently the track on the siding curve of the pneumatic point has been lifted, the whole point painted and the track re-laid with fresh sleepers. Also the steel work leading up to Brian's shed, the bridge to carriage shed and the area around the turntable have been given a boost with a couple of fresh coats of bitumen. Many thanks to the 'boys' who have undertaken all three of the latter tasks almost single handed. **(See picture below)**



We have also now removed the last of our crazy paving out the back of the workshop. Having completed a mammoth concreting session a couple of summer's ago out the back of the clubhouse there was a small patch about 10 foot square that remained. Over a couple of weekends in late January we dug up the last slabs, levelled the under lay and then one Saturday morning a few weeks back laid the new concrete pad in its place. Again, we were lucky with this job in respect that we had fairly mild weather and the rains that came on the Sunday made no impression on the concrete, which by then was well 'off'. This job was a really good team effort that went much more smoothly than previously thought.

John Midderigh has continued with the last of the leaf clearance for this season as well as quite a lot of de-brambling around the tops of the cuttings in the back field. The whole area behind the clubhouse looks extremely tidy once again – thanks to John for his continued efforts 'in the field' and with the appearance of a few Crocus and Daffodils last week the whole park is starting to awaken to spring!

Last but not least and with the help of our new Laptop computer, Steve and Graham have been continuing to map out the signalling system using CAD.

The drawings are starting to take shape and there is quite a lot that we are all learning about the system, which the more you look into is a tribute to Allan for the years of development that went into creating it – long may it continue.

Andrew

Snow

Following my prediction in the December edition regarding the impending cold weather I was as surprised as most people to the severity of the snow that fell during the week of 2nd February. In the 16 years I have been at Beech Hurst I have not seen as much lying snow as I did on that Monday afternoon, although I think we got off lightly compared to London and some of the Home Counties. There was virtually 5 inches of snow around the clubhouse, measured almost to the thou! This coupled with some quite elegant snowmen that were being built by bored school kids and the park looked a real treat – pity it couldn't have been the Sunday and we could have had a run! All we can hope for is more of the same at a weekend, but with March very much upon us I think time is running out and signs of spring are just starting to appear too.

Andrew

Jokes...

London Times Obituary of the late Common Sense

'Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- Life isn't always fair; and maybe it was my fault,
- Knowing when to come in out of the rain; why the early bird gets the worm,
- Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) & reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge),
- His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place.
- Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

- Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.
- It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an Aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.
- Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.
- Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.
- Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.
- Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason.
- He is survived by his 4 stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, I Want It Now, Someone Else Is To Blame, and I'm A Victim.
- Not many attended his funeral because so few realised he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.'

Alan Garner

Forthcoming Events

Beyond our AGM, which is being held on Saturday 7th March, there is the 'second half' of the talk by Robert Harris on 'The History of Fairgrounds', which is scheduled for Saturday 28th March at 19:00 as per November – all are welcome. Into April and we have been asked to exhibit at the Bath & West Showground for a second year running at their 'Models and Hobbies show'. If sufficient volunteers are available for this event on the weekend of 18th/19th then we will duly make a good display as per last year, but it is subject to volunteers which we are currently quite light on. If by mid-March we don't think that staffing this event is possible then we will have to withdraw, so if you are interested then a list of names is currently on the clubhouse blackboard and can be added to at free will! Moving into May and we will be hosting a visit by the Chelmsford club on Sunday 17th, followed by a slightly earlier than normal mid-summer 'Bring Your Own' BBQ on Saturday 23rd May – the Bank Holiday weekend. We'll have to hope and pray that the sun is shining that weekend!

A bit further ahead and we have received an invitation for a return visit to Chelmsford on Saturday 20th June for those who are interested and then we also have a provisional booking to display at the Bristol ME show over the weekend of the 21-23 August. This is only provisional at this stage, however it is looking quite likely that there will be space and this would be an excellent substitute for the Shepton Mallet show if we are unable to attend this year - details will follow in June / August editions.

Our end of summer 'Bring Your Own' BBQ will then be held on the Saturday of the August Bank Holiday, which is as late as it can be this year, falling on 29th August. Any alterations or additions to the above will be posted in the April / June or August newsletters as appropriate.

And finally, Club Night's will continue through the year on the first Thursday of each month, starting around 1900.

Andrew

Diary of Events

28th March 2009 – Talk by Robert Harris on 'History of Fairgrounds' part II.

28th/29th March 2009 – Our timetabled start to the 2009 season.

1st April 2009 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

18th/19th April 2009 – Provisional display at Shepton Mallet ME Show – TBC.

7th May 2009 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

17th May 2009 – Chelmsford to visit Beech Hurst – From approx. 1000.

23rd May 2009 – Mid-summer 'Bring Your Own' BBQ – Will start at approx. 1800.

4th June 2009 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

20th June 2009 – SMLS invited to visit Chelmsford – details to follow in April.

2nd July 2009 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

6th August 2009 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

21st/22nd/23rd August 2009 – Provisional display at Bristol ME Show – TBC.

29th August 2009 – End of summer 'B.Y.O.' BBQ – Will start at approx. 1800.

3rd September 2009 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

NB. Certain events may be organised at short notice and will not therefore appear in the newsletter. Please check black / notice boards in the Clubhouse for details of such events.

Andrew

Quiz Answers...

Due to spacing constraints (i.e. I need to keep to an even number of pages) I will defer the Christmas Quiz answers until the April edition, when more space will permit.

Andrew

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd



Rear Cover picture: -

A Lifetime of Service: Apart from his most obvious legacy, the signalling system, Allan also put in over 50 years unbroken active service at Beech Hurst, a feat that hasn't, as of yet, been matched. Pictured above, Allan receives a card and gift from the club in June 2005 as a token of this outstanding achievement and dedication.